WOMEN AND PHILANTHROPY: OLD STEREOTYPES, NEW CHALLENGES

A Monograph Series

Written by Mary Ellen S. Capek

for Global Fund for Women
Michigan Women's Foundation
Resourceful Women
Women & Philanthropy and
Women's Funding Network

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THE WOMEN'S FUNDING MOVEMENT: ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND CHALLENGES

Volume Three of the Monograph Series

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SERIES PREFACE

We are pleased to present the series *Women and Philanthropy: Old Stereotypes, New Challenges*. As organizations, active in the field of philanthropy that provide both funding and other kinds of support to groups serving the needs of women and girls, we offer these monographs on key issues affecting women and the practice of organized philanthropy.

Our five organizations—the Global Fund for Women, the Michigan Women’s Foundation, Resourceful Women, Women and Philanthropy, and Women’s Funding Network—have known and worked with each other for many years. We were fortunate, however, to have strengthened our working relationships over the past two years during which we were participants in the W.K. Kellogg Foundation supported the Women’s Philanthropy Cluster. The Cluster provided a forum for our organizations to come together on a regular basis. It offered a unique opportunity for us to address many of the critical questions that affect our own organizations and the broader field of women’s philanthropy. We are grateful to the Kellogg Foundation for its support of our work and of this project.

One of the first unanimous decisions was to commission targeted research and documentation on some of the key challenges facing the field. This series by Mary Ellen Capek is designed to give readers food for thought, provoke active discussion and debate, and offer an analysis of some of the emerging trends in the field. Other papers on related topics will follow. The perspectives presented in the series are those of the author, but the issues are of concern to all of us who care about and are active in the field of social change and philanthropy.

We hope that these papers will simulate animated conversations and thoughtful reflection among those of us engaged in the foundation world as well as serve as a resource to grassroots practitioners serving women and girls in this country and around the globe. We welcome your responses and look forward to the ideas generated from such discussions.

Kavita N. Ramdas, President, Global Fund for Women
Peg Talburtt, Executive Director, Michigan Women’s Foundation
Judy Bloom, Executive Director, Resourceful Women
Felicia Lynch, Executive Director, Women and Philanthropy
Carol Mollner, Executive Director, Women’s Funding Network
**INTRODUCTION**

This series began as an internal report written in the summer of 1997 for the five grantees that constitute the Women's Philanthropy Cluster funded by W.K. Kellogg Foundation: Global Fund for Women, Michigan Women's Foundation, Resourceful Women, Women & Philanthropy, and Women's Funding Network. I would like to thank cluster participants for their support, encouragement, and feedback as we reshaped the original report for broader audiences in the nonprofit and philanthropic communities: Carol Barton, Judy Bloom, Stephanie Clohesy, Karen Judd, Alissa Hauser, Felicia Lynch, Carol Mollner, Misti Mukhopadhyay, Kavita Ramdas, Sharon Ramirez, Laura Sperazi, Laurisa Sellers, Peg Talburtt, and Holly Wolhart.

I would also like to thank researchers Lee Badgett, John Havens, Barry Johnson, Ann Kaplan, Judith Kroll, Susan Ostrander, and Paul Schervish for reviewing parts of the manuscript. Gerald Auten, Robert Avery, Rebecca Blank, Tara Blue, Lynn Burbridge, Diana Campoamor, Chris Cardona, Marik K. Chamberlain, Tim Conseedine, Sally Covington, Donald Cox, Judith Eargle, Catherine Eckel, Nancy Folbre, Marjorie Fujiki, Tracy Gary, Sherman Hanna, Heidi Hartmann, John Havens, Virginia Hodgkinson, Fran Huehls, Janet Huettner, Ann Kaplan, Andrea Kaminski, Lynn Karoly, Judith Kroll, Barry Johnson, Patricia Lewis, Donna Manning, Susan Ostrander, Ellen Remmer, Loren Renz, Kathryn Shaw, Paul Schervish, Margaret Smith, Pam Sparr, Frank Stafford, Martha Starr-McCluer, Richard Steinberg, Cynthia Teague, Walteen Grady Truely, Abbie von Schlegell, Denny Vaughan, John Weicher, and Ed Wolff—all provided data, articles, referrals, critical comments, and/or other helpful resource material, often in a hurry, and I am grateful for their prompt, thoughtful responses.

Finally, I would like to thank Susan Hallgarth, who listened patiently as I talked my way through many of the manuscript revisions and skillfully edited final versions of the series. I am also grateful to the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, Princeton University, and the Anderson Schools of Management at the University of New Mexico for providing valuable institutional resources and affiliation that made this research possible. Laird Klingler, librarian at the Woodrow Wilson School, and Jacqueline N. Hood, Chair of the Anderson Schools' Department of Management, were especially helpful in arranging for both database and other research resources.

**SCOPE**

As noted occasionally in the text of all three monographs, the topic "Women and Philanthropy" encompasses much of the work of the women's movement as well as the women's funding movement since the early 1970s. My original charge from the Women's Philanthropy Cluster was to produce an overview of existing research, interview a sample of philanthropic leaders and others active in the women's funding movement, and provide a think piece for the Cluster.

As the report was read and discussed, Cluster participants recommended producing several briefer publications, each of which could stand on its own, but together would form a broad overview of “Women and Philanthropy”:

*Volume One.* Women as Donors: Stereotypes, Common Sense, and Challenges
Volume Two. Foundation Support for Women and Girls: "Special Interest" Funding or Effective Philanthropy? (Includes a Special Section on Women's Funds)

Volume Three. The Women's Funding Movement: Accomplishments and Challenges

These monographs all focus on the status of philanthropy in the United States. Future publications in this series will look at women's philanthropy in other countries, and it is important to note here that these three monographs are premised on the assumption that we in the United States have much to learn from philanthropy in other countries. For example, women and girls in other countries are seldom labeled a "special interest" group. The United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing, China in 1995, the accompanying Nongovernmental Organization (NGO) Forum in Huairou, and international women's organizing efforts leading to those events taught most of the world that funding women and girls changes families and changes communities. United States philanthropy has yet to take that lesson to heart, as all three publications in this series will document.

SOURCES AND LIMITATIONS

Reliable research on women and philanthropy is slim. To fill in gaps and analyze issues that range beyond the limits of existing documentation, 81 women and men were interviewed for this project: they included researchers; CEOs, senior executives, and program officers in "traditional" foundations; heads of nonprofit organizations, including Council on Foundations' affinity groups; current and former heads of women's funds; heads of women's organizations; women donors across the age spectrum; trustees; consultants and professional fundraisers and development directors. Twenty-eight percent of those interviewed were women and men of color. It is important to note that this sample was not drawn randomly. Because of the dearth of reliable research, the list of respondents necessarily included researchers whose opinions helped to shape my own interpretations about existing data, social climate issues, and the philanthropic and nonprofit sector in general. The list of respondents also was weighted to include people active in the women's funding movement and to include women and men in leadership positions in philanthropy, especially women and men of color. As with any anecdotal research, their observations should be read as food for thought. In most cases, respondents' perspectives are opinions, not facts, and some respondents may or may not have been acquainted with complete or up-to-date information.

OVERVIEW

The three monographs in this series were orginally written as one report, sharing many of the same respondents. Read together, they provide an overview of the status and perceptions of philanthropy as it affects women and girls. Although data and analyses in each publication also inform the other monographs, they are designed to be read separately. Each has a summary
section and provides recommendations for further research and implementation strategies for different types of organizations--women's organizations and others that raise money from women or for women and girls, women's funds, community foundations, corporate and private national funders, and government agencies that fund women and girls.

**Volume One. Women as Donors: Stereotypes, Common Sense, and Challenges**

This monograph begins with an overview of existing research on women as donors and raises questions about common stereotypes: Do women give away less money than men? Less often? It draws the conclusion that much existing research is based on stereotypes about gender that generate the wrong questions and hence the wrong answers. In fact, once other variables such as age, level of income, number of dependents, and health are taken into account, few discernible differences between men and women donors remain.

The data reveal, however, that some differences do exist. Women have less wealth than men, earn less, and have to spend more on day-to-day expenses. Yet women do give and give generously. To fill in background for conclusions about women as donors, this monograph provides up-to-date facts on women's assets, with some new data on wealth only recently available. Given the resources available for research on women's philanthropy, the important questions are not about gender differences in giving behavior but about what people give to. The evidence suggests that women and men give for many of the same reasons. Yet so many women and men still do not give--or do not give generously--to women's funds and other activist women's organizations. One important question is why don't they?

To consider several possible answers to that question, this monograph looks first at stumbling blocks for women donors; second at fundraising skills and constraints within women's organizations; and third at cultural phenomena that have subtle but powerful impact on giving to women and girls: 1) a barrage of image distortions about the people many women's organizations fund and serve, including immigrant women, poor women, lesbians, women students, and abused women and children; and 2) the internalized norms that condition how women see themselves in relation to other women and women's causes.

**Volume Two. Foundation Support for Women and Girls: "Special Interest" Funding or Effective Philanthropy? (Includes a Special Section on Women's Funds)**

This monograph looks at the available data on organized philanthropy as it affects women and girls. When women's organizations publicized previous years' numbers--both dollar values and numbers of grants awarded to women's and girls' organizations and programs--they stirred up controversies about the reliability of the data and what the data tell us. This review begins with a summary of available data on foundation funding for women and girls and defines in some detail what we can and cannot read from the data.

The monograph also looks at data on foundation leadership and staff--especially boards, CEOs, and program officers--and discusses what the numbers mean, especially for women and men of color. The analysis attempts to account for paradoxes in mainstream foundation culture: how some respondents within that culture feel thwarted and challenge the assumption that foundations are interested in pursuing diversity that is more than skin-deep. What does it mean,
for example, that while philanthropy itself is becoming a "feminized" profession, relatively few philanthropic resources reach women and girls and their organizations and programs in this country, especially organizations serving women and girls of color?

Finally, this monograph looks at the history of women’s funds, diversity, success, growing pains, and--perhaps most important--the innovations and funding strategies women's funds bring to organized philanthropy. This monograph and the third monograph on the women's funding movement itself rely heavily on assessments and questions shared by respondents interviewed. Its focus is on strategic funding for women's and girls' organizations; how women's funds' influence other foundations; how they have worked to democratize donors and achieve greater racial/ethnic diversity; and what does and does not work as women's funds reach toward wider communities and higher dollars.

**Volume Three. The Women's Funding Movement: Accomplishments and Challenges**

This monograph is shaped by responses to the question, "Is there a women's funding movement?" It also looks at definitions of social movements; lists key players, allies, and potential allies in the women's funding movement; explores areas of success, tensions, and failures; and identifies some visions for the future.

The theme emerging most frequently from respondents interviewed for the original report--many of them sympathetic supporters of women's organizations themselves--is the need for new thinking, new language, and, as important, new collaborations, coalitions, and strategies to connect the concerns of women and girls to a wider public.

As in the other two monographs, this report ends with a series of recommendations for future research and suggested strategies for using the data and analyses for further work.
VOLUME THREE. THE WOMEN'S FUNDING MOVEMENT: ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND CHALLENGES

SUMMARY

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The theme emerging most frequently from respondents interviewed for this publication--many of them sympathetic supporters of women's organizations themselves--is the need for new thinking, new language, and, as important, new collaborations, coalitions, and strategies to connect the concerns of women and girls to a wider public.

A detailed history of events affecting women and philanthropy over the last several decades is beyond the scope of this publication, but a brief chronology is included at the end of this monograph. Much of the history alluded to and the chronology itself is only a first step in compiling a comprehensive history of the women's funding movement and connections to the larger women's movement. Future research needs to include archival work at foundations and women's organizations that were early funders and organizers of the women's movement and also needs to explore the impact of funding strategies like direct mail that made much of the organizational work of the early phases of the women's movement possible.

INTRODUCTION

A 1991 article on fundraising as an empowerment strategy for women notes the convergence of four key forces that created the climate for women's funds' organizing in 1985. First, realities of "Reagonomics" had begun to hit home: declining funds for social services, research, and advocacy organizations. Second, younger professional staff, many of them women, were moving into careers in organized philanthropy, and younger generations of wealthy families, many of them influenced by social movements in the sixties and seventies, started to take control of their own money. Third, critiques of philanthropy that had begun with the release of the Filer Commission report in 1974 had by 1985 resulted in litigation against United Way and continued criticism aimed at foundations for ignoring the needs of women and minorities. And fourth, planning for what would prove to be the watershed conference of the United Nation's Decade for Women meeting in Nairobi was going forward (Brilliant 1991).

In fact, this convergence of events was preceded by more than a decade of massive efforts to transform women's economic and political lives. Any assessment of a "women's funding movement" is inextricably linked to the women's movement. It is crucial to note the transformative impact of the women's movement in women's and men's economic lives. Without the women's movement, we would not have today's thriving economy, dual-income households, expanded credit for women, the increase of numbers of women in executive positions in
foundations, the increase of women-owned businesses, or other opportunities for women to create their own wealth, to name just a few examples.

In fact, the largest national women's fund in the country, the Ms. Foundation for Women, was formed in 1972, with support from the startup of Ms. magazine. And it was in the heady days of early feminism that female foundation employees started to organize, first in New York in 1973, then nationally at the Council on Foundations' annual meeting in Chicago in 1975. That led to the official founding of Women and Foundations/Corporate Philanthropy (renamed Women & Philanthropy in 1995). Earlier efforts to fund women and girls had actually begun in the late '50s when the Carnegie Corporation set up a program area focusing on women in human resources and again in 1963 when Carnegie funded a new initiative on women and continuing education.

The Ford Foundation began systematic funding for women and girls in 1971 across program areas, and in 1974 published the first report on Ford funding for women and girls, recording almost $7 million in 1974 grants to institutions, plus additional grants for individual research and doctoral fellowships--enough to fill a 32-page booklet (Ford Foundation 1974). Almost a quarter of a century later, the list of women's topics Ford funded in the early 1970s is still impressive. Divided into program areas--legal rights and equal opportunity, educational needs, women in the workforce, women in the professions, research on women in society, and overseas activities related to women--the list includes funding for employment, legal challenges for government benefits, credit, legal education, abortion, eliminating sex role stereotyping, research on sex role stereotyping, sex education, women's studies, advanced research and learning centers, building women's union leadership, minority working women, child care services, and career guidance for young women.

Ford funding also included support for academic research on women and women's issues in areas like natural and social sciences, economics, politics, medicine, higher education, and women in society; support for international research and conferences; and support for foreign women's organizations. (The projects funded are all the more remarkable given the back page of the report, which lists no woman among the executive officers of the foundation and only two out of 16 trustees as women: a professor at the University of Massachusetts, Boston, and an attorney from Washington, DC.)

Ford's early funding for women's organizations and women's issues, while perhaps not jump-starting the women's funding movement, certainly lent it credibility, and the energy of Ford female staffers aided a number of emerging women's organizations, among them Women And Foundations/Corporate Philanthropy. As noted, a detailed history of coalitions and organizational activities affecting women and philanthropy over the last several decades is beyond the scope of this publication, but a brief chronology is included as an appendix.

The rest of this publication focuses on perceptions of what some call a "women's funding movement," others not. Most agree that something important has happened for women and philanthropy in the last quarter century. As one researcher noted, "It's a success that we even think about labeling something a 'women's funding movement.' Women and money haven't been in the same universe historically."

**SO IS THERE A WOMEN'S FUNDING MOVEMENT?**
One organizational head thinks that "there is something of a movement there, but its potential isn't realized yet." A foundation executive notes, "We've come a long way, maybe, but we still have a long way to go." Another comments, "We can't call ourselves a movement if we act like community foundations who just 'happen' to have a focus on women."

What's a movement? Definitions abound, but one recent overview of social movement research literature cites a list of three questions and ten essential ingredients for collective work to be considered a "social movement": Who makes up a movement? 1) A core constituency, 2) leaders, 3) a mass audience, and 4) opposition/enemies. What is at stake? 5) vital interests, 6) core values, and 7) hidden agendas like race, class, and ideology. What makes a movement work? 8) local action, 9) acts of symbolic power, and 10) milestones (Simmons 1996, pp. 11-12).

The work of social movements proceeds through a combination of informal grassroots organizing, the establishment of formal organizations to help structure the work, and formal and informal networks that link organizations with each other and with grassroots organizing. ("Grassroots" need not be community-based; it can also be "profession-" or "discipline"-based, for instance, just as Women & Philanthropy formed through women organizing at the 1976 Council on Foundations' meeting. Women's discipline-based caucuses and committees within their professional associations transformed the status of women faculty and helped create the "revolution" of women's studies and feminist theory within higher education.)

What makes a movement work? A list solicited from experienced activists includes:

• charismatic, visible leadership plus trusted internal leaders who know how to work behind the scenes and build consensus;

• the "time is ripe";

• publicity skills and ability to articulate a "big," emotionally-compelling, long-range vision that connects internally to diverse stakeholders in the movement as well as externally to larger, more disinterested audiences;

• ability to build working coalitions around a short, focused list of pragmatic goals;

• patience and the tolerance to ignore or work around differences and histories of institutional and personal animosities;

• ability and agility to modify short-term goals and shift strategies to meet the changing needs of a long-range vision; and

• more energy put into developing functional, diverse collaborative networks that are wide-flung yet in touch with each other, with some, but less energy, going into strengthening formal organizations that are permanently endowed and institutionalized.

Whether or not the "women's funding movement" is a movement is best left to more abstract analysis elsewhere. Especially since the "women's funding movement" is not considered to be a mass movement--where much of the energy comes from grassroots organizing, however that is defined--analysis needs to look more closely at the organizations that have been the source of
much of the energy for the women's funding movement from its inception. Following is a list of the primary players. For efficiency's sake, the women's funding movement will be referred to as a movement throughout the rest of this publication.

**PRIMARY PLAYERS**

- Women & Philanthropy, a national organization whose members are foundation trustees, executives, program officers, and other foundation staff. In 1988, Women & Philanthropy sponsored the Action/Research committee that built on a decade of earlier reports and analyses. Chaired by the head of the Ms. Foundation for Women, a board member of Women & Philanthropy, the committee launched and oversaw development of the Far From Done reports through 1994 and included consultants from the Council on Foundations, The Foundation Center, and the National Council for Research on Women in addition to other researchers and Women & Philanthropy members and staff;

- Women in Philanthropy groups (WIPs), regional coalitions of women funders like the Chicago Women in Philanthropy and the Boston Women in Philanthropy;

- Women's Funding Network and their membership, which includes most of the existing women's funds in the United States and one in Canada plus individual donors and associate members including various affinity groups of the Council on Foundations and other support organizations;

- National and international women's foundations like the Ms. Foundation for Women, the Sister Fund, the Global Fund for Women, and the Astraean National Lesbian Action Foundation that have played leadership roles nationally and internationally; and local foundations like the Chicago Foundation for Women and the Boston Women's Fund that, with their coalitions of women funders, produced comprehensive research reports on the dearth of funding to women and girls in their communities;

- National Council for Research on Women (NCRW) and many of their 80 member centers, both campus-based and freestanding research centers and organizations, which have done work on issues relevant to women and philanthropy. NCRW also issued several reports and other publications on federal funding and private philanthropy for women and girls;

- Individual researchers, some of whom have worked with the Women & Philanthropy Action/Research Committee and/or research projects of the Women's Funding Network and others with various of the organizational constituencies;

- Donor groups like Resourceful Women and the Women Donors Network and individual donors;

- National women's organizations that have taken on some of the issues, like the Fund for a Feminist Majority, NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund, Catalyst, the American Council on Education's Office of Women in Higher Education, and Rutgers University's Center for the American Woman and Politics and Institute for Women's Global Leadership; and
• Professional women fundraisers that organized the Women's Philanthropy Institute and the National Network on Women as Philanthropists.

ALLIES AND POTENTIAL ALLIES

Other groups involved to varying degrees or who are potential allies in the work of the movement include:

• Independent Sector, National Council of Nonprofit Associations, and state nonprofit associations;

• Council on Foundations, regional associations of grantmakers (RAGs), and the affinity groups of the Council, among them Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders in Philanthropy; Association of Black Foundation Executives; Disability Funders Network; Funders Concerned About AIDS; Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees; Grantmakers Evaluation Network; Grantmakers for Children, Youth & Families; Grantmakers in Aging; Grantmakers in Health; Grantmakers in Support of Reproductive Rights; Hispanics in Philanthropy; Native Americans in Philanthropy; and the Working Group on Funding Lesbian and Gay Issues;

• The Foundation Center;

• National Network of Grantmakers (NNG), affiliated groups like the NNG Women's Caucus and the Donor Organizers' Network, and NNG member organizations;

• National Alliance for Choice in Giving and the workplace giving federations;

• National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy;

• Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA) and the centers for research on philanthropy, including the only center focusing specifically on issues of women, the Center for Women and Philanthropy at the University of Wisconsin;

• American Association of Fund Raising Counsel (AAFRC) and the National Society of Fund Raising Executives (NSFRE); and

• The Philanthropic Initiative and other nonprofits working with individuals, families, corporations, and foundations to help develop and manage philanthropic programs.

SUCCESSES

Over the past 25 years, the women’s movement has had considerable successes including:

• the number of women who have moved into board and staff leadership positions in "traditional" foundations; the number of program officers who are women;
• the number of women's funds that have formed, the amount of money they have raised, and the diverse organizational structures and values they have institutionalized;

• the effectiveness of umbrella organizations like the Women's Funding Network and Women & Philanthropy in providing services and resources and challenging their constituencies;

• the expansion of research and reports such as: the *Far From Done* reports and city and state studies documenting the problems; book-length studies and collections of essays noted in the Chronology, and other publications;

• the visible presence of women at national and regional Council on Foundation meetings, NNG meetings, and Independent Sector meetings: on planning committees, on panels, as speakers, in attendance;

• ongoing foundation support from a small number of national private and corporate foundations;

• organizing, educating, and challenging women donors through groups like Resourceful Women.

**TENSIONS WITHIN THE MOVEMENT**

A number of respondents interviewed, when asked to assess where the women's funding movement is today, commented on tensions they saw playing out among the organizations and coalitions most active in the women's funding movement. Here's a summary, drawn from their comments and other observations:

• the organizations have different levels of development, growth, and institutionalization, especially in fundraising capacities;

• a lot of board and staff transitions are going on, probably no more than for most nonprofits, but they consume valuable staff energy, and especially for more "experimental" organizations, there are few models of successful transitions;

• in spite of significant duration (a feat in itself), many organizations still see themselves struggling for survival; many are significantly underfunded, even with recent core grants from Kellogg, Ford, and other funders. As one respondent noted, it's hard to "think big" when you're struggling for day-to-day survival;
organizations have to address different audiences, and they may not be "singing from the same hymnal" when it comes to strategies for making a difference. There is also a tendency (as common to organizations as to humans) to misread style for substance (e.g. "if you wear Ferragamo pumps to work you couldn't possibly own Birkenstocks...or Nikes");

built-in tensions among organizations reflect the class/power/status system in the larger nonprofit world. Program officers and executives in endowed foundations, for example, sometimes have trouble working in partnership with fundraising organizations that may be potential grantees; and

histories among a number of the organizations that have lead to mutual mistrust and perceived competition, a result of differences in leadership styles, personal relationship histories among some of the heads and former heads of organizations, and/or the financial fragility of the organizations.

On balance, however, many of the groups involved in the women's funding movement have engaged in increased collaboration and sharing in recent years, with outcomes resulting in collaborative projects, joint presentations at national meetings, and cross-membership in each others' organizations. The rest of this section offers more of respondents' observations in their own words.

"THE THINGS I THOUGHT I KNEW HAVEN'T WORKED"

The foundation executive who started her interview by commenting that "the things I thought I knew haven't worked" echoes some of the major stumbling blocks experienced by other leaders in the movement who have "been there, done that," and if not burned out, are very tired. As these leaders describe it, some have been working for well over a decade, if not in their current positions, then elsewhere in the movement. And they are not seeing the visible progress they had expected. "I thought we wouldn't need Women & Philanthropy twenty years later," one respondent remarked. And yet the fact that women have had such success in philanthropic careers makes the lack of funding flowing to women's and girls' organizations and programs all the more puzzling and discouraging.

This discouragement is as true among donors as it is among foundation executives. "For a lot of people," one woman donor maintains, "women's need for more philanthropic dollars is not even on their radar screens." Part of the problem is perception, she points out: "Many donors see the charitable sector itself oriented toward women; they don't even think whether the sector is actually serving women and girls."

Furthermore, there was a distinct sense among respondents that the women's funding movement has played out one set of strategies--some of which have worked, many of which haven't--and is, as some would say, "stuck." Others put it more tactfully: We're "at a critical juncture."
Is the women's movement's stalled?

Many of the women interviewed pointed out their sense that the women's movement itself is stalled, at least in the United States. Other respondents point out that so many women's funding movement arguments are "60s liberal stuff." The real argument, they suggest, is more effective grantmaking versus bandaids on all our major issues. With so many bandaids these days, one funder commented, "We're starting to look like a poster child for Johnson & Johnson."

Is identity politics killing us?

Respondents' concerns also center on divisions they still perceive among identity-based nonprofits. Despite the fact that collaboration has improved significantly among the Council on Foundation affinity groups--including a joint commitment to using a broader, inclusive lens--there is still a sense that when "we fight each other for increasingly smaller pieces of the pie, we don't fight 'Norm.'" Instead of finding common ground and building strategic alliances, groups get "stuck," as one respondent observed, in still-needed but time consuming identity-based politics: "Identity politics is killing us." Another respondent, a development officer, notes that "identity-based work grew out of some real needs, but it's not working any more. We need to reassess the strategy." Discrimination may have gotten more "polite," as one respondent noted, but it still "sets the pole higher" for people of color, gay men, and lesbians. Yet this same respondent asks, "Has [the identity work] moved us closer to being a healthy society? Aren't we just as isolated as when we started, with power still in the hands of a relatively few?"

Others acknowledge these concerns but still see a need to name the problems more openly: "Look the ugly thing in the face, admit the lack of equity, then decide what to do next." The trouble is that "no one wants to acknowledge the problems are so predominant or do the work even if they acknowledge the problems."

STRATEGIES THAT WORK

How can all of the stakeholders active in the women's funding movement and their allies find the one or two things they have in common and build agendas around those? "How do we convince all the groups of the importance of the movement, the importance of working in coalition?" as one respondent asked. "Heck, we're even starting to see some women's funds not sharing the values of the Network," another respondent pointed out. If we can't all pull our weight in one well-managed coalition," she insisted, "how can we make the case to have even more groups buy into the vision of a larger movement?"

What's worked? Persistence!

"Don't give up." "Don't lose your sense of humor." "Sure we're tired, but the problems haven't gone away, and we've got to learn to live with them for the long haul. We need to keep chipping away at them." In spite of a booming economy, most respondents have the sense things have gotten worse, especially for poor women of color and children. As things have gotten worse, the problems have taken more twists and turns. "It's even harder to move funders on the women's agenda because it's so much fuzzier, more amorphous. But we've got to hang in there."

Find allies.
"Just like a virus that grows resistant to antibiotics, discrimination always finds new strength," another respondent notes. Finding allies, working with allies is the key. She, at least, hasn't given up "making the case," at least "within our own ranks [traditional philanthropy], without giving it a gloss. Look at what happened at the law school at Berkeley when they ended affirmative action! We've got the evidence; let's use it!"

**Get more strategic.**

Yes, we need to keep making the case, but others argue we also need to get more strategic. "If we continue with the 'moral imperative' approach, it makes the job much more formidable. We're talking about transforming society. But if we look at it as 'good, effective grantmaking,' it's do-able." Another respondent observed, "Proving grants are effective makes the case for trustees." But another respondent worried, "Do foundations claim the analysis is so difficult in order to avoid the problems? Is it avoidance? If foundations made their priority 'grantmaking effectiveness,' then we'd have to look much harder at inequity." Another respondent asserted that if we "put women and children at the center, make them the starting point of funding initiatives instead of seeing them as 'special interest,' all grants would inevitably be more effective. We've learned the necessity of a gender lens for international funding. How come it's so hard to use one at home?"

Another fundraiser noted the importance of not raising issues in the abstract. Instead, ask "are we addressing critical needs?" This is another dimension of casting arguments as "grantmaking effectiveness." As another respondent asserted, "You don't have to be a feminist to understand that grants should address needs of women and girls." Another respondent urged versatility. "Maybe we need a combination of public media and "Trojan Horse" practicality: what would sell, what would be of interest, what gets us in the door?"

**We need new thinking.**

The "old-think mantle," as one fundraiser describes it, is talking about women's issues, women's problems. "New think" is naming the problems, e.g. low-skilled, unemployed, or abused--not who suffers in gender terms. (For some, this isn't "new think"; it's what successful fundraisers have for years called "the pretzel school of fundraising." But never mind.) "New think" advocates point out the importance of being more subtle, claiming especially that many younger women don't want to "bash" men, can't separate themselves from the needs of men and boys in their communities. "It's not an issue of autonomy so much as an issue of trying to understand the environments of funders and donors and the contexts in which women live and how we solve problems," another respondent pointed out. Good program officers, even in foundations that do not use "gender lens" assessments, can make sure that their program areas include the necessary funding for women and girls. "What works best is to use the subject matter of your own program area," one program officer noted. "Keep hammering home that you can't talk about issues of poverty unless you talk about issues of women." This strategy has other advantages, as one executive noted, "Using a gender lens to funding welfare as a women's program lets men off the hook."

**VISIONS FOR THE FUTURE**

Respondents shared a wealth of good ideas for strategies:
Foundations need to apply their experiences to affect public policy.

Just as conservative funders have worked in coalition with the nonprofits they support to move public policy agendas, other funders can learn to do this better. As one program officer suggested, "Take it to the next step: get five foundations who have done funding on teen-age pregnancy, examine the grants closely for public policy applications, then take their grantees to the Hill."

Foundations need to launch major support for women's funds.

Just as national foundations need community foundations to reach grantees they otherwise do not reach, large foundations also need to partner with and strengthen women's funds. Several respondents pointed to the success of major funding initiatives in the last decade that strengthened community foundations, providing significant core support and skills-building that stabilized funds and enabled them to grow to new levels. "This same kind of support now needs to be extended to women's funds," suggested one respondent. "It's mutually beneficial."

"We need a good mentoring program."

"...For all sorts of reasons," another respondent noted. Good mentoring does happen informally, she added, but taking time to pair up experienced foundation executives with women just beginning their careers, or being intentional about the pairing, could help transform some of the more troublesome things about foundation culture. "This could be really important for both men and women."

"Focus on boards."

"Boards are where it's happening," another respondent noted. Boston-based researcher Molly Mead notes that, according to her research, 70 percent of funding decisions are made at the trustee level (Mead 1997). A number of other respondents also suggested the need for a comprehensive board project. Building on trustees' research already done (Bonavoglia 1994) and their Leadership for Equity and Diversity (L.E.A.D.) initiative, Women & Philanthropy is planning to expand their work on boards. Board projects in higher education, the nonprofit community, and the corporate sector are also underway. "We need a prestigious gathering," one board member suggested. "Make it very prestigious, and bring together women on boards across sectors."

Other respondents suggested a three-way push: 1) get experienced corporate and financial women onto women's funds boards; 2) get experienced women's funds board members onto other foundation and corporate boards ("export their diversity training and knowledge of innovative funding"); and 3) get more women on "traditional" foundation boards "period, perhaps using a model similar to Catalyst's successful Corporate Board Placement service."

"We need a massive media campaign."

Many respondents see the need for major public relations interventions that "have a go at" sex discrimination like the Surgeon General went at cigarette smoking. "Somehow, we need to dramatize both root causes of discrimination and their effects, maybe another version of 'this is
your brain on drugs," one donor suggested. The same donor also argued that women's funds and women's organizations serving the needs of women and girls "need to get much more visible about their work--the daunting problems and the stirring successes." A program officer pointed out that young women don't particularly care about rights. "They're into 'responsibility.' We need to rethink where we go if old rights language isn't working anymore. We have to reorient the women's movement, and maybe the time is ripe to wage a strategic media war against the underlying culture of discrimination."

**Strengthen grassroots organizing.**

Other respondents stressed the importance of more grassroots work. "Publicity by itself doesn't do it," one program officer observed. "We need to build more civic capacity, do grassroots work, organize. If we frame it as 'public engagement' or 'community building,' funders might even fund it!" The women's funds are well-placed to facilitate community organizing, another donor suggested. "We need to strengthen links among local women's organizations, women legislators, women in the media, women educators, women's funds--all of us--to make the case locally for women and girls."

**Peer-to-peer communication.**

"What sells are the personal experiences, the personal stories," another funder notes. To really change foundations and enlist new donors respondents urged more talking peer-to-peer: board members to board members, CEOs to CEOs, program officers to program officers, donors to donors. Regarding foundations: "Being willing to 'witness,' to 'name' the problems in conversations with peers, is key." One CEO observed that it's easy to "drop a few words in a conversation about a successful program you've funded--make 'em jealous." Regarding donors, "People still relate to the founding families, get them to share their stories with others who need to hear them," one executive noted. Another fundraiser emphasized the importance of peer-to-peer candor: "This woman stood up and did the math," she recalled. "She actually showed how her planned giving enabled her to take care of herself as well as provide for the college she loved."

"There's no substitute for leadership."

Respondents noted the need for strong leadership within foundations and in the media. "Top down" makes all the difference, one program officer noted. "If the boss says 'use a gender lens,' the troops say 'Yes, boss.'" Among those reflecting on the women's funding movement, a number noted the importance of more women and men becoming both national and local spokespeople. "We need to put names and faces on women in local communities," one donor noted, "and we also need some superstars in the national media talking about the issues, especially a few visionary women who can inspire others." Some say the movement itself needs more leadership: "Most people know what the women's funding movement is. This is different from five years ago. There are real concerns, however, about where leadership is...coming from. Is this a movement with leaders?"

**Collaboration is key, all kinds of collaboration.**

"If women's funds and women's organizations could show they were all part of the same movement, all working together, that would encourage more contributions," one donor noted. "It
might take some foundations forcing people to come together and talk more about collaborations," another nonprofit executive noted. "Not merging per se, but working to divvy up the issues better, forcing us to trust each other, like 'OK, I've got this issue, I'll take the lead here, you take that one.'" Collaboration brings economies of scale: "If even half a dozen national women's organizations chipped in on a media campaign, the costs might be bearable," another nonprofit executive noted, "but we're all stuck playing catch up with the conservatives calling the shots. That's got to change. If conservative nonprofits and funders can agree on a strategic five-year media plan, why can't we?"

"We might even think about (gasp) doing some joint fundraising," another executive suggested. "What is it you always say? 'Think yeast not pie if you want more dough'? Yup, that's the recipe, but why can't I convince my board we need to share donors?" Another nonprofit head thought about 47th Street in New York City, which houses several stories of jewelry stores lined up and down the entire block. "People shop and buy lots more."

We also need to build more coalitions, find strategies for engaging mainstream philanthropy. One funder described an alternative loan fund: "The Grameen Bank wasn't set up to replace the National Bank of Bangladesh, but it moved a lot more money into the community for women and girls."

**Energize women donors.**

Respondents shared a number of pragmatic strategies for reaching more women donors and "getting them to give that second check," as one fundraiser observed.

"Get them comfortable with who's doing the soliciting," another urged. "Connect with advisers and lawyers, run seminars for bank trust officers."

Many respondents noted the importance of finding more innovative ways to involve donors in the organizations without overburdening staff with "make work" volunteer programs. One respondent recounted the success of the Atlanta Women's Fund in getting different groups of professional women involved in philanthropic activities that fit their expertise, e.g. sponsoring an event for real estate women that focused on homelessness and inspired the group to form their own grants committee. The fund energized a new set of donors and got their expertise in the bargain.

A fundraising consultant pointed out the importance of national/local collaborations in fundraising: tapping a national passion as EMILY's List did, for example, and linking it to local interest in candidates. "Women's organizations could attract a lot more donors if national and local groups found ways to do joint fundraising." Another fundraiser noted that even if there aren't a lot of "hot buttons" nationally that energize women the way Anita Hill did, there are always local "hot buttons" that women's groups can take advantage of to energize donors. "Passion, relevance, and connection...that's what it takes," she stressed. "The more women see their hot button issues reflected in the media and in conversations with each other, the more they'll be inspired to support the organizations that present themselves effectively on those issues."

Another executive noted that we need to use donors to help shape philanthropic culture, especially in community funds. "Money talks. When large numbers of women donors start a
fund for women in a local community foundation, they start to have a lot more influence on foundation policy. Then those same women turn around and educate younger ones."

Another respondent noted the success of groups and projects that are working to educate and organize women donors: "These need to be replicated all over the country, the Donor Organizers' Network, the Women Donors Network. Get the Council on Foundations family foundations group to sponsor high dollar donor education strategies."

"We need more research and evaluation."

Several respondents, both grantors and grantees, pointed out the need to hold individual foundations' feet to the fire: "Evaluate their grants. Are they meeting the needs of women and girls? Where have their grants been successful; where have they failed?" "Foundations preach evaluation," one funder noted, "but we seldom buy it for ourselves. How about funders contracting for confidential studies of their own grantmaking? Get grantees to evaluate foundations' effectiveness. Oops...am I asking for trouble?" Surprisingly, several foundation executives suggested confidential evaluations. Another noted evaluations, if they were done in the spirit of learning, not retribution, would help new funders think about their grants and who they are serving.

Even more radical, as one researcher noted, would be "developing complex indices for determining progress in foundations, e.g. has institutional culture changed?" Another researcher asked, "How about a 'feminist' index? How do women who 'rock the boat' get weeded out from careers in foundations? What are the implicit and explicit messages women get at different stages of their careers about what's permissible to push for, what isn't?"

Several respondents pointed out the need for more sophisticated research on the nonprofit sector generally, especially regarding women and girls. "We need to call the issues to the attention of more first-rate scholars and involve heavy-hitter feminist scholars in conversations with practitioners," one researcher noted. A nonprofit executive suggested building more collaborations with demographers, marketing analysts, and polling groups to draw out more accurate data about women's needs. Another fundraiser wants to hear from the men: "Let's ask 'em, 'How should we approach you?' How about some anecdotal studies of fundraising from men for women's causes?"

"We also need more data period," another researcher noted. "More longitudinal data on giving, on attitudes towards women's organizations and women's needs." And respondents suggested getting more creative about using data that is already there, just hard to use: 990s tax returns from women's organizations, now online, for example, annual reports of national women's organizations, and more complex runs of gender/race data from the Council on Foundations and Independent Sector. Another suggestion is to develop a one-page survey form for all affinity groups to use in collecting demographic information and positions held by their members.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FOLLOWUP

So what conclusions can be drawn from these suggestions? To summarize, this monograph began by raising the question, "Is there a women's funding movement?" The energy and imagination in the assessments clearly point to thoughtful attempts over time to challenge existing understanding of gender and its impact on funding for women and girls. The
suggestions shared by respondents call for new thinking, new language, and, as important, new collaborations, coalitions, and strategies to connect the concerns of women and girls to a wider public. The suggestions that follow are extrapolated from the text of the preceding narrative and reformatted here for ease of discussion.

**Research**

Sponsor a detailed history of the women's funding movement, beginning with 1) exploring archives at foundations like Ford and Carnegie that were early funders of women's and girls' organizations and programs; 2) interviewing more early participants in Women & Philanthropy and the Women's Funding Network (WFN); and 3) exploring archives of Women & Philanthropy, WFN, and other organizations active in the women's funding movement to look at evolution of leadership, program development, strategies, successes and failures. What were the forces at work in the field that gave rise to the coalition-building and organizational development that led to the development of the key organizations over last several decades? What leadership and program initiatives led to the most successful change strategies? What was the impact of funding strategies like direct mail that made much of the organizational work of the early phases of the women's movement possible?

Conduct a survey of organizational management and leadership literature to determine what strategies have proven to be most effective for transforming organizational culture. This type of research may be proprietary, done by the organizations themselves to assess effectiveness of new diversity initiatives and leadership strategies, but a polling of companies thought to be most effective in bringing about widespread and "deep" transformation could prove valuable to foundations assessing their own organizational culture.

Update the Women & Philanthropy survey of women CEOs in philanthropy (Garafolo 1993). Conduct another set of interviews to expand information made available in that report, and probe further the constraints and stumbling blocks women CEOs confront in increasing funding to women and girls.
Implementation Strategies

Launch a peer-to-peer mentoring program for philanthropy professionals, introducing experienced trustees, for example, with new board members who may not be as current on issues like those described in this monograph series.

Develop new strategies and opportunities for peer-to-peer communication, especially among philanthropic leadership and board members, to help philanthropy "walk its talk."

Use the clout of foundations to build cross-sector coalitions of organizations that are working to transform the way society understands race/ethnicity, class, and gender. This could take the form of a series of regional conferences, a national teleconference, or issue-specific collaboration that linked researchers, policy specialists, funders, and activists all working on the issue.

Develop translations of women's and girls' needs to existing foundation grantmaking priorities. Find creative ways to reframe needed efforts into "effective grantmaking."

Build a major multi-foundation initiative to raise regranting funds for women's funds and other organizations working to promote diversity strategies.

Strengthen grassroots organizing and community building around issues of importance to women and girls.

Encourage mainstream philanthropy to use its clout to move public policy agendas.

Develop a collaborative, national media campaign linked to regional and local media campaigns that can begin to counter the media distortions suffered by those most women's organizations serve, that can translate sophisticated, theoretical, research-based understanding of race/ethnicity, class, and gender issues to the wider public. What will it take to make the case in the national media? In regional/local media? Begin locally: what are the issues, the new language, the sound bites, the convincing messages in local communities that dramatize the existence of persistent bias in most women's lives and appeal to donors? Link local initiatives to each other and to a multi-year national media strategy for a broad coalition of women's organizations.

Support expanded research and internal evaluations of diversity in philanthropic organizations.
**BRIEF CHRONOLOGY OF THE WOMEN'S FUNDING MOVEMENT**

late '50s  Carnegie Corporation sets up program area focusing on women in human resources

1963  Carnegie Corporation funds new women and continuing education initiative

1971  Ford Foundation starts systematic funding for women's programs and organizations

1972  Ms. Foundation for Women is created

1973-80  Seven new women's funds are created

1973  Joint Foundation Support sponsors informal gathering of women foundation program staff in New York

1974  First Ford Foundation report on funding for women: *That 51 Per Cent: Ford Foundation Activities Related to Opportunities for Women* documents over $7 million in grants

1974  Percy Amendment passes US Congress, requiring US representatives in international organizations and development banks (including US Agency for International Development) to consider gender impact in funding and encourage inclusion of women in development projects and policy making positions. Expanded in 1987 in the International Financial Institutions Act

1974  Filer Commission report is published, focusing attention on roles of women and minorities in foundation giving and workplace fundraising

1975  100 annoyed women working in foundations convene for lunch at Council on Foundations meeting; Wingspread conference follows

1976  Women working in philanthropy's first full-day session at a Council on Foundation meeting; second Wingsspread conference follows


1977  Publication of Women and Foundations/Corporate Philanthropy's first study of foundation funding patterns, *What We Know Now* (Marting)

1978  Publication of Women and Foundations/Corporate Philanthropy's *Survey of Six Foundations that Derive their Assets Primarily from the Sales of Cosmetics to Women*

1979  Publication of Ford Foundation report on expanded funding for women's programs, *Financial Support of Women's Programs in the 1970's: A Review of Private and Government Funding in the United States and Abroad*
CHRONOLOGY OF THE WOMEN'S FUNDING MOVEMENT (cont.)

1980  Publication of Women and Foundations/Corporate Philanthropy's report, *Funding of Programs for Women and Girls by a Selected Sample of Major Corporations*

1981-85  24 new women's funds created

1981  National Council for Research on Women (NCRW) is formed

1984  Publication of *Women of the Upper Class* (Ostrander), first comprehensive look at roles, attitudes, and constraints on women of wealth

1985  Publication of NCRW's Commission on New Funding Priorities report, *A Declining Federal Commitment to Research about Women, 1980-84* (Rubin)

1985  First regional report documenting dearth of funding for women and girls: *Shortchanged: Chicago Foundations' and Corporations' funding of Women's Organizations* (Green) commissioned by Chicago Women in Philanthropy; expanded in 1992 as *Short Sighted: How Chicago-Area Grantmakers Can Apply a Gender Lens to See the Connections Between Social Problems and Women's Needs* (Servatius)

1985  First conference of women's funds held, National Network of Women's Funds formed (renamed Women's Funding Network in 1995);

1983  Publication of *Career Patterns of Women and Men* preliminary summary (Odendahl, Boris, and Daniels), first in-depth study of women's roles and styles in organized philanthropy, sponsored by Women and Foundations/Corporate Philanthropy and published *Working in Foundations: Career Patterns of Women and Men* by the Foundation Center in 1985

1986-90  25 new women's funds created

1987  Global Fund for Women created for international grantmaking to women and girls


1988  Women and Foundations/Corporate Philanthropy's Action/Research Committee formed

1988  Publication of first *Directory of Women's Funds* by Women and Foundations/Corporate Philanthropy

1988  First publication of Independent Sector's *Giving and Volunteering in the United States, Findings from a National Survey*

CHRONOLOGY OF THE WOMEN'S FUNDING MOVEMENT (cont.)
1988  Publication of Women and Foundations/Corporate Philanthropy's *Survey of Grantmakers Concerned with Adolescent Pregnancy* (Magat)

1985  Emily's List created

1989  First Women and Foundations/Corporate Philanthropy Action/Research Committee report published: *Far From Done: The Status of Women and Girls in America* (Bonavoglia) documenting needs and resources of women and girls and providing an overview of foundation giving to women and girls from 1981-1987; updated in 1992 as *Getting It Done: From Commitment to Action on Funding for Women and Girls* (Bonavoglia)

1989  Publication of Women and Foundations/Corporate Philanthropy's *Statements from the Grassroots: Women Breaking the Continuum of Poverty: A Report on a Regional Conference on Race, Gender, and Poverty* (Featherman)

1989  Ms. Foundation launches Collaborative Fund for Women's Economic Development

1990  Resourceful Women formed, an organization of women donors

1990  Publication of *Charity Begins at Home: Generosity and Self-Interest Among the Philanthropic Elite* (Odendahl)

1990  Publication of Women and Foundations/Corporate Philanthropy Action/Research Committee report *Far From Done: The Challenge of Diversifying Philanthropic Leadership* (Galvin), a "report card" and analysis of philanthropic board diversity, updated in 1994 as *The Trustee Connection: Making a Difference* (Bonavoglia)


1991-97  40 new women's funds created

1991  First edition of Foundation Center's *National Guide to Funding for Women and Girls*


CHRONOLOGY OF THE WOMEN'S FUNDING MOVEMENT (cont.)


1991 Lilly Endowment grant to NCRW, Women & Philanthropy, and NNWF's Funding Women Project

1991 National Network on Women as Philanthropists forms

1992 Wingspread conference on women and philanthropy, organized by the National Network of Women as Philanthropists and the Center for Women and Philanthropy, University of Wisconsin-Madison


1992 Women and Foundations/Corporate Philanthropy's national conference on Meeting the Health Care Needs of Women


1993 Wellesley concludes successful $341 million drive

1993 Publication of Women and Foundations/Corporate Philanthropy Action/Research Committee report *Women Taking Power: The Quest for Equality*, the fifth Far From Done report that summarizes the research and unresolved issues affecting women and leadership in the nonprofit sector, higher education, and business

1993 Women and Foundations/Corporate Philanthropy's national conference on Native American Women and their Communities, published as a report in 1994 (Chakravartty)


1993 Publication of *Women as Donors, Women as Philanthropists* (von Schlegell and Fisher)

1993 Ms. Foundation launches Take Our Daughters to Work Day, a national public education campaign

1994 Catalyst corporate board study published: *Women on Corporate Boards: The Challenge of Change*


1994 Ford Foundation and Women & Philanthropy convene grantmakers to mobilize support for United Nation's Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing, China; White House sponsors gathering of grantmakers to highlight Beijing conference


1995 Ms. Foundation and other groups organize a grantee/donor/foundation delegation. Women's Funding Network, the Global Fund for Women, and others lead workshops on global grantmaking to women and girls

1995 Ms. Foundation begins planning for the Healthy Girls/Healthy Women Collaborative Fund

1996 Coalition of organizations working in the women's funding movement convene a post-Beijing call-for-session at the Council on Foundations' Annual Meeting that would focus on applying a gender lens to the global economy

1996 Kellogg Foundation funds Women's Philanthropy Cluster
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