

For Immediate Release
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**New Book by Award-Winning Political Scientist Deborah Stone Offers
Roadmap for New Vision of Government**

9/25 Book Event at Policy Center Demos in New York City

"Thank you, Deborah Stone, for this powerful call to a moral reawakening."
--Barbara Ehrenreich, author of "Nickel and Dimed"

<http://www.samaritansdilemma.com/>

New York, NY—With the nation's attention focused on the presidential campaign, and the upcoming first presidential debate this week, award-winning political scientist and author Deborah Stone argues that there is a critical component missing in our national dialogue: what is the proper role of government in the everyday lives of its citizens?

In "The Samaritan's Dilemma: Should Government Help Your Neighbor?" (Perseus Books, 2008) Stone challenges the current moral vision of politics promoted by a generation of leaders--that self-interest is good, helping others is harmful, and government help is worst of all.

Since Ronald Reagan declared at his inauguration that "Government is not the solution to our problems; government is the problem," Americans have detached their personal compassion for their friends and loved ones from their fellow countrymen. Reagan's steadfast moral vision for politics--that we should be self-reliant and that failure is the consequence of poor choices or behavior--remains unchallenged and very much apart of our national moral orthodoxy.

Taking a different approach to the relationship between the individual and the citizenry, Stone argues that the conservative public philosophy violates our experience and our moral sense. "We are born needing help," writes Stone, "we die needing help, and we live out our days giving and getting help... We've been so brainwashed by the idea of self-interest that we've lost the ability to recognize altruism in ourselves and others. Most of us would never hesitate to help if we saw, say, a stranger who was injured on the street." Helping those

who are suffering is the essence of common morality. So when political leaders define the ideal citizen as someone who pursues his own self interests while withholding help from others, good people are repelled by politics.

Stone meticulously rebuts many of the conservative axioms imbedded in public consciousness. In a compelling argument, Stone writes:

--Government help, done right, can empower citizens to forge bonds with fellow Americans across deep social divides.

--By taking altruism seriously, political leaders can pull the public moral compass back in line with private morality.

--By fostering a sense of care and compassion from political leaders and government, private citizens' faith in the promise of their government to protect and aid them will be restored.

--The power and energy of a government-assisted social sphere will become an inspiring and empowering engine for democracy.

"The Samaritan's Dilemma" documents Americans' everyday altruism in all its rich variety and emotional force, and shows why taking altruism seriously is the first step to reviving American democracy. In doing so, writes Stone, we can restore our faith in the quest for social justice, freedom and equality through government and remind ourselves of America's promise.

Stone will be speaking about her book and the larger role of government in today's political environment as part of a special book event on September 25, 2008, hosted by Demos, a national, non-partisan, public policy organization in New York City.

Date: Thurs., Sept. 25, 2008

Time: Program from 12:00 – 2:00 pm

Location: Demos: A Network for Ideas and Action, 220 Fifth Avenue, 5th floor, New York, NY

About the Author:

Deborah Stone is a Research Professor of Government at Dartmouth College and a founding editor of "The American Prospect." She is the author of three previous books, including "*Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision-Making*,"

which has been translated into five languages and won the Aaron Wildavsky Award from the American Political Science Association for its enduring contribution to policy studies. She has taught at M.I.T. and Brandeis University, and as a visitor at Yale, Tulane, University of Bremen, Germany, and National Chung Cheng University in Taiwan. Her essays have appeared in “*The Nation*,” “*The New Republic*,” “*Boston Review*,” “*Civilization*,” and “*Natural History*.” She has held fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation and Harvard Law School, was a Phi Beta Kappa Society Visiting Scholar, and is now a Senior Fellow at Demos.

Members of the Press:

To schedule an interview with Deborah Stone, or to receive a review copy of ‘The Samaritan’s Dilemma,’ please contact Gennady Kolker, gkolker@demos.org, or (212) 389-1408.

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