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"Philanthropy's Janus-Faced Potential: The Dialectic of Care and Negligence Donors Face"

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There is an ever-present potential in every philanthropic approach to help or hinder charities and their beneficiaries. Philanthropy, the voluntary social relation of care by which donors respond directly to others in need (Schervish 1998), possesses an especially potent capacity to affect the prospects of others. Wealth-holders are capable of both extraordinary care and extraordinary carelessness in carrying out their philanthropy. This Janus-faced potential of philanthropy is what I refer to as the dialectic of care and impairment, negligence, or dominion. This chapter explores this dialectic, drawing on intensive interviews with wealth-holders about their lives and philanthropy I have carried out over the past two decades.

I begin with a cautionary tale that illustrates the dialectic of care and carelessness that hovers around all well-intentioned good work. In the second section, I discuss the notions of care and friendship to highlight just what is at stake when philanthropy succeeds or falters. In the third section, I explain the affective basis and need for practical wisdom in the exercise of philanthropic care. In the fourth, I describe how the dialectic of care and dominion gets played out in business-oriented philanthropy and in anonymous giving. I conclude by recommending that a process of critical self-reflection can aid wealth-holders who wish to be wise rather than injurious in their philanthropy.

The Philanthropic Dervish: The Potential Discrepancy between Intent and Effect

Good intentions do not alone generate good work. Philanthropy is about care, and care is about meeting the true needs of others. That it is the effect, and not just the intention that matters is shown in the story of the philanthropic dervish. H. B. M. Dervish (1982, 30) recounts a tale told by Idries Shah about how a dervish (a novice holy man) set out to help a poor family who refused all ordinary charity. Looking for a way to help the family, the well-meaning dervish pretended to be a carpet merchant and offered the family 100 gold pieces
for a worn rug in their home. The wife said she needed to check with her husband about the sale when he returned home. Upon hearing the offer, the husband grew suspicious and had the rug appraised. He learned that the rug was in fact worth ten times what the dervish had offered. When the dervish returned the next day, he was arrested for an attempt to take advantage of the poor. In the end, the dervish's philanthropy was ineffective. Despite its purported goal, the scheme produced negative unintended consequences, or dysfunctions, for the family and, equally important, for the dervish.

The notion of "dysfunction" was introduced over fifty years ago by Robert K. Merton (1949/1968) to precisely emphasize the fact that the consequences intended by actors do not necessarily ensue from purposeful action. Merton points out that motives and purposes are "often and erroneously merged with the related, but different concepts of objective consequences of attitude, belief and behavior" (104). This disjunction between motive and purpose as intent and actual effect points to the importance of discerning whether and in which ways the objective consequences actors seek actually come to fruition. While "functions" are observed consequences that allow for organizational accomplishment of a purpose, "dysfunctions" contradict or undercut the accomplishment of a purpose (105).

Although we leave the story of the dervish unclear about whether in due course the dervish extricates himself by explaining his honest mistake, it is clear that the initial intervention turned out to be dysfunctional. While the dervish's intentions were unassailable, his actions did not fulfill the needs of the family; indeed, they initially caused more harm than good. He crossed the sometimes evident and sometimes subtle line from care to negligence. Such is the difference between benevolence, or wanting to do good work, and beneficence, or actually doing good work.

Care and Friendship: The True Ends of Philanthropy

As Merton suggests, the notions of function and dysfunction apply only in the context of an intended purpose. Accordingly, it makes sense to speak of philanthropic activities as functional or dysfunctional only if we can identify a central purpose of philanthropy. We need to identify the purpose that makes philanthropy distinctively valuable when it is served and distinctively injurious when it is forsaken. I believe that this purpose revolves around the social relationships of care (Schervish and Havens 2002; Schervish 2005) and friendship. With Toner (1968), I see care as the implemental or instrumental aspect of unconditional affective regard for another, or love. The cardinal characteristic of care is that it is an activity directed toward treating other people as unconditional ends by meeting their true needs. Defining the purpose of philanthropy as meeting the true needs of others begs the question, of course, of just what in any particular setting the true needs are. However, it is the correct question. It locates philanthropy in the context of love and it insists on an intelligent prac-

tical implementation of love that advances rather than diminishes the welfare of others.

We can view the purpose of philanthropy from a second complementary direction that heretofore has not been stressed in philanthropic studies, namely that of friendship. The word philanthropy derives from the Greek philia and anthropos. The two terms in combination are almost always translated simply as love of humankind. No special attention is given to the particular kind of relational love denoted by philia, however, which is most accurately understood as the love of friendship, or simply friendship. Philia (the noun), or friendship love is the starting point for Aristotle in Book 8 of the Nicomachean Ethics, where he speaks about the concentric circles of love extending from family outward to the species. In the Ethics, says Provençal (2001), the family "is precisely a society of self-relations" in which the members love each other as other selves (5.37). From such mutual friendship in the family, philia extends outward to the friendship love of the species as other selves. Aristotle tells us that a "friend is another self" when speaking of the kind of friendship that brings individuals together for mutual benefit (1998, 1X:9).

Friendship love is the noble purpose of philanthropy when exercised with care. And friendship love is what is violated when philanthropy is exercised with negligence. In philanthropy, the same conditions that offer the occasion for friendship also offer the opportunity for one soul, under the auspices of good intentions, to impair the other soul.

The Affective Base and Need for Practical Wisdom in Philanthropy

For philanthropy to exist, let alone be creative, targeted, and effective, the sentiments of a donor must be stirred and activated toward unmet needs. This is different from what happens in business and politics. In commercial and political relationships, those who supply resources do so by responding to the medium (of dollars or votes) through which the needs are expressed. This is what economists call a relation mobilized by effective demand. This means that those with a demand can discipline those who supply the goods and services that meet those needs. Commercial and political consumers are able to withhold their dollars and votes from those who fail to deliver on those needs. In contrast, the donor is not materially disciplined by those in need. Another way of saying this is that philanthropy is led by supply rather than by demand. A transaction between donors and recipients occurs only when donors freely recognize and respond to the needs of the recipients. And the quality of that transaction depends, at least in its initial phase, on how well the donor organizes and administers the gift so that it actually addresses the true needs of the intended recipients.

If commercial and political relations are mobilized by effective demand, philanthropic relations are mobilized by what I call affective demand. It is the person
in need rather than the medium through which the need is expressed that motivates donors to supply resources. Different from the firms and elected officials that constitute the supply side in commercial and political relations, donors that constitute the supply side in philanthropic relations are under no material pressure to meet a demand or to do so appropriately. In contrast to business and politics, philanthropy entails no financially "coercive" downside for those on the supply side should they choose not to allocate their resources to offer the appropriate quantity and quality of goods and services to meet the demand of need. Even though there are occasional commercial shortages or political stalemates, the demand side inevitably exerts its will through the punitive system of consumer sovereignty.

Philanthropy comes to fruition only to the extent that donors recognize and respond to what is materially unenforceable by those in need, namely the humanity that is to be advanced by philanthropy. Philanthropy advances caring consequences and deter neglectful ones to the extent that donors are affectively engaged and employ practical wisdom about the consequences of their giving. Philanthropy requires that donors recognize a call to caring friendship that derives from the worth of the person or cause in need. Such a relationship is vulnerable from the outset to not being established, and once it is established, it is vulnerable to being inadequate, distorted, or coming to an end. None of this denies the authority to set the directions, conditions, and standards of their gifts. But in the absence of the countervailing market relations that are present in commercial and political relations, donors need to be especially vigilant about the subtle responsibilities of the friendships they enter.

Evaluative Strategy to Distinguish Care and Negligence

Over the past two decades, my colleagues and I have interviewed close to 300 donors about how they tie together capacity, character, and wisdom in their philanthropy. Virtually all tell their story as a moral tale, emphasizing how they have in one way or another exercised virtue to make a moral life from the hand that fortune dealt them. We learned about the regrets they harbor about their philanthropic failures and the steps they have taken or are now taking to remedy them. Even from these narratives, we seldom learn enough to form an independent evaluation of whether their philanthropic activities are ultimately caring or debilitating. So how can we appraise the functions and dysfunctions of philanthropy without indulging in off-the-cuff judgments about how well a philanthropic endeavor meets the criteria of care and strategic friendship?

The inability to calculate a balance sheet of functions and dysfunctions from narratives about philanthropic endeavors need not exclude the possibility of setting out criteria to formulate evaluative judgments. The evaluative approach I suggest derives from a framework of strategies for giving wealth-holders use that has come out of my research (see Schervish and Herman 1988). Evaluation criteria can be based on determining the distinctive aspects of each approach and elaborating the ways in which those characteristic elements can lead to both positive functions and negative dysfunctions.

A strategy of philanthropy is a way of acting, thinking, and feeling in an effort to meet one's own needs and the needs of others simultaneously. In a word, a strategy of philanthropy is a distinctive mode of engagement of a donor with a charity or beneficiary. Although donors may tend to emphasize a specific strategy in all or most of their giving, most often they pursue an array of different strategies depending on what they are doing and how they wish to be engaged. For instance, when carrying out a contributory philanthropic strategy, donors tend to simply write checks to support a cause and do not otherwise participate in activities in and around their gift. In contrast, when following an entrepreneurial strategy, donors contribute investment capital as well as their own skills, ideas, and time to the creation of a self-directed philanthropic enterprise.

For each strategy, distinctive attributes of donor engagement offer an opportunity for that strategy to be more or less caring. I find that what is potentially most caring and potentially most debilitating or manipulative about any particular strategy derives from the same source. For instance, in contributory philanthropy, limiting involvement to making a contribution can be especially caring for an organization that is well-directed and neither needs nor asks for any greater personal involvement. It can be a trusting and generous act for a donor to give resources and allow the charity to carry out its mission unhindered. At the same time, in other circumstances, simply making a contribution may express a donor's desire to be unengaged even though the charity may welcome and need greater engagement. Similarly, as we will see in entrepreneurial philanthropy the personal funding and hands-on direction of a new philanthropic venture or a new direction in an existing charitable organization can result in a breakthrough in meeting people's needs or a heavy-handed intrusion of business logic into an arena not suited or actually hindered by it.

In what follows, I review the elements of three business-related strategies and the general orientation of anonymous giving, which in some form can accompany any philanthropic strategy, and chart the particularly salient opportunities and obstacles for care inherent in each of these four approaches. The business analysis is based on interviews from our 2001 High Tech Donor Study (Schervish, O’Herlihy, and Havens 2001). The analysis of anonymous philanthropy is based on interviews from a 1988 Study on Wealth and Philanthropy (Schervish and Herman 1998).

The Dialectic of Care and Negligence in Three Business-Oriented Strategies

Strictly speaking, "venture capital," the term that spawned the analogous "venture philanthropy," denotes the more or less active dedication of an investor's money and expertise to propel the entrepreneurial activity of some-
one else. But as the term has come to be associated with philanthropy, it refers to a range of approaches that are in fact more widespread and multifaceted than what is strictly parallel to venture capital in the business world. Much of what is regularly included within the category of venture philanthropy is more accurately a set of three (and perhaps more) distinctive strategies that fall under the rubric of business-oriented philanthropy. The three forms of business philanthropy include managerial philanthropy, entrepreneurial philanthropy, and venture or investment philanthropy. Each is a specific way that donors carry out what is essentially self- or agent-animated philanthropy. Donors who use these strategies contribute to the direction of the charity in addition to contributing their financial resources.

Managerial philanthropy is the mode of engagement in which an individual’s central contribution to a charity is the gift of organizational expertise without the contribution of financial resources. “What I felt was my greatest strength is the managerial side,” explains Edward Morrison, a former software entrepreneur-turned-philanthropist. “I can manage people, I understand how people work, I don’t try to categorize them all the same and I understand the differences.” He is working with a nonprofit whose head is what he calls a “pure entrepreneur.” She is like her counterparts in the business world who “are typically pretty horrible managers because they want everything to happen in five seconds.” He is sympathetic to this demon because he too was once one of those entrepreneurs. The key to his managerial contribution is that he knows from experience “that there’s a brake . . . and I know when to use it.”

In contrast to the managerial strategy, an entrepreneurial strategy of philanthropy engages both the human and financial capital of a donor in order to inaugurate either a new charitable enterprise or a new component within an existing charity. For instance, Robert Shorette, founder of Digital Hardware, expends most of his philanthropic dollars and time overseeing the start-up of his own educational charity. What differentiates commercial from social entrepreneurship, says self-described social entrepreneur Eugene Willey, is not the lack of measurement or measurement on investment. The difference is that the return on investment focuses on a “social return, which is measured in community capital or human capital or social capital.”

The third business-orientated strategy is that of investment or venture philanthropy. Venture philanthropy is that “middle” form that infuses managerial advice and financial resources into a philanthropic effort but does not interject the hands-on daily direction that is the hallmark of an entrepreneur. For instance, Boston software entrepreneur Brian Taylor started his own family foundation, which he now uses as the base from which to contribute both his money and skills. His objective is to help others get charities off the ground by assisting them with goal definition, planning, and advice about how to leverage funding. He is not directly running a new charity but is combining, in a middle way, pieces of both managerial and entrepreneurial strategies.

The leading characteristic of today’s popular business-oriented philanthro-

pists is that they are agent-animated and shape direction. Even when simply making contributions to established organizations, these donors view themselves as actively appraising the effectiveness of the organizations to which they contribute. Taken together, this view and its three approaches can be described as intercessional orientation. I choose the term “intercessional” advisedly, for it provides both what is potentially most caring and potentially most domineering about business-oriented donors. On the one hand, it connotes interference or a manipulation that forces outcomes that are more willful than helpful. In business philanthropy, both the supportive and domineering potential of its intercessional character arise from the same underlying attribute of agent-animated donors. These strategies possess an overwhelming capacity to generate much care and much dominion.

There are, however, criteria for judgment that can be used by those who themselves engage in intercessory philanthropy and by those who are familiar enough with a particular case to evaluate the relative balance of care and harm. I turn first to the aspects of intercessory philanthropy that advance care and then address the distinctively portentous dysfunctions.

Several propitious opportunities are spawned by agent-animated philanthropy. The first is that it is particularly effective in spurring creative directions. When philanthropists recommend or insist on organizational formation and reformation, one goal is to improve a charitable mission in a creative way. In such cases, the intervention can be felicitous, for it offers charities wise organizational suggestions and lowers trepidation about making changes. A second positive outcome deriving from intercessional philanthropy occurs when donors offer sensitive criteria for and insightful appraisals about measuring outputs. High-tech donors make much of producing and measuring charitable outputs. But as many respondents appreciate, they need to recognize that long-term investments in human capital cannot be measured with the same quantitative rigor as short-term material benefits. Being sensitive to this distinction while remaining adamant about the need to formulate and assess performance is a particularly caring exercise of agent-animated philanthropy.

A third expression of care associated with agent-animated philanthropy is knowing when to step aside and turn a venture over to others. For instance, one donor who headed a university board felt it her duty to leave the board when someone else could provide the fresh ideas and energy she no longer felt she was capable of offering. She could have stayed on indefinitely, but she realized that different skills were needed to expand the fund-raising efforts she had excelled in starting.

A fourth fruit of intercessional philanthropy occurs when donors and individual beneficiaries develop a working relationship of mutual respect. When donors are in direct contact with nonprofit professionals as well as with the individual beneficiaries of a charity, they can learn to understand the cultural differences that separate the business world from the nonprofit world. They also can learn
to effectively phrase their advice and frame their assistance so as to hold true to what they believe needs to change without alienating the nonprofit professionals or destroying their own enthusiasm.

Just as intercessional philanthropy can have a salutary impact, it can set in motion several adverse effects that can be described as meddling in or dominating a charity. One such temptation is for activist philanthropists to insist on implementing their views despite counteracting opinions by front-line professionals or community activists. One harmful intercession is to push a pet project that a community may neither need nor want; a second is to sidetrack a worthwhile project. A third way intercessional philanthropists may cross the line from care to dominion is by insisting on a funding scheme that is too narrow to be effective. Venture philanthropists, especially, are adamant about treating philanthropic funding according to a stakeholder model that stresses the efficient production of outcomes. One pitfall in pursuing this model occurs when donors demand that outputs be measured in a program whose outputs are not known for a long period or are by their nature difficult or impossible to measure. Finally, an equally problematic misapplication of an intercessional logic can occur when charities commence projects merely because they attract funding and not because the charity and those it serves would benefit. When philanthropic intercession generates not what is needed to be done but what a funder arbitrarily decides to do, an opportunity for care becomes a detriment.

Note that the issue of care and dominion never turns merely on the notion of “welcome” as opposed to “unwelcome” intercession. Certainly it is important to heed what administrators or beneficiaries regard as desirable or undesirable about the engagement of influential donors. And failing to consider the views of beneficiaries is one sure sign of hubris. But what administrators, professionals, or beneficiaries of a charity think (no more than what donors think) ought not be the primary norm for determining care and control. Rather, the criterion is how effective a donor’s activities are for producing desirable outcomes—as long as we comprehensively define such outcomes to include not just productive efficiency but also repercussions for organizational ethics, participation, and the quality of goods and services.

The Dialectic of Care and Dominion in Anonymous Giving

In addition to studying the range of strategies used to implement charitable giving, we also studied anonymous giving as an orientation. There are various degrees of anonymity. At one extreme, an intermediary provides a gift so that the donor is not known to anyone; at the other extreme is the case where the donor is known to the development office and charity administrators but no name is credited with the gift in published donor lists. In the course of our research work, we identified aspects of the case for and the case against anonymous giving as enunciated by respondents.

By shielding the recipient from the name and other characteristics of the donor, anonymous giving has the potential to be humane but (and this is surprising) can also end up being manipulative and domineering. Concealment of a donor’s identity potentially “destabilizes” the relationship of mutual friendship, accentuating any trajectories toward friendliness or unfriendliness of a contribution. The very same reality—namely, concealment of a donor’s identity—has the potential to both heighten and curtail the disproportionate influence of donors when philanthropy is donor led.

Anonymous giving offers donors the opportunity to be philanthropic disciples or demigods in new and telling ways. This is illustrated by the long-running popular television program The Millionaire, which aired on Wednesday nights from 1955 to 1960. The 205 episodes of The Millionaire followed a stock dramatic formula. Each program began with the billionaire, John Beresford Tipton, sending his secretary to the door of an unsuspecting beneficiary with a tax-free cashier’s check for $1 million. The emissary was not authorized to reveal the donor’s name or background and prohibited the recipients from discussing how they came into their windfall. Naturally, the gift turned out to be a boon for some and the ruin of others. Ironically, the show was about the benefactor as much as it about the beneficiary. While the consequences for the recipient unfolded, an insightful viewer could also judge the donor’s balance sheet of care and manipulation by keeping tabs on his dramatic and consequential interventions in the lives of others.

The same anonymity that creates potential positive and negative outcomes in the philanthropy of John Beresford Tipton also occurs in the real-life anonymous giving of New Yorkers Karl and Marta Stempke. The Stempke’s report that the hallmark of their anonymous giving is being able to view the handiwork of their beneficence behind what turns out to be a one-way mirror. The secrecy of their gifts, says Karl Stempke, a Columbia University ophthalmologist, enables them to thoroughly enjoy being able to see things happen that we are responsible for, without anybody knowing it...and without the embarrassment or the dissatisfaction that would come from having them be grateful to you. At Christmas time, for example, we’ve provided funds for families without their knowing where it came from, and we’ve done it through charities so that their letters of thanks for what they did with it go back to the charity and we aren’t known at all in this.

Marta goes on to explain how she and Karl underwrote a struggling artist:

There is a young fellow...who we know in San Francisco who’s a talented painter. And we learned that he was having a hard time making ends meet. He has a wife and two children. We arranged through the foundation to make a gift to the University of San Francisco, and they are offering him an opportunity to do a mural for a large sum of money. We can’t wait to see the life that we know this fellow
Despite their wealth, the Stempeks have chosen to live in a working-class neighborhood and to designate their living and dining rooms as office spaces. My encounter with them in their home offered a portrait of two ethically consistent, humble activists who are profoundly moral in their motivations, work, and philanthropy. Yet it is important to examine how, from their concealed seat of anonymity, they have the potential to construct edifices of both care and dominion. Even for these good people, anonymity can offer a valuable way to both meet the true needs of beneficiaries and be a form of social engineering in the name of knowing what is good for someone else. It would not be bothersome or foreign to the Stempeks to hear me ask whether their anonymous giving is a higher form of friendship or a form of manipulation.

It is easy to note several positive consequences in the anonymous giving of the Stempeks and others we studied. In addressing their rationale for anonymous giving, the Stempeks enunciate two positive consequences of concealing their identity. The first is that they do not want their philanthropy to create a relationship of superordinate to subordinate. The Stempeks “can’t bear” to feel superior by making others feel grateful to them. As Marta, founder of the Women’s Lives organization in New York says, “I give you something, and you say thank you. You’re indebted to me. I can’t bear that relationship. That is a dreadful relationship to me; I don’t want to be superior to you.”

The second conviction, says Marta, referring to her community work with women in poverty, is that “I want to work with these people as equals.” “I don’t want them to think of me as some rich person who is going to come to their rescue and give them money so they can feel grateful to me. I feel that I’m bestowing my funds on them. I don’t want that because I want to be friends; I want to be equals; I want to be just at their level.” Keeping her contributions secret also affects her relationship with the clients who come to Women’s Lives for help. If the clients, who participate with her in a seven-week, three-hour-a-day support group, knew her status as a key donor, it would totally destroy her counseling relationship with them. Karl, too, talks of steps to ensure that the unintended consequences of status and privilege do not tarnish the experience of those he helps. He provides minority scholarships for students attending the medical school at which he teaches through anonymous donations in order to keep the recipients from feeling undue deference when they run into him, enroll in his courses, or work with him in clinical settings.

Finally, from the Stempeks’ point of view, anonymity makes them more humble and richer human beings and lends their recipients a nobler spirit. In addition to avoiding the corrupting lures of self-aggrandizement, anonymity can serve the instrumental purpose of allowing recipients to focus on using the gift effectively rather than looking back over their shoulder at a donor they might have to cultivate.

Without more knowledge, I cannot say whether the anonymous giving of the Stempeks and others breeds negative consequences. But when it does, several paths make it “unfriendly.” First, the anonymity that the Stempeks and others enlist to preserve them from elitism provides a hidden vantage point that allows donors to avoid some of the countervailing pressures of accountability that exist when the funder is as socially exposed as the recipient. Anonymity transposes philanthropy into a nonreciprocal relation in which donors can observe and know their recipients but are themselves shielded from being observed, known, and held accountable.

Second, the element of secrecy may lead to machinations in a manner akin to the mischievous antics of the demigods in Greek and Roman mythology. Leaving their heavenly realm and disguised in human form, these gods enter the world from the outside to shape the fortunes of mortals. The wealthy, as exemplified by the anonymous TV billionaire, the Stempeks, and others, enjoy a similar capacity not only to make a difference in the lives of others but also to make this difference in the way they want and without preparing the recipient for the largesse or receiving input. When shrouded in the cloak of anonymity, donors can readily fall into the temptation of offering help in a way that assuages guilt and grants a sense of efficaciousness without meeting the needs of recipients in a more profound way. For with anonymity comes at least a partial curb on the power of recipients to shape the nature of a gift and the relationships surrounding it.

A third negative consequence of anonymous giving is that it can curtail direct involvement of the donor in intercessional strategies of philanthropy, such as the business-oriented approaches I delineated previously. As entrepreneur and philanthropist Joan Halpern suggests, anonymous giving reduces the intensity of involvement. For her, anonymity would interfere with her ability to carry out hands-on innovation.

In the end, anonymous giving remains spiritually ambivalent. Anonymous giving can introduce reverence for the feelings and needs of the recipient and can provide a unique spiritual opportunity for the giver. “We love being Santa Claus,” says Marta Stempek, referring to her and Karl’s desire to release recipients from obligations of gratitude. There is something to that. As a friend once remarked, “Santa is the only person who gives you a gift whom you do not have to thank all year.” Although not directly accountable to their recipients, the Stempeks hold themselves accountable to a strong egalitarian ethic. Where such normative touchstones are in place, anonymity need not inevitably become an invitation to mischief.

Still, we know that even Santa can fail to confer appropriate gifts. The lack of reciprocity between giver and recipient removes a number of the reciprocal forces that might otherwise forge a better match between gift and need, especially because philanthropy is led by supply. Since the quality of the gift relationship depends so much on the anonymous giver’s insight and sensitivity, it

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is imperative that such donors remain mindful of the range of potentially negative consequences. Being available to help the recipient to prepare for, receive, and work well with the gift; being accountable for what one sets in motion; and being available for direct feedback about how the gift could be better directed are all more difficult for the anonymous donor who wishes to do more than let consequences emerge without counsel.

Conclusion: Opportunity for Self and Others

Generating positive consequences for both self and others is the primary outcome when wealth is used wisely in philanthropy. When used unwisely, it creates an opportunity to be domineering, incompetent, and negligent and can set in motion negative consequences in other ways. This is true for the most actively engaged forms of agent-animated philanthropy as well as for philanthropy that conceals the identity of the donor and curtails a full reciprocal relationship between donor and recipient. I have indicated the noble end of philanthropy to be care or friendship and have discussed philanthropy’s supply-or donor-led characteristic and the relationship in various approaches to philanthropy between forces that can bring blessings and curses. Philanthropy is a voluntary relationship of care that requires for its existence and its quality a sensitivity of practical wisdom; the donor must not only want to enter into philanthropy but want to do so in a way that meets the true needs of the recipients. For philanthropy to be a social relation of care, there must be the capacity to meet the needs of others, the moral sensitivity to be aware of such needs, the character to want to do so, and the wisdom to treat others in the way they need to be treated. Today’s philanthropists must be vigilant lest they act with all the goodwill of the unfortunate dervish whose philanthropic mission lacked the necessary wisdom to get right the consequences from friendship and care.

Notes

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1. Twelve strategies fall under four rubrics:

   Personal Engagement Strategies: donors and beneficiaries have direct personal contact and exchange information with priority given to recipient needs:
   1. Consumption: donors materially benefit from the organizations to which they contribute
   2. Empowerment: donors seek simultaneously to enhance their own sense of self-empowerment and to give some active organizational control to beneficiaries
   3. Adoption: donors attend personally to recipient needs in an ongoing and multifaceted relationship

   Mediated Engagement Strategies: contact between donors and recipients is mediated by organizations or other individuals though knowledge and concern for recipient needs may be high:
   1. Contributory: donor gives to a cause with no direct contact with recipient
   2. Brokering: donors solicit other key donors in their own network
   3. Catalytic: organizers donate time to mobilize a large number of other donors in a mass appeal

   Donor-Oriented Strategies: donors are governed and mobilized by their own circumstances rather than by those of recipients:
   1. Exchange: giving propelled by mutual obligation within a network of donors
   2. Pro Bono: giving based on obligations associated with job expectations

   Business Strategies: donors focus on using or improving the organizational resources of philanthropy:
   1. Managerial: efforts focused on improving organizational effectiveness of philanthropic groups
   2. Investment: philanthropy as raising and applying economic and human capital to achieve discernible outcomes
   3. Entrepreneurial: hands-on efforts to apply innovative approaches to fulfilling needs

2. All names and identifying information of the respondents here and throughout the text have been changed to preserve the anonymity of respondents and the institutions with which they are associated.

3. This section on anonymous philanthropy is based on Schervish 1994.

References


