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The Routledge Companion to Nonprofit Management

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The Routledge Companion to Nonprofit Management, edited by Helmut Anheier and Stefan Toepler, offers a comprehensive guide to key current research insights regarding the core challenges faced by the third sector. This volume is best suited for advanced undergraduate students with some prior knowledge of theories of the nonprofit sector as well as nonprofit MA and PhD students interested in a condensed and up-to-date summary of key issues. Six major sections make up this volume, including parts on different regional contexts of nonprofit management, leading and planning, managing internally, managing externally, funding sources, and social enterprise. Anheier and Toepler frame these parts with an opening essay highlighting the growing relevance of nonprofits and NGOs as well as the key distinctive features separating them from corporations and governmental agencies. The first main section consists of eight chapters written by regional experts on the different contexts of nonprofit management. These chapters typically provide a brief historical background, a current status update, and a forward-looking perspective on major challenges for the sector as well as future research needs. Part II, titled 'Leading and Planning' takes on issues of board governance, leadership, and strategic management as key factors shaping the overall health and capacity of nonprofits. Part III considers major issues of managing nonprofits internally, including budgeting, volunteer management, and new information technologies.

Part IV shifts attention to what nonprofits typically manage externally, including collaborations, advocacy efforts, fundraising relations, and marketing. Part V dives then more deeply into the most important external relations most nonprofits have in raising the resources needed for their survival. In this section, some of the core sources of funding are covered, including individual giving, foundations, corporate donations, and government grants. Notably absent here is earned income which in many countries represents a significant, if not dominant, source of funding. The final main section of the volume highlights social enterprise as a relatively new space of nonprofit activities. This includes chapters elaborating on what social innovation is, how impact investing may change the sector, and what to make of new, hybrid organizational forms bridging the nonprofit and the for-profit organizational form.

The volume brings together solid and easily accessible summaries on many central topics prevalent in nonprofit research. The chapters serve as excellent first stops for anyone taking a

closer look at a specific nonprofit issue, but also offer more seasoned researchers an opportunity to quickly update their knowledge and find new leads in the references. The social enterprise section adds a crucial part by opening up the practice and study of nonprofit management to the possibility of fundamental disruption either because societal problems are approached through new strategies (e.g., social innovation) or because the institution of the nonprofit is being complemented or replaced by new organizational forms that are funded and regulated differently than the traditional charity model. Anheier and Toepler have written elsewhere about how policies regulating the nonprofit sector are central in understanding its struggles in many industrialized countries (Anheier & Toepler, 2019), and this would have been an excellent addition as a concluding chapter reflecting on the expanding knowledge base of nonprofits across the globe. While four of the five parts of the volume highlight 'best practices' as well as 'best research' on standard nonprofit management topics, broader questions about the role of the sector in societies raised in the first part could have been picked up again in a 'lessons learned' conclusion which moves us beyond the introductory essay. This is particularly important because managing nonprofits constantly raises broader issues of purpose and legitimacy, which do not arise in the same ways for profit-focused businesses or elected governments. As Anheier and Toepler explain in the introductory essay, many nonprofits are unique, as private actors, in claiming to contribute to the public good. This means that individual organizations can survive for extended periods of time based on their missions and donor support, even if the management of the organization falls short of advancing the overall goals (Seibel, 1996). Many chapters, including those on leadership and advocacy, offer insights into why truly competent nonprofit management entails significant capacities to think generatively and regularly re-evaluate what the organization is doing (Trower, 2012).

In some ways, the disconnect between what are 'best' management practices and what makes nonprofits more likely to accomplish their lofty missions is tied to the bias of research focused strongly on nonprofit sectors in the industrialized world. This volume is no exception to that. The regional focus of Part I stands in contrast with the rest of the chapters, which often draw their primary emphasis from the nonprofit experiences in Europe and the United States. While a few chapters allude briefly to non-Western contexts (e.g., on individual giving), the book reflects the continued dominance of Northern-based research. This reveals the major challenges any author or editor faces who wants to write about issues such as 'leadership' or 'volunteer management' not only across a diverse national nonprofit sector, but across vastly different nonprofit sectors in many regions of the world. Volumes such as the one reviewed here play an important role in diversifying these perspectives and legitimating alternative views on nonprofit management as it is tied to the overall purpose of a key sector of societies.

Disclosure Statement

The author declares that there are no conflicts of interest that relate to the research, authorship, or publication of this article.

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Author Biography

Hans Peter Schmitz is Professor of Leadership Studies at the University of San Diego. He is the co-founder and former research director of the Transnational NGO Initiative at the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs/Syracuse University. His most recent co-authored book is titled *Between Power and Irrelevance. The Future of Transnational NGOs* (Oxford University Press, 2020).