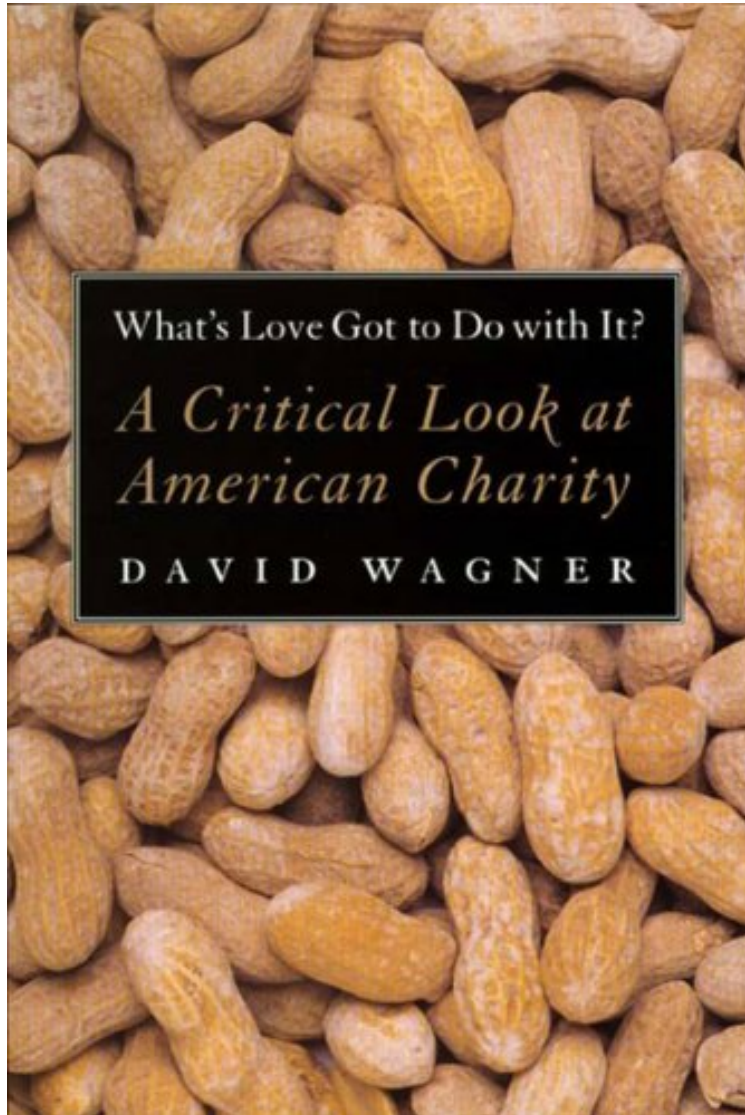


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What's Love Got to Do With It?: A Critical Look at American Charity

David Wagner

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Now available in paperback, *What's Love Got to Do with It?* is an insightful debunking of the way charitable giving disguises American neglect of the public welfare. Award-winning Professor of Social Work and Sociology David Wagner points out that while the United States prides itself on being one of the most generous nations, it provides its citizens with the lowest public benefits of any Western society and has rates of poverty and inequality among the highest in the industrialized world. These two facts, Wagner argues, are not unrelated: independent philanthropy actually provides a cover for the harshness of America's free-market capitalism. In a book that Howard Zinn, author of *A People's History of the United States*, says raises sobering questions for all of us who want to live in a just society, Wagner offers a provocative contribution to our thinking on philanthropy and social welfare.

A concise and vivid chronicle of the rise of paternalistic American charity. -- Frank Browning, Salon.com A stinging critique that exposes the dark side of private benevolence in America. -- Frances Fox Piven and Richard Cloward Clear, lively...wonderfully readable. -- Howard Zinn, author of *A People's History of the United States* This book will do more to end poverty than any number of contributions to elite charities. -- Barbara Ehrenreich Well-reasoned analysis. -- Booklist With charities' influence growing, the time is right to raise red flags and Wagner's are largely on target. -- The Baltimore Sun [T]renchant and sure to be controversial... deconstructs some of America's most venerated icons. -- Michael B. Katz, University of Pennsylvania From the Publisher Advanced Praise: "What's Love Got to do with it?" demolishes the conventional wisdom that private philanthropy is innately superior to public welfare measures. Calmly, reasonably, and drawing on an abundance of research, author David Wagner builds toward the jarring conclusion that organized charity is far better at serving the rich than the poor. If this book gets the attention it deserves, it will do more to end poverty than any number of contributions to elite private charities like the United Way." Barbara Ehrenreich "David Wagner cuts through the self-congratulation that accompanies charity giving in the United States, and asks the important question: why, with all this philanthropy, does the country have so much poverty, homelessness, infant mortality, imprisonment? He points rightly, to the need for a change in the way our economic system distributes benefits. He raises sobering questions for all of us who want to live in a just society. He does all this in clear, lively language which makes his book wonderfully readable" Howard Zinn "This book could not be more timely. As the right-wing call to replace inadequate public services with the 'compassionate conservatism' of private charity steams ahead, David Wagner brings us a stinging critique that exposes the dark side of private benevolence in America. A bracing contribution to a major contemporary debate" Frances Fox Piven and Richard Cloward From the Author A former social worker and labor organizer, David Wagner is a professor of social work and sociology at the University of Southern Maine. His previous books include the C. Wright Mills award winning *Checkerboard Square: Culture and Resistance in a Homeless Community* and *The New Temperance: The American Obsession with Sin and Vice* which won the 1998 Northeast Popular Culture Association book award.