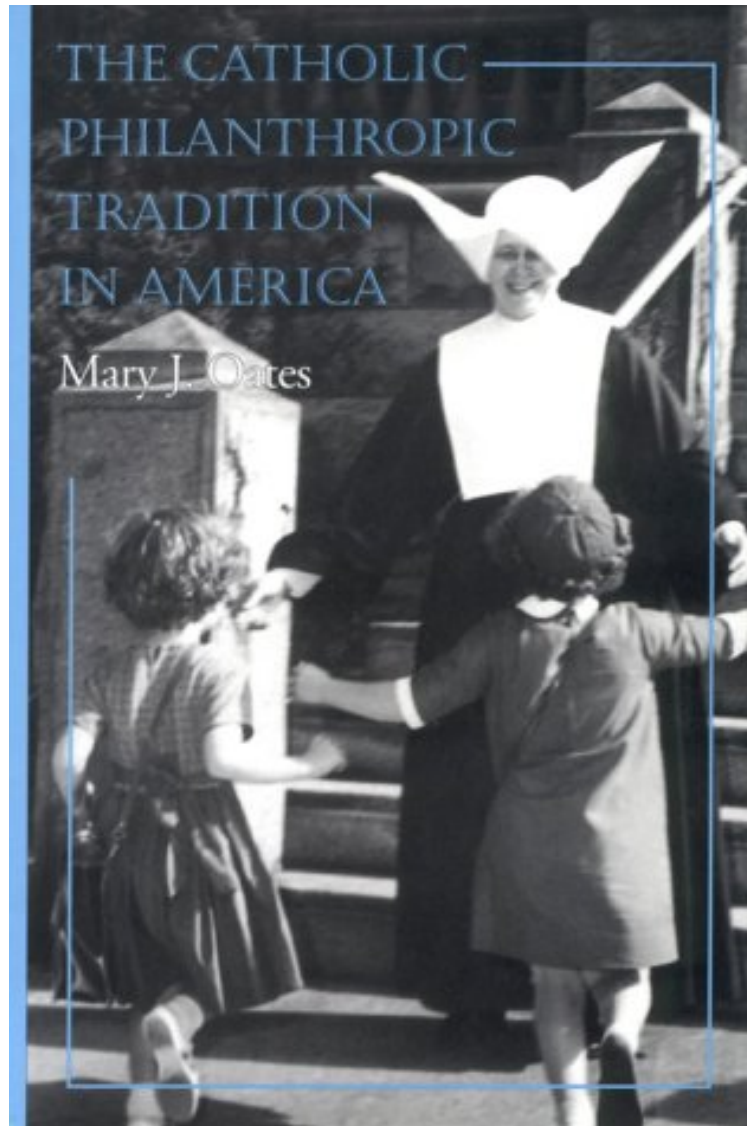


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# The Catholic Philanthropic Tradition in America (Philanthropic and Nonprofit Studies)

Mary J. Oates

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**Mary J. Oates : The Catholic Philanthropic Tradition in America (Philanthropic and Nonprofit Studies)** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Catholic Philanthropic Tradition in America (Philanthropic and Nonprofit Studies):

From their earliest days in America, Catholics organized to initiate and support charitable activities. A rapidly growing church community, although marked by widening church and ethnic differences, developed the extensive network of orphanages, hospitals, schools, and social agencies that came to represent the Catholic way of giving. But changing economic, political, and social conditions have often provoked sharp debate within the church about the obligation to give, priorities in giving, appropriate organization of religious charity, and the locus of authority over philanthropic resources. This first history of Catholic philanthropy in the United States chronicles the rich tradition of the church's charitable activities and the increasing tension between centralized control of giving and democratic participation.

From Publishers Weekly This historical view of Catholic philanthropy in the U.S. since 1790 describes a reputation for benevolence that appears to be eroding, according to the author. Oates (Higher Education for Catholic Women) observes that, since the 1960s, Catholic contributions to the church have fallen relative to family income. As she indicates, Roman Catholics, from their earliest days in America, have organized charitable activities--schools, hospitals, orphanages--in support of the Gospel mandate. Yet the study points out that, since the 1920s, a diminution of personal service, "not so much a weakening will to give," has marked Catholic philanthropy, which the author attributes to "a secular narrowing of opportunities to give more than money." She studies the patterns of Catholic giving that have evolved since the early days of the republic and examines how a population that remained largely working class until recent times developed and financed benevolent institutions and agencies. This is a highly specialized history. Photos. Copyright 1995 Cahners Business Information, Inc. About the Author MARY J. OATES is Professor of Economics at Regis College and author of Higher Education for Catholic Women: An Historical Anthology and The Role of the Cotton Textile Industry in the Economic Development of the American Southeast, 1900-1940.