

FRS 151: Philanthropy: can we make this a better world through generosity?

Fall, 2015

Mondays, 1:30-4:20

Mathey T-3

Syllabus

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Thanks to a grant from the Palette Fund and its president, Terrence Meck '00, students in this freshman seminar will engage in a very special project. The Fund has agreed to provide you with \$50,000 in order to enhance your understanding of and interest in philanthropy. It will be up to the students in the course to determine the object(s) of your philanthropy, the number and size of your gift(s), the mode of awarding the gift(s), and your plans for evaluating the success of your gift(s). The only limitations on your giving is that the recipients of the gift(s) must be U.S. 501(C)(3) [nonprofit] organizations, and that the gift(s) must reflect the will of the entire group – you cannot, in other words, divide the \$50,000 fifteen ways and each give your own gift. This is truly a group project.

This seminar will place its gift-giving effort in the context of philanthropy and civil society in the United States. We will ask how modern philanthropy emerged in America in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, how and why the private philanthropic foundation was created to implement the purposes of philanthropy, and what problems in public policy have emerged as a result of philanthropy. We will also examine the functions of civil society, the space between the state and the market, in the United States. Here we will particularly inquire how the nonprofit organizations that form the core of civil society contribute to democracy, and how they are influenced by the actions of philanthropy and philanthropists. We will bring both empirical and theoretical concerns to this inquiry. How does the philanthropic system of the United States actually work, and what improvements might be made to the system? How can philanthropy be understood at the level of moral and political philosophy?

But the core of your work will be to organize yourselves as a group to determine how best to act as philanthropists – that is, how to donate \$50,000 in the best manner possible before the end of the term. This should be quite a group adventure, and I am looking forward to seeing how you do.

The seminar will meet once a week. It will be a discussion course, and I look for active participation by each student. There will be a reading assignment each week through most of the term, though I will customize the assignments for you. I expect close analysis of texts and I look for each of you to complete the assignment before class. The basic course requirement is to prepare a group report on the gift process, but I will also twice be asking each of you to prepare a reflection paper on the specific aspects of the gift process that you have undertaken – once at mid-term and then again at the end of term. I will send current news items, reports and other material to you regularly by e-mail, and I encourage all of you to send materials and comments to all of the others on our e-list.

Terrence Meck will be joining us for the seminar sessions, and I hope that he will be an active participant in our discussion. But both Terrence and I will defer to the group in making gift decisions. We will have two or three visitors, professionals in philanthropy, to visit the seminars during the semester, and I think you will benefit from their wisdom and experience.

I do not keep formal “office hours”, but I work in my office most of the time, including weekends, and I hope that you will feel free to drop in to talk. I am happy to make appointments by e-mail, and my assistant, Bunny Yeager, will also be glad to make appointments for you. I know that Terrence will also make himself available to you, primarily by e-mail, since he does not live here in Princeton.

Required books: (available at Labyrinth Books)

Olivier Zunz, *Philanthropy in America: A History* (Princeton U. Press, 2012)

Peter Singer, *The Life You Can Save: Acting Now to End World Poverty* (Random House, 2009)

John Ehrenberg, *Civil Society: The Critical History of an Idea* (NYU Press, 1999)

Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*,  
(Simon & Schuster, 2001)

A very brief and highly selective list of websites relevant to Nonprofits, NGOs and Philanthropy:

General sites:

Idealist.org: [www.idealist.org](http://www.idealist.org) (clearing house for nonprofit ideas and news)

NonprofitHub.com: [www.nonprofithub.com](http://www.nonprofithub.com) (very large list of links, broken down by category; some broken, some frivolous)

Urban Institute: [www.urban.org](http://www.urban.org) (general social and economic policy research institute, with section devoted to nonprofits and philanthropy)

Guidestar: [www.guidestar.org](http://www.guidestar.org) (basic data about nonprofits organization- including organization's tax Form 990 images; free registration required)

Independent Sector: [www.independentsector.org](http://www.independentsector.org) (broad-based coalition dedicated to improving America's third sector)

Harvest Today: <http://www.harvesttoday.org> (nonprofit and philanthropy news and information service)

On Philanthropy:

The Chronicle of Philanthropy: [www.philanthropy.com](http://www.philanthropy.com) (the national weekly devoted to philanthropy).

The Non-Profit Times: [www.nptimes.com](http://www.nptimes.com) (monthly news magazine)

Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University: [www.philanthropy.iupui.edu](http://www.philanthropy.iupui.edu)

EPhilanthropyFoundation.org: [www.ephilanthropy.org](http://www.ephilanthropy.org) (organization dedicated to promoting online philanthropy; includes ezine)

Ashoka: [www.ashoka.org](http://www.ashoka.org) (organization supporting social entrepreneurship, with section dedicated to nonprofits and philanthropy)

Philanthropy News Digest: <http://fdncenter.org/pnd> (Foundation Center's online newspaper)

American Association of Fundraising Counsel: <http://www.aafrc.org> (Organization dedicated to professionalizing and ensuring ethical behavior amongst philanthropies)

The Philanthropic Initiative: <http://www.tpi.org> (TPI offers strategic services to philanthropists)

American Institute of Philanthropy: <http://www.charitywatch.org> (general purpose philanthropy website, including ratings of organizations)

Nonprofit Management Education Center: <http://www.uwex.edu/li/learner/sites.htm> (large list of links to a variety of third sector related sites)

Center for Strategic Philanthropy & Civil Society: <http://cspcs.sanford.duke.edu/>

Non-Profit Quaterly: [www.nonprofitquarterly.org](http://www.nonprofitquarterly.org)

Wealth and Giving Forum, Boston College: [www.wealthandgiving.org/people\\_schervish.html](http://www.wealthandgiving.org/people_schervish.html)

Science of Generosity Initiative, University of Notre Dame: <http://generosityresearch.nd.edu/>

Please note the blog that Maribel Morey, Ben Soskis and I have just launched: [www.histphil.org](http://www.histphil.org)

This is an attempt to bring historical perspective to the understanding of contemporary philanthropy.

On foundations:

Foundation Center: [www.fdncenter.org](http://www.fdncenter.org) (database on foundations, for both students and practitioners of philanthropy)

Foundation Center's international philanthropy page:

[http://fdncenter.org/research/npr\\_links/npr08\\_int.html](http://fdncenter.org/research/npr_links/npr08_int.html)

Council on Foundations: [www.cof.org](http://www.cof.org) (membership organization of foundations providing information, expertise and advice to foundations and general public)

Minnesota Council on Foundations: <http://www.mcf.org> (includes a variety of non-Minnesota links, especially under "Links of Interest")

On NGOs, US and international:

Center for Global Prosperity: [www.global-prosperity.org](http://www.global-prosperity.org) (new Hudson Institute/Brady Center site on global philanthropy and remittances)

Interaction: [www.interaction.org](http://www.interaction.org) (alliance of 160 of the largest U.S. based NGOs working on international relief and development)

Duke University Non-governmental Organizations Research Guide:

<http://docs.lib.duke.edu/igo/guides/ngo> (includes very comprehensive list of NGOs, including international ones, with weblinks)

Boardsource: <http://www.boardsource.org> (dedicated to NGO development, especially of boards and their members)

Global Policy Forum: <http://www.globalpolicy.org/ngos/index.htm> (GPF monitors UN policy making; this page relates to the UN and NGOs)

Reading Assignments: (Assignments other than in books required for purchase can be found in the e-reserves section of the FRS 151 Blackboard site)

11 September: What are the obligations of wealth?

Andrew Carnegie, "The Gospel of Wealth"

Olivier Zunz, *Philanthropy in America: A History* (Princeton U. Press, 2012)

28 September: What is civil society?

John Ehrenberg, *Civil Society: The Critical History of an Idea* (NYU Press, 1999)

5 October: How does civil society work in America?

Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, (Simon & Schuster, 2001)

12 October: What is philanthropy in America?

Peter Singer, *The Life You Can Save: Acting Now to End World Poverty* (Random House, 2009)

19 October: What is a private philanthropic foundation?

Barry D. Karl and Stanley N. Katz, "The American Private Philanthropic Foundation and the Public Sphere, 1890-1930," *Minerva* XIX (1981), pp. 236-270, (pub. March 1983).

Barry D. Karl and Stanley N. Katz, "Foundations and Ruling Class Elites," *Daedalus: Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, 116/1 (Winter 1987), pp. 1-40.

26 October: *First reflection paper due*

26 October: What is the "strategic" approach to philanthropy?

Christine W. Letts, William Ryan and Allen Grossman, "Virtuous Capital: What Foundations can Learn from Venture Capitalists," *Harvard Business Review* (March-April 1997), pp. 36-44.

Michael E. Porter and Mark R. Kramer, "Philanthropy's New Agenda: Creating Value," *Harvard Business Review*, November-December 1999, pp. 121-130.

2 November: Fall Break

9 November: Philosophical approaches to philanthropy

Jon Elster, "The Valmont Effect" in Illingworth, Pogge and Wenar, *Giving Well* (Oxford U. Press, 2011), chp. 4, pp. 67-81

Rob Reich, "Toward a Political Theory of Philanthropy" in Illingworth, Pogge and Wenar, *Giving Well* (Oxford U. Press, 2011), chp. 9, pp. 177-191

Leif Wenar, "Poverty is No Pond" in Illingworth, Pogge and Wenar, *Giving Well* (Oxford U. Press, 2011), chp. 6, pp. 104-130

16 November: Discussion: The opportunities for philanthropy in America

23 November: Decisions

30 November: Decisions

7 December: Decisions

14 December: Decisions

12 January 2014 (Dean's Date) *Second reflection paper due; Group report due*