

Document B

Source: Andrew Carnegie, "Wealth," in the *North American Review*, June, 1889.

... What is the proper mode of administering wealth after the laws (of survival of the fittest) upon which civilization is founded have thrown it into the hands of the few?

There are but three modes in which surplus wealth can be disposed of. It can be left to the families of the decedents; or it can be bequeathed for public purposes; or, finally, it can be administered by its possessors during their lives....

The first is the most injudicious.... Why should men leave great fortunes to their children? If this is done from affection, is this not misguided affection?

As to the second mode, that of leaving wealth at death for public uses, (why should a man) wait until he is dead before he becomes of much good in the world? ... Men who leave vast sums in this way may fairly be thought men who would not have left it at all had they been able to take it with them....

There remains, then, only one mode of using great fortunes; ... the duty of the man of wealth (is to) set an example of modest ... living...; and ... to consider all surplus revenues ... as trust funds ... to produce the most beneficial results for the community – the man of wealth thus becoming the ... agent for his poorer brethren, bringing to their service his superior wisdom, experience, and ability to administer; doing for them better than they would or could do for themselves....

The man who dies rich dies disgraced.

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Document Analysis

1. Who is the author of this article and in what year was it written?
2. What is "survival of the fittest" and how does it "throw" wealth into the hands of the few?
3. According to Carnegie what two things shouldn't a rich person do with his fortune?
4. According to Carnegie what should a rich person do with his fortune?
5. What does Carnegie mean when he says, "The man who dies rich dies disgraced"?
6. These ideas of Andrew Carnegie are often referred to as "The Gospel of Wealth." Are the ideas expressed in this document the ideas of a hero? Explain your thinking.