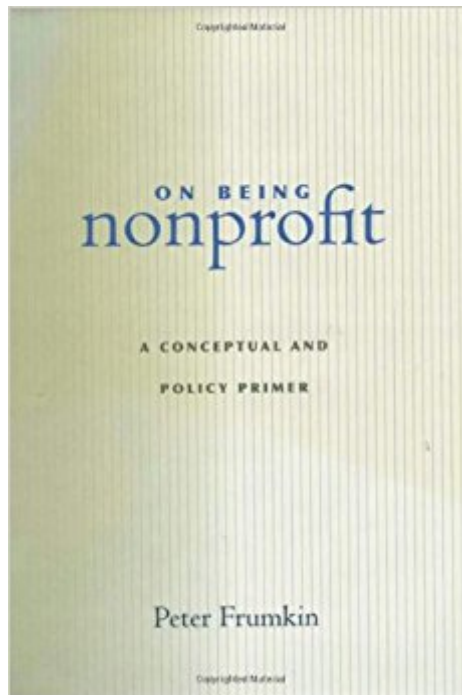




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On Being Nonprofit: A Conceptual And Policy Primer



Synopsis

This concise and illuminating book provides a road map to the evolving conceptual and policy terrain of the nonprofit sector. Drawing on prominent economic, political, and sociological explanations of nonprofit activity, Peter Frumkin focuses on four important functions that have come to define nonprofit organizations. The author clarifies the debate over the underlying rationale for the nonprofit and voluntary sector's privileged position in America by examining how nonprofits deliver needed services, promote civic engagement, express values and faith, and channel entrepreneurial impulses. He also exposes the difficult policy questions that have emerged as the boundaries between the nonprofit, business, and government sectors have blurred. Focusing on nonprofits' growing dependence on public funding, tendency toward political polarization, often idiosyncratic missions, and increasing commercialism, Peter Frumkin argues that the long-term challenges facing nonprofit organizations will only be solved when they achieve greater balance among their four central functions. By probing foundational thinking as well as emergent ideas, the book is an essential guide for nonprofit novitiates and experts alike who want to understand the issues propelling public debate about the future of their sector. By virtue of its breadth and insight, Frumkin's book will be an invaluable resource for anyone interested in understanding the complex interplay of public purposes and private values that animate nonprofit organizations.

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Customer Reviews

This intelligent analysis sheds light on the meaning and operation of the nonprofit sector.

Authorities, including those in government, have often portrayed nonprofits as merely forms of interest groups or, alternatively, service organizations that educate, feed, or otherwise assist some subset of society. This book makes clear that nonprofits include both of these types of organizations and others...Highly recommended. (W. P. Browne Choice 2003-03-01)On Being Nonprofit is an excellent volume for the beginner, as well as a provocative volume for the experienced scholar. I hope this well-written book will stimulate more theorizing about the nature, functions, and contributions of such third sectors in various societies. (Virginia A. Hodgkinson Contemporary Sociology)Frumkin's book ties together, in one place, many strands of thought about the nonprofit sector, and will serve as an important resource for scholars. Exceptionally well-written and easy to understand...Frumkin gives us the kind of intellectual tour of the sector that those of us who call ourselves 'nonprofit scholars' have needed for a long time. (Arthur C. Brooks Public Administration Review 2003-07-01)The book's strong features are its inclusive conceptual framework, its consideration of current debates and controversies, and its exploration of a series of basic tensions that seem inherent in the nonprofit sector due to its diversity. These are challenges that academics, practitioners, policy makers, and other nonprofit stakeholders must understand. (Wolfgang Bielefeld Nonprofit And Voluntary Sector Quarterly 2003-12-01)

Frumkin's little volume captures accurately and provocatively the contested and continuously-changing nonprofit domain. Unblinded by nonprofitdom's self-serving myths, it candidly identifies both the strengths and weaknesses of America's fastest-growing organizational sector. (Peter Dobkin Hall, Harvard University)

I had to read this book for my non-profit management class and it was a pleasure reading and learning what the book has to say about what and why non-profits are necessary in our public space. If you are at all interested in the NGO system, how to navigate it and build a successful and effective non-profit organization, this is the book for you. It is a relatively short book but is quite dense and thorough. Be prepared to digest some academically insightful and sometimes complex ideas. Maybe not the best book for younger students but definitely suited for college level reading. Overall, I would highly recommend this book for your research papers or just some insight into the non-profit sector.

I passed the class, so it must be a good book.

Book was complete, but had lots of writing and underlining in it. Personal notes on pages and underlining on pages made it hard to read.

This is a very good book that is weak on political theory. The book is very readable and I used it with success in my class of upper level undergraduates at a strong undergraduate college. They liked it, found it easy to understand and digest, and it served my needs in terms of explaining what nonprofit organizations are to an audience that had not thought about them before. The book reads as though Frumkin taught this material many times when he was at the Kennedy School and then decided to write down his teaching notes. That's probably why it such a good teaching book. But the book is written from the standpoint of neoclassical economics and the economic theory of nonprofits even though it is written as political theory. The book mostly leaves out political economy, pluralist theory, ideas about social capital, and the ways all of these contribute to shaping nonprofits and the nonprofit sector. Ultimately that caused me to give up on the book as a text for my course.

This book is brilliant. It is thorough in its analysis yet not repetitive or overly analytical. I am a graduate student taking my first nonprofit class and bought this book for my midterm project. In its compact 181 pages the book covers everything we have covered in class and more. The author brilliantly presents both sides of every issues and refrains from asserting anyone one viewpoint. I absolutely loved it and would recommend it to anyone involved in or interested in the nonprofit sector. In fact I suggested to my professor that it be included as a required text for his class because none of our assigned texts can touch this.

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