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Octobre 2019 October

PHILANTHROPIE ET DÉMOCRATIE

L'activité philanthropique en contexte démocratique est chose délicate. Tandis que la démocratie se définit comme un régime politique où le pouvoir est l'affaire des citoyens et citoyennes, la philanthropie correspond, pour sa part, à une forme d'intervention sociale où les individus utilisent leurs ressources personnelles pour faire progresser les causes qu'ils choisissent. Cela signifie que les philanthropes – les grands comme les petits – agissent sur des enjeux d'intérêt général à partir de choix personnels, lesquels ne sont pas nécessairement validés par des mécanismes de délibération. Prend alors forme une tension, entre, d'un côté, l'idéal démocratique fondé sur la prise de décision par le plus grand nombre de façon consensualiste, idéal à lequel aspire toute société démocratique, et, de l'autre côté, la liberté qu'ont les individus d'utiliser leurs ressources financières ou autres pour faire agir au nom du bien commun. Naturellement, cette tension est d'autant plus forte en contexte de concentration de la richesse où la majeure partie des ressources financières du secteur philanthropique est contrôlée par un petit nombre de fondations et que le poids des grands donateurs gagne en importance sur le marché du don. À moins que ne soit attaquée de front la question des inégalités sociales, sera inmanquablement présente et légitime la crainte que la philanthropie des grands donateurs entraîne des dérapages ploutocratiques. De plus, la croissance des besoins exprimés par la population pour des services publiques ou pour des interventions régulatrices de l'État étant limitées par les capacités effectives d'agir de ce dernier, une pression

PHILANTHROPY AND DEMOCRACY

Philanthropic activity within a democratic context is a sensitive issue. While democracy defines itself as a political regime in which power stems from citizens, philanthropy, in contrast, corresponds to a form of social intervention in which individuals use their personal resources to help advance the causes of their choice. This means that philanthropists - big and small - act on questions of public interest from a position of personal choice, the latter not necessarily being validated by deliberation. A tension is thus formed between, on the one hand, the democratic ideal founded on decisions being made by majority consensus, an ideal to which all democratic societies aspire to, and, on the other hand, the individual freedom for one to use their financial, or other, resources for the common good. Naturally, this tension is greater in a context of resource concentration, where a small number of foundations controls the majority of the philanthropic sector's financial resources and the influence of big donors is gaining ground on the donation market. Unless the issue of social inequalities is to be addressed with full force, the fear that big-donor philanthropy will bring about plutocratic tendencies will remain legitimate and present. Also, the increase in the population's demands for public services or for regulatory interventions by the State are limited by the latter's capacity of action, causing big donors and their foundations to feel the pressure to intervene in the State's place. How are we to separate the State's responsibility from that of philanthropy regarding

s'exerce sur les grands donateurs et leurs fondations à l'effet d'intervenir à la place de l'État. Comment alors départager ce qui relève des responsabilités de l'État et de la philanthropie à l'égard de la chose publique. Les références bibliographiques présentées dans ce bulletin nous aident à mieux comprendre les défis qui caractérisent le rapport de la philanthropie à la démocratie.

Bonne lecture !

public affairs? The references presented in this newsletter aim at shedding light on the challenges that define the connection between philanthropy and democracy.

Enjoy your reading

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ÉTAT-PROVIDENCE ET PHILANTHROPIE : DES FRONTIÈRES MOUVANTES

WELFARE STATE AND PHILANTHROPY: SHIFTING BORDERS



Élisa Chelle (2017). « La philanthropie aux États-Unis et en France », *Presses Universitaires de France*, Vol. 8, Num. 4, pp. 395-408.

Résumé :

La philanthropie est une pratique sociale et politique née en Europe et développée aux États-Unis. L'État français a longtemps contenu ces corps intermédiaires dont les intérêts particuliers étaient entourés de suspicion en ce qu'ils concurrençaient l'administration centrale sur le terrain de la production de l'intérêt général. La France et les États-Unis sont traditionnellement opposés quant à la forme de l'État, la religion dominante et la conception de la démocratie. Ce bilan critique se propose d'éclairer ces dynamiques sociopolitiques par la nuance. Il montre qu'en France comme aux États-Unis, la philanthropie est née d'une dissension politico-religieuse. Les transformations profondes de ces sociétés au XIXe siècle appellent à la formation d'une économie politique. Cette réponse morale et scientifique à l'urbanisation est étayée par les organisations philanthropiques aux États-Unis. En France, le pouvoir central capte cette formulation en contrôlant les fondations plus qu'en les annihilant. Si la philanthropie apparaît aux États-Unis comme une véritable industrie démocratique, c'est qu'elle matérialise un engagement civique relativement dissocié de la politique. La France quant à elle, en confondant civil et politique, en vient à considérer historiquement les élites philanthropiques non démocratiques. Un refus progressivement levé depuis une trentaine d'années, et plus récemment avec l'entrée des fondations dans les financements publics.



Bruce R. Sievers (2010). « Philanthropy's Role in Liberal Democracy », *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy*, Vol. 24, No. 4 (2010), pp. 380-398.

Lien Web – Web Link :

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5325/jspecphil.24.4.0380>

Summary :

Here is a contemporary social paradox: Modern liberal democracy rests upon a platform of a pluralistic civil society. Philanthropy, by providing vital resources, is an essential feature of that civil society. Yet philanthropy also plays an ambiguous role in democracy. Therefore philanthropy potentially both supports and detracts from democracy. This essay explores the nature of this paradox and its implications for the practice of contemporary philanthropy.



Élisa Chelle (2017). « La philanthropie aux États-Unis et en France », *Presses Universitaires de France*, Vol. 8, Num. 4, pp. 395-408.

Lien Web – Web Link :

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Peter Dobkin Hall (2013). « Nonprofit Sector and the Democratic Dilemma », *Daedalus*, Volume 142, Issue 2, pp. 139 à 158.

Lien Web – Web Link :

<https://www.hks.harvard.edu/files/phall/PDH-Daedalus.pdf>

Summary :

The central dilemma of American democracy is the tension between “voice” and “equality”: between the Constitution's unconditional guarantees of citizens' expressive, associational, and property rights and the legal and political equality that is the foundation of majoritarian decision-making. Philanthropy and nonprofit organizations – which enable citizens to give money and time to support causes in which they believe – have posed this dilemma with unusual force, allowing moneyed minorities to oppose and sometimes overwhelm the popular will. In the past, these assertions of private power have inevitably aroused popular opposition producing legislative and regulatory outcomes that have maintained a balance between voice and equality. Today, with unprecedented accumulations of wealth and legal changes permitting the unrestricted use of wealth in politics, the unchallenged exercise of private power through philanthropy and the nonprofit sector poses grave threats to the democratic process.



Barry D. Karl et Stanley N. Katz. (1981). « The American Private Philanthropic Foundation and the Public Sphere 1890-1930 », *Minerva*, vol. 19, no 2, pp. 236-270.

Lien Web – Web Link :

<https://scholar.princeton.edu/sites/default/files/snkatz/files/minerva.pdf>

Excerpt – Extrait :

« By the last decade of the nineteenth century, the traditional institutions and goals of American charitable action no longer sufficed to achieve the aims and satisfy the ambitions of an emerging philanthropic class, whose values changed from "charity" to "philanthropy". The philanthropists as a group were newly minted captains of industry, self-made men riding the crest of America's surge to industrial prosperity in the last third of the nineteenth century. They were not well assimilated into the institutions and patterns of élite charitable activity, although they were mostly committed to sectarian religious traditions. And they were making money faster than they could give it away. »



Olivier Zunz. *La Philanthropie en Amérique. Argent privé, affaires d'État*, Fayard, 2012, 450 pages.

Compte-rendu de l'ouvrage
par Sylvain Lefèvre :

<http://sociologie.revues.org/1982#text>

Résumé :

Pour des Français, entendre Warren Buffett ou Bill Gates appeler les plus grandes fortunes mondiales à suivre leur exemple en donnant la majeure partie de leurs richesses à des œuvres caritatives a de quoi étonner. Pourtant, cet appel s'inscrit dans une tradition séculaire de la vie politique américaine : la philanthropie. Depuis le début du XXe siècle, dans le sillage des Rockefeller, Carnegie et autres Ford, la réussite outre-Atlantique s'accompagne d'un impératif philanthropique. Il ne s'agit pas seulement de donner à des « bonnes œuvres », mais de participer à des investissements dans le cadre d'actions politiques d'envergure. Si l'objectif affiché par les généreux mécènes est toujours la recherche du bien commun, leurs motivations et l'affectation de leurs dons varient cependant en fonction de leurs valeurs et de leurs engagements. Au-delà des riches magnats de l'industrie, ce sont surtout des millions d'Américains qui, chacun selon ses moyens, se sont engagés depuis plus d'un siècle dans la philanthropie, permettant de parler à partir des années 1950 d'un « don de masse ». Cet afflux d'argent est tel qu'il a largement façonné la politique culturelle et sociale des États-Unis, ainsi qu'une grande partie de leur recherche – autant de champs d'action qui, en Europe, relèvent de l'intervention étatique.

Avec une grande clarté et un vrai sens du récit, Olivier Zunz nous raconte ici les liens uniques qui unissent l'argent privé et les affaires d'État, cette tradition singulière qui a fait l'histoire des États-Unis. Olivier Zunz est professeur d'histoire des États-Unis à l'université de Virginie. Il a notamment publié *Le Siècle américain* (Fayard, 2000).



Theo N.M. Schuyt (2010). « Philanthropy in European welfare states: a challenging promise? », *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, Vol. 7, Issue 4, pp. 774–789.

Lien Web – Web Link :

[https://journals.sagepub.com/
doi/10.1177/00208523103812
18](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0020852310381218)

Summary :

Philanthropy is growing rapidly in Europe and in most of the countries in the industrialized world. A well-known phenomenon from history, philanthropy has made a comeback in recent years and is finding new form and meaning in an emerging 'civil society'. But how do we define this new 'modern' philanthropy? Does it differ from concepts such as 'charity' and the 'third sector'? Has it already earned a place at the table of EC policymakers? Is this 'old' but 'new' phenomenon awakening scholarly interest? These questions are discussed in this article. Philanthropy is defined by applying theoretical insights on the concept of philanthropy. Scholarly interest is measured by using the attention paid to philanthropy in leading English-language political science journals between 2000 and 2008 as a yardstick. The results show that though philanthropy is a distinct concept, it receives very little scholarly attention in these journals. The article concludes by arguing that the growth of philanthropy today offers a promising challenge for policymakers in welfare states provided that 'private actions for the public good' can be incorporated in the welfare-state paradigm.

LA GRANDE PHILANTHROPIE, UN FACTEUR D'ÉROSION DÉMOCRATIQUE

BIG PHILANTHROPY, A FACTOR IN DEMOCRATIC EROSION



Joanne Barkan^[L]^[SER] (2013). « Plutocrats at Work: How Big Philanthropy Undermines Democracy^[L]^[SER] », *Social Research*, Vol. 80, No. 2, pp. 635-652.

Lien Web – Web Link :

<https://www.dissentmagazine.org/article/plutocrats-at-work-how-big-philanthropy-undermines-democracy>

Excerpt – Extrait :

« From the start, the mega-foundations provoked hostility across the political spectrum. To their many detractors, they looked like centers of plutocratic power that threatened democratic governance. Setting up do-good corporations, critics said, was merely a ploy to secure the wealth and clean up the reputations of business moguls who amassed fortunes during the Gilded Age. »



Rob Reich (2019). « Philanthropy in the Service of Democracy ». *Stanford Social Innovation Review*.

Lien Web – Web Link :

https://ssir.org/articles/entry/philanthropy_in_the_service_of_democracy

Excerpt – Extrait :

« The policies that structure American philanthropy are broken. There's a long list of reasons why this is so. Donor-advised funds are spreading like kudzu, increasingly dominating the list of most popular charitable causes and, in the process, warehousing increasing sums of philanthropic wealth while donors take immediate advantage of tax benefits for giving. President Donald Trump's 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act significantly diminished the incentive for giving by capping total itemized deductions and raising the standard deduction. Numerous studies predict a decrease in charitable giving in 2018. And our wealthiest donors are making philanthropy into a political weapon, funneling dark money through social welfare organizations or 501(c)(4)s and, like Mark Zuckerberg, Pierre Omidyar, and Laurene Powell Jobs, setting up limited liability companies (LLCs) at least partly in order to avoid the transparency requirements that attach to foundations. »



Rob Reich. *Just Giving. Why Philanthropy is Failing Democracy and How it Can do Better*. Princeton University Press : New Jersey, 2018, 239 pages.

Book review by Kristen Pue,
PhiLab :

https://philab.uqam.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/philab-Just-Giving_compressed.pdf

Summary – Résumé :

Is philanthropy, by its very nature, a threat to today's democracy? Though we may laud wealthy individuals who give away their money for society's benefit, *Just Giving* shows how such generosity not only isn't the unassailable good we think it to be but might also undermine democratic values and set back aspirations of justice. Big philanthropy is often an exercise of power, the conversion of private assets into public influence. And it is a form of power that is largely unaccountable, often perpetual, and lavishly tax-advantaged. The affluent—and their foundations—reap vast benefits even as they influence policy without accountability. And small philanthropy, or ordinary charitable giving, can be problematic as well. Charity, it turns out, does surprisingly little to provide for those in need and sometimes worsens inequality.

These outcomes are shaped by the policies that define and structure philanthropy. When, how much, and to whom people give is influenced by laws governing everything from the creation of foundations and nonprofits to generous tax exemptions for donations of money and property. Rob Reich asks: What attitude and what policies should democracies have concerning individuals who give money away for public purposes? Philanthropy currently fails democracy in many ways, but Reich argues that it can be redeemed. Differentiating between individual philanthropy and private foundations, the aims of mass giving should be the decentralization of power in the production of public goods, such as the arts, education, and science. For foundations, the goal should be what Reich terms "discovery," or long-time-horizon innovations that enhance democratic experimentalism. Philanthropy, when properly structured, can play a crucial role in supporting a strong liberal democracy.

Just Giving investigates the ethical and political dimensions of philanthropy and considers how giving might better support democratic values and promote justice.



Jean-Michel Servet (2012). « Les sociétés civiles entre risques ploutocratiques de la philanthropie et alternatives solidaires : une lecture polanyienne », *Mondes en développement*, N°159, pp. 89-104.

Lien Web – Web Link :

<http://www.cairn.info/revue-mondes-en-developpement-2012-3-page-89.htm>

Résumé :

Tant dans les pays du Nord que dans ceux du Sud, un compromis entre une logique néo-libérale anti-étatiste et certains intérêts des organisations non gouvernementales a marqué la construction des sociétés civiles. Il s'est réalisé notamment à travers le social business soutenu par de grandes entreprises. En mobilisant le concept polanyien de principe d'intégration économique, l'analyse a pour ambition de comprendre les limites de ce nouveau modèle de philanthropie et ce qui le différencie de l'économie solidaire.

LA PHILANTHROPIE COMME PARTICIPATION CITOYENNE

PHILANTHROPY AS CITIZEN PARTICIPATION



Angela M. Eikenberry (2007). « Philanthropy, Voluntary Association, and Governance Beyond the State. *Giving Circles and Challenges for Democracy* », *Sage Journals*, Vol 39, Issue 7, pp. 857 à 882.

Lien Web – Web Link :

<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0095399707306189>

Summary :

There has been little discussion about the democratic impacts of new roles and expectations put on private philanthropy and voluntarism in an era of governance beyond the state. This article explores tensions philanthropic voluntary associations face in balancing their internal democratic effects of enhancing civic education and participation of members on the one hand with meeting needs and solving problems in the community on the other. This is brought into focus through an analysis of giving circles, groups that entail individuals pooling resources and then deciding together how and where to give these away. Giving circles highlight the trade-off between the grassroots independence and noncoercive collaborative action that enables voluntary associations to contribute to democratic governance and the ability for these institutions to adequately and comprehensively address community problems; a trade-off that becomes important if one is concerned with serving the public good in an era of government cutbacks and privatization.



Angela M. Eikenberry (2009). « Refusing the Market: A Democratic Discourse for Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations », *Sage Journals*, Vol 38, Issue 4, pp. 582-596.

Lien Web – Web Link :

<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0899764009333686>

Extrait – Excerpt :

This article extends critical and normative theorizing about the assumptions and implications of marketization for nonprofit and voluntary organizations and suggests an alternative discourse. It describes reasons for the increasing marketization of nonprofit and voluntary organizations and what the literature has shown to be problematic about marketization. It argues that one way to resist colonization by the market is for academics and practitioners of voluntary and nonprofit organizations to create and apply a democratic counterdiscourse.



Steven Teles, Heather Hurlburt et Mark Schmitt (2014). « Philanthropy in a time of polarization », *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, pp. 44 à 49.

Lien Web – Web Link :

https://ssir.org/articles/entry/philanthropy_in_a_time_of_polarization

Summary – Résumé :

The days when major foundations could remain above the partisan fray, even as they were deeply engaged in advocating changes in public policy, are all but gone. The polarization of the US political scene is imposing new limits on how foundations can operate in that sphere. But it's also revealing new ways in which they can influence the policy process.



Bruce R. Sievers. *Civil Society, Philanthropy, and the Fate of the Commons*. Tufts University Press: Medford, 2010, 205 pages.

Lien Web – Web Link :

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/289166084_Civil_society_philanthropy_and_the_fate_of_the_commons

Summary – Résumé :

Among the greatest challenges facing humanity in the twenty-first century is that of sustaining a healthy civil society, which depends upon managing the tension between individual and collective interests. Bruce R. Sievers explores this issue by investigating ways to balance the public and private sides of modern life in a manner that allows realization of the ideal of individual freedom and, at the same time, makes possible the effective pursuit of the common good. He traces the development of civil society from the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic and the eighteenth-century Scottish Enlightenment, analyzes its legacy for modern political life, and explores how historical trends in the formation of civil society and philanthropy aid or impede our achievement of public goods in the modern era.



Simon Stacey and Sada Aksartova (2001). « The Foundations of Democracy: U.S. Foundation Support for Civil Society in South Africa, 1988–96 », *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, Vol. 12, pp. 277-296.

Lien Web – Web Link :

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/27927746>

Summary :

This paper analyzes the grantmaking to South African civil society of six major U.S. foundations between 1988 and 1996. It answers four related questions: (1) How did these foundations understand civil society, and did they think there was a link between it and democracy? (2) How significant was their support for civil society from 1988 to 1996? (3) How did South Africa's democratization affect their grantmaking patterns? (4) Did the foundations favor professionalized NGOs over grassroots and decentralized organizations, and if so, was this the right approach? The empirical analysis of the South African case contributes to the general debate about the link between civil society and democracy, and the role of funders in supporting both.



Makoto Imada. « Civil Society in Japan : Democracy, Voluntary Action, and Philanthropy ». Dans : Henk Vinken, Yuko Nishimura, Bruce L. J. White et Masayuki Deguchi (éditeurs). *Civic Engagement in Contemporary Japan*. Springer. pp. 21 - 40.

Lien Web – Web Link :

https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-1-4419-1504-7_2

Résumé – Summary :

This chapter describes civil society in Japan: its historical contexts, its present state, and the challenges it faces in the twenty-first century. Civil society is translated as “shimin shakai” in Japanese. Shimin means citizen and shakai means society. Shimin is a rather confusing concept because shimin refers primarily to the resident of a city. Of course, when we talk about shimin shakai or civil society, shimin does not mean resident of a city. In this chapter, I define the term “shimin” or citizen as “any people who participate in civic engagement.” Civic engagement here means participation in public life. I use the term civil society to express the structure or system of society which allows any person to become civilly engaged.



Produit par David Grant-Poitras,
Assistant de recherche, PhiLab

Faites-nous parvenir vos suggestions de références sur la philanthropie et la démocratie. Écrivez-nous au philab@uqam.ca et il nous fera grand plaisir de les ajouter au bulletin.

De plus, vous pouvez nous suivre via notre site internet www.philab.uqam.ca, sur Twitter [@PhiLabMTL](https://twitter.com/PhiLabMTL) ou même en vous abonnant à notre Infolettre.

On vous revoit le mois prochain !

Produced by David Grant-Poitras,
Research assistant, PhiLab

Send us your suggestions of references about philanthropy and democracy. Write to us at philab@uqam.ca and it would be our pleasure to add them to the newsletter.

You can also follow us on our Web site www.philab.uqam.ca, on Twitter [@PhiLabMTL](https://twitter.com/PhiLabMTL) or even by subscribing to our Newsletter.

See you next month !