



## Accountability: To Whom and For What Purposes

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October 4, 2002

*Waldemar A. Nielsen Issues in Philanthropy Seminar Series*  
Georgetown University

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Wally Nielsen was one of the most perceptive observers of the American foundation world, and I feel greatly honored to be invited to deliver a lecture named for him. Which is not to say that I fully agree with his observations, as when he said, referring to foundations, that “the profile of their activity is largely conventional, not reformist. They are overwhelming institutions of social continuity, not change.”<sup>1</sup> Perhaps they were so when Nielsen wrote 30 years ago, but they are hardly so today. Look, for example, at the Meyer Foundation report I was just given. It looks to me more “reformist” than mere “social continuity.” The same is true, I think, of many of the national and regional foundations, as well as most of the community foundations. I will return to that subject a bit later.

The real reason I am here, however, is not the honor of being a Nielsen Lecturer but the admiration and love I have for Virginia Hodgkinson. No one who knows her could ever refuse to do anything she asks, even foundation program officers, and at least within reason. But then she has never been known to ask anything beyond reason. Among my colleagues at the Atlantic Philanthropies, Virginia has long been known by the descriptor applied to her by my long-time colleague Jim Spencer, who, in recognition of the deference which all us inevitably gave to Virginia’s requests, dubbed her “A National Treasure Always to Be Coddled.”

And a national treasure she surely is! More than anyone else in the U.S., Virginia has been the pioneer of contemporary research on the not-for-profit sector. It is by dint of her vision, laborious toil and relentless persistence that any of us has a reasonably solid base of understanding of the contours of America’s not-for-profit sector today. She established and, for many years, led the Research Division of Independent Sector, she originated and supervised the Giving and Volunteering surveys of the U.S., she has been a board member, as well as frequently chair, of virtually every organization dedicated to advancing the cause of research on America’s not-for-profit sector, and she has published papers and edited many volumes on that subject.

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<sup>1</sup> The Big Foundations, Twentieth Century Fund (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972, p.

And that is but the tip of the iceberg, which is all I intend to reveal today. If I gave Virginia her due, there would not be time left for me to speak on the subject with which she asked me to deal—the current state of accountability of America’s not-for-profit sector, and especially the foundation sub-sector. But I will say that no one has contributed more to the nonprofit sector as a sector than Virginia has.

Little is different today from the picture I drew of not-for-profit accountability for the American Assembly volume published three years ago, except that many more instances of nonprofits’ egregious misbehavior have found their way into print or onto television screens. The mere mention of the names of a few of the many organizations—legitimate and fraudulent-- that have been in trouble—United Way of America, United Way of the National Capital Area, New Era Philanthropy, the Bishop’s Estate, Adelphi University, Baptist Foundation of Arizona, Marine Toys for Tots, the Freedom Forum, the American Red Cross (Who would have believed that the original American flag, Mom and Apple pie organization could commit so serious a public relations blunder?)-- is enough to remind us that our house is hardly in order, and that, if the not-for-profit sector continues to fail to bestir itself to invent a voluntary system of accountability-enforcement, it is only a matter of time before the state and federal authorities begin to enforce accountability on us.

What do I mean by “accountability”? I mean a routine practice, as Colin Campbell put it, “of being obliged to give an account of themselves and their activities to others.” And who are those others? The public, the institutions of government that create their tax exempt status and confer tax benefits on those who contribute donations to them, their donors, their boards, their service recipients, their partner NGOs, and so on. I am not using accountability here to mean “return on investment” in the sense that those who practice venture philanthropy use that term. I am enthusiastic about venture philanthropy and the obligation of fund recipients to their investors is certainly a kind of accountability, but it is a specific rather than general kind.

What are the existing mechanisms of accountability-enforcement? The IRS, the state Attorneys-General, other state charities monitoring entities, the FTC, watchdog groups such as the former NCIB and Better Business Bureau's Philanthropic Advisory Service, now merged into the Good Giving Alliance and the National Center for Responsive Philanthropy, the press in general and the magazines, such as Business Week and others which rate the performance of charities, the net-based entities such as Guidestar and perhaps Charity Navigator. The think tanks and scholars who gather and analyze data on nonprofits, such as the Urban Institute's Center on Nonprofits and Philanthropy, headed by Elizabeth Boris, and the Brookings Institution's Center on Governance, headed by Paul Light, the Indiana Center on Philanthropy, the Hauser Center at Harvard, the HBS Social Enterprise Initiative. And of course, the Georgetown Public Policy Institute's Center for the Study of Voluntary Organizations and Service. That Center is now starting a Ph.D. training program, in cooperation with Georgetown's Government Department, to establish a Center for Democracy and the Third Sector, which will produce Ph.D.s in Government who will focus their research on the workings of the nonprofit sector. So far as I know, that will be the only such program in the country. And it goes without saying that there is a great need for well-trained political scientists to study the nonprofit sector.

In the chapter I wrote for the American Assembly volume, I suggested three options for improved accountability-enforcement. The first model, and the one I prefer, is that of a not-for-profit sector voluntary standard-setting, effective performance benchmarking, enforcement entity sponsored by the leading umbrella organizations and financed by foundations, with an investigative capacity that would be constantly on the lookout for problems and that could either deal with such problems itself, or refer them to the appropriate governmental authorities. The second model, to be launched only if the first model is not mounted, would work hand-in-glove with the governmental authorities, very much like a private investigator but in the public interest. The second option would be a non-governmental not-for-profit organization which would become a sector-wide watchdog partner of the IRS, FTC, and State AG offices in order to provide investigative human resource

power to the shockingly understaffed governmental enforcement organizations. Unlike option one, this second option would function only as an adjunct to the governmental organizations. If neither of these options are eventually implemented, I believe that we will be forced to fall back on the creation of some kind of new governmental entity, with both investigative and subpoena power, either within the IRS, FTC, and/or SEC, which I referred to as something like, but in many ways significantly different from, the UK Charities Commission. I called it the US Charities Commission. I say again, as I said then, that I favor the third alternative only as a last resort, and that I believe that the nonprofit sector will end up with that alternative if it fails to undertake the burden of accountability-enforcement itself, and that, if the third option is what we get, it is bound to be more burdensome than options one and two, or than what any of us would prefer.

Let me also make clear that no one I know believes that nonprofit malfeasance is widespread. It clearly is not! But every time there is a high profile instance of fraud or serious mismanagement, the fragile tissue of public trust in nonprofits frays a bit, and remember that it is that public trust in nonprofits on which the generous tax benefits enacted by Congress and State legislatures ultimately rest. Let the public trust erode substantially, and it will not be long before some lawmakers, whipped up by the investigative journalists, begin to wage a crusade to slap the nonprofit sector with punitive fines or perhaps even a heavy-handed accountability-enforcement mechanism.

Make no mistake about it. The tissue of public trust is not only fraying, but it is beginning to tear a bit. According to Independent Sector's most recent poll, only 64% of Americans believe nonprofit organizations act honestly and ethically in using funds donated by others. That leaves 36% of Americans who believe differently, and remember that the essence of the charitable nonprofits is altruism—benefiting others, so more than a third of Americans doubt the bona fides of the nonprofit sector.

## What is the Problem?

What is the root of the problem? The basic problem is, as it always is, leadership—principally the CEO—Board of Directors leadership dynamic. In other words, the problem is CEO selection by the trustee/directors and trustee/director supervision of the CEO once selected. The root of that problem, obviously, is trustee/director recruitment and trustee/director inattention once recruited.

Despite the insistence with which courts have enunciated a trio of trustee/director duties—the duty of care, the duty of loyalty and the duty of obedience—my guess is that most director/trustees of most not-for-profits do not fulfill the duty of care with the diligence that the affairs of the organizations warrant. Let me say that that is the case only with respect to the duty of care, which requires board members to be diligent, to pay attention to the affairs of the organization, and to take pains to inform themselves about the affairs of the organization. Very few directors fail to fulfill their duties of loyalty and obedience, which primarily deal with the avoidance of conflicts of interest. (In another speech a month from now, I will explore the similarities and differences between not-for-profit and for-profit boards, and seek to understand what the not-for-profit sector has to learn from the recent disasters in for-profit governance. Here I am focussing only on not-for-profit boards.)

First, let's talk only about grant-seeking organizations and not foundations. As we all know, the primary criterion used in selecting board candidates is fund-raising—give or get a specified amount every year.

Next, let's distinguish between the high- and less-high-prestige organizations in any community or nationally. High prestige organizations—major museums, symphony orchestras, the best hospitals and medical research institutions, leading think tanks, and so on—attract trustee candidates who are eager to have some of the organization's prestige rub off on him or her.

Don't jump to the conclusion, however, that the trustees don't really care about the mission of the high prestige organization. In fact, many of the trustees, perhaps most, are keenly interested in and committed to the missions and goals of the organization boards on which they serve. The problem is the exchange transaction which occurs when they are recruited and ultimately accept. That transaction between the recruiter—usually the board chair with the CEO or another trustee—and the recruited minimizes the likelihood that so-called “quality time” and sustained personal attention will be forthcoming at the levels needed to assure informed participation. What is that exchange transaction at its most basic? The organization primarily wants a money-giver or getter, and the prospective board member wants to do as little as necessary in return for the prestige of association with the “recognizable” names who are to be his/her fellow board members. To be sure, some of the recruited board members are eager to give time, but not many, at least at the beginning. Frequently, they will caution the CEO or Board Chair that they will satisfy their financial obligation but may not be able to attend meetings frequently.

This is much less a problem with regard to the far larger number of not-for-profits that are NOT especially prestigious, but it is still a problem. As a general matter, the exchange transaction is not very different. The board chair or CEO wants someone interested in the subject matter, someone who will donate or raise money, perhaps someone who brings additional stature or special relevant skills to the board, and the person recruited almost always has agreed to serve as a favor to a friend—the CEO, the Board chair or another director/trustee—and only secondarily because of any burning personal passion for the particular cause. In either event, money from the recruited is almost always easier to come by than time.

In all cases, however, it goes without saying that either the CEO or the board chair, having played a major role in recruiting a board member, usually from among pre-existing friends, has the primary claim on the loyalty of that board member. The obligation vectors of that relationship increase the likelihood that board members will defer to the chair and CEO on most matters, and will decrease the likelihood

that board members will scrutinize the CEO's leadership of the organization with an arm's length perspective.

The best boards—that is the boards which do the best job in selecting and carefully supervising the CEO—are the boards whose members give more attention-focussed time to their responsibilities, and they have the following characteristics. First, they have an active board nominating committee that continuously reaches out widely to identify talented individuals BEYOND the circle of friends of the CEO and board chair. Second, they continuously analyze the particular substantive expertise needs of the board and identify potential new members who have the ability and track record to fill those needs. Third, they reach out to organizations and knowledgeable individuals with requests to help them identify such persons. Fourth, if they are large and well-financed, they use an executive search firm to cast a broad net and do due diligence on potential board members. Fifth, if they are smaller and cannot afford an executive search firm, they turn to organizations such as Brooke Mahoney's nonprofit Volunteer Consulting Group, the mission of which is to identify potential board members from among corporate executives and others.

If the root of the problem is indeed ineffective board recruitment, how might that problem be remedied? Several ways occur to me.

First, emulate the best boards by recruiting systematically, broadly and multi-functionally. Recruit more on the basis of board expertise and substantive stature-enhancing needs and only minimally on fund-giving and –raising capacity. Reach beyond the personal networks of the CEO and existing board members. Organizations with a local or regional focus should seek nominations from their community foundations, which know the best possible people locally. Use executive search firms more frequently not only for CEO searches but also for board searches, which is the primary method that for-profit boards use to find the best persons in the country or across the world for their board slots. There are several quite good firms with a significant nonprofit search practice; Heidrick and Struggles, Spencer Stuart, Russell Reynolds, and Korn Ferry all have nonprofit search groups. In

addition, some firms do nonprofit searches exclusively—Phillips Oppenheim in New York, Isaacson Miller in Boston, Hamilton Rabinowitz in LA and Washington and Slesinger Management Services here in Washington. All of them have excellent reach and updated search registries, which cover most of the fields served by nonprofit organizations.

Second, we should consider stiffer legal penalties for board misfeasance. We took a large step in that direction with the enactment of the Intermediate Sanctions provisions, which impose fines on directors who, among other actions, approve excessive compensation packages for nonprofit staffs. We should consider bringing over to the nonprofit sector some of the regulatory practices that the SEC requires of for-profit organizations, such as, for example, the personal certification by the CEO and Chair of the accuracy of financial data. It is important, however, to note that there are significant downsides to increasing the penalties for nonprofit board misfeasance and malfeasance. The more threatening the risks and more onerous the burdens, the less attractive nonprofit board service will be. And it is also important to remember that nonprofit boards do not have available to them the financial incentives that for-profit boards have at their disposal—honoraria, stock options and restricted stock grants—to help compensate for the risk. It is essential to be careful not to discourage talented persons from serving on nonprofit boards!

Third, business, nonprofit and public policy schools should establish executive education programs with some sort of board certification for current nonprofit board members. Some business schools already offer executive education programs for nonprofit executives and board chairs—Harvard does—but there are very few such programs and none focuses exclusively on nonprofit board members or gives certification of completion of a prescribed course. Such programs could easily be created by cooperation with Board Source, formerly known as the National Center for Nonprofit Boards, now led by Judy O'Connor, who is, much to my distress, on leave because of serious illness. If such certification programs were widely available, perhaps foundations and United Ways could require a minimum proportion of certified board

members to be on the boards of recipient organizations as a condition of grants. Some already do so—The Ford Foundation, for example—for minority and gender representation.

It has been said that the most important decision a board makes is the selection of a CEO, but a board's responsibility does not stop with that choice. Indeed, it just begins there. Once a nonprofit assembles an attentive, informed, diligent board, the board members need to take great care in recruiting the CEO and in establishing procedures to hold the CEO responsible. Many, if not virtually all, of the malfeasance and misfeasance problems suffered by nonprofits are the result of CEOs who were either rotten eggs to start with, or who evolved increasingly into bad habits because the directors let them operate free of sustained, diligent oversight. Think of United Way of America's Aramony and President Diamandopolous of Adelphi University.

The failure of judgment in selecting CEOs is partially the result of throwing caution to the winds in sometimes single-minded pursuit of chief executives whose primary talent is a perceived ability to raise funds for the organization. As fund-raising skills have come to dominate the criteria for CEO positions—as we have seen that they have for directors themselves—the tendency today is to look for persons whose primary assets are money-generating entrepreneurial skills, and, once installed in office, to look the other way if the person selected proves in fact to be an engine of cash. That is less a problem, however, in some kinds of nonprofits, such as universities, art museums, scientific research, cultural institutions, and think tanks, because the substantive qualifications required by the mission of the particular nonprofits are not easily overcome by the lure of fundraising skills. As a result, in such institutions, the quest for substantive competence takes priority, and only after that threshold has been crossed does the talent for revenue generation begin to weigh heavily. As all nonprofits today increasingly are forced to engage in commercial activities of one sort or another in order to diversify and swell revenue streams, they will undoubtedly seek in their chief executives significant entrepreneurial promise. And of course, even in high-prestige

universities, a knack for raising money is a high-priority criterion in choosing presidents.

The entrepreneurial personality is by nature expansive and frequently self-obsessed, and entrepreneurs who know that they are good at what they do easily come to believe, more often than not, that their entrepreneurial successes in behalf of the organizations they run have earned them a kind of entitlement to more leeway than ordinary mortals in obeying the rules. That means that, while recognizing and bowing to the steadily increasing necessity for entrepreneurs in CEO positions, directors/trustees today must become even more vigilant in overseeing the CEOs who report to them. Perhaps some leeway in bending the rules for entrepreneurs may sometimes be justified, and, if so, directors/trustees should always stay away from the thin ice that borders illegality and inappropriate behavior for nonprofits. But the leeway allowed to Aramony by virtue of his dazzling entrepreneurial skills was not only illegal and inappropriate, but a massive trustee failure, made all the more shocking by the fact that so many of UWA's directors then were CEOs of Fortune 500 companies who did know better but were simply not paying attention. Had they been paying attention, they would never have approved without scrutinizing Aramony's proposed initiatives, which permitted Aramony to engage in the personal-benefiting activities which have now been documented and which resulted in his conviction, because, even by the slacker standards of the for-profit sector, they would have been illegal.

### **The Special Problem of Foundations**

Let's look now at the special accountability problem posed by foundations. And, lest there be no misunderstanding, let me preface my criticisms by saying that, whatever their shortcomings, foundations are enormously beneficial to American society and must be protected from external incursions on their independence. I will say more about that later.

First, let's look at the problem.

All nonprofits which have to raise money to survive and thrive have built-in accountability-enforcing stakeholders in the form of donors and service-recipients. Such stakeholders have at least the potential of keeping such nonprofits honest. Typically, many of them are the recipients of support from government, or are in partnerships with many other organizations, all of which are in a position to exercise some measure of informal, even if lateral, oversight.

Alas, however, foundations are subject to NONE of those accountability-enforcing mechanisms. Unless the donor himself or herself is alive and engaged on the board of the foundation, that is. But otherwise not. No one is looking over the shoulder of foundation trustee/directors except a few watchdog organizations, of which the National Center for Responsive Philanthropy is perhaps the most noticeable, some of the right and left of center think tanks and scholars, and occasionally the press.

As a general rule, the trustee/directors of foundations DO pay more attention to the affairs of their foundations than do those of most grant-receiving nonprofits. Why is that so? Because the act of giving away large sums of money continuously is something that most human beings recognize as being consequential decisions, because the laws regulating the conduct of foundations and their trustee/directors are more stringent than the laws regulating other kinds of nonprofits, and because foundation trustee/directors find personal satisfaction in such giving decisions.

Foundations insist that grant-receiving nonprofits be accountable to them, but to whom are the foundations themselves accountable? To whom are they required to give an account of themselves? To no one but their board, the IRS, and the state attorney general, none of which does, as a general rule, an acceptable job of accountability-enforcement. I believe that that lack of accountability has a number of serious consequences for foundations themselves and the not-for-profit sector as a whole.

That lack of accountability permits some foundations to engage in arrogant behavior ranging from arbitrariness and whim in approving and rejecting proposals, to the minor sin of discourtesy in failing to respond to letters of inquiry and to return phone calls, either in a timely fashion or not at all.

That lack of accountability means that foundations share with the public only such information about their work as they in their own judgment choose. Foundation transparency doesn't really exist; annual reports, frequently glossy, are published but they are rarely self-critical and mostly filled with self-praise for what are regarded as successes. With one exception that I know about, foundations never report publicly on their failures. That one exception is the Casey Foundation, which has publicly reported on one of its failures. The consequences are that failures do get covered up, and that those who are engaged in solving public problems are forced inevitably to reinvent the wheel.

That lack of accountability allows foundations to fail to come to grips systematically with the measurement of the impacts of their grantmaking. Some of the large foundations do have credible evaluation procedures, but the benefits of such evaluations are limited to insiders.

There is very little credible research on the impact of foundation grants in achieving their objectives in particular, or in benefiting society in general. Aside from the institutional histories of foundations, and a scattering of books by historians, including some excellent ones by Ellen Lageman, Stan Katz, Barry Karl, and Stephen Wheatley, there are few works which systematically scrutinize the accomplishments of foundations. There are some encouraging stirrings on this front, however. The Center for Effective Philanthropy, founded by Mark Kramer and Michael Porter, and directed by Phil Buchanan is one bright spot, where the focus is on generating comparative empirical data on the manner in which foundations do their work. Another promising initiative is the Aspen Institute's Nonprofit Sector Research Fund's Foundation Effectiveness Initiative, chaired by Paul Light, which will support research on foundation impacts. Another, I hope, is the nascent Program on Foundation Impacts in Duke's Center for the

Study of Philanthropy and Voluntarism, in which Charles Clotfelter and I am involved. The lack of objective external research is an important contributor to the non-accountability of foundations.

That lack of accountability may also be one of the reasons that donors are increasingly establishing non-perpetual foundations, or deciding to spend down foundations which they had previously established. Some of you may have seen the recent article in the Wall Street Journal which mentioned some of those foundations, including Atlantic Philanthropies, the Bernard Marcus Foundation (set up by the co-founder of Home Depot), the Ted Turner Foundation, George Soros's foundations, as well as the Irene Diamond, Jacobs and Olin foundations. Many donors have said to me that they simply don't have confidence that, once they die, the foundations they set up will remain true to their intentions. Many of them remark that they have seen too many perpetual foundations administered by program officers who have no sense of stewardship of someone else's money, but think of the largesse they are dispensing as their own.

Let me expressly dissociate myself from the position of Mark Dowie, whose recent book, *American Foundations: An Investigative History*, presents a deeply flawed, thoroughly inaccurate picture of American foundations, and concludes with some of the most wrong-headed recommendations for change I've ever encountered. Those recommendations are reminiscent of similarly wrong-headed recommendations made several years ago by Teresa Odendahl.

Here are a few, randomly-selected quotes from Dowie's book:

Dowie: "It is just that much of what foundations do and fund seems principally designed to protect and strengthen the professional and scientific classes and the institutions that produce wealth for future philanthropies." Xxxiv

Dowie: "The central thesis of this book is that foundations do deserve to exist; but only if they evolve swiftly from an essentially private to unremittingly public institution of American life." Xxxix

Dowie: "As more taxpayers realize that approximately half of foundation assets—which would have flowed into state and federal treasuries if not protected by trusts—in effect belongs to the public, the pressure to implement reforms will accelerate. So too will the demand for openness and public accountability, transforming foundations from elite, secretive trusts into high-profile "public" institutions. XI

Dowie concludes with a recommendation for the enactment of what he calls "The Foundations Antitrust Act," which, among other things, would break up the largest foundations. He also recommends adding to foundation boards persons appointed by elected officials, up to perhaps a third of their members.

Please do not misread my criticisms of foundations. While they pinpoint shortcomings, they do not connote any lack of admiration for the foundation world. To the contrary, I believe that foundations play an indispensable role in the continuous refreshment and refurbishment of the not-for-profit sector in particular and of American society in general. Foundations are America's primary pool of social venture capital, and they have conferred enormously valuable benefits on all of us. Their independence from government and from any external control over their policy and grantmaking decisions is absolutely necessary. The fact that they have shortcomings must not lead us either to doubt their continuing value or to circumscribe their autonomy. That autonomy is what breathes life and power into American polyarchy, the term that political scientists use to describe a society with many centers of power, as opposed to monarchy, for example, which means one center of power. I have no doubt that it is America's polyarchy—the proliferation of countless points of view on all issues, the proliferation of countless independent sources of initiative—which is the true foundation of our nation's vitality, vibrancy, power and enduring strength. And it is on the independence and autonomy of foundations, which despite all their shortcomings, our polyarchy rests.

One of America's greatest, tallest-standing men, John Gardner, died earlier this year. No one wrote more perceptively about, or worked more effectively for, the nonprofit sector than John did.

"The Independent Sector" was the name John Gardner chose for the organization, which he founded to be the umbrella and advocate for all of America's not-for-profit organizations. In his work as president of the Carnegie Corporation, as founder not only of Independent Sector but also of Common Cause and the Urban Coalition, and as an elegant, wise, and eloquent writer, Gardner has been one of the most influential pioneers and advocates of the not-for-profit sector. I cannot, therefore, end this talk, which focused on the greatness "independence" gives to the not-for-profit sector, without quoting from Gardner's most recent writings on that subject (from *Giving Back the Future: Philanthropy in the Twenty-First Century*, 9/28/98, Oakland CA):

"Every American knows some piece of the independent sector. Foundations generally know a great deal about it. But very few people have glimpsed its extraordinary sweep and its possibilities. Let me draw out first the possibilities and then mention some stern realities....At its best, it is a sector in which we are allowed to pursue truth, even if we are going in the wrong direction; allowed to experiment, even if we are bound to fail; to map unknown territory, even if we get lost. It is a sector in which we are committed to alleviate misery and redress grievances, to give reign to the mind's curiosity and soul's longing, to seek beauty and defend truth where we must, to honor the worthy and smite the rascals with everyone free to define worthiness and rascality, to find cures and to console the incurable, to deal with the ancient impulse to hate and fear the tribe in the next valley, to prepare for tomorrow's crisis and preserve yesterday's wisdom, and to pursue the questions others won't pursue because they are too busy or too lazy or too fearful or too jaded. It is a sector for seed planting and pathfinding, for lost causes and causes that yet may win, and--if I may borrow words from George Bernard Shaw--'for the future and the past, for the posterity that has no vote and the tradition that never had any, for the great abstractions...for the eternal against the expedient, for the

evolutionary appetite against the days of gluttony, for intellectual integrity, for humanity."

But Gardner was also a realist: "...the nonprofit world does have its share of oafs and rascals. I hate to say so. It has its share of unworthy institutions and, of course, it has its share of good people with whom you disagree fiercely. If you can't find a nonprofit institution that you genuinely dislike, then something has gone wrong with our pluralism."

Thanks to the work of Virginia Hodgkinson, her colleagues and students, and the other organizations represented in the audience here today, our pluralism indeed remains strong and will continue so for years to come, God willing.

Thank you very much for your patience.