



Charity, Philanthropy, and Civility in American History

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Professional historians address the dominant issues and theories offered to explain the history of American philanthropy and its role in American society. These essays develop and enlighten major themes, oftentimes contesting each other in the process. The overarching premise is that philanthropic activity in America has its roots in the desires of individuals to impose their visions of societal ideals, or conceptions of truth, upon their society. To do so, they organize in groups that frequently define themselves and their group's role in society.

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Editorial Review

Review

"By demonstrating that philanthropic activities have often involved efforts by both individuals and groups to create a society modeled on their own values and vision, the contributors have provided a provocative analysis that will transform the very meaning of philanthropy. This is a major contribution to both American history and the history of philanthropy. Its authors also demonstrate that philanthropic activities--however valuable--cannot substitute for collective public action to deal with major social problems." Gerald N. Grob, Henry E. Sigerist Professor of the History of Medicine Emeritus, Rutgers University

"Students of the history of charity and philanthropy have been waiting a long time for a successor to Robert Bremner's classic survey of the field. They need wait no longer, since this solid collection of essays provides a cogent, up-to-date, and teachable text. The Friedman and McGarvie volume is an important indication that the history of philanthropy has come of age as a field of study." Stanley N. Katz, Professor of the Woodrow Wilson School and Director of the Center for Arts and Cultural Policy Studies, Princeton University

"Charity, Philanthropy, and Civility in American History is a valuable scholarly corrective to earlier mythical and exclusionary views of American philanthropy, and an affirmation of more critical perspectives. Indeed, this book may be the single most important work to come out of the new philanthropic studies. It should be read by researchers, policymakers, and thoughtful practitioners alike." Susan A. Ostrander, Professor of Sociology, Tufts University

"Charity, Philanthropy, and Civility in American History will be soon acclaimed as one of the most important works ever published on a subject too long neglected. An inspired introduction by Lawrence J. Friedman prepares both scholar and general reader for the very accessible but thoroughly penetrating essays on a uniquely American phenomenon organized giving for amazingly diverse objectives, social, cultural, and sometimes political in nature. This anthology deserves a wide and appreciative readership because for over two centuries institutional charity has shaped national destiny in surprising and largely salutary ways." Bertram Wyatt-Brown, Richard J. Milbauer Professor of United States History at the University of Florida

"[This book] should certainly inspire future historians to tackle the topic and, perhaps more important, it will provide practitioners and nonhistorians with a deeper understanding of the roots of American philanthropy." Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly

"Highly recommended." Choice

About the Author

Lawrence J. Friedman is Professor of History and Philanthropic Studies at Indiana University. His publications include *Identity's Architect: A Biography of Erik Erikson* (1999) and *Menninger: The Family and the Clinic* (1990).

Mark D. McGarvie is the Golieb Fellow in Legal History at the New York University School of Law. He has published in the *Journal of College and University Law*, *Indiana Magazine of History*, and *Wisconsin Bar Bulletin*.

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