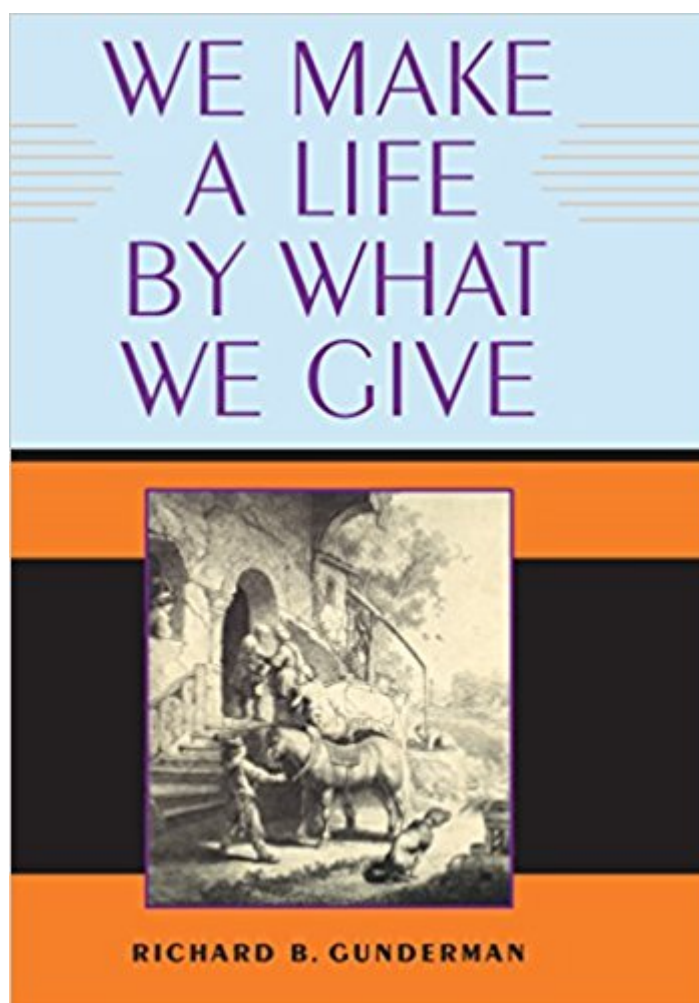


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# We Make A Life By What We Give (Philanthropic And Nonprofit Studies)



## Synopsis

According to an old saying, "We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give." In 22 brief and insightful essays, Richard B. Gunderman shows us that the key to more rewarding giving can be found by looking beyond mere donations of money. Exploring the ethical core of sharing and examining its importance for both those who receive and those who give, here is a book to deepen our understanding of what it means to share.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"... provides a rich understanding of humanity and how we must live in community." [Kirby Hughes Gould, Christian Church Foundation, GIVING Magazine, 2010](#)"Gunderman is as important a humanistic voice in the discussion of philanthropy as I know of. He writes like an angel; he works out of a rich Aristotelian tradition; his views are balanced, clear, and persuasive." [David H. Smith, author of Entrusted](#)"Short, sweet, and a pleasure to read, [this book] reminds us that we are capable of contributing much more when we see ourselves in the company of those who depend on us to make the most of what we have been given." ["Some books enlighten us, some books inspire us, and some books challenge us to expand our understanding of who we are and who we can become. \[This book\] does all three.... It simply surpasses all other books in the field, but more importantly, it expands our understanding of the field of philanthropy and of ourselves and our potential."](#) [Heather Wood Ion, Contributing Editor, Conversations on Philanthropy](#)

"Gunderman is as important a humanistic voice in the discussion of philanthropy as I know of. He writes like an angel; he works out of a rich Aristotelian tradition; his views are balanced, clear, and persuasive." --David H. Smith, author of *Entrusted* --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Professor Gunderman teaches both medicine and philanthropy at Indiana University. The Center for Philanthropy at Indiana maintains a principle that "careful reading and discussion of classic texts" is important to understanding philanthropy. Gunderman's writing is richly infused with arguments and illustrations drawn from the classics and medicine. It makes this collection of essays a deeply thoughtful and illuminating discussion of philanthropy. One of his central theses is that philanthropy defies measurement. His analogy is medical. "In medicine, pulse rate, blood pressure, and temperature are easy to measure, but they do not tell the whole story of human health. Likewise, in philanthropy, dollars do not tell the whole story of human giving." And, Equally persuasively, "To promote greater accountability, we develop "dashboards" for philanthropic organizations, a collection of gauges or metrics by which to evaluate their performance...[there is] something wrong when we begin driving with our eyes glued to the instrument panel." Another central argument in Gunderman's study of philanthropy is the vital importance of the 'moral imagination' and of stories to philanthropy: "Our most important philanthropic resource is our imagination, our dreams. What do we think is possible? What purposes larger than ourselves are we capable of discerning and working on behalf of? In some respects, we are the instruments of those purposes. Yet it is truer to say that we collaborate actively with them. When we recognize dreams as our most important philanthropic resource, we realize that one of the greatest gifts we can give another person is to believe in them, even when they don't believe in themselves. This can be as complex as devoting part of our lives to them, and as simple as giving them our undivided attention. When we do that, we transform our narrative perspective from, "What is my story?" to "What story are we in?" "It will be no surprise to readers then that Gunderman draws a clear distinction between philanthropy and business, which philanthropic organizations are called upon to model by some. He also cautions against fixating on the philanthropy of the wealthy that "dominates most discussions of philanthropy in the news media." The essays are written in an elegant and cultured style drawing on history, philosophy and literature as well as contemporary issues. Professor Gunderman is neither social scientist nor management theorist. Arguments are developed recursively not linearly: there is not a bullet point or a diagram to be seen. A mild criticism is that although there is an ample bibliography, the book contains no citations. The book deserves to become an influential text. I can only hope it

succeeds.

Thoughtful essays on the topic of generosity-Deeds of love-- and filled with insight and the real world experience of a doctor.

Just as described, thanks!

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