

## **Women and Philanthropy: A Literature Review (2012)**

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### **Introduction**

An accumulating body of demographic data and research suggests that women's philanthropy is one of the key developments in philanthropy globally, one which has the potential to transform how philanthropy is practiced in the future. A 2006 article in *The Economist* stated that, "women are now the most powerful engine of global growth." According to a Barclay's study of 2,000 millionaires around the globe (2010), "men are more active philanthropists in developed countries, but in emerging countries, women take the lead." Women are raising their voices, changing the face of philanthropy, and transforming how philanthropy is practiced around the world.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the theoretical and empirical scholarship that addresses women's philanthropic behavior and to provide policy-makers and nonprofit leaders practical recommendations as to how to better involve women in philanthropy. We define philanthropy very broadly to include both giving of time and money. Although there is a substantial literature on giving across multiple disciplines, to date, there is no review of the research that specifically addresses gender differences in philanthropy. This is an important topic for those working in the field of philanthropy; the more we understand gender differences in giving, the better informed we will be in meeting today's challenges and preparing for tomorrow's opportunities.

We begin by reflecting on the demographic changes that have affected women's propensity for philanthropy, the role that women have played in philanthropy over the past 20 years, and how this field has evolved. We then review the more recent cross-disciplinary research that pertains to women's philanthropy. We conclude with directions for future research and discussion of the challenges facing the leaders and practitioners of our nonprofit institutions as how to best incorporate and translate this body of research into sound practice.

### *Demographics*

Women's philanthropy has been shaped to a significant extent by their shifting economic position and social roles. Income and education, in particular, are strong predictors of giving and women have made notable gains in both over the past three decades. More U.S. women—about 60 percent—are in the labor force today compared to 40 percent four decades years ago (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2011). Women are entering the global labor force in record numbers as well. 1.2 billion of the world's 2.9 billion workers are women, representing a worldwide increase of about 200 million women employed in the past 10 years. In 2006, 47.9 percent of working women worldwide were in wage and salaried employment compared with 42.9 percent ten years earlier. Furthermore, in six out of nine global regions, female employment-to-population ratios increased over the last ten years (International Labour Organization, 2007).

Similarly, the proportion of working women in the U.S. with a college degree roughly tripled from 1970 to 2008: 36 percent of women in the workforce held college degrees in 2008, compared with 11 percent in 1970 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2011). Globally, more women are gaining access to education as well, but equality in education is still far from the reality in some regions of the world (International Labour Organization, 2008).

Women today are also earning more than ever before, although gender imbalances persist. In 1979, U. S. women working full time earned 62 percent of what men did; in 2008, women's earnings were 80 percent of men's (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2011). Internationally, women also typically earn less than men, although women's share of professional and managerial jobs is slowly increasing worldwide (International Labour Organization, 2008). The proportion of U.S. wives earning more than their husbands also has grown. In two decades' time (1987 to 2007), the percentage of working wives who earn more than their working husbands grew by 8 percent to a total of 26 percent (Fry & Cohn, 2010).

Changes in marital status also play important roles. We know, for example, that married couples give more and are more likely to give than singles (Mesch et al., 2006; Rooney et al., 2005) in large part because married people tend to be more connected with social networks, which is linked to philanthropic giving. Marriage in the U.S., however, is becoming a less dominant lifestyle. As of 2009, the number of unmarried and single Americans comprised 43 percent of the U.S. population 18 and older—53 percent of that group were women (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).

By and large, the research literature on charitable giving finds significant gender differences, although much of this research “controls for the donor's sex, it does not look more closely at how there might be differences in giving and volunteering between the sexes” (Simmons and Emanuele, 2007, p. 536). A recent study conducted at the Women's Philanthropy Institute at the Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University found significant differences in philanthropic giving between single-headed male and female household (1) across income levels; (2) by marital status; and (3) across charitable subsectors— as to the likelihood of giving as well as the dollar amount given—controlling for other factors that affect giving (Mesch, 2010). In general, this research finds that female-headed households are more likely to give and give more to charity than male-headed households across all charitable subsectors and income levels. Other research supports these findings as well (e.g., Mesch, et al., 2006; Piper and Schnepf, 2008; Simmons and Emanuele, 2007; Rooney, Brown & Mesch, 2007; Rooney, et al., 2005).

### **The Emerging Role of Women and Philanthropy**

Women have always been involved in philanthropy, giving generously of their time, talent, and treasure to improve their community. Today, there are a kaleidoscope of opportunities for women to be involved in philanthropy including through organized efforts such as women's funds, giving circles, and networks within nonprofit organizations and on college campuses. The myriad ways for women to be engaged in philanthropy expands exponentially the number of women across generations who seek the niche best suited to them to put their values into action.

In the United States, the establishment of the Ms. Foundation for Women in 1972 signaled the emergence of the contemporary women's philanthropy movement. Since then more than 160 women's funds have been founded across the globe. Mama Cash, the oldest international women's fund, was established in the Netherlands in 1983. Today women's funds are on six continents in emerging and developed countries. As of 2012, with assets of more than \$535 million and annual grant allocations of \$70 million ([www.womensfundingnetwork.org](http://www.womensfundingnetwork.org)), this model of women's engagement in philanthropy has provided leadership opportunities at the staff and volunteer level for thousands of women.

Giving circles took root in the United States in the 1990s. Defined as “a form of philanthropy where groups of individuals donate their own money or time to a pooled fund, decide together how to allocate the funds, and, in doing so, seek to increase their awareness of and engagement in the issues covered by the charity or community project” (Eikenberry et al., 2009). This model of engagement can range from extremely informal settings such as four or five women seated around a kitchen table deciding how to allocate their “coupon money” to extremely sophisticated, structured and formal programs such as the Women Donors Network ([www.womendonors.org](http://www.womendonors.org)) and Rachel’s Network ([www.rachelsnetwork.org](http://www.rachelsnetwork.org)).

Impact 100 groups are an example of giving circles in which 100 female donors contribute \$1,000 to raise major funds (\$100,000 or greater) for greatest impact on the community in which they live. From the initial group created in 2001, there are now more than a dozen Impact 100 groups in the United States. (Impact 100)

In the early 2000s, two national nonprofit organizations, recognizing the potential of this untapped donor segment, created specific initiatives to engage women more deeply in their mission. The American Red Cross Tiffany Circle Society of Leaders began as a pilot program in 2006, has grown to more than 800 female members across the United States, and has expanded globally with members in Canada, the United Kingdom and interest from 16 more countries. The giving level starts at \$10,000 annually; the group has raised more than \$40 million since then. United Way Worldwide responded to grassroots organizing efforts by women in local chapters and created a national umbrella, the Women’s Leadership Council. The Leadership Councils, representing 50,000 women, raised \$132 million in 2010.

Another initiative, Women Moving Millions, changed the way people think about women and giving by growing million dollar gifts from women. The leaders raised \$182 million from more than 100 women in three years culminating in 2009 ([www.womenmovingmillions.org](http://www.womenmovingmillions.org)).

Each of these models in this brief summary reflects the power of the network, one of the key features of the contemporary women’s philanthropy landscape. Two research studies attest to the power of purposeful networks to women. Eikenberry et al. (2009), in her research on giving circles, suggests this power arises from the building up of internal bonding and trust among members. The *2011 Study of High Net Worth Women’s Philanthropy* finds the network positively affects women’s philanthropic attitudes and behaviors. In particular, high net worth women who participate in a network are more motivated than counterparts who did not participate in a network to give back to the community (87% vs. 71.1%) and are more motivated to give when they volunteer at an organization (73.1% vs. 59.6%) (19). Additionally, more than half of networked women report a great deal of confidence in the ability of individuals and nonprofit organizations to solve societal and global problems (Center on Philanthropy, 2011).

## **REVIEW OF THE RESEARCH LITERATURE**

### **Gender Differences in Motives for Giving and Patterns of Giving**

A substantial literature exists as to gender differences in altruism, prosocial, empathy, and other motives for helping behavior from the economic, sociology, biology, and psychology disciplines,

as well as the philanthropic studies literature. For the most part, this literature finds women to be more selfless, prosocial, nurturing, empathetic, and/or generous than men (e.g., Andreoni & Vesterland, 2001; Baron-Cohen, 2003; Cox & Deck, 2006; Croson & Buchan, 1999; Eagly & Crowley, 1986; Eagly & Koenig, 2006; Eckel & Grossman, 1998; Einolf, 2011; Eisenberg & Lennon, 1983; Erdle, et al., 1992; Hoffman, 1977; Jolliffe & Farrington, 2005; Kottasz, 2004; Mesch et al., 2011; Mills et al., 1989; Piliavin & Charng, 1990; Piliavin & Unger, 1985; Skoe, et al., 2002). Reasons given for these gender differences in motivations for giving have been explained as: (1) differences in gender roles and the ways in which women have been socialized as the caregivers of their families (Gilligan, 1982); (2) women view philanthropy as a way to show their caring and express their moral beliefs (Newman, 1995)—whereas, men give due to social roles such as status and social expectations (Croson, Handy & Shang, 2009; Eagly and Steffen, 1984; Skoe et al., 2002); (3) women experience emotions more strongly than men (Harsham and Paivio, 1987); and (4) women are more egalitarian and engage in reciprocal behavior whereas men are more competitive (Croson and Gneezy, 2009).

In general, we see a strong and positive relationship between altruism, empathy, and prosocial values and philanthropy (e.g., Bekkers and Wiepking, 2011; Bennett, 2003; Mesch et al., 2011; Wilhelm and Bekkers, 2010). Mesch et al., (2011) found significant differences in motives by gender, as well as differences in the probability of giving and amount given by gender, even after controlling for empathic concern and principle of care measures. Conditional on giving, men gave approximately 12 percent less on average than women and were significantly less likely to give to charity than women in the full regression model. Simmons and Emanuele (2007) found that, on average, women donate more of both money and time and conclude that “altruism is a major contributing factor” (p. 547) where “society places more expectations on women to be altruistic and to act in an altruistic manner” (p. 546). Wymer (2011) found significant gender differences in motives for giving and volunteering where women were more likely to donate or volunteer for an organization that helps people in need. Conversely, men scored higher on motives that assumed some level of risk-taking and danger such as rescuing others (Wymer, 2011, p. 840).

A study by the Center on Philanthropy (2011) found that motivations for giving differ among high net worth men and women. High net worth women are more motivated than their male counterparts to give when they believe their gift will make a difference (81.7% vs. 70.9%), when they know the organization is efficient (80.5% vs. 69.2%), and to give back to the community (78.2% vs. 63.3%). Women are more likely than men to give because they volunteer at the organization (65.7% vs. 49.8%) and because they wish to set an example for young people (43.6% vs. 25.1%). Men, were more likely than women to support the same organization annually (67.9% vs. 59.5%) (Center on Philanthropy, 2011).

#### A Closer Look at Generosity

Depending on the discipline and methodology used (i.e., lab versus field studies), there appears to be significant variation across individual studies as to how motivations, demographic, and other individual characteristics affect participation in giving--where simple bivariate analysis is not sufficient (Havens, O’Herlihy & Schervish, 2006). Subsequently, contradictory evidence exists as to the magnitude and direction of these gender differences (Cox & Deck, 2006). Although much of the empirical research examining the relationship between gender and giving reveals that females are more generous and donate more to charity than males, as previously discussed, some research finds either no evidence of gender differences in giving (e.g., Bolton &

Katok, 1995; Frey & Meir, 2004) or found males to be more generous (e.g., Brown-Kruse & Hummels, 1993; Chang, 2005; Frey & Meir, 2004; Jackson & Latané 1981; Meier, 2007; Sokolowski 1996). More specifically, several studies find that while females are more likely to give, males give higher amounts (Andreoni, Brown & Rischall, 2003; Bekkers 2004; Belfield & Beney 2000; Einolf, 2006; Kottasz, 2004; Lyons & Nivison-Smith, 2006; Mesch, et al., 2006; Piper & Schnepf, 2008; Weyant, 1984).

Andreoni and Vesterlund's (2001) seminal study demonstrated that the question of "Who is more generous?" is complicated. Their study found differences in the "demand curves for altruism" where men are more responsive to the price of giving (pg. 1). They conclude that men are more generous when it is cheap to give, but women are more generous when it is more expensive to give. That is, men are more likely to be either perfectly selfish or perfectly selfless, whereas women tend to be "egalitarians" who prefer to share evenly. Andreoni, Brown, and Rischall (2003) found support for these findings when testing giving behavior outside of the laboratory to actual charitable giving. Cox and Deck (2006), however, found that women's generosity is more income elastic, in which women base their decision of whether to be generous on the costs associated with the decision. That is, women, unlike men, are more likely to be generous when the stakes are lower and are more responsive to variations in the cost of giving than men. Using a series of field experiments, List (2004) examined the effect of age and gender on giving and found that mature men and women gave more than their younger counterparts, with the lowest rates coming from young men. He concludes, "charitable giving profiles appear to have different temporal aspects across gender, with men's rates of giving and gift size showing much larger increases over time than women's" (p. 140). However, when sending letters of solicitation to potential donors during a university fundraising drive, he found that women participated significantly more than men, and concluded that "the marginal return from sending a solicitation letter to women" was significantly higher than for men (p. 142).

#### *Cross National Studies on Gender Differences*

Research on motives for philanthropy across countries and cultures is a burgeoning area of study. Recent studies offer some evidence supporting significant cross-national gender differences in the way men and women give. According to the World Values Survey (2006), data indicate that globally, more women than men believe that service to others is very important; women, more than men, are more likely to state that it is very important to provide basic needs; women are more likely to believe that the poor are poor because of unfairness rather than laziness; and women are more likely to indicate that the government is not doing enough to fight poverty. Wiepking and Einolf (2011) analyze data from the Gallup World View Survey and the World Database of Happiness that indicate gender differences in charitable giving across countries. The researchers further suggest that the differences in giving by gender may be explained by gender differences in empathy, the degree of religious commitment, income, education, and connection to social networks in different countries. Women are more likely to give in some countries because they are more empathic and religious than men, while men are more likely to give in other countries because they are more able to give (due to income and wealth) and are more frequently asked.

In a study conducted on giving and volunteering of Lions Clubs participants across 12 countries, results indicate that, in general, men and women were equally likely to make charitable contributions, although some significant gender differences were found across country, as to the type of cause and amount given. In Australia, female members gave \$709 on average for disaster

preparedness, compared to \$348 by male members; in France, female members gave more to youth development/family services (\$403), than did male members (\$116); in Nigeria, female members gave significantly more to religious causes (\$3,353), compared to male members (\$887); and in the United States, male members gave \$2,867 on average for religious purposes, and female members donated \$1,812 on average (Center on Philanthropy, 2012). Although additional cross-country comparison research is warranted, these initial findings from cross-national research studies suggest that women share universal motives for giving.

### Gender Differences in Charity Choice

Much of the empirical research indicates that men and women exhibit different charity choices and patterns of donating money. Women tend to give to organizations that have had an impact on them or someone they know personally (e.g., Burgoyne, Young, & Walker, 2005; Parsons, 2004). Several studies have found that males tend to strategically concentrate their giving among a few charities, whereas females were more likely to spread the amounts they give across a wide range of charities (e.g., Andreoni, Brown, & Rischall, 2003; Brown, 2006; Piper & Schnepf, 2008; Yörük, 2010).

Studies also have found differences in the types of charities in which men and women choose to give. Women are more likely to give to educational causes (e.g., Einolf, 2006; Piper & Schnepf, 2008; Rooney, Brown, & Mesch, 2007), human services, children, and health-related charities (e.g., Bekkers, 2007; Einolf, 2006; Marx, 2000; Midlarsky & Hannah, 1989; Piper & Schnepf, 2008; Wymer, 2011), the environment (e.g., Israel, 2007), overseas causes (Micklewright & Schnepf, 2009), and animal welfare (e.g., Piper and Schnepf, 2008), whereas men have been found to give more to sports and recreational groups (e.g., Andreoni, Brown & Rischall, 2003; Micklewright & Schnepf, 2009) or causes in which they received social returns (e.g., Kottasz, 2004).

Piper and Schnepf (2008) examined the probability of giving and the amount given by men and women across 15 charities in Great Britain and found the percentage of female donors to be significantly higher than that of male donors for almost all causes. Similarly, using the Center on Philanthropy Panel Study of the Panel Study of Income Dynamics, the Women Give 2010 report found that women were as likely or more likely to give across all charitable subsectors (Mesch, 2010). However, Eckel and Grossman (2003) found that men and women exhibited a high degree of similarity in their charity choice, but that women were more generous than men in six of the ten cases (pg. 694).

In terms of religious giving, the research is mixed. Kamas, Preston and Baum (2008) found that women gave more in anonymous giving across all religious denominations and that high income women gave significantly more than high-income men. Some research indicates that males give more to religion (e.g., Brown & Ferris, 2007; Einolf, 2011), but females give more to secular causes and for helping those in need (e.g., Brown & Ferris, 2007; Regnerus, Smith, & Sikkink, 1998). Other studies find that females are more likely to give to religion (i.e., Newman, 1995; Piper & Schnepf, 2008; Yen, 2002). More specifically, Piper and Schnepf (2008) found that while married men and women show the same level of support for religious organizations, among single people, women are nearly twice as likely as men to give to them; even after controlling for different characteristics (age, income, living alone, region, education, and proxies for wealth), this gender difference remains significant (p. 114).

## Volunteering

According to the most recent data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, women continue to volunteer at a higher rate than did men across all age groups, educational levels, and other major demographic characteristics, while the volunteer rate for men changed little (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2011). The preponderance of the research literature also indicates that women volunteer significantly more and in greater numbers than men (e.g., Einolf, 2006; 2011; Hodgkinson et al., 1992, Hodgkinson & Weitzman, 1996; Mesch et al., 2006, Sokolowski, Wymer, Riecken, & Yavas, 1996), although “sex differences in the amount of volunteering vary from country to country” (Einolf, 2011, p. 1094). The predominant conceptual framework for understanding gender differences in volunteering draws upon a social learning theory in which “gender appropriate behavior is positively reinforced in society,” where “females are taught to be more nurturing” and, hence, more likely to volunteer (Wymer, 2011, p. 833).

Subsequent research has endeavored to examine the factors that account for these gender differences—including the relationship between volunteering and donating to charity (e.g., Bekkers & Wiepking, 2007, Van Slyke & Brooks, 2005; Wunnava & Lauze, 2001), although, few studies have examined this relationship by gender. Brown and Lankford (1992) found a positive and significant relationship between money contributions and giving of time, as well as significant gender differences when examining the interdependence between individuals’ charitable donations and volunteering. Specifically, although education and lower tax prices (i.e., the tax price of monetary giving) increases hours volunteered for both men and women--marital status, available time, and household size had a positive effect on volunteer hours for women, while single parenthood had a negative impact. For women, “the significant economic variables are available time and the tax price of money gifts” (Brown & Lankford, 1992, p. 333). Marx<sup>(case)</sup> (2000) found that those who give to human services are significantly more likely to be volunteers as well as female. Parsons (2004) found that women who volunteer are more likely to provide financial support to the same organizations where they or family members contribute their time.

Wymer and Samu’s (2002) study found significant gender differences in motivations and values for volunteering; female volunteers were significantly more empathetic, and scored higher on values of world peace and a sense of accomplishment, whereas males assigned significantly more importance to social recognition, self-respect, and friendship. Similarly, Wymer (2011) found that females prefer to volunteer for organizations that are more “people-oriented, emphasizing consensus, communication, and cooperation,” emphasizing community and reciprocal relationships where they could make a meaningful difference, as well volunteering for organizations that are more goal-oriented and efficient (p. 841). These findings have been supported using a sample from a younger cohort--Generation Y—indicating significant gender differences in motivations to volunteer, where females expressed significantly stronger motivations than did males (Burns, et al., 2008).

Using cross-national data, Themudo (2009) finds a positive and significant relationship between women’s empowerment, voluntary action, and the strength of the nonprofit sector. Specifically, his results indicate that women’s empowerment globally is strongly associated with women’s volunteering across all types of charities in the nonprofit sector—globally, the strength of the nonprofit sector is directly related to women’s empowerment even when controlling for other possible factors (p. 677). Similarly, a study comparing responses from nearly 5,800 students from six countries concludes that volunteering is a personal decision; volunteering is affected

mainly by individual characteristics, although also influenced, to some degree, by macro-level societal factors (Hustinx, et al., 2010). With regard to gender, this study finds significant gender differences in the likelihood of volunteering across countries; Finland and Canada have the highest proportion of female volunteers, while in the U.S., Japan, and China participation in volunteering activities is more gender-balanced.

### **Gender Effects on Household Decisions to Give**

Although there is some research on how charitable giving is managed within a household and how these decisions are made (e.g., Burgoyne, Young & Walker, 2005), little research has been conducted on the role of gender in reaching these decisions. Because men and women's preferences for giving are different, research has begun to examine the question as to who in the household is the primary decision-maker with regard to giving to charity. Andreoni, Brown and Rischall's (2003) study examined intra-household decision-making and found evidence that bargaining, predominantly favoring husbands, characterizes how household charitable decisions are made. When decisions were made jointly, husbands had more influence over their wives in deciding on charitable giving. However, they found that education and income were the primary determinants of control over charitable resources—being the primary earner strengthens one's bargaining power in marriage as does the husband's education relative to the wife's. When the woman is the decision-maker, however, she is significantly more likely to give to education than her husband or a jointly deciding couple. Consistent with Andreoni et al., Rooney, Brown and Mesch (2007) also found that women decision-makers were more likely to have a positive effect on both the likelihood and amount of giving to education. Furthermore, when females were the main decision-makers, results indicated a positive effect on secular giving, but no effect on religious giving, holding other factors constant.

Replicating the Andreoni et. al. study using data from the 2003 wave of the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID), Yörük (2010) found that jointly deciding households' charitable giving looks more like what the wives would have chosen, and that jointly-deciding households gave more than one would predict from the behavior of households with a sole decision maker. Specifically, he finds that bargaining increases household giving by about 7 percent on average.

Using data from the Netherlands, Wiepking and Bekkers (2010) found that separate deciding households gave significantly less on average than all other couples, when the effect of couples' tastes for giving is considered in the model. However, the statistical significance disappears after controlling for other factors that may affect charitable giving, such as income, education, or home ownership. Their study further supports that, among jointly deciding families, couples with opposing tastes for giving give less than those with similar tastes. However, female deciding households are more generous than separate and joint deciding households in the case of total donations. In the case of donations over €50, male deciding households no longer donated higher amounts compared to female deciding households after traditional gender role characteristics are held constant.

Kamas, Preston and Baum's (2008) laboratory study finds support for the influence of women in decision-making about giving. Using dictator experiments across mixed-sex pairings, men adjusted their giving upward due to their more generous female partners. They note, "increasing women's participation in traditionally male spheres of decision making may result in more altruistic economic behavior." (p. 23)



## Directions for Future Research

Research to better understand the role of gender in philanthropy is in its infancy—and there are many more questions yet to be addressed than have been answered. In fact, most of the empirical research reviewed in this chapter comprises studies that have been conducted within the last ten years. Women, indeed, are different from their male counterparts in terms of motivations for giving, patterns of giving, and likelihood and amount of giving. As research builds a stronger foundation for this field, it will contribute substantially to a future in which philanthropy is more gender balanced.

Below we provide several areas for future research that will further the understanding of women's expanding role in philanthropy:

### *What accounts for gender differences in philanthropy?*

How and where do men and women learn to be philanthropic? Who are the role models for philanthropy and what are the characteristics of these role models? What prompts men and women to participate or engage in philanthropy? Current research provides some evidence of a positive relationship of giving and volunteering between children and their parents (e.g., Bekkers, 2007; 2011; Janoski & Wilson, 1995; Mustillo, Wilson & Lynch, 2004; Wilhelm et al., 2008). Little research, however, has examined this issue by gender. In a recent study, Wilhelm et al., (2011) established the importance of role models and conversations about philanthropy in socializing adolescents in charitable giving and volunteering. Regarding gender, they found role-model associations for girls were stronger than for boys, but conversations about giving were more highly associated for boys. This is an exciting new area of research.

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### *Women, Race, Religion, Culture, and Life Cycle*

Although the field has moved beyond using gender as a control variable in philanthropic giving, there is a paucity of research that examines the intersection of gender and other factors such as race/ethnicity, religion, culture, and stage in life as factors in giving and volunteering. How do these factors affect giving by gender and across cultures? Are there differences in giving across race and ethnicity? How does giving among women change through the generations? In particular what are the differences in how baby boomer and older women give from those in Generation Y and younger? There is an extensive literature from education and history that provides an historical perspective of female philanthropists of color (e.g., Robertson, 2007; Walton, 2005). The empirical research should incorporate these perspectives and disciplines.

Although the religion subsector has received the largest slice of individual giving for 56 years (approximately 35% in 2010) as tracked by Giving USA, scant research has explored the role of gender in charitable decision making in this area. (Giving USA Foundation, 2011) Are there differences in the way men and women give to philanthropy according to religious denominations? Is the gap that has been found in the past between men and women for religious motives in giving narrowing across the cohorts as religion becomes less important?

### *The Effect of Gender on Decision-making within Households*

Although research has begun in this area, we have much to learn about how charitable giving decisions within a household are made. What are the factors that influence men's and women's giving within a household and how does this affect giving decisions? What confers decision-

making authority? How do marriage, religion, generation, employment, and life-cycle affect giving? What are the consequences for the disposition of philanthropy (i.e., does who is deciding influence what the money is going towards?). Are there differences across race, culture, and nations?

### **Implications and Next Steps**

Women have always been philanthropic but their stories and actions have not often been part of the historical narrative. What has changed through this contemporary women's philanthropy movement is that more women across the globe and at all income levels are vocal, visible, active, and telling the story of their philanthropic involvement daily around the world. Benefitting from demographic changes and expanding roles in society as well as increased access to education and income, two key predictors of philanthropy, women are often the household charitable decision makers and generous donors. Moreover, women have created innovative new models of engagement such as women's funds and brought new life to the notion of collective action through giving circles. They have formed an array of networks that often reach across the globe, strengthen levels of trust, deepen involvement with charities, and result in increased giving.

Despite the overwhelming evidence that women today are an integral component of mainstream philanthropy, a predisposition to a male-centered and male-dominated climate is still evident in the fundraising community and nonprofit sector. Gender does matter in philanthropy. Women and men differ in their motivations for giving. They exhibit different giving patterns. What works for men may not work for women. New fundraising strategies which include both spouses from the beginning of the conversation and also include single women acknowledge the evolving dynamics of who is a philanthropist and who is philanthropic. As the 21<sup>st</sup> century unfolds, women will continue to push the limits, explore the possibilities, and bring new perspectives and ideas to enrich and energize their communities for the common good. Fundraisers, practitioners, and nonprofit professionals who embrace the new normal of a more balanced gender approach to philanthropy will find a willing, loyal, and generous group of donors among the women in their database.

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