

Introduction

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Philanthropy: Voluntary Action for the Public Good

Part I of this book, "Major Challenges to Philanthropy," was written in one sustained burst during August of 1984. When I agreed in February 1986 to convert it into a "real book," it was my hope to make use of the other writing that was so much a part of my life at Exxon Education Foundation. Much of that writing was done in preparation for speeches and lectures, and it is from a selection of those that these essays and reflections are drawn.

The selection process attempts to draw from these pieces aspects of the philanthropic tradition that are inadequately presented in Part I. The pieces vary greatly in length, but collectively they are intended to convey again the scope, variety, and complexity of American philanthropy in action.

The essay by Virginia A. Hodgkinson of Independent Sector concisely reports on the rapid expansion of scholarly and applied research in philanthropy, as well as on some of the encouraging new developments in philanthropic education.