

PART ONE

Acknowledging the Differences

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Women Are Not Little Men

What I find particularly gratifying about the growth of the women's philanthropy movement is not just that more women are participating and at higher giving levels, but that this has caused us to think differently about how we engage women—and men—in philanthropic activity. We are no longer comfortable with "one size fits all." We recognize that people give for different reasons, respond to different messages, and want to be engaged in different ways. And so we conduct research, we test, we ask questions, and we listen. We are more open to exploring new and creative strategies to meet donors on their terms, and in ways that advance their values and the goals of the causes they care about. We have all been enormously enriched by this transformation.¹

—Edith Falk, chair and CEO,
Campbell & Company, Chicago, Illinois

GENDER DIFFERENCES ARE JUST THAT: DIFFERENCES in the ways women and men think, behave, look, and communicate. (Not to mention our very different reproductive organs and voices.) None of the differences are bad or wrong and, contrary to popular media depictions, it's not a battle of the sexes. That would be defeating for both genders. It's just an understanding that there are differences, and they affect the ways we relate to one another. Male and female complement one another and need one another's differences to improve our world.

Plenty of books, articles, plays, and movies have been written about gender differences, but the book that started a revolution was a small one written in 1982 by Harvard professor Carol Gilligan: *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development*.² In it, Gilligan claims that women had been misunderstood in the past and should be heard in their own voices and with their own sense of integrity. This was a revelation to most people, particularly to many feminists who had claimed there were no differences between males and females.

Gilligan looked at children at play and the sociological messages they received from those around them. From these observations she concluded that women have differing moral and psychological tendencies than men and a different sense of values. Gilligan also said that women think more in terms of relationships, whereas men think in terms of rules. The book rocked the psychological world and continues to do so to this day. We were struck by the book's messages and used them early on in our women's philanthropy work. We could see how these unique differences affected women's motivations for giving as well as the ways women were asked for gifts.

It stood to reason that if women thought in ways different from men, and their values were different, then their philanthropy would be different as well. We concluded that because women thought so much about relationships and caring, they wanted to give to causes that helped solve societal issues. We also took away from Gilligan's book the theory that women needed to find their philanthropic voice and often were interested in doing their philanthropy together, with other women: the philosophy behind women's giving circles and women's philanthropic initiatives.

It is well worth reading *In a Different Voice* today—as women become bigger and better philanthropists—in order to understand, based on the female experience, women's motives and moral commitments as well as their gender's view of what is important in life. Whether or not one agrees with Gilligan's theories, they have inspired new research, educational initiatives, and political debate while helping women and men understand each other in this different light.

This chapter will look at a number of these differences and how they translate into action related to philanthropic work.

NATURE VERSUS NURTURE: IT ALL STARTS IN THE BRAIN

A number of studies show the vast differences in women's and men's brains and thus their actions. For example, a University of Pennsylvania researcher says men lose their brain tissue three times faster than women, and with it some memory, concentration, and reasoning power. Dr. Ruben C. Gur concludes that's why men's shrinking brains may make them more ill-tempered—hence “grumpy old men.”³

Then there's the less rigorous conclusion reached by former Harvard president Lawrence Summers that the difference in men's and women's brains could be one explanation for the dearth of women in tenured positions in science and engineering at the country's top universities.⁴ This conclusion cost Summers his job and inspired women all over the nation to rise up and claim otherwise. University of Wisconsin's psychology professor Janet Hyde says she was inspired by Summer's remarks to finish her research.⁵ In an analysis of about seven million students released in 2006, Hyde concluded that sex differences in math and science are negligible, reinforcing a 1990 analysis she had completed on math.⁶

But it's not about wanting more female brains than male brains, it's about needing all brains. We need all of our brain power to contribute to the intellectual output of this country, including our philanthropy.

Most researchers do agree about two brain facts: men's brains are larger than women's, but women have more neurons⁷ and their corpus callosum is larger than men's.⁸ This cluster of fibers and tissues connecting the right and left hemispheres of the cerebrum sends information back and forth between the right and left brains. As a consequence of this larger corpus callosum, women can multitask better than men—no doubt necessary when women were caring for children, keeping the home fires going, cooking, making clothing, and working in the fields while the men were out hunting.

A Transfer to Action. Women want to look at all sides of the problem or solution: from both the left side of the brain, or the more practical side, as well as the right side of the brain, the more emotional side. They want to see the big picture, not just one part of it. Give women the whole story—all the links from beginning to end.

COMMUNICATION: SHE SAYS, HE SAYS

Whereas Dr. Gilligan looked at psychological theories in women's and men's development and believed that women's voices hadn't been heard, Deborah Tannen—a linguist, author, and Georgetown professor—wanted to find out whether women's communication was different from men's. Her seminal book, *You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation*⁹—in which Tannen said that yes, there were differences in the ways women and men communicate—was a best seller in 1991, and her terms “rapport talk” and “report talk” were tossed around when people discussed those differences: that is, women use conversation as a way to get to know one another, and men converse to impart information.

Tannen wrote about not only the ways women and men talk and the words they use, but their actions as well. To visualize these differences, picture the two men in the 2004 movie *Sideways*. The main characters, Miles and Jack, seemed most comfortable sitting next to one another in a bar or a car. The actors rarely looked one another squarely in the face but rather looked “sideways,” invoking an impersonal rather than a personal relationship. Women, on the other hand, are most frequently pictured in films sitting around a table or gathered in a circle, as in the television show *Sex and the City*, where the four women, unless shopping or having sex, are often seated around a table in a restaurant looking one another squarely in the face.

Tannen's theories about women and men communicating, both verbally and through their actions, are as pertinent today as they were when her book was written. Gilligan would add that because women and men are products of different cultures, we have different ways of connecting and communicating with one another.

A Transfer to Action. Read about different styles of gender communications and be aware of them when talking with donors. Recognize women's interest in the personal aspects of your conversation and use it as a discussion before providing a solution.

BELIEFS ABOUT MONEY

Women and men have different feelings and beliefs about money.¹⁰ Many men tend to view increasing their wealth as an end in itself, whereas women often perceive their money in a broader context—

as a means to be independent, care for children, or make philanthropic gifts.

As for how much money is enough, Linda Basch,¹¹ president of the National Council for Research on Women, says, “For women it’s not just the thrill of making money, it’s the social purposes that the money can be used for. What we’ve seen with some women in our research about women in fund management is that they have a sense when they’ve made enough and they cash out.”

Basch points to Jacki Zehner as an example. In 1996 Zehner was the youngest woman and the first female trader to be invited into the partnership of Goldman Sachs. After leaving the firm in 2002 at the age of thirty-five, and having done well financially, she is now committed to doing good through her philanthropy concerning the economic empowerment of women.

Kathryn Hinsch, formerly of Microsoft and founding director and board president of the Seattle think tank Women’s Bioethics Project, has her own views about women and money. Hinsch believes that women in their forties and fifties are more likely than men to consider what they want to do for the world rather than the legacy they want to leave for their offspring. “I think of women in my situation as women of means with dreams,” Hinsch says.¹²

A Transfer to Action. Consider sponsoring women’s donor education programs to help women discover their dreams and discuss money and philanthropy with other women in a controlled and friendly atmosphere. (See Chapter Nine.)

THE DESIRE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Thomas Kavanagh, nonprofit consultant and former vice president for advancement at Northwood University in Midland, Michigan, puts it this way: “Women seem to find satisfaction in knowing that their giving makes a difference in people’s lives, whereas men seem to tend more toward supporting institutions that helped them, such as their schools and affiliations from their youth like Scouts, and Boys’ and Girls’ Clubs.”¹³

According to a *Chronicle of Philanthropy* survey, women are more likely than men to contribute to causes they strongly believe in, to carry on their parents’ legacy of giving, and to give to a charity linked to an illness. In contrast, Donna Hall, executive

director for the Women Donors Network, says that “men are more likely to give to traditional charities, their university, sports clubs, or their churches.”¹⁴

Other significant gender differences in giving have been released by the Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University. The research shows that:

- Women are more likely than men to say they give because those who have more have a responsibility to help those who have less.
- Women are more likely than men to give to meet basic needs and to health issues.¹⁵

Judith Nichols, a New York–based author and trend analyst, says that although men describe their giving as practical—filling in the gaps that government can’t or won’t—women describe theirs as emotional, an obligation to help those with less.¹⁶

A Transfer to Action. Place your organization’s or institution’s needs in the context of making a difference and changing things for the better. Put a different “spin” on your cause and include the emotional face. Feature programs that help others. Don’t be afraid to ask for a cause that is unique and not a mainstream action.

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

Shaw-Hardy has a Pandora bracelet that other women often comment on, noting its charms and colors. Rather than just saying thank you and moving on, she will generally acknowledge the compliment, then talk a bit about the charms. This usually leads to a discussion in which she and the woman both share something personal.

Deborah Tannen says that personalizing and sharing is a women’s thing; that men tend to connect through status, usually through their jobs, whereas women tend to connect through storytelling.¹⁷ All of us remember people or subjects much better if there is a story attached. For one thing, it helps create a connection with the person or the subject. Through storytelling, we find out the details of other people’s lives, compare experiences, and discover similarities.

Kay Ballard, former director of major gifts and planned giving for the American Association of University Women Educational

Foundation, puts it this way: “I believe that instead of guiding our potential donors through pages of diagrams, spigots, and flow charts, we should tell interesting stories in an enthusiastic and jargon-free manner. The stories that we tell should give simple examples of financial and family situations that demonstrate how . . . gifts were used to provide beneficial outcomes for the donors involved.”¹⁸

A Transfer to Action. Find similarities between your life and your donor or prospect’s life. Find out what experiences have had the greatest impact on her life and share similar happenings that you have had. Tell a personal story or recount a special individual’s situation to describe your cause, whether you do this in person or through your communications—tell stories, show people.

ASKING FOR THE GIFT: WHO, WHAT, AND HOW?

How much does the purpose of a gift matter, versus who is asking you to give it? Is there a difference in the ways women and men respond, depending on these factors? Vanderbilt University Dean of Nursing, Colleen Conway-Welch, believes that women and men do respond differently: “Women value the connection with the solicitor and cause while men say that ‘who asks’ is the most important,” she says.¹⁹ In other words, although women will more willingly give when asked by someone they know, the cause must be one that is important to them, one they believe in emotionally, passionately, and compassionately. Men, on the other hand, can often be influenced by their perception of the person doing the asking: Is that person important to their career? Do they owe the asker a gift because he gave to their cause?

Bruce Flessner, founding principal of Bentz Whaley Flessner Consultants in Minneapolis, takes this a step further. “Guys bond through competition,” he says. “We can push our close friends for gifts because making it uncomfortable for them is a sign that we are good friends. I don’t ever recall hearing a woman say, ‘I want to call on my friend Sue and squeeze the last dime out of her.’ For men it shows we care.”²⁰

A Transfer to Action. Review your donor files and find out who is closest to your woman prospect and is also an advocate for the

institutional cause. Don't use peer pressure when asking for a gift. However, it's all right to mention others with whom the woman has a relationship to encourage not competition, but *collaboration*.

TIME AND DETAILS

We have found when working with women that they want to hear about all the pieces between the beginning and the end as well as the strategy involved. By way of analogy, men want the executive summary; women want the entire report. Yes, it takes longer to present the entire report; it takes longer to work with women. They often ask more questions and don't jump to a conclusion, even if it seems to be a logical one.

When Shaw-Hardy was raising funds for a political party in Washington, D.C., she worked with political action committees, mostly headed by men. It was pretty easy getting the money because the men just wanted to know what politician the money was for and how much it was going to cost. It was a case of in and out the door or a brief phone call. It surely didn't require much time—but then, it didn't always result in much of a lasting commitment. Of course, the donor expected to have favor with the politician; that was a given. No negotiations even had to take place.

A Transfer to Action. Be prepared to take the time to answer questions and provide more information, with the knowledge that even though a woman may take longer to make a decision, once it's made she will usually stick by it.

RECOGNITION AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

In research conducted by the National Foundation of Women Business Owners (NFWBO) with corporate women, only 40 percent of these high-powered business women were interested in recognition.²¹ According to nonprofit consultant Thomas Kavanagh, that research, completed in 1999, remains true today: "Women donors tend to be very specific in their giving, in that they want to see the results of their giving more than the recognition that accompanies it. Men, on the other hand, seem to like seeing their generosity recognized in more

concrete terms, like their name on a building—no pun intended!” Dean Conway-Welch agrees: “Men want recognition and women want involvement when they give.”

Philanthropy consultant Robert Sharpe relates it to our earlier point that women want to make a difference. He claims that in his experience, the husband is usually more interested in naming opportunities (he calls it “monument-building”), raising more than the last college class, and advancing his career; women want to make a difference in society and aren’t as motivated by a need for recognition.²²

The issue of recognition wouldn’t be complete without talking about anonymity (a generational consideration that we discuss more fully in Chapter Five). Women in the “traditional generation” are more likely to ask for anonymity because it was not considered ladylike in their generation to discuss money and especially not to display it by having their names on buildings. This attitude is changing as women see the necessity of being role models for others; happily, women like Darla Moore (see Chapter Three) and Christine Lodewick enjoy the responses they get from their gift.

Lodewick says she doesn’t feel at all uncomfortable being noticed for having given a gift with her husband, Philip, to help build the University of Connecticut Visitor’s Center. “People ask if I’m the Lodewick that gave the building, and they do so in a very pleasant way,” she says. “I think it’s not the name or the money, it’s how you act about it. And giving that gift and having my name up there with Philip’s name makes me very happy. So others are happy for and with me.” Christine credits Philip for encouraging her to put her name on the building as well as his. “He said otherwise no one would ever realize a woman had a part in it.”²³

When cofounding the Three Generations Circle of Women Givers in Traverse City, Michigan, Shaw-Hardy wanted to make sure women would allow their names to be in print. She provided an easy way to do this by asking the women to give their gift in honor or memory of someone in the three generations of their family. Women loved the idea and had no qualms at all about having their thousand-dollar gift mentioned in publications because it was associated with someone very personal to them. We stress this point because there is nothing, absolutely nothing that receives more complaints from women than men being credited for women’s gifts. Along that same line, a woman in one of our focus groups complained that she and

her spouse gave together to their university, but her husband was the one who always received the invitations to football games. Her husband wasn't interested in going to the games, but she was—although her name wasn't included. One can only wonder how she will feel about the university if and when she becomes a widow.

A Transfer to Action. When a gift is made, ask how the parties would like to be credited. Should it be in her name? In his name? Or in both? Review your nonprofit's record keeping and be sure that it is consistent with the donor's wishes throughout the institution. If a mistake is made and she contacts you, apologize profusely as you change the acknowledgment, and make sure it never happens again. Unless directed not to, always invite both spouses to events.

Encourage women to allow their names be used for their gifts. Be aware that recognition alone is not a motivator for a woman's gift; what counts most to her is the cause itself, how she can be involved, and how her gift will make a difference. Provide opportunities for women to honor and memorialize others through their gifts.

VOLUNTEERING

Women do seem to be more hard-wired than men to be engaged in their communities. According to a *Chronicle of Philanthropy* study, they consider volunteering as part of their lives; by contrast, most men have been socialized to do things and get paid for them. A male volunteer from the same study, Michael Wingfield, who has served alongside both women and men, says, "Men tend to respond to a crisis; they're reactive, and women are proactive. Men sit with their spears waiting for someone to attack the village while the women gather the berries and tend the children and just generally keep everything together."²⁴

We have had numerous occasions to serve on boards with men who worked very hard as volunteers. However, until retirement, they seemed less willing to volunteer unless there was a leadership position involved. Women, on the other hand, are usually willing to stuff envelopes and answer the phone, not expecting a reward.

There was a time when women equated giving their time to giving money. But as precious as time is to today's women, most seem to understand the difference now and realize that giving money means

being able to have an impact on the organization. This differs from giving time, which is generally more affecting for the person, not the organization.

Women do want to be engaged with the institutions they support. Even in the NFWBO study mentioned earlier, corporate women showed they wanted connection, such as mentoring young women in business schools. Volunteering as a mentor or involvement with students or girls is high on the list of ways women choose their involvement. It is not enough for women to just write a check; they want the personal involvement as well—or at least to be offered the chance.

A Transfer to Action. Debra Mesch, director of the Women’s Philanthropy Institute at the Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University, observes that “[t]he likelihood of giving a gift rises with the amount of time volunteered. [In that sense], time definitely is money, and it’s well worth the time to develop volunteer activities.”²⁵

Create a grid for volunteer help and publish this on the organization’s Web site or in the media. Inform donors of volunteer opportunities. Include ways for volunteers to work with young people.

Ensure that there is a volunteer coordinator to train and schedule the volunteers. Volunteers understandably get frustrated when they are recruited and then have nothing to do. They become discouraged and disinclined to continue their support with either time or money.

LOYALTY

Investment firms and financial managers have long known that women need more time to make a decision than men do. Lynn M. Schmidt, president of Meritus Financial Group in Elgin, Illinois, says the payoff is a high level of loyalty if women like the service. “Men want less information, but they are less inclined to stick with the plan. They switch around a lot. Women want more education and they take longer to make a decision. But they will stick with the plan and remain loyal to you,” Schmidt says.²⁶

The same loyalty holds true for women as donors, according to Andrea Pactor, associate director of the Women’s Philanthropy Institute. “Women are committed donors who care deeply about

the causes they support.” Pactor likens this loyalty to that found in the consumer world. “The three main indicators of brand loyalty in the consumer world—trust, commitment, satisfaction—are the same qualities that women donors especially seek in long-term relationships with nonprofits.”²⁷

A Transfer to Action. Loyalty is deeply associated with stewardship, and both function together. Beyond thanks for the gift also comes the organization’s responsibility to retain donors’ loyalty by providing accountability and periodic reporting about the impact of their gift. Let donors know that you value their contribution. Their continued interest will sustain their loyalty and belief in you and the organization.

BEQUESTS AND LEGACY GIVING

Bequests have long been popular with women, and a Blackbaud Company study shows that most charitable bequests are given by women. In arranging to give away their money after their death, they don’t have to worry about depleting their resources during their lifetime or becoming “bag ladies.”²⁸

The reasons women give bequests differ significantly from those of men. Women are more likely than men to respond to appeals that focus on the impact a bequest can achieve or on the value of helping those with less, according to research published by the Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University. However, both women and men under forty are more responsive to requests that emphasize basic needs.²⁹

Interestingly, in a 2007 survey done by the Association of Healthcare Philanthropy, 54 percent of men over sixty-five with an income of more than \$100,000 said they made bequests because charities provide better services than the government.³⁰ Although the survey doesn’t draw any conclusions, many women want to partner with government and think government has a responsibility to be involved.

A Transfer to Action. When working with women donors, emphasize how their bequests will help the organization benefit society and make the world a better place. Encourage women to make a gift during their lifetime so they can enjoy seeing the results.

GLOBAL GIVING

Although many women say they would rather give in their community or to organizations and institutions that directly affect them, more and more women are giving globally. And according to a study conducted by Karen Winterich at Texas A&M Mays Business School, they're more likely than men to support overseas causes.³¹

Why are women more likely than men to give globally? In Shaw-Hardy and Carmen Stevens's 2008 research, many women said they considered themselves "global citizens" or "citizens of the world."³² These philanthropic women said they give globally because of the extreme need—they see need locally, of course, but also understand the link between local and global issues.

Winterich's study results showed that women are more likely than men to support "out group" causes to which they have no tie, such as international tsunami victims, whereas men are more likely to support national victims or an "in cause." An "in cause" is one that would positively reflect on a person's generosity or was favored by someone whom the person held in high esteem. This ties in with earlier conclusions that women are not so affected by the person asking as they are by the cause.

The spread of global giving, particularly to women in emerging countries, may well have started with microloans to women from the Grameen Foundation—women like Lucy Billingsley of Dallas, who invested through the Grameen Foundation in projects like Chiapas Women.³³

Billingsley, the only daughter of legendary developer Trammell Crow, was on vacation in San Cristóbal de Las Casas, Chiapas, Mexico, when, while admiring the native women's talent, she also deplored the extreme poverty they endured. She was so moved by what she saw that she took thirty of her Dallas friends to Chiapas to get involved raising money to provide microfinancing (lending money to women who live and raise their family on less than \$1 a day) to these women. Ultimately, Billingsley has raised \$4 million through the Grameen Foundation. Billingsley reflects the view of many women when she says, "Why did I get opportunity and responsibility? I got it so I could give it again."

Also from Dallas, Trisha Wilson, interior designer for the Atlantis in the Bahamas and the Venetian in Las Vegas, says she will always

remember the time when, while on safari, she went into one of the African shacks. There she found a two-year-old who looked like a newborn. “I’ll never forget that sight as long as I live. He already had club fingers—his fingers were square. It was heart-wrenching.”³⁴ That was five years ago and since then she formed the Wilson Foundation, providing education and medical help to AIDS-ravaged villages near Wilson’s second home in South Africa.

There are many such stories about women who have traveled far and wide, seen the Louvre and the North Pole, ridden camels and visited Dubai. These women want more than just sight-seeing and the ability to talk about their last trip. They have looked around during their travels and seen firsthand and up close the problems of the world through women’s eyes. They recognize women all over the globe as their sisters, and they feel that it’s their responsibility and a major opportunity to help them break out of poverty. They know that to help a woman is to help a family, a community, and ultimately a world in which they and those they help live, no matter on what part of the globe.

A Transfer to Action. Be aware that women are interested in global causes and see a connection between what is taking place in their neighborhood and what is taking place on another continent. Are there ways that the mission of your institution or organization can embrace a global involvement, especially in Third World countries and particularly to help women and girls? There may be social networks that can be set up between your organization and a similar one in another country. Ask your women donors to help think this through. Not all will be interested in connecting globally, but the trend is definitely there.

TAKEAWAYS

Science shows that there are biological, neurological, and behavioral variations in women’s and men’s brains—we do think, behave, and communicate differently. Different doesn’t mean right or wrong, but if there weren’t these differences, we would have had no reason to write *Women and Philanthropy*. However, the fact that the Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University’s preliminary research shows that younger men are thinking more like women means that noting

gender differences is extremely important to those seeking money from both genders.³⁵

Women are a huge and complex group. It takes an investment in time to understand women in totality and individually. But gender plays the biggest part in understanding women's giving motivations, followed by generation.

Consider these gender differences when engaging women donors:

- Women want to see the big picture.
- Women relate to causes through stories.
- Women want their gift to bring about change and make a difference.
- Women use conversation to get to know one another better.
- The cause is more important to women than who is asking.
- Women multitask and want details.
- It may take women a while to make a decision. Some call this “gestation time.”
- Being properly credited for the gift is extremely important to women.
- Women are increasingly interested in having their gift publicly recognized, particularly if it serves as a role model for other women.
- Women want opportunities to be engaged with the organization—to volunteer.
- Keep a woman informed, and you can count on her loyalty.
- Women are interested in the potential impact of their bequests.
- Women are more inclined than men are to support global causes.

