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Herro, Annie

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Foundations of Radical Philanthropy

Annie Herro, UNSW
Franklin Obeng-Odoom, University of Helsinki

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Abstract

As an institution seeking to redress global inequality and poverty, philanthropy has often been dismissed as either masking structural causes, an insufficient response, or a contribution to the problem itself. Either way, philanthropy is increasingly labelled as philanthro-capitalism because it serves the interest of capital. But what about philanthropy that engages, seeks to transcend, and tries to provide alternatives to the status quo? Such philanthropies have been highlighted in the literature, but their radical foundations could be further clarified. In seeking to do so, this article (a) engages a radical theory of poverty, (b) teases out key principles of radical philanthropy ~~one important foundation, Habitat for Humanity Australia, which self-identifies as radical~~, and (c) critically highlights the need to consider radical philanthropy as a collectively dialectical alternative to philanthro-capitalism ~~evaluates the principles of 'b' against 'a'. While accepting the limitations of philanthro-capitalism, this paper argues that~~ Radical philanthropy is quite distinct and, even if individually limiting, as a collective, it can ~~could potentially~~ be considered as one an important concrete step towards realising contribution to the aphorism, popularised by the World Social Forum, that 'another world is possible'.

~~fight against global inequality and poverty.~~

Key Words: Radicalism, Philanthropy, Poverty, Inequality, Habitat for Humanity Australia.

Introduction

Much has been recently written about the new Gilded Age, defined by the dramatic rise in the wealth of the richest “one per cent”, and what can be done about it (Piketty, 2014; Atkinson, 2016). However, the role philanthropy plays in addressing these inequalities requires greater consideration.

Judging by its size alone, the potential for philanthropy to meaningfully engage with the roots of poverty and inequality is substantial. While not all aimed at addressing poverty and inequalities, there are more than 200,000 philanthropic foundations spread throughout the world and, of these, close to half are registered in the US alone. Foundations are also active in Western (85,000) and Eastern (35,000) Europe and in the global South, particularly in Mexico (10,000 foundations), China (nearly 2,000), and Brazil (1,000) (Martens & Seitz 2015). For these reasons, regardless of the motives of the philanthropists (whether it is to do good, to spread certain ideas, or to benefit from tax reductions), those seeking to understand how to respond to poverty and inequality need to must, therefore, take philanthropy more seriously (Skocpol 2016).

While social scientists ~~ee scholars~~ are paying increasing attention to philanthropy, many of them (e.g., McGoey 2012; Fridell & Konings 2013; Horvath & Powell 2016) restrict their engagement devote themselves to critiquing the “business-model” of philanthro-capitalism. They charge these dominant approaches to philanthropic giving with eroding democracy, undermining the state’s role in the public sector and, critically, diverting attention away from the structural causes of social and economic problems. The eminent political economist, Hyman Minsky (2013), for example, suggested that any poverty reduction programme that failed to create jobs cannot be a compelling alternative to orthodoxy.

If so, what about philanthropy that focuses on addressing structural problems, such as creating jobs, and developing skills for decent jobs? Such philanthropy is much less discussed, but its potential for realising Some scholars have proposed such models of philanthropy along these lines, briefly using case studies as illustrations. They distinguish themselves with at least two key descriptors, namely “transformation” and “social justice” (Edwards 2010; Suárez 2012; Ostrander 2005), and Other descriptors are supporting advocacy groups that target state or market accountability (Clough, 2015), empowering progressive social movements or giving marginalised members of the community a role in the management and distribution of philanthropic funds (Incite! 2017; for a general overview, see Faber & McCarthy 2005) has been recognised. Additional clarifications could help to better spell out how this radical philanthropy they differ from other philanthropies and unify the various criteria of radicalism, a gap acknowledged by some of the authors themselves (Eikenberry & Mirabella 2018; Nickel & Eikenberry 2009).

The modest contribution that this paper seeks to make is to try to offer an overarching theory or set of guiding principles which inform – or ought to inform – this alternative model of philanthropic giving. The is simple schema of radical philanthropy developed in the paper explicitly targets the structures that perpetuate inequality and poverty. Drawing on the radical theory of inequality and poverty (Watchel 1971), we argue that what sets radical philanthropy apart is that it recognises the centrality of the cumulative and interconnecting forces of free-market capitalism, colonialism, neo-colonialism and imperialism in making and maintaining

global poverty. It also recognises that poverty has other cross-cutting dimensions, including the intersectionality of too, such as race, class, and gender, which are intersectional. In promoting economic and social justice, radical foundations seek to engage (for example, by giving jobs in the interim) but ultimately seek to transform the institutions of the current economic system, and to develop a critical, yet constructive, relationship with the state. In practice, while radical philanthropists, in turn, tend to fund individuals and organisations that are demanding and – crucially – proposing alternatives to the status quo, these radical philanthropists are also inconsistent, sometimes engaging in practices that are questionable. Critical engagement with all philanthropy is useful, but it must recognise the foundations of radical philanthropy are quite distinct.

The rest of the paper is divided into two ~~three~~ sections, namely philanthrocapitalism philanthro-capitalism: Defence and its discontents, and theorising principles of radical philanthropy, and the humanity of radicalism. These sections respectively highlight the analytical and practical limitations of philanthrocapitalism philanthro-capitalism, attempt to clarify and theorise radical philanthropy, and evaluate the real-world experiences of Habitat for Humanity Australia, which self-identifies as a radical philanthropy.[†]

Philanthrocapitalism Philanthro-capitalism and its Discontents

Defence

Philanthrocapitalism Philanthro-capitalism is the dominant form of arguably the most common philanthropy in the world-US but it is also embraced elsewhere (Bishop & Green, 2010). It is broadly associated with a new generation of philanthropists who earn^t their money through entrepreneurial initiatives, often based in finance or IT, and who use the skills and attitudes that led to their success in these industries to shape their giving (Moody 2008; Bishop & Green 2010; Holmes 2012).

While philanthrocapitalism philanthro-capitalism can take a variety of forms, it has been widely criticised. From a theoretical perspective, one criticism is that, although poverty is widely regarded as structural and contextual, philanthro-capitalism it utilises a conservative theory of poverty, which locates the causes of poverty in individual characteristics or cultural traits and, hence, tries to 'fix' these attributes. It holds that the solution to poverty can be found in the de-regulation of industry and the market, and increased social regulation of populations (Watchel 1971). For example, the Kovner Foundation, established by the American billionaire, Bruce Kovner, funds think-tanks like the American Enterprise Institute (AEI) (Kovner Foundation 2018a), which are known for espousing individual responsibility and free-market principles, and are influential in shaping the policy sphere (Callahan 2017). David Callahan's (2017) recent book, *The Givers*, quotes Kovner as saying "We know that

[†]The Foundation Centre (2014), a well-regarded source of information about philanthropy, distinguishes between four types of foundations: independent, operating, corporate and community. Habitat is an operating foundation, which means that it mostly runs its own programmes. When discussing different approaches to philanthropy, we also refer to independent foundations, which mainly engage in grant-making activities (e.g. the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation) and community foundations, which raise funds from public and private sources and engage in grant-making within a limited geographical region.

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the free-market economy has lifted hundreds of millions, if not billions, of people from poverty. I want to support institutions that promote those policies” (Callahan, 2017, p. 71). Another AEI donor said that he wants “all people to have the same shot at achieving the American dream” (p. 275), indicating his belief in individualism.

This paradigm takes a suspicious or disparaging view of the state’s role in economic and social spheres. For conservatives, the right economic role of the state is to leave things alone - *laissez-faire*. The state exists solely to protect the basic institutions of capitalism, such as private property ~~and labour markets~~. The “deserving poor” will attain social mobility in this generation or the next by individual effort and via the normal functioning of markets (Watchel 1971). So, constraining the market creates poverty; freeing it brings prosperity. Reflecting this creed, the President of the American Enterprise Institute, Arthur Brooks, is quoted as saying “A lot of our donors...are offended by a sprawling, mediocre, huge, all-encompassing blob of a government that they think is suffocating initiative and excellence” (Callahan 2017). This disdain for what is perceived to be a paternalistic, bloated, and inefficient state not only leads some conservative philanthropists to support conservative fiscal policy reforms and think tanks, but also to shape (and replace) public institutions with their own initiatives so that they reflect market principles (Skocpol 2016).

Perhaps the most well-known example of this type of philanthropy in the United States is the Charter Schools Movement, supported by the Gates and Broad Foundations, among other major philanthropists. According to the Gates Foundation website, charter schools aim to “give thousands of disadvantaged youth access to a rigorous, personalized education” (Gates Foundation 2003), and Broad believes that they will force traditional public schools to step up their game. Although better known in the United States, this concept is increasingly being globalised, thanks to Paul Romer the 2018 Nobel Prize Winner in Economics, who has been promoting the idea in Africa and elsewhere in the world (for a discussion, see Mallaby, 2010).

~~however, evidence of this is questionable (Callahan 2017). As of 2015, the ambition of the Broad Foundation was to move half of all school children in Los Angeles into charter schools (Callahan 2017). Sweeping initiatives such as these have led some commentators to argue that some philanthropists can become “mini-governments” (Eikenberry 2006), crowding out the public sector and, in turn, reducing the legitimacy and efficacy of the state to replace civic goals with narrower concerns about efficiency and markets (Horvath & Powell 2016).~~

This top-down approach to combating poverty is a defining feature of philanthro-capitalism. So, in the conservative tradition, the role of beneficiaries in grant-making is not a priority (Eikenberry & Mirrabella 2018). Their unfailing belief in the power of market means that donor interest discretion is prioritised, amount. As an example, To invoke the Kovner Foundation again, their website states that they “do not accept unsolicited proposals” and that they “select activities based on personal values and experience” (Kovner Foundation 2018b, n.p.). Their board members are mostly In addition, Edwards (2010) observed that the absence of grass roots voices, community organisers, and labour representatives on the boards of many of the major foundations is striking—they are instead populated by business leaders, CEOs of large nonprofits, and the occasional academic or other public figures – which is another feature of conservative foundations (Edwards, 2010).

~~Fixing a set of deviant individual attributes is not the only focus of philanthrocapitalists. Some philanthrocapitalist foundations recognise that poverty arises from other forces too. Government failure Government failure is another explanation-key source. Rather than seeking remedies by altering these social institutions, philanthrocapitalists of the liberal tradition try to use government either to ease the burden of poverty through welfare or help the individual to adapt to existing institutions (Watchel 1971;). As Roclofs, (2005;) points out, liberal foundations in the US have "advocated social security, national health insurance, community development corporations and...individual development accounts, which give money to poor people who save for worthy objectives." They may also emphasise the obligation of society to recognise and affirm the human rights of the poor to live dignified lives (Cornwall & Nyamu-Musembi 2004; Alston 2005). The emphasis here is how large centralised states are incapable of protecting y demand more than charity, even if they support charity. For them, poverty arises from a neglect of the political rights of the poor.~~

~~Markets are seen to be more reliable. failure is viewed another source of poverty and inequality for liberals. This approach to poverty considers it to be a residual problem of a few unfortunate individuals left behind by a market that otherwise works well. In turn, the problems of the unfortunate ones can be addressed by through extending the reaches of the market-"making markets work better for poor people" (World Bank 2001) rather than implementing structural and more comprehensive social protections to redesign the rules of the market. Such is evidently the case of the microcredit boom (Edwards 2010) and shareholder initiatives to force~~

~~The Grameen Bank micro credit loans first established by Muhammed Yunus of Bangladesh and later replicated around the global South is a good example. They provide microloans to poor entrepreneurs and small businesses lacking access to banking and related services. Micro finance has been hailed for increasing people's resilience and reducing their need to sell valued assets in difficult times, but critics have argued that, on its own, does not move people out of poverty (Edwards 2010). Another way such philanthro-capitalists try to make markets work better for the poor is through shareholder action. This involves investing in publicly listed companies to invest ethically or in ways that contribute to poverty reduction and using their power as a shareholder to ask companies to improve on ethical issues through moving resolutions at annual general meetings. As the founder and head of a foundation that engages in international development put it, if a philanthropist is investing their money in an industry, such as the gaming industry, where there is clear evidence that it is harmful "and not turning up at every AGM screaming then you're complicit" (Philanthropy Australia 2018).~~

~~So, poverty does not arise only from inherent individual failings but rather a disenabling politico-social context and a weak state not necessarily inclined or capable to discharge its duties to its citizens.~~

Discontents

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~~Yet, even these p~~Philanthrocapitalists are criticised too. They ~~neglect tend to be less comfortable with those advocating~~ radical systemic change that potentially threatens or undermines the status quo. ~~Roelofs (2005) argues that, traditionally, such foundations have sought to temper radical social change thinkers, organisations and movements in favour of moderates. As one example, she quotes the president of the Ford Foundation saying:~~

~~There is a very important proposition here that for institutions and organizations which are young and which are not fully shaped as to their direction it can make a great deal of difference as to the degree and way in which they develop if when they have a responsible and constructive proposal they can find support for it. If they cannot find such support, those within the organizations who may be tempted to move in paths of disruption, discord and even violence, may be confirmed in their view that American society doesn't care about their needs (Roelofs, 2005, p. 71).~~

~~While Given the dual preference of some philanthro capitalists to be inclusive but to also pursue reformist outcomes, it is likely the boards of many such conservative their foundations could have would constitute a mix of both the usual suspects (such as business leaders, experts etc) and as well as a sprinkling of "grassroots" voices, the former group dominates. Liberal foundations might also seek other ways of including and integrating the perspectives of beneficiaries and the communities being served, such as creating advisory boards, giving to community-led NGOs or employing individuals with lived experiences of poverty and other forms of marginalisation as programme staff (Kenny 2018; Ostrander, Silver & McCarthy 2005).~~

~~DEither way, deep participation of the beneficiaries is not a priority for this type of top-down philanthropy. Of course, they might consult with the poor, but their projects are fundamentally designed, implemented, and monitored by the philanthropists themselves. This is illustrated the fight against the Ebola Virus Disease in Africa. Here, many philanthropic organisations/non-governmental organisations, such as Médecines Sans Frontières, Samaritans Purse, International Medical Purse, Canadian Red Cross, and Partners in Health took the view that it was their technical expertise that the Africans needed because the Africans had no doctors of their own (Obeng-Odoom & Bockarie 2018). Under the auspices of the United Nations, philanthropists such as Bill Gates funded a grand programme in which African anthropologists were recruited to help educate affected communities who were suspicious of external 'help' into an underlying technocratic scheme by making them feel that they were participating in it (Levich 2015). The primary response of external parties was a top-down, rights-based approach that focused on strengthening the "health systems" and the provision of "medicine". While these are important pieces of the puzzle, such a narrow focus resulted in attention being diverted from key factors which caused the poor, powerless and the weak to be disproportionately affected by Ebola. Such factors included social alienation and the implosion of social ties at the family, community, national and regional levels.~~

~~This neglect also resulted in the entrenchment of existing levels of inequalities, a further downgrading of African institutions, and institutionalised a systematic process of control that left the poor dependent on systems designed and enforced by the global North. Such an approach stands in the way of culturally sensitive alternatives that prioritise~~

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indigenous social relations, and an appreciation of the diversity and complexity in African societies (Obeng-Odoom & Bockarie 2018).

Indeed, systematic research, shows that ‘chartering’ is questionable as an approach to addressing social problems (Callahan 2017) in part because of such top down practices. As of 2015, the ambition of the Broad Foundation was to move half of all school children in Los Angeles into charter schools (Callahan 2017), effectively developing parallel “mini-governments” (Eikenberry 2006), which crowd out the public sector and, in turn, reduce the legitimacy and efficacy of the state to replace civic goals with narrower concerns about efficiency and markets (Horvath & Powell 2016). At the global scale, chartering undermines national sovereignty and, in the case of Madagascar, contributed to a coup which removed a national president who was sympathetic to chartering (Mallaby, 2010).

So, generally, these philanthro-capitalists are business-like. They tend to either promote or neglect to challenge the logic of capitalism, such as privatisation and economic indicators to measure performance and accountability. Scholars have identified several tenets of philanthro-capitalism, including (a) a belief that methods drawn from business can solve social problems and are superior to the other methods in use in the public sector and civil society; and (b) a claim that these methods can achieve the transformation of society rather than increased access to socially beneficial goods and services (Edwards 2010).

A fundamental problem is that this paradigm fails to acknowledge the role the market plays in creating many of the social ills philanthropist seek to allay (Eikenberry & Nickel 2009; Eikenberry & Mirabella 2018; Cobb 2015). Some might argue that it is the *application* of the principles of neoliberalism rather than a necessary function of the principles themselves that cause such ills which might be overcome through a more ‘benign application’. Yet, evidence suggests that the failings are inherent in markets; not merely a function of implementation problems (Fridell & Konings 2013). Consider, Wilson’s (2015) research in Ghana. Based on his assessment of the Millennium Villages Project in Bonsaaso, Ghana, Wilson goes so far as to say that some philanthro-capitalists are motivated primarily by the ideology of market capitalism even *at the expense of* scientific problem-solving and communities they purport to serve.

Perhaps the most fundamental critique of philanthro-capitalism₇ is that it diverts critical attention away from the structural causes (e.g., the financial system, the housing system and how goods and services are organised in society) of social problems. Focusing on addressing immediate symptoms, such as slums and streetism, this paradigm does not try to untangle and correct the deeper drivers of the situation, including over accumulation of businesses and resulting gentrification, which drive people into and keeps them in slums ~~and keep them there~~. As C. C. Johnson (2011, n.p.) notes, “In failing to address the dynamics of structural underdevelopment, do-good design performs the grassroots ideological work of neoliberalism by promoting market values and autoregulation.” In response to such criticisms, some scholars argue, implicitly or explicitly, that the best way to support public goods or address social ills is for would-be philanthropists to simply pay more taxes (Horvath & Powell 2016; Cobb 2015), while others propose that serious progress must transcend philanthro-capitalism into the realms of a more radical alternative to the orthodoxy.

Theorising Principles of Radical Philanthropy

~~The is section identifies the central principles of radical philanthropy as they pertain to causes of, and possible remedies solutions to, poverty and inequality; the engagement with the state; and the relationship of philanthropists and their representatives with beneficiaries, however, require greater clarity. Underlining these principles is the recognition that~~
~~We argue that radical philanthropy holds that poverty and inequality is largely thanks to capitalism the prevailing dominant economic system, different forms of colonialism (such as neo-colonialism and imperialism), and the discrimination against of different social groups need to be factored into philanthropy. -If so, the position of radical philanthropy is that addressing poverty must entail -Radicals believe that solutions can be respectively found in- fostering new economic institutions, tackling manifestations of colonialism by supporting local, grassroots initiatives, and combatting racists and discriminatory laws, policies and practices. Radical philanthropy s must view the state as an avenue for struggle and seek, as much as possible, to invest grantmaking power in the beneficiaries.~~
~~We elaborate on each of these points in the discussion below.~~

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~~The foundations of these principles require further exposition. RFirst and foremost,~~
~~radicalism takes a critical perspective on the economic explanation of poverty in capitalism (whether of a conservative or, liberal, or humanist version), and a critical perspective on the institutions of capitalism, such as housing, banking, and the labour market. A major plant in the foundations of these principles is the analytical position Broadly, radicals believe that poverty arises from the institutions of capitalism, especially their tendency towards profit-based growth, and propensity to reinforce the privileged position of dominant groups in society.~~

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In the mainstream media, radicalism tends to be associated with violent extremism or Soviet-style communism but, at its core, it simply means to engage, to question, and to replace orthodoxy for a more empowering alternative which makes the world a better place (Carroll 2015). Indeed, non-capitalist alternatives are often non-violent. For example, liberation theology is radical in its rejection of capitalism and its “preferential option for the poor” yet rejects violence (McGovern 2009, n.p.). The need for philanthropic support of concrete alternatives to capitalist institutions is even more pronounced in view of claims that a central failure of the global ‘Occupy’ protests over social and economic inequality was the inability of the movement to imagine viable replacements to current systems.

Radical alternatives tend to support economic institutions that are inclusive and that foster cooperation. As Caroline Shenaz Hossein (2016a; 2016b) has shown, these alternatives include such diverse social forms as developing solidarity borrowing common among Black people the world over intended to empower members of social groups who have either been rejected, let down, or constrained by financial institutions ~~or are often let down by them~~ because of a clash of values: one of competition and the other of cooperation. Thus, such institutions are not ‘microfinance’ which, as Hermes and Lensink (2007) show, is indeed decentralised capitalist financial system in its mores and norms. Other radical institutions are solving social problems based on dynamic local knowledge of local systems and nature; co-operative trade; not (primarily) based on profiteering. These ancient Black traditions predate

capitalism and contemporary neoliberal finance and helped Black people to thrive even in the days of their brutal enslavement, when they suffered marginalisation and oppression under colonialism and neo-colonial imperialism. Enduring to this day, Hossein shows that they constitute a radical alternative that can transcend laissez-faire capitalism.

An example of a philanthropy supporting alternative economic systems is the McConnell Foundation. ~~McConnell is~~ a large and hugely ambitious foundation, which ~~donates gives away~~ approximately US\$38 million per year in Canada (Huddart 2018). ~~Recognising that They recognise that the~~ “current economic model is falling short when it comes to equality”, ~~it and consequently~~ seeks to support “new economics” to “shift systems underlying poverty”. ~~This McConnell approach It~~ is based on the idea that a social economy approach to development is a powerful tool because its mission is to serve community, ~~not rather than answer to~~ outside shareholders (McConnell Foundation n.d.a). The types of new economies the foundation is supporting include “local food economies” where food is grown, fished, raised and processed within a limited geographic area and distributed over shorter distances from consumers’ homes than is common in the global industrial food system (McConnell Foundation, n.d.b). Its purpose is to ~~support the process of nourishing foster~~ local economies, ~~which provide and provide~~ healthy and affordable food to ~~local people in the area~~.

Radical ~~philanthropy s~~ also sees poverty arising from colonialism, neo-colonialism, and imperialism, often waged through ~~military~~ war or economic warfare (sanctions). For example, colonial public investments in education, health, and infrastructure continue to influence current regional inequalities in French-speaking West Africa. This enduring impact can be explained by the fact that later investments continue to be in similar areas, thus perpetuating the economic disparities established by the former coloniser (Huillery 2009). Therefore, any poverty-alleviation measures supported by philanthropic foundation must be informed by the history ~~and political-economic context~~ of the region, the role of the colonisers in the shaping it and its ongoing implications. Similarly, it is not uncommon for the large philanthro-capitalists to fund multinational companies, such as Monsanto, to develop genetically modified seeds that small-scale farmers in parts of Africa can afford (Morvaridi 2016). Yet local and global social movements have challenged whether genetically modified crops are in the interest of smallholder farmers given the lack of understanding and research into local contexts (Morvaridi 2012). Instead, they promote the use of native seed varieties to achieve locally sustainable, rural economies that through agricultural biodiversity can adapt to changing climates and environments (Morvaridi 2016). Radical philanthropists, therefore, prioritise where possible, local solutions to problems that are geographically and culturally situated. This is not to say that a foundation that, for example, seeks to undermine capitalism by creating communitarian housing for impoverished white males in rural areas of United States would not be – and could not be – radical philanthropy. Rather it is to say that where manifestations or vestiges of colonialism are present and contribute to poverty, radical philanthropy would not shy away from addressing them.

A related point is that radical philanthropy recognises that poverty has other dimensions, too, such as race, class, and gender, which are intersectional (Watchel 1971; Crenshaw 1991). This means that laws, social norms or political institutions that overlook racism, sexism, classism or which themselves discriminate on the basis of these and other

social identities contribute to the problem. For example, philanthropic organisations targeting poverty and homelessness among women would recognise – and tailor their programmes to – the reality that women of colour, older women, women with disabilities will be disproportionately affected by poverty and so require particular attention (Herro 2017). The Reichstein Foundation (n.d.a) of Australia, whose mandate is “to achieve a more equitable distribution of wealth and power” reflects this principle in the initiatives it supports. Employing the tactic of “strategic litigation”, it has assisted community groups to mount a case against the government over a discriminatory wage assessment tool which affects persons with disabilities. Though not supported by this particular foundation, strategic litigation, notably the successful lawsuit against the Dutch government’s climate policy to reduce carbon emissions by 25 per cent by 2020, has proved to be a very effective tool in changing government policy (Neslen 2015). The Reichstein Foundation (n.d.b) also supported the national cross-disability organisation, People with Disability Australia, to undertake advocacy work on issues of wage discrimination and inequality experienced by employees with disability

The position of radical philanthropy towards the state is textured. While some radicals view the state as part of the problem, arguing that it only serves the interests of the rich and is an impediment to social process (Watchel 1971; O’Connor 1973), more nuanced radical theorists view the state as an avenue for struggle (Stilwell 2012), which involves neither privileging nor forsaking it but rather “reclaiming the state” (Wainwright 2013). Indeed, it is the state that sets the rules underpinning the operation of the labour markets, land, businesses and so on which means it is both a problem and a solution to poverty and inequality.

They do this not only through strategic litigation, as discussed previously, but also through the support of social movements calling for radical change both domestically and internationally. Domestically, the UK-based Edge Fund (2018) distinguishes itself from liberal foundations by pointing out that “there are a lot of funders out there who are prepared to fund somewhat politically motivated groups, whereas Edge Fund will fund the groups that are prepared to really challenge the system.”ⁱⁱ Similarly, the Belfast-based Social Change Initiative (2018) works both globally and locally on “[d]eveloping effective and sustainable activism to bring about social change; and [m]aximising the impact of funding to support social change.”

Participatory grant-making is fundamental to radical philanthropy. Edwards advocates that philanthropists give civil society “...as much money as possible with the fewest strings attached, so that the nonprofits that want it can get on with doing what they do best...” which means “endowments and foundations controlled by disadvantaged groups themselves”. In practice, Edge Fund is doing just this. A representative states, “We don’t just redistribute money, we redistribute power” and emphasises that they are committed to “re-centering and challenging the power dynamics between the funder and the person receiving the funds” (Edge Fund 2018). Most groups they fund are self-organised and led by the persons with disabilities, working class, women, people of colour, gypsy and Roma and other groups who

ⁱⁱ The case of Edge Fund reveals that there are legal implications for this model of philanthropy. They are not registered as a charity in the UK as this would limit them to only supporting ‘charitable’ projects and instead are a registered society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014.

have been marginalised to different degrees by the social, economic and political structures. They insist: “We don’t attempt to control or dictate to groups. We really are about trying to allow people to just tell us what they want and let them get on with it.” They ask grant recipients themselves to review new applicants and vote on who should receive funding. Indeed, Ostrander (2005) documents that the women’s funding movement in the US seeks to blur the line between those who give money and those who receive it, which is consistent with feminist visions of non-hierarchical relationships.

~~The literature from the peak body Philanthropy Australia is peppered with stories of foundations described ‘game changing’, ‘contentious’ and supporting ‘people-powered justice’, suggesting the radical philanthropy might be on the rise. But whether any philanthropy embodies these radical values is an empirical question. We now assess an operational foundation, Habitat for Humanity, which was inspired by the epitome of the humanity of radicalism: Clarence Jordan – the founder of Koinonia Farm (Fuller 1994) – provides another example of radical philanthropy. –Its inspiration, Clarence Jordan, globally known as an advocate of a radical approach to ending poverty, sought to free both the oppressed and the oppressor (Downing 2017), a philosophy pursued by Habitat for Humanity. This twin and their relationship was a focus of commentary in a lengthy article published in *Huffington Post* (Carey 2012). –Indeed, the Fuller family, which founded Habitat for Humanity, went into an alliance with Clarence Jordan to establish Koinonia Partners (Fuller, 1994), which became the forerunner to Habitat.~~

The Humanity of Radicalism

There are likely to be hundreds of institutions that have defined themselves as radical, game changing or some of the other terms associated with radical philanthropy, including a number – perhaps a significant number – that have emerged from radical or progressive roots like HFHA.ⁱⁱⁱ In the interests of brevity, we have chosen just one case study to show the principles of radical philanthropy have been interpreted in practice and the challenges organisations that identify as radical face in living up to the all the facets of radical philanthropy.

Habitat for Humanity International was founded in 1976. Working through a series of national branches, the real action of HFH can be seen by examining these. In this sense, Habitat for Humanity Australia (HFHA), the national Australian affiliate, is particularly interesting. Although understudied, HFHA is quite influential. It oversees a large programme with implications for Cambodia, Vietnam, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Myanmar, India, and Fiji as well as the Habitat programme in Thailand, Nepal, and Sri Lanka, among others (HFHA 2017, 2018c). It is still answerable to Habitat for Humanity International, the parent organisation which, over the years, has grown so large that, in the USA at least, it is regarded as the eighteenth largest not for profit organisation (Smith 2013). Although HFHA works in Australia where it has affiliates in New South Wales, South Australia, Queensland, and

ⁱⁱⁱ E.g. the organisations in *solidaire* <https://solidairenetwork.org/grantees/>

Victoria, its scale of operation in that country is small, often limited to building two homes per year.

Previous studies of the scheme (Adarkwa & Oppong 2007; Obeng-Odoom 2009, 2012) have mainly approached it as ‘housing research’, such as by examining the extent to which the organisation has contributed to meeting the housing needs of the community. They have not looked at the core philosophy of the scheme, how it has evolved and the wider social and economic role of creating ‘a habitat for humanity’.

The approach taken in this paper is different. It entails a study of how the organisation itself defines its parameters and its claims to success. In doing so, our research tries to show the extent to which and how this scheme transcends philanthro-capitalism in a very explicit way. We also present our own critical reflections on its shortcomings, highlighting where and how the organisation fails to live up to the principles of radical philanthropy. We rely on publicly available financial and annual reports that HFHA is obligated under Australian law to share. For other questions not available in the reports, we interviewed Habitat Staff, and studied material that it publishes on its official websites.

Commitment to Systemic Change

Habitat for Humanity is based on ‘the theology of the hammer’ (Fuller 1994): the idea that love for God must be acted out today, not merely stated in terms of anachronistic stories. HFHA’s projects are centrally focused on housing, based on the premise that decent housing for all is needed to ‘eliminate poverty housing and homelessness’ (Fuller 1994). To a lesser degree, the organisation ~~y~~ also focuses on disaster risk reduction and recovery, urban programming and advocacy, and water sanitation and hygiene (HFHA 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018a).

For Habitat, the provision of decent housing is not just about ownership or about building new houses. It is also about repairing run-down houses and improving neighbourhoods (Fuller 2000). Habitat ~~They~~ attempts to express God’s love through practically creating and sustaining communities and promote collective action to resolve collective problems. Sarah Glynn (2009) shows that social or public housing has a direct effect on alleviating poverty, on improving mental health, wellbeing, and on strengthening social stability. For these and other reasons, ‘the right to adequate housing’ is seen by the United Nations as a fundamental human right (United Nations General Assembly 1966). The provision of housing is also socially transformative. The American urban economist, Jane Jacobs (1961), strongly advocated this perspective as have more recent scholars (see, for example, Harris & Arku 2006; Tibaijuka 2009). Therefore, Habitat’s mission is largely consistent with radicalism as addressing housing is one way to tackle global and widespread social problems at a systemic level.

~~As we investigate further, we find that while many—but not all—of their words and deeds are also consistent with this paradigm.~~

Fostering an Alternative to Free-Market Capitalism

~~Does Habitat, through its philosophy and programmes, provide an alternative free-market capitalism? In many ways, yes, it does.~~ Habitat's work is grounded in 'Biblical economics'.

This means 'no profit and no interest; taking what limited resources are available, asking God to bless them, then going to work, and proceeding with the sure knowledge that God's love extends to everyone – with a preferential concern for the poor' (Fuller 1994: 7). This approach is complemented by 'the theology of enough' (Fuller 1994: 31-39), which Habitat promotes and that is specifically designed for the rich. It is a statement against relentless wealth accumulation and in favour of defending the cause of the poor and the needy by pursuing equity (Fuller 1994: 31-32). It also means that the rich who support Habitat must not seek to recreate affluent ways of life in the Habitat programme by building big, luxury housing. Rather, they need to scale down their own ways of life and live more modestly (Baggett 2002: 72-73). This denial of incessant accumulation is one of Habitat's key claims to being system-changing rather than simply system-conforming.

HFHA also emphasises the non-commodification of land. Following Clarence Jordan who 'loved...the land, which he considered a sacred gift from God' (Fuller, 1994: 2), land itself is obtained through non-commodity processes of donations from communities, from individuals, from the state and from other institutions. Where there are no donations, Habitat buys land, cheaply from the state, from forced sale, or from the open market, although the latter is the least preferred for reasons of cost (Adarkwa & Oppong 2007; Obeng-Odoom 2008; Smith 2013). Habitat housing is not for sale and the Habitat model insists on small, decent housing (Obeng-Odoom 2008; Fuller 1994). These are values that, as J.P. Baggett (2002) notes, have become the lingua franca of Habitat and are summarised as 'the economics of Jesus' or 'public religion'. They could, however, perhaps be more accurately be called 'public economics' given the affinity of the Habitat values to the field of public and co-operative economics.

~~Habitat housing loans are to people with incomes typically 30-60 per cent lower than the median area average and the housing can be about twenty times less expensive than comparable housing in the housing market (Obeng-Odoom 2009; Lattimore & Lauria 2018). Habitat also attempts to modify the economic system by helping to empower communities in monetary terms. Here, the emphasis is on helping to grow social enterprises or economic activities which aim to meet the social or environmental needs of Habitat beneficiaries. Not only does building social enterprises seek to avoid the problem of providing welfare without jobs, doing so also discourages the tendency to develop the problem of taking (benefit) without giving (responsibility). Beneficiaries must pay back a low/no interest loan, so there is both an incentive to work without the risk of burnout as is often experienced in the market economy as well as the motivation to take care of HFHA housing. In this sense, beneficiaries of the housing scheme are neither objectified nor treated as empty barrels. It has mechanisms to avoid financialisation and commodification, for example, by debarring completed housing from becoming a commodity.~~

~~Data on economy wide and various social impacts of the housing project are not readily available, although we expect, following Hirschman (1958), that it has backward, forward, and combined effects. Research on Habitat projects outside of the Asia Pacific region (Phillips et al. 2009; Lattimore & Lauria 2018) has systematically discovered these effects. This means that not only does housing, by using local materials as is common~~

practice with Habitat, create jobs in the local housing materials industry but the provision of housing also creates the conditions to improve the productivity of the people who have been housed. This housing-economic development nexus is well known in the literature (Harris & Arku 2006; Tibaijuka 2009; Glynn 2009). Specifically, by removing the levels of rent required to be paid to speculators, people have more money to spend. From a Keynesian perspective, we expect these expenditures to generate further economic activity which, in turn, generate other multiplier effects—even beyond economic impacts. Hohmann (2013) notes that ‘housing is embedded in our social structures. As a physical object, it has a pervasive influence on lifestyles, the arrangement of neighbourhoods, the attainment of social welfare and patterns of household consumption’.

Reinforcing Capitalism

Despite these radical credentials, HFHA seems to have deviated from its roots over the years and with the different leadership styles. For instance, in its early stages, there was a much stronger emphasis on community organisation and a stronger insistence on sharing community values as prerequisite for holding decision-making positions in the organisation. However, during the tenure of Paul Leonard as leader of the Habitat International, he tried to scale up the activities of the organisation, professionalise it, and to approach new possible donors (Leonard 2006). These changes are not trivial because, as J.P. Baggett (2002) and C.A. Smith (2013) note, they sometimes impinge on key values of the organisation. For example, the influence of ‘professional hires’, such as business graduate from elite universities, who see their role merely to produce more and more housing have sometimes been at the expense of some of Habitat’s other social goals, such as putting the poor first while carrying out their mission (Baggett 2002).

Another deviation from radicalism is that while it is well known that the mining industry in Australia has contributed immensely to the rapid increases in property values (Lawrie et al. 2011), HFHA celebrates its partnership with key mining interests such as Norton Gold Fields Ltd., which has been described as the ‘Owner of the Paddington gold mine in the Eastern Goldfields’ in Australia. The organisations announced that ‘Habitat for Humanity is now looking for new partners from the resources industry who are keen to include such projects as part of their corporate social responsibility charters’ (Sizer 2010). So, HFHA seems unaware that it is walking a contradictory path: on the one hand, mining resources can help HFHA to build more housing but, on the other hand, there are grave issues that arise from partnering with organisations which plunder at the expense of the environment, and all who depend on it. Indeed, mining activities raise property values in such a way that HFHA building activities can be curtailed because of rising land prices.

The literature from the peak body Philanthropy Australia is peppered with others stories of foundations described as ‘game-changing’, ‘contentious’ and supporting ‘people-powered justice’, suggesting that radical philanthropy might be on the rise. Some of the actions of many of these philanthropic organisations might have something in common with radical philanthropy.

Of course, whether it is McConnell Foundation (promoting social economies), Reichstein Foundation (n.d.a) of Australia using the courts to institutionalise just wages, or Edge Fund which funds social change, these radical philanthropies have their own limitations. For instance, despite these radical credentials, HFHA has many limitations (see, for example, Baggett, 2002; Lawrie et al. 2011; Smith, 2013). While it is well-known that the mining industry in Australia has contributed immensely to the rapid increases in property values, HFHA celebrates its partnership with key mining interests such as Norton Gold Fields Ltd., which has been described as the ‘Owner of the Paddington gold mine in the Eastern Goldfields’ in Australia. The organisations announced that ‘Habitat for Humanity is now looking for new partners from the resources industry who are keen to include such projects as part of their corporate social responsibility charters’ (Sizer 2010). So, HFHA seems unaware that it is walking a contradictory path: on the one hand, mining resources can help HFHA to build more housing but, on the other hand, there are grave issues that arise from partnering with organisations which plunder at the expense of the environment, and all who depend on it. Indeed, mining activities raise property values in such a way that HFHA building activities can be curtailed because of rising land prices. These major failings, however, do not negate HFHA’s radical contributions.

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The methodological lesson here is that no *one* philanthropy embodies these dynamic radical values, which are fundamentally based on a radical theory of poverty (Wachtel, 1975). The key point with the examples used in this paper is that testing single organisations against the conceptualisation of radical philanthropy is not useful. Radical philanthropy – much like its anti-thesis, philanthro-capitalism – refers to a collective set of principles intended to help in reshaping the entire philanthropy landscape. The value of these principles lie in their *dialectical relationship* with philanthro-capitalism in seeking to show that ‘another world is possible’.

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HFHA also endorses microfinance schemes, which raises important questions about their radical credentials. In the Asia Pacific region, HFHA notes that ‘Most microfinance loans are used for home renovation, extension or improvement, with average loan size being between USD 1500 to 2000’ (email correspondence, 5 June 2018). Microfinance schemes are patterned after capitalist finance and they differ radically from alternative, non-capitalist money pools systems extensively analysed by C.S. Hossein (2016a, 2016b). Yet, according to an HFHA staff member with whom we corresponded for this paper, ‘While not all projects have a microfinance component, if financing is required HFH will partner with local MFIs [micro finance institutions], who then provide capital to clients for home improvement,

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renovation and/or construction. HFH delivers advisory services through local and international experts to design client-centric housing microfinance products, building capacity of loan officers and improved systems' (email correspondence, 5 June 2018).

Microcredit may have its benefits and, in the Asia-Pacific region where they are particularly widespread (Young et al. 2009), it makes sense that HFHA works with them. Yet, as systematic, empirical research (Hermes & Lensink 2007) shows, its benefits are contingent rather than assured. Often, the non-payment of interest due on microcredit can lead to serious consequences such as repossession. So, Habitat housing schemes can fall prey to the foreclosure practices of its microcredit partners.

These uncertainties about repossession do not apply where there are no such partnerships with microcredit schemes, of course. For example, research in Ghana (Adarkwa & Oppong 2007; Obeng-Odoom 2008) shows that such Habitat for Humanity has mostly extricated itself from the perils of microcredit. There, a revolving fund is established by Habitat into which three types of payments are made: mortgage payments, donations from Habitat for Humanity International, and donations by others such as the state. Indeed, in Ghana, Habitat housing is commons-based. That means communities invite Habitat to develop housing on common land that is collectively managed and owned. There is no private property in this sense and hence no speculation, no hoarding, and no monopolistic practices to artificially increase the price of land. Coupled with the use of local materials for building, Habitat housing can be about ten times less than similar properties on the market. Beneficiaries obtain their own housing but the housing stands on common land and hence the scheme reinforces the power of commons-based property relations.

The 'theology of enough' is one of Habitat's most important claims to being radical. This notion of the rich giving up on relentless accumulation to inspire other rich classes is a bold claim, but has HFHA or even Habitat group generally been successful here? How many more Fullers has Habitat produced? The organisation seems to have gone silent on this issue in ways that loudly suggest that they have failed. Even worse, by their choice of recruiting donors, they have succeeded in reinforcing choices already made by the extractive industries: to exploit, to exclude, and to plunder.

Struggling with Combatting (Neo)Colonial Roots of Poverty and Supporting Localism

Although not stated explicitly as a vision in the theology, if it is to be called a radical philanthropy then, by our framework, HFHA should also be engaging the colonial and neo-colonial roots of poverty. Doing so is a political and economic acknowledgement that imperial forces maintain structures of poverty. Providing housing for such people is necessary but it is not sufficient as a radical solution. Similarly, HFHA disaster programmes in the Asia-Pacific region are important, but do not probe the structures of recurrent disasters or what Naomi Klein (2007) has called 'disaster capitalism' as a truly radical philanthropy would. This is where neo-liberal economic policies, which transfer wealth and power from the people to the global corporate elite, are pushed through following 'shocks', such as natural disasters.

At the same time, however, prioritising grassroots voices and capacities, which is another feature of radicalism, are in many ways central to HFHA. Indeed, its founder describes it as a ‘...grassroots movement of people’ (Fuller 1994). Unlike philanthro-capitalist foundations, such as Architecture for Humanity, Project H, the Humanitarian International Design Organization, which advocate technocratic solutions and the privileging of ‘experts’ and technical solutions to social problems (Johnson 2011), the Habitat for Humanity Housing Scheme prioritises building local expertise and using traditional knowledge, insisting on the use of traditional building materials. As a HFHA representative put in, “Shelter in the mountains of Nepal are very different and require different environmental provisions to houses on an island in the Pacific” (email correspondence, 5 June 2018). So, while Habitat avoids engaging with the (neo-)colonial roots of poverty and inequality and getting involved in the politics of post-disaster policy reform, it is nevertheless prioritises local approaches to local housing problems.

Failing to Recognise Intersectional Dimensions of Poverty

The primary selection criterion for a Habitat for Humanity Australia donation is need—the extent to which the applicant is facing ‘housing affordability stress’. Provided there is need, anyone, regardless of religion, age, or gender or other criteria such as sexuality, can qualify for the scheme. In practise, beneficiaries have been homeless people, street dwellers, those who live in slums, and ghettos, those affected by disaster, and others at the risk of living in housing stress often approach HFHA for support. The right to adequate housing has the most profound effect when it is enjoyed by the most marginalised in society, such as women, children, the elderly, slum dwellers, homeless peoples, persons with disabilities, displaced peoples, migrants, and Indigenous peoples (UN HABITAT 2015). There is no evidence, however, that Habitat is explicitly targeting groups that are most affected by poverty and homelessness.

Inability to Address the Concentration of Power

On the one hand, the board of HFHA is made up of professional women and men, mostly from Australia and New Zealand (HFHA 2018b), suggesting that much more could be done at the level of governance to redistribute power to the recipients of the organisation’s largesse. On the other hand, HFHA projects decentralise decision making to the lowest possible level. Various community organisations handle key decisions about where to build and how. HFHA philanthropy also promotes collective support and collective responsibility by insisting that community members help one another in alleviating their housing need, which re-frames participants in the HFHA projects not as mere beneficiaries of charity, nor as mere clients of business, but rather as social partners. In a sense, this feature makes the provision of housing a way of addressing root causes of social deprivations within the prevailing economic system.

——— A key assumption of those who believe that social housing is socially transformative is the try to incentivise the rich to live among the poor to provide role models for the poor to

change their lifestyle and for them to emulate how the rich take care of their housing (Lattimore & Lauria 2018). In other words, the housing problem and the problem of the rich can be addressed best by diffusing social housing within rich neighbourhoods or enticing rich people to live among the poor. What makes Habitat particularly interesting and underscores its place in alternative philanthropy is that it turns this assumption on its head. It expresses confidence in collective abilities of the poor to build their way out of poverty. Moreover, the effectiveness of poor to poor empowerment has been empirically verified in external studies on Habitat for Humanity (Lattimore & Lauria 2018). In turn, Habitat seeks to build a community of dedicated marginalised people committed to improving their social conditions by challenging conventional, top-down theories on how to combat social and economic inequality.

Ongoing Problematic Relationship with the State

Partnership with the state all levels—local, state or provincial, and national—is particularly important for Habitat, but it is also this partnership that is complicated (Smith 2013). Fuller (1994) himself explains their nuanced relationship in the following terms:

...[W]e have called upon governmental units at various levels to ‘set the stage’, so that Habitat, with private funds, can build on that stage. What we mean by ‘setting the stage’ is: (1) providing land as a grant or at a nominal price; (2) donating or selling at a reduced price houses or apartment complexes that have fallen into disrepair; and (3) putting in streets, sidewalks, and services. In other words, we look to governments to prepare the way so that Habitat volunteers—using donated materials or materials purchased with donations from churches, civic and other organizations, companies, foundations, or individuals—can build or renovate houses for needy families.

But because Habitat organisations around the world can approach the Habitat mission how they deem fit given the local conditions, Habitat’s relationship with the state varies. In North America, Habitat looks very different from India or from Ghana. In North America, Habitat has been styled as an alternative to the state because it does a better job than the state in providing and managing public housing. In turn, the state seeks to promote affordable housing by simultaneously increasing its support for Habitat and relinquishing its direct role. This arrangement creates a bizarre situation in which Habitat looks like a private competitor (Hackworth 2009; Smith 2013). Whereas in other regions and localities, especially in the Asia-Pacific and African regions, Habitat is seen as a complement to the state.

Conclusion

This article has identified the principles underpinning radical philanthropy based on the radical theory on poverty. In doing so, it has ~~we-shown~~ ~~ed~~ that radical philanthropy. This article has shown that philanthropic radicalism or radical philanthropy is not simply an idea: it is both a paradigm and a movement. As a paradigm, it looks for the explanation of inequality and poverty in malfunctioning political-economic structures; not in individual

failings, nor the market, nor “expert” solutions. As a movement, radicalism recognises that seeking to address poverty only through reimagining is limited. So, radicalism also emphasises political action for social change.

~~We have shown that such political action~~ might include supporting alternative economies, tackling (neo-)colonial roots of poverty and inequality and prioritising indigenous ideas, practices and institutions as well as supporting the decommodification of land. Seeking to address institutional discrimination that exclude marginalised group through, for example, strategic litigation is also central ~~to the movement~~. Finally, radical philanthropy ~~as a movement~~ views the state as both an obstacle, and a strong contributor to, addressing the problem of poverty and inequality often working alongside radical philanthropy in a complex social process.

We have drawn on examples of foundations throughout this paper ~~and a case study~~ to illustrate what radical philanthropy ‘looks like’ in practice. As ~~these examples show ease of HFHA shows~~, although radical philanthropy is distinctive, it as a social practice can be contradictory, it is still distinctive when viewed narrowly in terms of individual examples. We use the conclusion of this article to tease out some of these contradictions and consider what they reveal about radical philanthropy in theory and in practice.

~~W~~First, ~~the case study shows that while~~ an organisation might seek to foster an alternative and more just and cooperative economic system, when it comes to running the organisation itself, especially a large one like the one investigated, under investigation, these commitments are easily compromised. For example, ~~we showed that~~ HFHA’s partnerships with extractivist mining companies is antithetical to many of its values, all the while recognising that such partnership help it achieve its radical mission in terms of the provision of housing. The ‘professionalisation’ of Habitat, which some have argued has compromised aspects of their social justice and communitarian ethos, is another example.

These first contradictions raises questions about whether additional principles need to be included among those that constitute radical philanthropy. Should a commitment to ethical investments and partnerships also be a central feature of radical philanthropy? Is this even feasible for organisations struggling to find the resources to carry out their missions? Both examples beg the question: is the perceived imperative to ‘scale-up’ a programme or grow and organisation ever justifiable if, in doing so, central virtues of radicalism are diluted? These go to the heart of the long-standing debates about whether to prioritise justice in outcome or procedure, that is, whether it is the end that should justify the means.

On a related point, the HFHA case sheds light on the challenges of placing the beneficiaries at the centre of the organisation because, especially when such organisations have decentralised nodes in various countries, the power dynamics between grantors and grantees can vary greatly. This was highlighted in the different practices of Habitat Ghana in contrast to Habitat Australia as it was with the composition of the former’s board which predominantly comprised professionals from Australia and New Zealand. These intra-organisational contradictions also manifested in Habitat’s engagement with the state: in some contexts it was constructive (as understood by radicals), in others it was not. Both examples raise a similar question: is there an inverse relationship between the size of an organisation and its adherence to radical principles? Also, at issue is

The case study also highlights the tension between service delivery and political advocacy.

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Clearly, ~~t~~This article has shown that philanthropic radicalism is inherently political: it looks for the explanation of inequality and poverty in malfunctioning political-economic structures; not in individual failings, nor the market, nor “expert” solutions. Radicalism recognises that seeking to address poverty only through reimagining is limited. So, radicalism also emphasises political action – including challenging philanthro-capitalism and its institutions -for social change.

~~W~~On the one hand, HFHA shows that when guided by radical principles, such as the non-commodification of land, an organisation can contribute to systemic change even in the provision of ~~houses—a~~ basic services. On the other hand, ~~in the performance of this function, the non-engagement HFHA fails to engage with~~ political institutions which set ‘the rules of the game’ that led their beneficiaries to require the ~~ir housing~~-services in the first place. ~~In addition, their post-disaster response does not challenge the practice of ‘disaster capitalism’ which maintains structures of poverty in post-disaster reconstruction efforts. However, is~~ it is unreasonable to expect one organisation to be all things at once, so ? ~~T~~The practical analytical lesson from considering these examples is to simultaneously exemplify principles and to show their limitations when pursued as stand-alone ideas by individual organisations. ~~of doing so would be considerable, not to mention costly as it might jeopardise HFHA’s access to the humanitarian space as sometimes happens with organisations that speak out on political issue (e.g. Reiff).~~

~~R~~In sum, radical philanthropy is better placed to realise its potential, if pursued as a collective and dialectical set of principles to reshape philanthropy. ~~It~~As a cluster of meanings, the foundations of radical philanthropy can serve as a springboard ~~has potential to be further developed and could have important implications for the struggle against the new ‘Gilded Age’ and its relationship with the other aims of philanthropy.~~

. More in-depth studies into several of the foundations mentioned in this article could be carried out, perhaps, building on our attempt to theorise ~~articulate the principles of radical philanthropy and raise questions about its character~~ to throw additional theoretical and empirical floodlights on the dimensions of radical philanthropy.

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