

ABSTRACT

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Philanthropy: the need for public accountability

Contemporary Australian Philanthropists speak

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Abstract:

On the eve of the new century, the Australian Prime Minister announced a series of measures to encourage greater personal philanthropy. The centrepiece of these incentives was a new form of philanthropy, the Prescribed Private Fund (PPF), modelled on the American family foundation. These foundations grew quickly and almost a decade later, the government determined it would examine their practice. In 2008 a Discussion Paper was released a Discussion Paper and called for submissions.

This paper is the first attempt to identify and analyse the voice of modern Australian philanthropists and explore their views regarding public accountability of philanthropy. The major primary source is the 114 submissions received by The Treasury, in response to its request. These were from individuals and families who had established PPFs and other stakeholders interested in this new form of philanthropy. The other main source is the annual Federal Budget papers for 2001-2009. Therefore both qualitative and quantitative methodologies will be utilised in this analysis. This case study also examines the pertinence of Antonio Gramsci's theory of hegemony and asks if it has any relevance for the practice of modern Australian Philanthropy.

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