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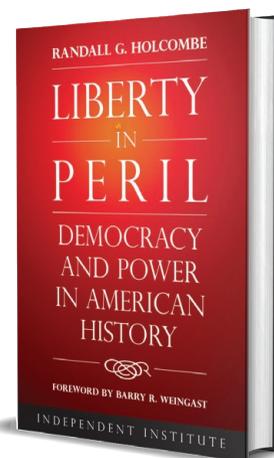
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From Hobbes to Hayek

Perspectives on Civil Society and Philanthropy

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JACQUELINE PFEFFER MERRILL

Charity and philanthropy—private citizens’ acts to do good for others—stand outside the realm of government. Charity and philanthropy seem to be quintessentially private; nevertheless, governing authorities are often keenly alert to citizens’ charitable and philanthropic activities. Philanthropy is broadly essential to a robust civil society. On the one hand, charity and philanthropy can fill needs that might otherwise fall to the government and thus clear the field for government to provide other public goods. On the other hand, philanthropists and nonprofit entities can also establish and foster rival sources of public influence and authority to government. Philanthropists can fund scientific and policy initiatives that support or undercut the current government’s policy preferences. Philanthropy and charity may be acts of private citizens, but they are acts with public and therefore potentially political significance.

No wonder, then, that governments are alert to citizens’ philanthropic and charitable activities. Across the ages, political philosophers and others have debated whether there should be limits to individual citizens’ freedom to be philanthropists and to dispense charity or whether individuals should have unlimited freedom in this area. Broadly speaking, there are three predominant positions today about the proper relations between government and philanthropists. First, there is an argument for

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constraint, which holds that because citizens have established government as the legitimate, final authority to represent the commonweal, governments may properly constrain and even limit charity and philanthropy rather than allowing philanthropists unchecked freedom to establish rival loci of power. Second, there is an argument for *protection* of private philanthropy, which holds that because citizens have rights, especially private-property rights, they should be free to exercise them so long as they do not impinge on others' rights. On this view, government should protect philanthropy and charity as activities bound up with individuals' property rights. The third position, one of *encouraging* philanthropy, holds that because the health of pluralistic liberal democracies requires the flourishing of communities and associations, with special allowance for those that represent minority communities and unpopular opinions, governments should actively promote philanthropy as essential to sustaining such substate communities and minority groups for the sake of pluralist democracy.

In the past decade in the United States, these three positions have been in the backdrop of heated debates about donor privacy, donor-funded initiatives, and limits to the charitable deduction in the U.S. Tax Code. Although these debates may seem only the flavor du jour of political debate, they have much deeper origins in modern understandings of the individual citizen's relationship to the modern state. By understanding the deeper origins of these various positions, we are better able to understand what is at stake in these contemporary debates.

The first of these positions is rooted in the thought of philosophers such as Immanuel Kant and Jean-Jacques Rousseau and finds powerful contemporary expression in the thought of John Rawls and his followers. The second is rooted in the thought of John Locke, with recent development by theorists such as Robert Nozick and Rose and Milton Friedman. The third is rooted in the thought of Edmund Burke and Alexis de Tocqueville, with contemporary articulation in the writings of F. A. Hayek, Yuval Levin, William Schambra, and others. The scope allowed to private philanthropy and charity tells much about the total scope that is allowed for individual freedom in a political community. I take up each of these positions in turn.

Before I examine them, however, it is worth noting that many political philosophers remind us that government and the rule of law create the possibility to build up wealth, without which there would be no charity or philanthropy. As Thomas Hobbes wrote in *Leviathan*, without government

there is no place for Industry; because the fruit thereof is uncertain: and consequently no Culture of the Earth; no Navigation, nor use of commodities that may be imported by Sea; no commodious Building; no Instruments of moving, and removing such things as require much force; no Knowledge of the face of the Earth; no account of Time; no Arts; no Letters; no Society; and which is worst of all, continuall feare, and danger of violent death; And the life of man, solitary, poore, nasty, brutish, and short. ([1651] 1968, I.13, 186)

With his view of human nature as naturally solitary and prone to distrust, Hobbes thought that government should be sure to provide for citizens' basic needs:

“Whereas many men, by accident unavoidable, become unable to maintain themselves by their labour; they ought not to be left to the Charity of private persons; but to be provided for, (as far-forth as the necessities of Nature require,) by the Lawes of the Common-wealth. For as it is Uncharitableness in any man, to neglect the impotent; so it is in the Sovereign of a Common-wealth, to expose them to the hazard of such uncertain Charity.” ([1651] 1968, II.30, 387)

Once citizens do undertake charity and philanthropy, political communities must determine how and why these two things are to be constrained and directed or protected as an exercise of liberty or actively encouraged. Let us now turn to these three positions and their origins in modern political philosophy.

Constrain and Direct Philanthropy

To many, philanthropy seems to be so obviously a good carried out by private citizens' free acts that it is surprising to suppose governments might seek to constrain it. And yet governments past and present have judged that philanthropy may be a threat to the commonweal.

Niccolò Machiavelli offered a dramatic instance of how Rome's senators dealt with what they saw as a threat to the regime from private philanthropy:

When the city of Rome was overburdened with hunger, and private provisions were not enough to stop it, one Spurius Maelius, who was very rich for those times, had the intent to make provision of grain privately, and to feed the plebs with it, gaining its favor for him. Because of this affair he had such a crowd of people in his favor that the Senate . . . had him killed. Here it is to be noted that many times works that appear merciful, which cannot reasonably be condemned, become cruel and are very dangerous for a republic if they are not corrected in good time. ([1531] 1996, III.28, 276, mentioned in Reich 2011, 177–78)

No philanthropist today is in danger of being executed for his philanthropy, but there are many who do agree that philanthropy, although generally beneficial to the political community, may also and perhaps often be “very dangerous” for the American republic and must be closely regulated.

Consider, for example, the “UnKoch My Campus” and “Transparent GMU” organizations: even in a time of deep concern about soaring higher-education costs, which would seem to make philanthropic support for colleges and universities especially welcome, some campus activists have raised the alarm about the allegedly pernicious

effects of Charles Koch's and like-minded donors' private philanthropy to support faculty lines, graduate study, and campus programming, with the charge that these grants are intended to advance a libertarian agenda that is contrary to the public good (Gluckman 2018). Likewise at a time when U.S. primary and secondary students lag behind their peers in other countries, there has been scrutiny of and opposition to the enormous philanthropic investments in K–12 education and support of the Common Core standards on the part of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and other broadly liberal funders (Tomkins-Stange 2016, 16).¹ Concerns especially about libertarian and conservative funders have led to alarms about “dark money” (Mayer 2016) and to calls for charities to be required to disclose the names of their major donors so that the public may know and judge the sources of philanthropy (Callahan 2017; see also Parnell 2017, 293–95). Of course, the disclosure requirement may have a chilling effect on donors who are considering support of unpopular or controversial causes.

In addition to the opposition to specific philanthropists and their initiatives, there has been support for efforts to erode the charitable tax deduction, which, thanks to the so-called Hollis Amendment, has been part of the federal income tax regime ever since income taxes were widely imposed for the first time with the War Revenue Act of 1917. The amendment was named for New Hampshire senator Henry F. Hollis, who argued for encouraging taxpayers to choose to support “charities and educational objects out of their surplus” and for reducing taxes for those who support charities (Hollis 1917, 3). But President Barack Obama's budgets called for limiting the value of the charitable deduction for taxpayers in top income brackets; the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 effectively limits the value of the charitable deduction by limiting the number of taxpayers who would benefit from itemizing deductions, with the probable effect of reducing charitable giving in the United States by as much as \$20 billion annually (Tax Policy Center 2017; see also Lilly Family School of Philanthropy 2017).

Although modern philanthropists are unlikely to suffer the fate of Spurius Maelius, many citizens today see threats to the commonweal from at least some philanthropic gifts. That is why there is support for imposing disclosure requirements that are intended to discourage certain philanthropists and charitable gifts and for instituting new tax laws that will decrease charitable donations.

Much current opposition to philanthropic and charitable activities finds its origin not in the thought of Machiavelli, but in the thought of eighteenth-century philosophers Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Immanuel Kant. In *Social Contract* (1762), Rousseau argued that government is established by a social contract with a view to realize what he termed the “general will,” which “considers only the common interest” and is “always right and always tends toward the public utility” (Rousseau 1978, II.iii). The general will is distinct from individual interests or the sum of individual interests and expresses what each citizen should want quite apart from his own interest. Kant

1. Megan Tomkins-Stange writes: “Foundations [including those of individual living donors] are alternatively lauded and censured, celebrated and critiqued for their policy influence, and these discussions are often based on ideology rather than on empirical rigor” (2016, 16).

powerfully reformulated Rousseau's "general will" in *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals* ([1785] 1949) by describing each rational individual as an "end in himself" and capable of formulating the principles of practical action that would be adopted by any rational individual. Because the same principles would be willed by every rational individual, the will of each is a "universally legislative will." When many individuals come together in a political community, they form a "kingdom of ends" governed by common laws based on the principles of practical action that each would adopt and that all would theoretically adopt universally the more rational these laws were (48–50).

American political philosopher John Rawls extended Kant's categorical imperative in his landmark work *A Theory of Justice* (1971), asking what principles of justice would be unanimously accepted were everyone to choose principles from behind a veil of ignorance, knowing nothing about himself or to what generation or in what county he was born, nothing about his personal attributes and abilities, and nothing about his passions and interests. These are the principles that in Rousseauian terms would be "the general will" or in Kantian terms would be universally willed. Rawls argued that people would choose principles of justice that make their society "fair": each citizen should enjoy equal basic liberties, each should be eligible for every office and position, and differences in outcomes should be arranged so that they are "to the greatest advantage of the least advantaged" (Rawls 1971, 60–65). The latter principle, which Rawls termed the "difference principle," is a principle of distributive justice. It allows those who are more talented to earn a higher income only so as to induce them to fill jobs and roles that benefit others: those with the intellectual gifts and dexterity to be surgeons, for example, may justly earn a high income to induce them to use their talents to benefit others.

If these Rawlsian principles of justice as fairness articulate what each of us would will, unencumbered by the "blindness" that comes from our own situated interests, then government policy should be shaped in accordance with these principles of justice; even more, legislation and policies should be put in place to ensure that our political, social, and economic institutions accord with these principles to the greatest extent possible. The difference principle has been particularly controversial as a principle of distributive justice because it warrants an extensive role for government in the economy through legislation and policy. There is also controversy about whether a redistribution of wealth and opportunities to ensure that differences in economic outcomes are "to the greatest advantage of the least advantaged" is genuinely most just.

The difference principle is particularly germane to charitable giving. Because charity and philanthropy redistribute resources from donors to beneficiaries, and if the difference principle indicates how we all would wish goods to be redistributed if we were choosing impartially, a Rawlsian would say that the difference principle should be the guiding principle of philanthropy. For example, political scientist Chiara Cordelli argues on Rawlsian grounds that the wealthy are duty bound to give charity to rectify the ways the distribution of wealth in our society deviates from the difference principle: "It is a duty to pay a debt. . . . This means that agent-relative reasons appealing to what donors

‘care about’ or their ‘life history’ [such as where they went to college or which hospital provided medical care to a relative] should not matter *at all* in the process of deciding how to give. All that should guide wealthy donors’ reasoning is a concern about the level of deprivation the worst-off are subject to as a consequence of an unjust system.” Cordelli argues further that the wealthy “have a duty of *distributive justice* to give to effective advocacy organizations, to the extent that this is the most effective way to bring about institutions that are able to secure and maintain egalitarian patterns of distribution over time” (2016, 261, emphasis in original).

Cordelli’s views explain the hostility to the charitable deduction, to donor privacy, and to certain broad categories of philanthropic initiatives noted earlier. For those who think that known and correct principles of justice determine a just distribution of wealth, philanthropy may be a vehicle for making society ever more unjust. Consider the tax deduction for charitable giving: when wealthy individuals lower their tax rates by claiming the charitable deduction, not only is there a reduction in tax revenue that could be redistributed through government entitlement programs and other government initiatives, but also charitable gifts may be going to well-heeled elite universities and cultural organizations that disproportionately serve the wealthy. Further, on this view, donor privacy may only cloak the self-serving nature of much of philanthropy, such as donor-funded initiatives that support research into free-market economics but serve only to support and perpetuate injustice.

The charitable deduction is so well established in the United States that it would be nearly impossible to eliminate. Perhaps that is why those who are influenced by this strand of the history of political thought generally do not propose eliminating it but instead curtailing its use; many of the Obama administration budgets, for example, proposed limiting the value of the charitable deduction by capping the deduction rate below that of the marginal tax rate paid by top income earners. Nobel Laureate economist Robert Shiller proposes that the government could offer higher tax-deduction rates or even credits for donations to charities recognized by the government as fulfilling urgent national needs or as advancing government-approved aims (2012, 203).²

Protect Philanthropy

Although some see philanthropy as a potential threat to the political community, others see it as an expression of individuals’ right to dispose of their property as they see fit.

This view of philanthropy traces its origin to the political thought of John Locke. Locke’s *Second Treatise of Government* ([1689] 1960), which profoundly influenced the American Founders, asserts each individual’s natural right “to dispose of his Person

2. For example, Shiller suggests that, “at a time of rising inequality, there could be a special tax incentive for organizations that embrace the concerns of the poor or that help to foster a sense of community between rich and poor” (2012, 203).

or Possessions” and that “men,” following from their different uses of their possessions and of the different returns to those uses, “have agreed to a disproportionate and unequal possession” of wealth (chap. 2, §6). Because property rights are insecure without the rule of law, government is necessary—not to enforce a principle that redistributes wealth but to protect individuals’ property rights. As Locke put it in the *Second Treatise*, “[T]he great and *chief end* . . . [of men] putting themselves under Government, *is the Preservation of their Property*” ([1689] 1960, chap. 9, §124, emphasis in original).

It might seem that Locke’s view is unfriendly to philanthropy and charity; after all, if individuals seek to preserve their property, one might think that men would be indisposed to dispense charity and philanthropy. Locke’s account suggests otherwise, however. Locke himself thought that people are fundamentally social; the Lockean state of nature, unlike the Hobbesian one, is social and peaceable (Locke [1689] 1960, treatise 2, chap. 3, §19). In fact, the right to property, on Locke’s account, arises from a natural law that demands “the Peace and *Preservation of all Mankind*” (Locke [1689] 1960, treatise 2, chap. 2, §7). Unlike Hobbes’s emphasis on individual self-preservation, Locke asserted that each man not only has a right to defend himself as a matter of justice but also must act, “as much as he can, to preserve the rest of Mankind” ([1689] 1960, treatise 2, chap. 2, §6). He asserted that the natural law to preserve all “gives every Man a Title to so much out of another’s Plenty, as will keep him from extream want” ([1689] 1960, treatise 1, chap. 4, §42). Locke himself, according to the testimony of his friend and fellow philosopher Lady Masham, generously gave to the poor (Forde 2009, 428, 457). And in his educational treatise, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, he stressed the importance of educating children to be generous, even suggesting that parents make a “Contest” among their children to see who could be the most generous. Locke stressed the centrality of generosity in moral education: by teaching generosity, Locke wrote, “Covetousness, and the Desire of having in our possession, and under our Dominion, more than we have need of, being the Root of all Evil, [would be] early and carefully weeded out and the contrary Quality of a Readiness to impart to others, implanted” (Locke [1693] 1989, §110; see also discussions in Pfeffer 2001, 604–5, and Forde 2009, 455–57).

Robert Nozick, whose work *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* (1974) argued from explicitly Lockean premises, reasserted Locke’s insistence on the respect for individual property rights and asserted that the only legitimate government is a night-watchman state, limited to the enforcement of contracts and to protection against fraud, theft, and violence as well as from foreign threats (26). Nozick is far from conceiving of the polity governed by a night-watchman state as a grim community full of self-centered and mean individuals; he argued instead that readers should find his account of the minimal state “inspiring as well as right”—indeed, that it is a “utopia” (1974, ix, 297–334).³

3. See also Wolff 1991, 12–14, for a discussion of the friendliness of Nozick’s minimal state to philanthropy.

Sharing Locke's assumption that people are essentially sociable, Nozick imagines that the night-watchman state will create the conditions for a flourishing civil society where private associations provide for the basic needs as well as the education and higher-order needs of community members. Nozick asks us to suppose there are ten Robinson Crusoes, each on his own island, each with radios and means to convey goods between islands. Nozick argues that those Robinson Crusoes whose islands have more coconut trees and more fish do not owe anything to those with poorer islands, but that the better-off Robinson Crusoes would be likely to share with the others. For these Robinson Crusoes, and for those of us in American society, Nozick hypothesizes that if forced contributions to others were removed—by eliminating all social programs and limiting taxes to a bare minimum necessary to support a night-watchman state—we could realize a “utopian” society in which people might cooperate in all kinds of hitherto unforeseen ways (1974, 185–86). Rose Friedman and Milton Friedman similarly argued that if the role of the state were reduced, there would be a spontaneous increase in philanthropic and charitable activity (1980, 114, 124).

For libertarians in the Lockean tradition, such as Nozick and the Friedmans, making charitable and philanthropic gifts is just one way in which individuals exercise their property rights and should be protected as such. Sharing the Lockean assumptions about the fundamental sociability of mankind, libertarians optimistically assume that the smaller the government role, the greater the scope of voluntary activities of all sorts, including philanthropic activities. Some libertarians note the role of philanthropy in supporting institutions such as universities that foster innovation and research as well as in diffusing wealth rather than keeping it within families (Acs 2013, 10–11).

Unlike those who think that philanthropic and charitable activities should be channeled through privileging certain causes or that philanthropy should be regulated so as to watch for philanthropic giving that may undermine a certain version of a just society, libertarians might argue that equal treatment of lawful economic activities means that all charitable activities should be eligible for the charitable deduction—or that the charitable deduction should be entirely eliminated along with the myriad other deductions that subsidize various economic activities with taxpayer dollars. The libertarian position also suggests that charitable activities should be accorded the same privacy as other activities so that charities should no more be required to disclose the names of their donors than shops are required to disclose the names of their customers.

Encourage Philanthropy

As we have seen, some view philanthropy as a potential threat to the political community that must be regulated and directed, and others view philanthropy as an exercise of private-property rights from which the political community may well benefit and is certainly obliged to protect. The third position that stands in the backdrop of current debates and that has roots in modern political philosophy is the view that philanthropic activity is essential to robust pluralist democracy and especially to the American polity.

As such, the government should do all it can to promote wide opportunities for philanthropy and donor-funded initiatives and organizations.

Writing during the same period as Rousseau and Kant, English parliamentarian and philosopher Edmund Burke wrote in praise of the small community within the larger state, which he famously called a “little platoon” in *Reflections on the Revolution in France* ([1790] 1987). Burke was referring to a specific class of aristocrats united by certain political views, but he seems to suppose that there can be many such communities that can be “the first link in the series by which we proceed toward love to our country and to mankind. The interest of that portion of social arrangement is a trust in the hands of all those who compose it” (41).

These “little platoons” animated by a shared interest or passion, on Burke’s account, do not create a gulf between themselves and the broader community; rather, being part of such little communities strengthens ties to the entire civil community.

In the second volume of *Democracy in America* ([1840] 2000), Alexis de Tocqueville described the American way of organizing little platoons as “associations.” He wrote:

Americans of all ages, all conditions, all minds constantly unite. Not only do they have commercial and industrial associations in which all take part, but they also have a thousand other kinds: religious, moral, grave, futile, very general and very particular, immense and very small; Americans use associations to give fêtes, to found seminaries, to build inns, to raise churches, to distribute books, to send missionaries to the antipodes; in this manner they create hospitals, prisons, schools. Finally, if it is a question of bringing to light a truth or developing a sentiment with the support of a great example, they associate. Everywhere that, at the head of a new undertaking, you see the government in France and a great lord in England, count on it that you will perceive an association in the United States. (II.ii.4, 489)

Tocqueville argued that the American genius for forming associations was essential to the success of the American polity and that Americans’ “science of association is the mother science” of their other enterprises and progress ([1840] 2000, II.ii.4, 491). These associations are supported by philanthropy and carry out the philanthropic and civic purposes for which they are founded.

Burke and Tocqueville have been the inspiration for contemporary political philosophers who argue for the importance of donor-funded civil associations and enterprises in liberal democracy. William Schambra (2000), for example, argues that American political society must continue to draw on the impulse to create associations that address local social problems. He argues that the inclination of Americans to coordinate social action in this way was deeply eroded by the Great Society programs introduced by the Johnson administration. Such national programs are administered according to the edicts of impersonal bureaucrats and “service providers” rather than

developed by local civic leaders to meet particular local challenges. Among the consequences of the professionalization of such programs, Schambra argues, is that they become tasks for impersonal experts rather than opportunities to become personally engaged in addressing local issues. The consequence has been that Americans are less engaged as citizens, and because programs designed on a national scale often do not match local needs, these professional programs may be less successful at meeting local needs than previous ones managed on a smaller scale by local citizens. Schambra, however, remains optimistic, finding that “the American people have evinced a strong desire to reverse this process and bring authority back to the civic institutions closest to home” (2000, 322–32, 334, 338–46). Commentator Jeremy Beer echoes Schambra with his call for a return to “philanthrolocalism,” where philanthropists focus on meeting the needs of those with whom donors and volunteers may have an authentic personal relationship (2015, 99–102).

The “little platoon” mentioned by Burke was, as mentioned earlier, a class of aristocrats with shared political views, and many contemporary theorists likewise emphasize the importance of philanthropic support for particular classes or groups, especially minority groups. Yuval Levin takes his cue from Burke’s little platoons when he argues that we may heal the fractious nature of contemporary politics through “a commitment to a robust pluralism of moral subcultures” (2016, 213). These minority moral subcultures may have unusual or unorthodox notions of the good life, but they become schools for citizenship by educating their citizens about how to be engaged in community affairs. And when members of these subgroups see that America protects their freedom to live in their own way, they are further bound to the country.

The American political scientist Rob Reich (2006), who has at times argued like Cordelli that much philanthropy exacerbates inequality and is therefore unjust, has also emphasized how philanthropy is important to accommodate and protect minority views and minority communities so that they may survive as such. He believes that one aspect of flourishing liberal democracies is that they are pluralistic communities, willingly accommodating communities outside the mainstream. Reich argues that incentives for philanthropy should be offered through the tax code to promote pluralism:

Every citizen [has] the liberty to join with others to pursue dissenting or conflicting visions of the public good or the production of social goods; the justification for subsidizing this liberty through tax incentives is to enhance or amplify every citizen’s voice, stimulate their [*sic*] contributions to civil society, and assist minorities in overcoming the constraints of the median voter. Philanthropy becomes a means of voting for one’s favored civil society projects with dollars partially private and partially public. . . . [I]t is about protecting and promoting a flourishing and pluralistic civil society. (2011, 189–90)⁴

4. Reich goes on to argue against the current form of the charitable deduction even as he supports tax incentives for philanthropy (2011, 190–91).

Whereas Reich argues that philanthropy may be important to protect minorities as such, F. A. Hayek argued that philanthropy was important so the views of minorities might eventually become the view of majorities. Hayek was particularly concerned about the role of philanthropy in supporting minority opinions in “the fields of thought and opinion, of tastes and beliefs” (1960, 128). He argued that the philanthropy of a leisured, wealthy class is essential,

above all, in the propagation of new ideas in politics, morals, and religion. If minority views are to have a chance to become majority views, it is necessary . . . that representatives of all divergent views and tastes should be in a position to support with their means and their energy ideals which are not yet shared by the majority. . . . We cannot attempt to recount here the long story of all good causes which came to be recognized only after lonely pioneers had devoted their lives and fortunes to arousing the public conscience, of their long campaigns until at last they gained support for the abolition of slavery, for penal and prison reform, for the prevention of cruelty to children or to animals, or for a more humane treatment of the insane. (1960, 125, 127)

In short, while largely setting aside detailed attention to welfare-oriented philanthropy, Hayek thought that philanthropy and a leisured, wealthy class are essential to the improvement of political society; he was worried that there was only a small such class in the United States.

For those who think that philanthropy plays an essential role in supporting our “little platoons” or Tocquevillian “associations,” there is broad support for encouraging and promoting philanthropy. Unlike Rawlsians, they do not think that there are known and correct principles of justice to be pursued through philanthropy; rather, they are sympathetic to supporting a wide range of goods and ways of living through philanthropy. They support the widest of philanthropic activity, with minimal government direction, and, as Reich argues, they may support offering tax incentives that will subsidize and encourage philanthropy. They also think that donor privacy should be protected because donor privacy may be important to encourage philanthropists to support minority communities, unfashionable causes, and unpopular opinions.

Conclusion

As we have seen, current debates about donor privacy, donor-funded initiatives, and new limits to the charitable deduction in the U.S. Tax Code have deep roots in modern political thought. In the background of these debates are fundamental assumptions about human nature, the political community, and principles of justice. The intellectual inheritance from Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Kant, Burke, and Tocqueville, among others, grounds and shapes our contemporary discussions about philanthropy. The

simple fact is that ideas matter, and so a fuller understanding of the ideas that stand behind our contemporary policy debates will help us better navigate those discussions.

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