



Daughters of the Declaration: How Women Social Entrepreneurs Built the American Dream

Claire Gaudiani, David Graham Burnett

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America's founding fathers established an idealistic framework for a bold experiment in democratic governance. The new nation would be built on the belief that "all men are created equal, and are endowed...with a right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." The challenge of turning these ideals into reality for all citizens was taken up by a set of exceptional American women.

Distinguished scholar and civic leader Claire Gaudiani calls these women "social entrepreneurs," arguing that they brought the same drive and strategic intent to their pursuit of "the greater good" that their male counterparts applied to building the nation's capital markets throughout the nineteenth century. Gaudiani tells the stories of these patriotic women, and their creation of America's unique not-for-profit, or "social profit" sector. She concludes that the idealism and optimism inherent in this work provided an important asset to the increasing prosperity of the nation from its founding to the Second World War. Social entrepreneurs have defined a system of governance "by the people," and they remain our best hope for continued moral leadership in the world.



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