



Inside American Philanthropy: The Dramas of Donorship

Waldemar A. Nielsen

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This penetrating analysis of the inner workings of American philanthropic foundations focuses on the crucial role played by the men and women who create them. Philanthropy's pre-eminent expert and critic, Waldemar Nielsen probes deeply into the intensely personal factors that are involved in donors' decisions.

Giving practical advice for would-be founders and directors, Nielsen drives home his argument with an unusual series of case studies. Triumphs and tragedies are equally instructive in his well-chosen philanthropic parables.

This book comes at a pivotal point in American philanthropy when there are 35,000 active American foundations with combined assets of \$175 billion. Pointing to the massive individual wealth accumulation that occurred during the 1980s (there are now 64 American billionaires and 210,000 deca-millionaires), Nielsen predicts "the number, assets, and grant making of American foundations will double by the first decade of the new century."

Always providing specific examples, Nielsen details the pitfalls of traditional family foundations, the attractions of community foundations, the successes of women in philanthropy, and the achievements of both special- and general-interest foundations. As our troubled society faces cutbacks in government programs, *Inside American Philanthropy* will be a revelation for every citizen interested in our powerful and little-understood nonprofit institutions.

This book is essential reading for established donors and potential foundation creators, as well as legal and financial advisors working for wealthy families and foundations and fund-raisers for museums, churches, colleges, and other nonprofit organizations.

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