

# Women & Philanthropy:

*inspiring women, inspired giving*



**Women & Philanthropy:** *inspiring women, inspired giving* is the first contemporary report into women and philanthropy in the UK. It highlights, for the first time, the growing involvement and influence of women in major philanthropy today. This trend is significant for everyone with an interest in promoting a culture of giving in the UK, and we hope that this report spurs further research into this important area.

Philanthropy UK warmly thanks our guest editor Maggie Baxter, who has been instrumental in developing this comprehensive resource, and also the philanthropists and guest contributors who so generously gave us their time and support.

**Susan Mackenzie**  
Director, Philanthropy UK  
March 2008

**Women & Philanthropy:** *inspiring women, inspired giving*

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Guest editor: Maggie Baxter

Produced by Philanthropy UK  
[www.philanthropyuk.org](http://www.philanthropyuk.org)

© 2008 Association of Charitable Foundations (ACF)

ISBN 978-1-897916-33-9

Published by ACF

Central House, 14 Upper Woburn Place, London WC1H 0AE

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Company registration number: 5190466; Registered charity number: 1105412

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

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Design & artwork by Carrington Griffin Design

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# A celebration of women's philanthropy

by *Maggie Baxter*

In this special report on Women & Philanthropy, I'm delighted that we have been given the chance to celebrate the extraordinarily diverse and energetic contribution made by women to the world of philanthropy. But let's not forget all those whose philanthropy remains hidden.

Philanthropy as defined in the Oxford Dictionary is *"the desire to help others, especially through donation of money to good causes"*.

It's worth remembering all those women who give their time, resources and energy to hold their communities together, from a gathering of a group of mothers considering how to counter gun crime, to an early morning breakfast club for kids of working mothers. Philanthropy can be time, energy and commitment as well as hard cash.

Moreover, women's role in major philanthropy continues to evolve, and – as we report in the following article – is becoming increasingly influential. But this activity is not without precedent, and we also provide historical and global perspectives on women's giving.

All the philanthropists profiled herein give different accounts as to what philanthropy means to them and why they became philanthropists. It's fascinating to me that almost all, whether individuals or groups, make other women their primary beneficiaries. Whether these individuals are motivated by the reality of continuing inequality, or by their desire to give back to society, there is an undeniable sense of 'sisterhood'. This growing sense of sisterhood is



central to the new UK Women's Fund (see "UK Women's Fund to launch").

Another undeniable theme is the fun and joy our contributors find in giving. They talk of "making a difference", and "living their values" through what they support. This positive attitude is a far cry from the media's often dismissive view of women philanthropists as described in Beth Breeze's article (see 'Benevolence and bias in black & white').

The women who are profiled here have different backgrounds and different experiences. Sigrid Rausing's personal politics are exhibited by her giving to women's rights; J.K. Rowling by feeling a moral responsibility "when given far more than you need"; Mia Morris by her sense of community social responsibility; Darcey Bussell as a way to "give something back"; and Renu Mehta by her feelings of guilt and unfulfilment, and ensuing desire to create a culture of giving. Their philanthropy is shaped by their experiences and is driven by their values.

Our historical profiles also feature two influential women who through their wealth improved employment, education, legislation and representation for women in generations to follow. The profiles of corporate groups, networks and giving circles emphasise the importance for those groups of engaging with those they wish to support, and developing partnerships rather than just signing a cheque.

It is not just the recipients who benefit; givers are immeasurably enriched by seeing the results of their philanthropy.

*Maggie Baxter is guest editor of this special report on Women & Philanthropy. Maggie is setting up the new UK Women's Fund, to be launched this spring.*

*In January 2007 she left the post of Executive Director of WOMANKIND Worldwide where she had been since May 1999. Prior to this she was Deputy Chief Executive and Grants Director at Comic Relief. She is a trustee of several charities, including City Parochial Foundation, where she chairs the Grants Committee, as well as the Trust for London and Women for Refugee Women.*





# How women are changing the face of British philanthropy

by *Susan Mackenzie*

**As Britain's 'new philanthropists' are changing the giving landscape in the UK, there has been another important trend that has gone largely unrecognised: the growing involvement and influence of women in major philanthropy.**

**Image:** *The Sigrid Rausing Trust funds The Campaign for Female Education (CAMFED), which is dedicated to fighting poverty and AIDS in rural communities in Africa by educating girls. Riziki, an entrepreneur from Kibaha in Tanzania, used a grant from CAMFED to expand her small business, which she uses to support her family and pay for a higher education course.*

Like many male philanthropists, women take a strategic and engaged approach to their philanthropy. But, compared to men, they often seek a deeper level of engagement and connections with the causes they support, according to a Philanthropy UK panel of advisors to high-net-worth individuals.

In this way, women donors typify a key characteristic of the 'new philanthropist': that is, they want to do more than 'write a cheque'; they also want to offer their time and expertise.

Yet female philanthropists lack both the profile and recognition achieved by many male donors. Women's philanthropy is not comprehensively reported in the press, and there still is little research on gender differences in philanthropy. Further, women are under-represented in giving statistics, such as the *Sunday Times Giving Index* (see sidebar on next page), which reflect how wealth is attributed, and so generally do not capture the influence, in major philanthropy, of women in decision-making by couples and families.

Philanthropy UK believes that such simple statistics belie the true impact that women are having on major philanthropy in the UK – and ultimately on charities and their beneficiaries.



To explore further women's role in major philanthropy, we sought the insights of a range of professional advisors serving a breadth of male and female clients. The seven advisors we consulted represented a mix of wealth management, legal, family office and specialist philanthropy advisory organisations.

We hope that these findings stimulate further dialogue about women and philanthropy, and encourage research into this important area.

*“Women are often the decision-makers; they are the ones who make things happen”*

Renu Mehta visits a water project funded by Fortune Forum in Gonde Ethiopia that provides clean water for the local community.  
Photo courtesy of Fortune Forum

### Giving Index misses out on women

The business entrepreneurs and City professionals who dominate the *Sunday Times Giving Index* (which ranks the top 30 philanthropists by their giving as a percentage of their wealth) are predominately male. Out of the 67 different people who have appeared in the Giving Index over the last four years, only 7, or about 10%, were women. In 2006, not one of the 30 *Giving Index* members was female.

*“This is largely because the Giving Index is derived from the Sunday Times Rich List,”* explains Alastair McCall, Editor of the Giving Index. *“There is a significant gender imbalance in the Rich List, with 1,028 men making the List in 2007, compared with only 92 women. There are wider sociological issues at play: women are under-represented in the board room and at chief executive level, for instance.”*

And, because both the *Rich List* and *Giving Index* are based on the individuals from whom the wealth is derived, it is often men who are recognised as the givers. For example, David and Heather Stevens – who donated half their stake in Admiral Insurance to endow a new charitable foundation – topped the 2007 Giving Index; but in second place is hedge fund manager Christopher Hohn – yet it is his wife Jamie Cooper-Hohn who runs the family’s foundation, the Children’s Investment Fund Foundation. Similarly, the wealth of the Rausing family is attributed to Hans Rausing, and so his daughters, Sigrid and Lisbet, both prominent philanthropists, do not appear.

McCall comments, *“Of course, giving is often done as a partnership, and women play a critical role in major philanthropy.”*

*The 2008 Sunday Times Rich List and Giving Index will be published in the spring.*



### Influence

A growing number of women are becoming more engaged and influential in their family’s philanthropy. And, one solicitor reported that more female clients are setting up their own foundations, and also that more are playing an increasingly influential role in their family’s philanthropy.

*“Women are often the decision-makers; they are the ones who make things happen,”* remarked Harry Charlton, Head of Client Development at New Philanthropy Capital (NPC). Other philanthropy advisors we spoke to agreed. Said Heather Maizels, Barclays Wealth Director and Head of Philanthropy: *“The women seem to be the chief influencers on where the money eventually goes.”*

Theresa Lloyd, philanthropy consultant and Founder Director of Philanthropy UK, adds: *“My research for Why Rich People Give showed that for couples major philanthropy was usually a joint decision. Even if one person appeared to lead on a relationship with the beneficiary, both partners had to feel involved for a commitment to a significant gift.”*

Indeed, family giving is becoming more inclusive. As Tanja Jegger, Head of Philanthropy at the wealth manager Stonehage, explained, *“In a family foundation setting, women can and often do play a leading role in deciding on themes and specific projects.”* Maizels elaborated, *“Women seem to be more interested in family philanthropy, seeing it as a way to bind siblings together, involve less affluent cousins and be a way of ensuring that the family have a continuing way of sharing their lives.”*

Women’s growing influence in decision-making is good news for charities, as women tend to be more generous than men with their gifts, as highlighted in recent research from the US (see *‘Among singles, women are more generous, US research shows’* in Latest News on Philanthropy UK’s website). Philanthropist Sigrid Rausing observes: *“The main gender difference is that men have access to considerably more capital than do women overall; but also, I believe, that women (like the poor) are rather more generous with what they have.”*



*“In addition to taking a strategic approach, women also seek a deeper involvement and connection with the issues”*



### Engagement

As women are becoming more influential in giving decisions, they also are becoming more engaged in the giving process. One advisor to a family office noted that the younger generation of women in the family are more active than their forebears in their philanthropy: *“They are very connected, strategic and involved.”*

Yet the experience of the advisors we spoke to suggests that women’s engagement differs in a fundamental respect: in addition to taking a strategic approach, women also seek a *“deeper involvement and connection”* with the issues. Jegger commented, *“Women are typically quite emotionally attached to the causes they engage in, with time and expertise being just as important as financial support.”*

One family office advisor has noted a similar pattern in clients: *“Women are more closely involved with their grantees than are the men in the same generation; they feel more comfortable with an emotional response. They also seem to be more motivated, believing that ‘some things are just wrong.’”*

And a solicitor observed of his clients, *“Women generally seek emotional engagement with grant recipients, whereas men typically do not want to deal at an emotional level with beneficiaries.”*

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**Image:** *The Children’s Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF) is providing £3 million funding to Protecting Families Against AIDS (PREFA), an indigenous Ugandan organization. The program pilots an innovative, but proven strategy combining prevention of mother-to-child transmission services with universal home to home HIV counselling and testing and nutrition/food security. © CIFF*

### Impact

Women are more likely to fund *“harder causes”* and individuals *“on the margins of society”*, according to our panel of advisors. This may be, perhaps, because of a deeper emotional engagement with beneficiaries; although we simply don’t know, as there is little research to draw on. Vivienne Hayes, Director of the Women’s Resource Centre, a charity which supports women’s organisations to be more effective and sustainable, wonders, *“It could be that the struggles for recognition and equal rights that women have faced in their own careers and families fuel their engagement with causes and communities on the margins.”*

For example, the top three causes targeted by NPC’s female clients are refugees, mental health and domestic violence (see graph on next page). In contrast, the most popular causes amongst NPC’s male clients include cancer, and truancy and exclusion; areas where outcomes are more easily measurable and quantifiable. Women also seem to want to be involved locally, solving problems and building infrastructure closer to home, according to some advisors.

Several advisors suggested that women may be more comfortable than men with intangible results. Having an impact is just as important to women, but they monitor results partly through their personal engagement with the charity. Rausing commented on the importance of appropriate outcomes measurement: *“Measuring outcome has a cost, and needs to be thought about – too much, and you get jargon and glossy reports. Too little, and organisations can lose their way.”*

Jegger explained, *“While men may often be more structured and results-oriented, women can be more*



*process-oriented, often selecting smaller projects, where they feel they can make more impact.”*

Men also are more likely to seek to “*make their mark*” on something, such as having their name on a building, while women seem less concerned with recognition; and one advisor noted that, once a gift is made, men generally view it as still their own money, whereas women tend to view it as the charity’s money. Philanthropist Dame Stephanie Shirley, writing in this issue of the Newsletter, remarks, “*Givers, speaking especially for women, care about the issues and are ‘care-ful’ about them. A man typically might ask ‘what does society expect a man in my position to do?’ and ‘what recognition will I get out of it?’ Women seem less interested in these fripperies and perhaps focus more on ‘how can I make the most difference?’*”

**Advice**

Women also can be more thoughtful and consultative in their giving, and more willing to seek advice. For instance, Maizels notes that “*Women generally tend to seek advice more than men on investment matters, and we have noticed that this trend also applies to philanthropy.*”

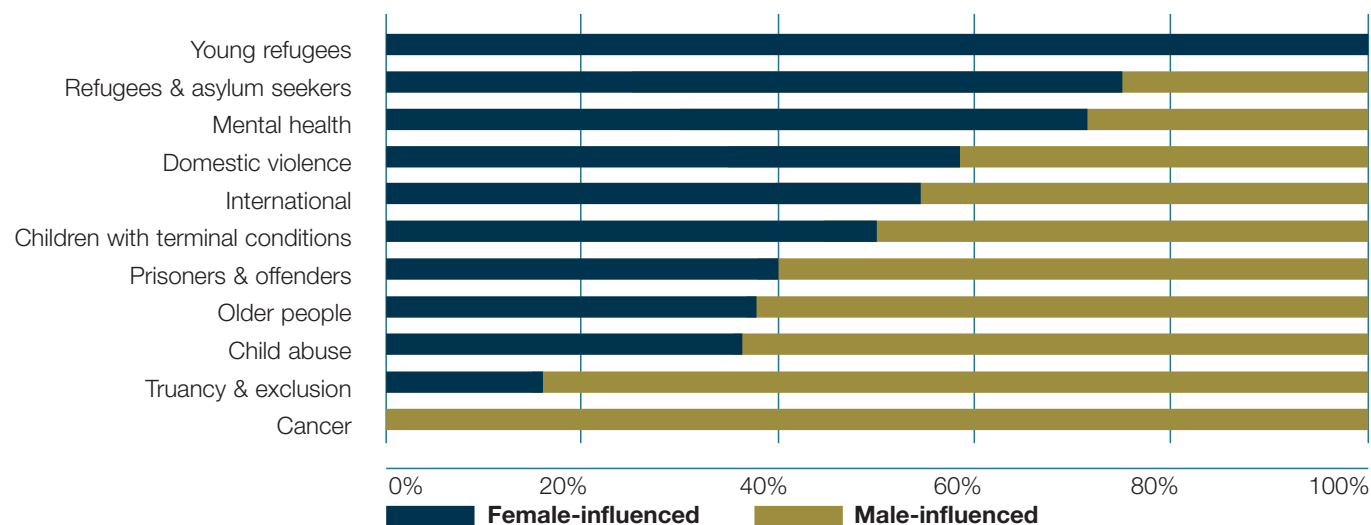
Several advisors reported that their male clients tended to be more directive with their giving. They want the problem solved, but are more likely to use an intermediary to achieve their objectives. In contrast, women are more “*consultative and involving*”. Charlton explains, “*Women want to engage with the problem and understand the issues; they seek a deeper level of engagement with the beneficiaries.*” Lloyd agrees: “*Women are more active managers; they are more hands-on. They often ‘start small’ and learn. They do not want to reinvent the wheel.*”

There are, of course, notable exceptions to these trends. Though in general, women are becoming more involved – and more influential – in giving decisions, and they are becoming increasingly engaged with beneficiaries. Renu Mehta, philanthropist and founder of the Fortune Forum, observes, “*Traditionally, women are more triggered by emotion, and men are more analytical. But the line is*

*blurring, especially with the emergence of the philanthropy ‘power couple’ – such as Bill and Melinda Gates, Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie, and Chris and Jamie Cooper-Hohn – where we are seeing a cross-fertilization of perspectives.*”

“*In major philanthropy,*” an advisor concludes, “*as a couple, men and women are a great balancing act.*”

**Charitable causes supported by gender. New Philanthropy Capital clients**



Source: New Philanthropy Capital. Based on 165 grants. “Female influenced” indicates either women donors as individuals or couples where the woman has had a significant influence.

## Profiles of women in philanthropy

The remarkable women profiled in this section all have distinctive stories to tell of their journey in philanthropy.

Here they share their inspirations and aspirations; their influences and motivations into why and how they give; and the experiences and insights which have shaped them along the way.

As we report in *'How women are changing the face of British philanthropy'*, their experiences reflect a broader trend of women becoming more strategic in their giving, and more personally engaged in the causes they support. These women may give individually, with their partner or family, or through a wider network of friends, colleagues or others in their community. But what they all have in common – across the diversity of their backgrounds, experiences and motivations – is the passion they bring to their philanthropy and the joy they receive from it.

**Susan Mackenzie**

Director, Philanthropy UK

# Personal stories in philanthropy

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## Sigrid Rausing: *ideals-driven philanthropy*

by Roxanne Clark

Philanthropist, publisher and anthropologist Sigrid Rausing possesses that rare quality of someone who truly puts her ideals into action.

From an early age she was actively working for social change: in 1993 she spent a year living on a remote collective farm in Estonia doing fieldwork for a PhD in Social Anthropology and was an early member of the Network for Social Change.

Rausing, the daughter of Tetra Pak billionaire Hans Rausing, founded her charitable trust in 1995 (re-named the Sigrid Rausing Trust in 2003). It has five main areas of interest; (Human Rights) Civil and Political Rights, Women's Rights and Advocacy, Minority Rights, Environmental Justice, and Social and Economic Rights, these being causes in which she profoundly believes and which often find it hard to raise funds.

*"I first became involved in activism rather than philanthropy, a young peoples' Amnesty group when I was 13, and feminism and peace protests at university," she tells Philanthropy UK.*

*"I felt quite rooted in the progressive movements, the civil liberties movement, feminism, the anti-torture campaign, and the movement to record and witness the Holocaust and other genocides. In my mid-20s I met a group of American inheritors who had come together to fund progressive projects and*





*organisations, and learn about how to assess projects as well as talk about the meaning of inheritance. I joined a UK group too, and talked about similar issues. That is how I became a philanthropist.”*

Key to Rausing’s impact as a philanthropist is her approach to grant-making: *“Most of the work we do is human rights orientated. We support quite a few organisations working on violence against women, oppressed minorities, including sexual minorities, and we now have a separate portfolio concerned with protecting human rights defenders internationally. The work we support within environmental justice is mainly about helping poor communities fight against environmental degradation caused by industrial pollution. We also support a number of organisations which focus on corruption, or which act as watchdogs to large financial institutions such as the World Bank.”*

Her criteria for selecting projects are also well-considered and successful: so far the Trust has given away more than £85m in grants. *“In many ways we are like an eclectic publishing company – we try to pick the best projects we find within our funding categories. The budget has to make sense, the application has to be good, and the project has to be both creative and realistic. But we stay with our projects for an unspecified length of time, and often give core grants, both of which are crucial to successful grant-making.”*

As there are always challenges to giving effectively, this can help shape the approach taken, as Rausing explains: *“In my view people in the human rights movement rarely think advocacy through to the end, which ultimately, always, is about what kind of a government you envisage. If you include the right to work in your mission, for instance, you are, perhaps without realising, advocating for an extremely strong – perhaps excessively strong – State. The main challenge, I think, is to find projects and organisations with clarity of purpose (mission creep is endemic), are well led, and with good creative ideas. Leadership, to us, is about creativity as well as management.”*

As Rausing’s own work and interests have continued to evolve – she founded Portobello Books, a publishing company and in 2005 also bought Granta magazine and publishing house – she advocates embracing change in philanthropy. She encourages new givers to *“recognise that it’s all a work in progress – that what you fund now may be different from what you do in five years time, and that evolution and change is an intrinsic part of any work which involves pushing for a change in the status quo. Visit projects and people on the ground, or in their offices. Think about the congruence between what you fund and who you are in life.”*

This marriage of ideals and philanthropic purpose has been Rausing’s enduring motivation, and it has been immensely rewarding: *“I enjoy travelling to projects that we fund, (and) meeting the people on the ground. I don’t get enough time to do that now, but I will start again when my son is older. It’s extraordinarily inspiring.”*

*“Leadership...  
is about creativity  
as well as  
management”*

## J.K. Rowling: *a moral responsibility to give*

by *Sophie Radice*

The year 2000 marked an important turning point for J.K. Rowling, the author of the phenomenally successful Harry Potter series of children's books.

Before then she remained relatively anonymous, rarely giving interviews and keeping any cause she supported as far away from press interest as she could possibly manage.

Perhaps she got fed up of her rags-to-riches story of single-motherhood-on-benefits-in-Edinburgh being rehashed in the first paragraph of any profile of her – she described it as feeling like she had *'penniless, divorcee, lone parent'* tattooed on her head – and decided that if it was going to follow her around, then she would use her status as the most famous single mother in Britain to become the Ambassador and then the President of the National Council for One-Parent Families. In the same year, Rowling



© J P Masclat

*“You have a moral responsibility when you’ve been given far more than you need, to do wise things with it and give intelligently”*

established the Volant Charitable Trust, which uses its annual budget of £5.1m to aid women and children and to combat poverty and social inequality.

Since then Rowling has had plenty to say about the way single parents get blamed for everything from falling morals to rising crime: *“It’s much easier for certain sections of society to say, ‘You’ve brought this on yourself by your fecklessness; you sort it out,’ than to say ‘You’ve been a victim of circumstances’ or ‘Hey, marriages break up.....but how are we going to help you help yourself?’”*

Her philanthropy is now unabashedly visible and involved – the two books she wrote for Comic relief – *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* and *Quidditch Through the Ages* – have gone on to raise £15.7m for the fund. She has said that *“You have a moral responsibility when you’ve been given far more than you need, to do wise things with it and give intelligently”*. Rather than passively signing large cheques, she involves herself not only in the organisation of her own charities but also in well publicised events (such as a reading with Stephen King and John Irving in New York to raise money for AIDS and ‘Medicine Without Borders’), which increase the public and media profile of the cause she is supporting as well as raising substantial amounts of money.

In the last couple of years, Rowling has been almost hyper-active in her giving of her time, money and her celebrity status. In 2006, she contributed a substantial sum towards the creation of a new Centre for Regenerative Medicine at Edinburgh University – her mother died of multiple sclerosis - and hosted a fund-raising ball with her anaesthetist husband to mark the twelfth anniversary of her mother’s death.

In the same year Rowling went to Bucharest to

highlight the use of caged beds in children’s mental institutions and raise support for the Children’s High Level Group (CHLG), which was founded by her and MEP Emma Nicholson. The CHLG’s aim is to improve the well being, health and protection of vulnerable children in care. To further support the CHLG, Rowling auctioned one of seven handwritten and illustrated copies of *The Tales of Beedle the Bard*, a collection of wizarding fairy tales alluded to in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, the final book of the Harry Potter series, and raised £1.95m for the charity.

After the bid she said, *“Large amounts of wealth bring a certain responsibility if you’re any kind of human being, then after you fulfil your family’s needs, you think, well how do I do some good with this?”*

*Sophie Radice writes for The Guardian, The Observer, The Independent and The Evening Standard, as well as magazines such as Eve, Woman and Home and Women’s Weekly. She is working on her first novel.*



*Sophie Radice*



*“We don’t talk about philanthropy but community social responsibility. It is more of a way of life, an integral part of what we do and how we view the world.”*

## Mia Morris: *community social responsibility*

*By Roxanne Clark*

Philanthropy takes many shapes and for Mia Morris, whose parents came to the UK from Grenada, giving is all about CSR – community social responsibility.



© Philanthropy UK / Lisa Barnard

Morris, a well known community activist, is described by Operation Black Vote, the first initiative to focus exclusively on the Black democratic deficit in the UK, as a ‘renaissance woman’.

And, she defines her philanthropic activities as being deeply rooted in belonging to a community of people who arrived in the UK from the West Indies at the time of SS Empire Windrush – which is celebrating its 60th anniversary this year – and had “*to fashion a life out of nothing*”, giving each other support with “*good grace*” and encouragement.

*“My motivation to give comes from my favourite quote from American Poet Laureate Gwendolyn Brooks: ‘We are each other’s harvest, we are each other’s business, and we are each other’s magnitude and bond’,”* explains Morris.

*“This correlates to my earlier experiences growing up in the 1960s in Stamford Hill, London. My Grenadian parents regularly helped and supported people, and I was brought up to do what you can where you can. I have fond memories of playing in a local school yard. Recognising that we children had no where to play that was safe, my father persuaded the local school*

*caretaker to allow parents to take it in turn to keep an eye on the space while we played.”*

This was also reflected in how the community ensured a financial future in their new country. As Morris explains, because many banks were not forthcoming in giving loans, the community established their own informal savings networks, called sou-sous, based on trust and spread across most of the West Indian communities. Some of these later became credit unions.

Morris has continued the community tradition first establishing Black History Month website and then the International Women’s Month (IWM) site which has been operating for five years.

*“I care passionately about the plight of women internationally and I am keen to support groups that would not necessarily get much support and publicity. And the websites are reflections of these causes.*

*“I have fond memories of organising and attending events during the 1980s where there were more women’s organisations and units at local authorities focusing on the equality agenda. The site has been created to be a 365-day portal available to inspire visitors.”*

Campaigns and projects promoted by the IWM website include supporting survivors of the Asian Tsunami, breast cancer and zero tolerance to female genital mutilation.

In the Caribbean, Morris has supported a Grenadian library project and engaged the publishing house Penguin to donate books from their children’s range.

The IWM site is supported by the community work Morris does through her company Wellplaced Consultancy, which organises events, conferences, seminars, and provides a successful speakers bureau and training.

*“In our community we do what we can where we can, not for reward or accolade but to make a difference. We don’t talk about philanthropy but community social responsibility. It is more of a way of life, an integral part of what we do and how we view the world.”*

- ▶ Black History Month website:  
[www.black-history-month.co.uk](http://www.black-history-month.co.uk)
- ▶ International Women’s Month (IWM) website:  
[www.international-womens-month.co.uk](http://www.international-womens-month.co.uk)

*Photo previously published in NPC's Giving Insights/ John Swannell*

*“By concentrating on one charity I can learn more and know what I’m talking about. That way I feel that I’m making much more of a difference and doing a better job.”*

## Darcey Bussell: *giving with passion*

By Sue Wixley

When she was the Royal Ballet’s principal dancer Darcey Bussell did shows for charity, but since her retirement last year her philanthropy has taken a more central role.

*“Unlike dancing, which is a bit of a selfish art, this is not all about me. Now I want to give something back,”* says Bussell.

Bussell has chosen to support the work of Rainforest Concern, a UK-based charity that targets biodiversity ‘hot spots’, particularly the dense rainforests in South America.

*“They don’t buy up land, but they work with the local community to preserve the forest and species that live in it”,* she says. *“By working with local organisations they can help people living close to the forests to find*

*ways to earn income which doesn’t have a negative impact on the forest.”*

Bussell feels that having her two children has given her a new appreciation for the environment and motivated her to do more for the next generation. Getting older has played its part too.

*“To know that you’re giving something back feels good. As soon as you have kids, you want to make them understand and appreciate their surroundings. It’s also about slowing down. As you get older you realise that it’s not necessary to live in the fast lane, and I realise that I only need to be happy – and for me and my family to be healthy.”*

For Bussell, focusing her giving is really important because it means she can learn a lot about the subject. *“By concentrating on one charity I can learn more and know what I’m talking about. That way I feel that I’m making much more of a difference and doing a better job.”*

She recommends that donors base their giving on an understanding of a problem. Indeed, it was discovering that the world’s rainforests have been halved within her own lifetime that motivated



Bussell to do something about it. *“As the rainforests diminish, we lose species at an incredible rate. It makes me want to get out there and put a big brick wall around the rainforests – anything to stop it happening!”*

The dancer recommends that donors approach intermediaries for advice on their giving. *“People may know an awful lot but they might not know about charities and how to give constructively. Organisations like New Philanthropy Capital can help to show them how giving money to charities can work for them.”*

Although Bussell supports the idea of a more hard-headed, information-driven approach to supporting charities, that does not mean that giving needs to be cold or emotionless. *“If you are passionate about something, you can do so much more”,* she says.



*“It is important for donors to understand and tap into their own personal motives for giving. It requires a lot of honesty.”*

## Renu Mehta: networking to change fortunes

*By Susan Mackenzie*

Renu Mehta is fortunate. A wealthy heiress who headed up the design team at her family’s fashion house, she has enjoyed the life of a busy socialite and successful businesswoman. Still, like many of her friends, she felt unfulfilled. *“I felt guilty because my life was so easy, while so many others live facing a grim existence against disease and hunger”*, said Mehta.

She says her inspirations are other women philanthropists, such as Melinda Gates, Sigrid Rausing and Queen Rania. Mehta explained, *“They don’t have to be involved in philanthropy; it is an active choice. They have chosen to dedicate themselves to this work, and are giving their time and passion and getting personally involved.”*

Recognising her impressive Rolodex as an important asset, Mehta sought to make a difference through harnessing her network. *“I wanted to do more than support good causes myself – I wanted to help create a culture of giving in the UK.”*

The result was the Fortune Forum, a charity which aims to tackle the interdependent global issues of poverty, climate change and diseases – including HIV/Aids, malaria and cancer. The Forum convenes philanthropists, global leaders, celebrity activists, influential entrepreneurs and media moguls to collectively make a difference. Mehta commented, *“Fortune Forum is a heady mix of substance and glamour.”*

Launched in 2006, the Forum hosted its inaugural annual Summit in September that year. With a guest

list that most charities could only dream of, the gala event featured former US President Bill Clinton as the keynote speaker and raised over £1m for charities. *“Its appeal was successful beyond our expectations”*, said Mehta. *“Our primary objective was to raise awareness, and the media coverage was tremendous in supporting us.”*

The 2007 Summit raised even more money for charities. Mehta realised that not everyone was comfortable giving publicly, and so last year participants were able to make donations privately to the charities presenting. She said: *“Our focus is on showing people the joy of giving, and creating a welcoming environment; and so we need to understand the different motivations of our members.”* She continued: *“It is important for donors to understand and tap into their own personal motives for giving. This understanding is necessary so that individuals can decide where and how to give that is best for them. It requires a lot of honesty. But in the end motivations don’t necessarily matter as long as people engage positively.”*

Whilst the glitzy dinners attract most of the media attention, the hard work is done behind the scenes,



Renu Mehta with former US President Bill Clinton  
Photo courtesy of Fortune Forum

*“To achieve scale and meaningful change, we must look at markets and influence policy”*

and throughout the entire year. The Forum also hosts a series of focused, strategic dinners which bring together people who can influence and effect change.

One of these groups is the International Clean Energy Circle (ICE Circle), launched at the 2007 Summit. ICE Circle comprises two groups: an Innovation circle, which explores new technologies, and a Policy circle, which seeks to influence governments. *“To achieve scale and meaningful change, we must look at markets and influence policy”*, Mehta said. *“The £1m raised at the first Summit is a pittance compared to the challenges the world is facing: a few million pounds can save a few*

*thousand lives, but through policy we can save millions. For instance, I am currently looking at tax reform, where I am working on creating a specific fiscal mechanism whereby the ‘super-rich’ and the government can work together to divert huge flows of funding into the international development arena.”*

The scale of the problem is immense, and the Forum is taking a holistic approach. Through its charity partners, which include WaterAid, British Red Cross, as well as grassroots initiatives, the Forum is focusing on developing infrastructure, health and education in developing countries. *“The poor must become productive on their own account, to be self-sufficient,”* commented Mehta. *“Fortune Forum brings money, time and our network to help them ultimately achieve self-sufficiency.”*

Yet Mehta is undaunted, and says she has never enjoyed anything as much as the Forum. *“But I am not complacent – there is still so much to be done”*, she says. *“I am still learning, and the Forum is constantly evolving. The best rewards are yet to come.”*

► Fortune Forum: [www.fortuneforum.org](http://www.fortuneforum.org)

# Historical icons

## Angela Burdett-Coutts, 1814-1906



### *Founding mother of women's philanthropy*

*By Susan Elizabeth*

Angela Burdett-Coutts inherited the vast wealth of her grandfather, the banker Thomas Coutts, and though estimates of her inheritance varied, it seems likely that she inherited some £600,000 in cash and an income of around £50,000 per year from a share in the bank.

It was an almost inconceivable fortune at the time. And, whilst there had always been women who were heiresses to landed property, it had never been known for a young woman of 23 years to possess such a staggering sum.

She lived to her 92nd year and was the first woman to be made a Baroness in her own right, in recognition of the lifetime of philanthropy that flowed from her astonishing wealth.

Among the vast array of causes Angela committed time and money to were the rehabilitation of prostitutes; providing schools in the poorest parts of London; pioneering good quality housing for the working poor and the construction of Columbia Market to improve the supply of fresh food at affordable prices to the poor of London's East End.

She was an early patron of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC); established a fund to support Muslim refugees from the Russo-Turkish war; and set up schemes in southern Ireland to retrain peasant farmers, starving as a result of the potato famine, to become deep-sea fishermen.

When Angela died in 1906 she was buried in Westminster Abbey, having given away an estimated £4m during her lifetime, leaving a relatively modest estate of £79,000.

And in case Angela Burdett-Coutts comes across as a one-dimensional paragon of Victorian virtue, it's worth noting that her private life was complex and surprising. For 18 years she suffered the attention of a 'stalker'. In her thirties she proposed to the 78-year-old Duke of Wellington (he gently turned her down), and in 1880 when she herself was 66, she scandalised polite society by marrying a man of 29. She ignored the Archbishop of Canterbury's suggestion that she might adopt him instead!





## Barbara Leigh Smith Bodichon, 1827-1891

### *Unconventional Victorian reformer*

*By Susan Elizabeth*

Barbara Leigh Smith Bodichon was an atypical Victorian woman and an unconventional and influential leader of the Victorian women's movement.

Thanks to her father's radical beliefs and her own skills as an artist, she had an independent income throughout her adult life, which she used to foster the causes she cared about.

Born in 1827, she was the eldest child of the reforming MP, Benjamin Smith. The Smith family was rich and powerful, but Barbara's social position was always overshadowed by the fact that her father and mother never married.

On their coming of age Ben Smith gave both his daughters and sons a portfolio of stocks and shares. This made Barbara that most unusual of things – a single Victorian woman with independent means. For the rest of her life she was to use her income alongside her astonishing energy and enormous network of contacts to pursue four great feminist campaigns: for reform of the Married Women's Property Act and the legal status of married women; for the right of women to work; for their right to vote and for their right to be educated.

Barbara was every bit the 'hands-on' philanthropist – alongside her money, she wrote pamphlets and articles, joined committees and organised petitions – activities that made the case for reform, stimulated debate and became the launch pads for the introduction of new legislation.

Her most significant financial backing – and her greatest legacy – was the money she donated to establish Girton College, the first Cambridge college to admit women. This was the culmination of a lifetime's passionate concern for the education of women, which she saw as one of the cornerstones of "common justice to half the world".

Very influential in her day, Barbara was quickly forgotten. Yet her work has touched every generation of women that followed. She played a vital role in opening up education, legal rights, and employment – in her social reforming zeal she opened the door for all modern women.

*Susan Elizabeth has 25 years' experience in the voluntary sector. She was Chief Executive of the Camelot Foundation 2001-2006, developing programmes to reconnect marginalised young people to the mainstream of UK life. Prior to that she was Director of Grants and Development at health think tank the Kings Fund, and Deputy Director of the National Council for One Parent Families. Susan now works as a freelance consultant, with clients in the funding and voluntary sectors. She is a Trustee of BBC Children in Need and of the Guy's & St Thomas' Charity and is a non-executive Director of the Probation Service in Sussex.*

*These are excerpts of two longer articles she wrote for the Association of Charitable Foundations' Trust and Foundations News, December 2002.*



# Giving circles & networks

## New trend connects more women to giving

*By Roxanne Clark*

Women have been quietly giving in many guises since the hey-day of Victorian philanthropy, and a 21st century trend that is connecting more women to giving and increasing their philanthropic clout is giving circles and networks.

A giving circle can take many forms but generally involves a group of individuals coming together with a philanthropic purpose, pooling their pounds and deciding collectively where to give their money. Within these basic parameters no two groups look or act the same, and can be as small as a handful of women meeting locally through to large corporate and foundation-supported groups.

One of the most appealing and effective aspects of giving circles is the opportunity to shape the group to meet the particular needs of a community, and the interests and capabilities of donors.

In this section we profile a kaleidoscope of giving circles and networks, and take inspiration from the US, where giving circles, once considered a fad, are now flourishing.

The consistent statement across all groups, both UK and US-based, is that participating in giving circles and networks is empowering and allows women to “*make a difference*” to their own and other communities in a way that would not be possible individually.

With more and more women wanting to give, and the wind of influence blowing in from the US, the forecast for the growth of giving circles in the UK can only be good.

*"When you see the difference that actually quite small amounts of money can make, in well run and well led projects, then you do feel optimistic about how funds like this can change lives."*

## UK Women's Fund to launch

by *Natasha Walter*



Natasha Walter

*"If people join us now, they will be in at the beginning of something potentially revolutionary,"* says Maggie Baxter, talking about the upcoming launch of the new UK Women's Fund. Maggie Baxter is one of those rare people who combine inspiration with pragmatism; she has spent more than 30 years in the voluntary sector, from grants director of Comic Relief to director of Womankind Worldwide; yet she has never lost the idealism that has driven her from the start of her career. *"When you see the difference that actually quite small amounts of money can make, in well run and well led projects, then you do feel optimistic about how funds like this can change lives."*

There are more than 200 women's funds in the world, stretching from the Ukraine to Ghana, from India to the USA, where there are dozens – while we are still waiting for a national women's fund in the UK. Elsewhere, these funds – which include well known organisations such as the Global Fund for Women and MamaCash, through to community funds such as the Women's Fund of Greater Milwaukee – are successful in channelling money towards women's organisations.

In doing so they fill a real need, because grant-making is often blind to the fundamental inequalities between men

and women, which means that women's organisations lose out. *"I was first really aware of this when I went to Africa for Comic Relief in the 1990s,"* says Baxter, *"I saw how women do all the work and yet are so unrecognised. In a less obvious way, the same is still true of the UK – the work that the women's sector does, whether it's in protecting women from violence or campaigning for political equality – still tends to get sidelined, which means that women's organisations remain horribly underfunded, despite superficial equality elsewhere in society."*

Alice Hooper at the branding agency Rainey Kelly, who has been working on the launch of the new UK Women's Fund, was struck by the response of the women in the focus groups they talked to: *"At first women said that they didn't see the point of a special women's fund, but when we presented them with the real needs on the grounds for many women, particularly around sexual violence – how rape crisis lines are being cut, how women who flee trafficking can't find support – we saw a change in the room. Women began to join up the dots. They saw the connections between these issues and issues such as a lack of political representation."*

*Maggie Baxter and Ann-Sophie Morrissette of the UK Women's Fund*

© Philanthropy UK/Lisa Barnard



*“The work that the women’s sector does, whether it’s in protecting women from violence or campaigning for political equality, still tends to get sidelined, which means that women’s organisations remain horribly underfunded, despite superficial equality elsewhere in society.”*

The fund will aim to draw in new money from people who may not have been attracted to philanthropy in the past, as well as influence existing funders to invest in women. In other countries where women's funds have taken off, Baxter has noted that they foster a spirit of sisterhood and solidarity, which she is keen to see take off in the UK too. *“There is a strong sense of self-interest in our society at the moment, a sense that ‘if I’m all right I can ignore those who aren’t’. But I think when you encourage people to realise that they can be part of a movement to grow a better society, they are drawn to that.”*

Hooper agrees: *“There is the potential for a huge leap here. Just recently it wasn’t at all cool to be green, and that has turned around. I think the same could happen with women’s issues – that it could become cool for women to get involved in empowering other women.”*

The UK Women's Fund will launch in spring 2008. It will invest in women creating change in the areas of safety, economic justice, voice, health & well being. To find out more or to get involved, please contact Ann-Sophie Morrissette at [annsophie@wrc.org.uk](mailto:annsophie@wrc.org.uk).

*Natasha Walter is a journalist and broadcaster, the author of *The New Feminism* and the founder of *Women for Refugee Women*.*

*This article first appeared in the March 2008 issue of the *Philanthropy UK Newsletter*.*



*“I know we are having an effect on every woman we touch, both internally at BT and externally through our charity work”*

## Corporate network inspires women to aspire

By *Ann-Sophie Morrissette*

When Jane Swift, Chair of BT Executive Women, came across stories of women struggling globally against violence and suffering, she was hard pressed to see how it might relate to corporate women in the UK. But she knew that there was a connection to be made between supporting women at BT and supporting women worldwide.

Working within a corporate and traditionally male-dominated industry can be lonely for women, particularly those *‘at the top.’* This was the impetus behind BT Executive Women (BTEW) – one of ten networks within BT and an offshoot of BT Women’s Network (now in its 21st year). With women making up only 22% of the BT workforce and 17% of senior managers, Executive Women is dedicated to inspiring women in senior management in BT to achieve their aspirations and help other women inside and outside the company. The core activities are led by an executive committee of 14 women.

Its focus is on inspiring and motivating women to share and develop their skills and includes a coaching scheme run in partnership with government agencies and other companies, talks by inspiring leaders and lobbying BT around issues important to members.

Having witnessed BT women transformed by the network, Swift realised the potential for Executive Women to make connections with women externally. Reading the stories of women suffering abroad on charity website WOMANKIND Worldwide, she was struck by the contrast to the enormous privilege experienced by BT women and recognised an

opportunity for BTEW’s members to share skills, build leadership, and motivate women outside BT.

Led by committee member Sam McDonald and a team of dedicated volunteers, BTEW has built relationships with charities including WOMANKIND Worldwide; Ogunte Global Tribal Network for social entrepreneurs; the microcredit programme for women StreetCred; regeneration agency East London Business Alliance; Wellbeing of Women, which invests in research into gynaecological health; and Race for Life, raising funds for Cancer Research UK.

Swift is emphatic that support is *“not about freebies”* but about encouraging members to extend their skills outwards. This includes training in customer service, management and marketing for small businesses, IT strategies, and sponsorship of events.

While BTEW operates on a small budget, the partnership with charities may yield further donations from individual members. The charities have a platform from which to communicate their work to a large number of women.

Swift is firm in her belief of the benefits to women in BT network: *“Making links with charities has given*



*our women a vehicle to demonstrate their skills, capabilities and strengths without having to go down the 'Look at what I'm good at' route – something many women are uncomfortable with. I know we are having an effect on every woman we touch, both internally at BT and externally through our charity work.”*

*Ann-Sophie Morrissette has been involved in the development of the UK Women's Fund for the past two years, most recently as Administrator of its development phase. Previously she worked at the Centre for Creative Communities (CCC) where she led a research study (commissioned by the List Family Foundation) into the viability of the women's fund. Ann-Sophie also wears the hat of fund-seeker as a fringe theatre producer.*



*Ann-Sophie Morrissette*

© Philanthropy UK / Lisa Barnard



*“We want to introduce giving to [our community] in a way that plants seeds for the future”*

## Innovative philanthropy formed in the playground

*By Roxanne Clark*

The school playground may not be the first place one would consider to embark on a philanthropic project, but this is where the committee of Talk in Company (TIC), a social network with a charitable edge, first met.

Formed just a year ago by a trio of mothers and one father, TIC has firmly established its regular charitable lunches as must-do events for the many formerly professional women who are now at-home mums, as well as small-business owners, in Wandsworth, south London, who were in desperate need of a stimulating social outlet.

And, it is the innovative formula of inspirational speaker, Friday lunch and giving back via the speaker's nominated charity that holds the key to its growing success.

*“We wanted to do something that would make a difference, and also to find a way to make the participants feel comfortable to hear about charities,”* explained Maria Stuff, TIC's marketing manager. *“Yes,”* said finance officer Catherine Deptford, *“from*

*the outset we wanted to give back, and all our speakers give 20% of their profit from the event to charity. Ninety per cent of the attendees to our events are women, with some local businessmen and dads joining us, and a lot of them do charitable work, so this is a way they can also give and learn more about the speakers' charities.”*

Through the speakers, which have included Nicola Horlick and Mike Dixon, TIC has so far supported seven charities and the plan is to continue developing the giving theme.

Along with their colleagues, membership officer Deborah Davidson and events organiser Mark Solon, they are planning a philanthropy day in June, to help *“make giving easier”* for their members, and will provide a philanthropist as a key speaker and a variety of taster workshops on different ways of giving.

*“We know our community and what they will be interested in”,* said Stuff, *“and we want to introduce giving to them in a way that plants seeds for the future.”*

► [www.talkincompany.com](http://www.talkincompany.com)



*“As a group of six women acting together, we feel we are capable of being more creative, more daring and more informed as charitable givers than any of us had ever been as individuals”*

## The Women’s Trust Fund: 25 years on and going strong

### *A member gives a snapshot view*

Once when the six of us from the Women’s Trust Fund were eating in a local restaurant, the waitress asked *“Now, what kind of a group outing is this. I always like to guess.”* One of us quickly replied, *“We’re social workers.”* This seemed the most plausible explanation since we were all in jeans, all women and no one was wearing make up. It was certainly more believable than if we had said we are philanthropists who had inherited wealth, some of which we give to other women who wish to create positive changes in their own lives and in the lives of yet other women. ‘Social workers’ seemed to cover it nicely.

The Women’s Trust Fund was begun by two women in the 1980s. Over the past 25 years we’ve grown in number and evolved our direction and commitment to our charitable giving. We’ve funded individual women with grants up to £500, and women’s groups with grants up to £800. Individual grants have been given to a wide range of women who may be seeking support for further education, setting up a community newsletter, or training in alternative health therapies. The women’s groups we have

supported include shelters and refuges, ethnic women’s centres, health information services and local organisations working with women at risk.

As a group of six women acting together, we feel we are capable of being more creative, more daring and more informed as charitable givers than any of us had ever been as individuals. It is a true privilege to be together in this very particular and effective way.

Because we are scattered all over the country, we meet only twice a year, but for a 24-hour period at each other’s homes on a rotating basis. These meeting dates are guarded very closely in our diaries. Usually we start with lunch on a Friday followed by our ‘Trust’ business, discussing and deciding on grant applications and developing ideas for the future. Later we have our evening meal, either cooked together or at a local restaurant.

Next morning we fit in a walk and then often discuss wider issues about financial management, ethical investment or other practical matters concerning money and giving. These discussions have helped us all a great deal, since money is not a subject easily shared with other friends in our daily lives.



*“By making a longer-term commitment we can provide a dependable source of ongoing funding”*

## Circle of Oxford friends embraces women far afield

*By Anne James*

The Oxford Givers' Circle is a network of friends who quietly and consistently support the work of the charity WOMANKIND Worldwide by giving money annually and by telling friends and neighbours about the charity's work.

WOMANKIND Worldwide funds and works with local organisations in developing communities, skilling and empowering women in order to improve their life chances and the life chances of their families. I first learned of the charity 17 years ago thanks to an article in *The Guardian*. I was very moved by the article, and wanted to help. So, my friend Mary and I arranged to visit the charity's offices to find out what we could do to support them.

My experience in working with voluntary and community groups in this country has taught me that short-term or one-off funding does not make for long-

term sustainability. By making a longer-term commitment we can provide a dependable source of ongoing funding.

We chose to support WOMANKIND Worldwide's work with The Irula Tribal Women's Welfare Society, a partner organisation in South India that works with and for tribal women in Tamil Nadu. The initial project that we chose was The Hill Tribe Women's Association Livestock Project. This has developed and expanded over the years into a cluster of projects, all aimed at giving women the literacy, numeracy and confidence they need to engage in decision-making in their communities, to petition the authorities for improved facilities for their villages (such as electricity, roads, lavatories and drinking water), to address domestic violence in their communities, and to earn an income to support their families.

In 1992 we approached 15 friends and asked if they would like to join the Oxford Givers' Circle and to commit to giving a modest sum for a minimum of three years. In 1995 we reviewed and renewed our initial commitment; more women joined the Circle; and most members increased the amount they gave.

We meet annually in one of our homes, for a simple curry lunch and an update on the projects. WOMANKIND Worldwide provides us with materials or a speaker. We have gained a great deal from our involvement with this charity, and have seen the difference that our modest donations have made. We have learned about the lives, hardships and successes of other ordinary women who are less fortunate than ourselves.

The Oxford Givers' Circle has now been in existence for 16 years, and is set to continue.

*Anne James is founder of the Oxford Givers' Circle. She works in the UK in the fields of social care and community development. She can be contacted at [anne@riverbank38.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:anne@riverbank38.freeserve.co.uk).*



*“Consistent across all levels of giving is the motivation behind why women participate in giving circles; this is the desire to become more connected to their communities, and to make a difference”*

## Giving in the US comes full circle

*By Roxanne Clark*

Recent research into giving circles in the US indicates that rather than being a passing fad they are reaching across all ethnic and social classes to become an established form of philanthropy.

*More Giving Together: The Growth and Impact of Giving Circles and Shared Giving*, a 2007 report commissioned by the US-based Forum of Regional Associations of Grantmakers, showed strong growth in the number and diversity of giving circles.

*“This form of giving is now cutting across all ethnic groups and ages, with more men contributing too”*, explained Daria Teutonico, Director, New Ventures in Philanthropy at the Forum.

The study identified 400 giving circles across the US – ranging from the small New York-based group *One Percent for Moms* who meet in a living room, through to large foundation-based organisations like the *Washington Women’s Foundation* in Seattle which engages more than 400 women and operates with a staff of four.

Consistent across all levels of giving is the motivation behind why women participate in giving circles; this is the desire to become more connected to their communities, and to make a difference.

*“The largest number of giving circles is community-based, with some being internationally focused, and for a cross-section it is also about expressing an identity such as with some of the Afro-American groups,”* said Teutonico.

And, these groups are having an impact: *“Even though most operate at a grass-roots level it is serious money making a serious difference, upward of \$100m. Giving circles are the democratisation of philanthropy,”* she added, *“Anyone can get involved and it reinforces the power of the collective. It resonates with women’s approaches to networking and empowers them to make a difference that they couldn’t do individually.”*

And, according to Teutonico they will continue to flourish. *“Giving circles are here to stay and our aim is for them to become a mainstream and acknowledged form of philanthropy.”*



© Forum of Regional Associations of Grantmakers, USA

*The Forum has published a useful resource, the Giving Circles Knowledge Center, which includes detailed information on how to set-up and run a giving circle, networking and case studies.*  
[www.givingforum.org](http://www.givingforum.org)

# Historical perspective

## Women and philanthropy in 19th century England

**By Frank Prochaska**

My research into female philanthropy sprang from an interest in philanthropy rather than in feminism. My initial purpose was to fill some gaps in David Owen's distinguished *English Philanthropy, 1660-1960*, but the research soon developed into a study of the history of women.

Based on a wide range of statistical and literary evidence, including a large number of women's memoirs, my book *Women and Philanthropy in Nineteenth-Century England* looks at women's charitable motives and methods against the backdrop of contemporary attitudes towards women.

Free from the cut and thrust of commercial life and widely thought to be more sensitive than men to suffering and personal relations, women were increasingly called upon to be agents of social improvement. "In charity", as a writer in the *English Woman's Journal* put it, "there will always be found a congenial sphere for the fruition of the unemployed energies of women". Like medieval churchmen who fell back on morality to increase their power in a society dominated by an armed aristocracy, nineteenth-century women exploited the belief in their

superior morality to increase their power in a society dominated by men.

By the mid-nineteenth century the range of women's activities was enormous, and through determination, ingenious fundraising, and a willingness to take on work that men were unwilling or unable to do, they had broken down much of the prejudice against them in the charitable establishment.

While it is impossible to be precise about their overall financial contribution to philanthropy in the nineteenth century, women dramatically increased their share of charitable funding. In a growing number of societies they provided the bulk of the income. In the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA), for example, women made up 69% of the subscribers by 1900,

*"As the influence of women in charity increased it whetted their appetite for more, and a larger and larger number of institutions emerged with women in charge"*

and their financial contribution was roughly in line with that figure. Increasingly prominent in the world of organised philanthropy, they began to redirect the nation's charitable energies into channels that suited their perception of society's needs, most notably causes associated with the welfare of women and children. In district visiting, for example, the forerunner of social work, women became so ubiquitous that commentators often used the pronoun 'she' when referring to visitors.

As the influence of women in charity increased it whetted their appetite for more, and a larger and larger number of institutions emerged with women in charge. In 1893, *The Englishwoman's Yearbook* estimated that there were about 500,000 women who laboured "continuously and semi-professionally" in philanthropy and another 20,000 who supported themselves as "paid officials" in charitable societies.

With the years women extended their activities to campaigns for legal and moral reform. Many charitable campaigners joined the women's suffrage societies, which some saw as part of the wider moral reform movement. Charitable work provided a variety of experience, not least in administration, that was a very useful

introduction to other professions. As a religion of action philanthropy challenged the complacency of women, gave them practical responsibility, and heightened their self-confidence and self esteem.

One of the major themes of the book is that the charitable experience of women from all social classes was a lever which they used to pry open the doors closed to them in other spheres. Philanthropy, in short, was the taproot of female emancipation in the nineteenth century.

Today, when philanthropy is back in the headlines, the role of women remains a fascinating issue, and should continue to attract anyone interested in social reform and active citizenship.

*Frank Prochaska teaches Modern British History at Yale University and has published widely on the history of philanthropy and welfare provision. To order a copy Women and Philanthropy in Nineteenth Century England, please visit [www.oup.com/uk/catalogue/?ci=9780198226277](http://www.oup.com/uk/catalogue/?ci=9780198226277)*

## Women and philanthropy in the 20th century



Anne Logan

*By Anne Logan*

Most historical studies of women and philanthropy either end roughly around the time of the First World War or follow a trajectory tracing a transformation from the voluntary sector to professionalised social work.

However, the vital role played by women's philanthropy in the social services of the twentieth century (notwithstanding the growth of the 'Welfare State') is now beginning to be recognised. Many social issues continued to demand the attention of voluntary services while, for some decades, cultural practices restricting the opportunities for paid work by married women ensured that there remained a ready supply of willing workers. A survey of *Women's Citizens Association* members in 1956-7, aptly titled '*A Job in Each Hand*', found respondents involved in a wide range of voluntary activities including church work, hospital charities, and care of the elderly, as well as serving in local government and as JPs.

Philanthropic women in the 20th century were still sometimes typecast as '*Lady Bountifuls*', a derogatory appellation that carried connotations both of class and amateurism. '*Noblesse oblige*' may have continued to play a part as late as the mid-twentieth century, for example during the heyday of Lady Reading's leadership of the Women's Voluntary Service, but the charitable work done by women was increasingly '*professional*' in its approach.

In 1934 Elizabeth Macadam described the ‘*New Philanthropy*’, based on social scientific research and rigorous training. Philanthropic women in the twentieth century often worked extremely hard and gave up large amounts of time – and money – to support what they saw as progressive social initiatives. Importantly, they continued to work alongside the statutory services and helped maintain the long-term significance of voluntary action in British society.

*Anne Logan is a lecturer in social history at the University of Kent. She has done research on the work of women magistrates and is writing a book on feminism and criminal justice policy in the period 1920-1970.*

### Resourcing women

*By Ann-Sophie Morrisette*

Women dedicating their time, resources and skills for the benefit of other women is an underpinning theme of women and philanthropy in the twentieth century.

Following the Second World War and the subsequent development of the voluntary and community sector alongside the welfare state, the 1970s and 1980s gave birth to services we know today as ‘women’s organisations’. Research by the Women’s Resource Centre ([www.whywomen.org.uk](http://www.whywomen.org.uk)) recounts how the Women’s Liberation Movement, in addition to significant gains in public policy and public opinion, brought about “organised, community based services by women, for women.” A self-help, holistic, empowerment approach formed the backbone of women’s organisations during this era, as they actively addressed gaps in state provision.

This legacy lives on in the twenty-first century, with over 11,000 UK charities (7% of all registered charities) working specifically with women – ranging from refuges, employment and training agencies, rape crisis centres, and lobbying organisations.

*Women’s Resource Centre is a national umbrella organisation which supports women’s organisations to be more effective and sustainable. [www.wrc.org.uk](http://www.wrc.org.uk)*

*“The vital role played by women’s philanthropy in the social services of the twentieth century is now beginning to be recognised”*





# Benevolence and bias in black & white: *media coverage of female philanthropists*

**By Beth Breeze**

An analysis of every published article about philanthropy in UK newspapers in 2006 revealed a distinct difference in the way the media reports the activities of male and female philanthropists.

When the subject is a male philanthropist, journalists tend to focus on the size of their fortune, how they made their money and details of their luxury lifestyle. But when female philanthropists are mentioned, they are often described in trivialising ways, focusing on what they look like, their private life and their family connections.

A typical example of a male giver in the press is, *“Irvine Laidlaw [who] founded the world’s largest events and conference company...He now has more time – and money – to donate to politics, philanthropy and his passion for fast cars and boats”*. Whilst a report on Michael Brown explained that he *“made his £100m fortune in property and city trading before moving to the Balearic island where he has two mansions, a fleet of cars and a private jet”*.

Media treatment of female donors is typified by references to the cultural philanthropist Louise T McBain, known as the *“£260m blonde divorcee”* who once dated Prince Andrew, and Ann Gloag, who is encapsulated as a *“Perth-born former nurse”* who is

now a *“diminutive, demanding and driven”* billionaire. Other women who can claim great philanthropic achievements are described dismissively as *“a reformed socialite and former model”* (Renu Mehta), *“a fabled beauty”* (Queen Noor) and *“doyenne of the silk-stocking district”* (Brooke Astor).

The journalist Natasha Walter, author of *The New Feminism*, comments, *“Of course it’s the case that much more attention is laid on the personal lives and the looks and style of women philanthropists – that happens to women in every walk of life.”*

There is still some cultural discomfort about the existence of rich women, especially those who created their own wealth in traditional ‘male’ worlds such as finance and manufacturing. Walter adds, *“Perhaps it makes it easier for us to feel comfortable with them if we exaggerate their feminine qualities. That means we read an awful lot about women who have made their money in fashion, such as Tamara Mellon, and not so much about women who have made their money in less ‘girly’ businesses.”*

Media coverage of philanthropists may also reflect societal perceptions of the ‘proper’ role for men and women. As Walter concludes, *“The mainstream media very much like women who spend their money on feminine causes – children, animals, breast cancer, ballet – and if*

*women take up harder causes such as human rights, then they can be seen as a bit threatening. But those women are the inspiring ones – women such as Dame Anita Roddick, or Sigrid Rausing, who is unusual because there is this political, feminist aspect to her philanthropy.”*

Increased media coverage of philanthropy is, of course, a welcome development. But more even-handed treatment of male and female philanthropists would be even more welcome.

*“There is still some cultural discomfort about the existence of rich women, especially those who created their own wealth in traditional ‘male’ worlds such as finance and manufacturing”*

# Global perspective

To bring a global perspective to this special edition, Philanthropy UK invited a range of contributors to provide a high-level overview of women and philanthropy in seven countries. The resulting round-up of the state of gender and giving, which covers five continents, is the first attempt that we know of to provide such a comparative perspective.

Our contributors include women and men who work in the philanthropic sector or who have made intensive studies of the country they write about.

A defining feature of almost all the articles is a lack of data to draw on. Apart from in the USA (where philanthropy research is well established), our contributors had to refer to studies in which philanthropy was a tangential topic and to informal sources of information.

The lack of readily available facts and statistics about women and philanthropy makes this round-up a particularly useful resource for all those with an interest in the international development of female philanthropy.

**Beth Breeze**

## Hungary

*By Paola Grenier*

In terms of philanthropy, women in present day Hungary are characterised as enthusiastic donors but less keen volunteers.

A 2004 survey of giving and volunteering found that 68% of women made financial donations to charities and non-profit organisations, compared with 62% of men. However, 37% women volunteered, whereas 43% of men engaged in voluntary activities. Women are also less likely than men to be members of associations. This has been attributed to the fact that most women in Hungary work and also carry the main responsibility for childcare and household duties. Men, on the other hand traditionally have fewer household obligations. Women therefore have money, but less time available to contribute as volunteers.

However, the group of women most active in philanthropy are married housewives with two children. This may be because they are involved with local community organisations, parenting groups, and engaged with providing mutual support. Those who are retired are more likely to make donations but less likely to volunteer.



*Paola Grenier*



A women's movement became active in Hungary in the late 19th Century, resulting in their greater participation in education and politics. It also resulted in a number of associations and foundations established specifically to support women and to promote their role and rights; up until the end of the Second World War, women were more involved in charitable works than men.

After the political changes that followed the war, and the imposition of a socialist regime, women were declared as having equal status to men in education and employment and were required to make an equal contribution to society. In practice, women took on a greater role than men in the family, but also in the grey or second economy, and in some ways did achieve equal status economically. They did not, however, achieve equal political status.

This is the legacy that has gone on to shape the role and contribution of women in philanthropy following the change to democracy in the 1990s.

*Paola Grenier is completing a doctoral thesis and consults for various organisations including the European Venture Philanthropy Association. Additional information was provided by Eva Kuti and Istvan Sebesteny.*

## Kyrgyzstan

*By Dr Balihar Sanghera*

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Kyrgyzstan experienced a severe depression and cutbacks to social spending throughout the 1990s and early 2000s. Since independence, the philanthropic sector has therefore increased in importance as the state lacks the interest or capacity to deliver social services for its citizens and to protect the environment.

Most surveys suggest that 40%-50% of the population are poor, and struggle to make ends meet. In spite of this widespread poverty and the Soviet legacy of centralised decision-making and provisions, charitable giving is strong.

As recipients of donations and grants, women benefit from philanthropy. Some organisations, such as women's rights, child poverty and health care campaigns, are either led or managed by women.

Charitable giving takes several forms. Local businesses and the local Rotary club in Bishkek donate to good causes, such as to Second World War veterans. Students and workers arrange box collections of clothes and food, and entertain disadvantaged groups by performing concerts and plays. Kyrgyzstani Muslims give alms during Ramadan, and more affluent households give to poorer households in the community in order to avoid the 'evil eye' and sabotage to their own property. Citizens give on compassionate grounds to homeless children and elderly and disabled beggars on the streets. Also, migrant workers send money back to their communities to support schools and mosques.



*Dr Balihar Sanghera*

*“In everyday life, women are significant actors in the voluntary sector, as donors, recipients and NGO staff”*



There is a strong political-criminal-business nexus in Kyrgyzstan, and wives and daughters of politicians and mob leaders offer a human face to a corrupt system, through their patronage to the arts, education, hospitals and other public causes.

It is as salaried workers that women have more of a presence in the voluntary sector. They tend to work for large international non-profit making organisations, which offer women a better salary, status, perks and working conditions than working for local employers.

In everyday life, women are significant actors in the voluntary sector, as donors, recipients and NGO staff.

*Dr Baliyar Sanghera is a Lecturer in the School of Social Policy, Sociology and Social Research, University of Kent.*

## Mexico and Latin America

*By Ruben D. Flores Sandoval*

Historically, women have played a salient role in Latin American philanthropy, such as in the case of Eva Peron in 20th century Argentina.

Yet the participation of women in philanthropy in Mexico and Latin America has received very little attention from researchers. Some few things can be said, though, as women's participation in philanthropy meets the eye on an everyday basis: whether through the ritual commitment of the first lady in philanthropic activities, or the everywoman raising money for charities on the streets.

Research by the Mexican Centre for Philanthropy – *Centro Mexicano para la Filantropía* – which is headed by a woman, shows that women who participate in charitable organisations are mostly between 35-50 years of age (55%) and 50+ (36%), belong to middle or high-income groups, and have had access to higher education (64%). Although the women researched reported that their participation in philanthropy stems from social concerns or from family or religious traditions, they noted that their involvement is also connected with events such as the 1968 student movement, the feminist movement of the 1970s; the 1985 earthquake; the economic and political crises of 1988, 1994 and 1995; or the 1994 Chiapas rebellion.

The same report found that most Third Sector Organisations (TSOs) address education and health issues, mostly in urban areas, and directed their efforts towards cross-sections of the population identified as most

*Ruben D. Flores Sandoval*



vulnerable (low-income women and children, indigenous population). Women's participation in TSOs has tended to become more professional over the years. Nevertheless, it remains largely voluntary and non-paid. Although increasingly professionalised, women tend to make use of traditional ways of fundraising, such as raffles, bazaars, and the use of personal contacts.

*Ruben D. Flores Sandoval is a Mexican PhD researcher at the University of Kent, Canterbury.*

*“Women’s participation in TSOs has tended to become more professional over the years”*





Pamala Wiepking

## The Netherlands

By Pamala Wiepking

In the Netherlands, women's involvement in philanthropy started around 1850.

During the period of industrialisation, the social position of middle- and upper-class women changed. Before industrialisation, women were needed and, thus allowed to have a paid job and make money for the family. The increasing wealth that came with industrialisation diminished this need, and provided women with servants, leaving them with little to do but socialise. The only social functions middle- and upper-class women could have during industrialisation were charitable ones.

Women's philanthropy in the Netherlands was driven by norms of compassion and Christianity. Women formed associations that aided the poor, orphans, and the ill, resulting in, among others, service organisations, which still exist in present day Netherlands; an example is the Soroptimist Club, a network of businesswomen supporting women's charities.

Twentieth century feminism brought women more of the same rights as men, although in the Netherlands some of

## “Women’s philanthropy in the Netherlands was driven by norms of compassion and Christianity”

these rights came fairly late, with Dutch women only being allowed to vote from 1919. These equal rights were also reflected in philanthropy, when women's and men's giving started to resemble each other more. However, it is interesting to note that, at the beginning of the 21st century, most boards of charitable organisations and foundations in the Netherlands are still occupied by a majority of men.

Women generally occupy more practical functions with charitable organisations and foundations, such as tasks related to fundraising and helping people directly.

In the Netherlands it is very uncommon to openly discuss large charitable donations. In 2007, the magazine 'Millionair' published a list of the 25 largest charitable donors in the Netherlands, and there were only two women represented in that list.

*Pamala Wiepking is a PhD student in Philanthropy/Sociology at the VU University Amsterdam, the Netherlands.*

Alena Králíková



## Slovakia and the Czech Republic

By Alena Králíková

Czech and Slovak philanthropy is only just beginning to develop and as yet there has been minimal discussion of the gender dimension.

There are however several broad positive trends worth mentioning. Research by the Ministry of Finance of the Czech Republic and Czech Donors' Forum finds that the value of individual donations has doubled in recent years, from 670m CZK in 2000 to 1,250m CZK (£30m) in 2006, and the number of philanthropists has also almost doubled in the same time period. Meanwhile, corporate donations have tripled from 746m CZK in 2000 to 2,045m CZK (£50m) in 2006.

Another trend is that both individual and corporate donors are supporting a broader range of people and causes, and two women have become well known for giving not just their money but also their resources and

*“Women demand involvement in the institutions that they support, giving not only of their finances, but also of their time and talent.”*

attention to topics that tend to be overlooked. Juliana Gyenesová, who died last summer, bequeathed all her possessions to the Oncology Unit of the Children Hospital in Banská Bystrica; this was the first major charitable legacy in Slovakia. In the Czech Republic, Mathilda Nostitz received a VIA Bona award for her long-term support to The Union of the Blind and Weak-sighted People.

The Slovak-Czech Women’s Fund does not yet play a major role in terms of funding, but it does represent an important grant-making organisation, as it is the only one supporting women’s and girls’ initiatives in the two countries. The Fund’s mission is to provide resources to support the promotion of women’s rights in society and to implement the principle of gender equality.

The Fund aims to contribute to the development of socially responsible philanthropy in Slovakia and in the Czech Republic. Its ambition is to change the traditional donor-grantee relationship to a partnership among supporters, donors, women’s initiatives and women and girls.

*Alena Králíková is development manager of the Slovak-Czech Women’s Fund.*

## The USA

*By Sondra Shaw-Hardy and Carmen J. Stevens*

Women have been affecting the philanthropic landscape of the US since the founding of the country in 1776. Women have created universities, like Smith College, founded in 1871 by Sophia Smith, and museums like the Museum of Modern Art, co-founded by Lizzie Palmer Bliss. Yet, it has been during the last quarter of a century that women have truly claimed their philanthropy as a means of social change in the US and the world.

Research suggests that women’s giving differs from men’s. Women demand involvement in the institutions that they support, giving not only of their finances, but also of their time and talent. Women seek a connection based on values and give to see creative solutions to problems.

A selection of research findings on women’s philanthropy in the US include:

- Recent studies generally show a reversal of a long-time trend: more women are giving to charities than are their male counterparts, and they are giving away higher percentages of their incomes than are men
- Single women are 37% more likely to be charitable donors than are single men.

- Because women live longer than men, they will end up in charge of much of the US\$41 trillion expected to pass from generation to generation over the next fifty years.
- Gen X women (born 1961-81) are the future of philanthropy. While Prime Time (born 1928-44) and Boomer women (born 1945-60) are actively giving, those institutions that engage the Gen X community will benefit the most.

Overwhelmingly, what defines women’s philanthropy in the US is the passion for a cause. Connecting women to institutions, and to one another, for a collective mission ignites the power that each holds individually. Women’s philanthropy will continue to provide an opportunity for women to create lasting change in their communities locally and those that they partner with throughout the globe.

*Sondra Shaw-Hardy is a philanthropy advisor and co-founder of the Women’s Philanthropy Institute (WPI) at the Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University. Carmen J. Stevens is Director of Philanthropic Services for Falconer Philanthropic Advisors. The authors of this contribution recently released Women’s Giving: A Generational Perspective, a summary of their landmark research of women’s giving across three generations of American women.*

# The top five: *tips for giving*

## Choosing a socially responsible lifestyle

*By Dame Stephanie Shirley*

Materialists believe that the only things that matter are those we can verify with our own senses. The main goals in life are correspondingly wealth and power since the more abstract goals are too difficult to measure. As a self-made millionaire I know that economic sustenance is important – but not all-important. Social responsibility demands that we develop a spiritual dimension to life.

To find the underlying motivation for philanthropy, you have to dig deep. The passing years bring a sense of urgency to complete life's goals, to set aside surplus funds to relieve suffering beyond one's immediate circle, to move from success to the significance that can be found in the service of others. Then money transmutes from figures on a sheet of paper to something meaningful. Giving is a private expression of personal beliefs as well as fulfilling community needs. So perhaps the motives hardly matter. The fact is that people give and it's the birthright and defining characteristic of the human species.

Although I do sometimes give anonymously – just as I occasionally work anonymously – I believe that philanthropy needs to be proactive, ambitious and focused on results. It's not a business but needs to be business-



*Dame Stephanie Shirley has donated over £50m to various pioneering and strategic projects in IT (her professional discipline) and autism (her late son's disorder).*

*Dame Stephanie Shirley*





A pupil during a handwriting session at Priors Court school, which provides specialised education for children with autism and was established by founding patron Dame Stephanie Shirley.

*“I believe that philanthropy needs to be proactive, ambitious and focused on results”*

like. My aim is always to be professional, to be efficient and to be effective. But the main thing is that I'm having a load of fun! I meet more interesting people, travel purposefully to more interesting places and feel more fulfilled as a social entrepreneur than I ever did in the years spent making money.

Giving is a lifestyle and is not altruistic at all, since you get so much in return. A large bank balance is all very nice, but like the 16th century philosopher Francis Bacon, I believe that *“money is like muck, not good except it be spread”*. Even Bill Gates seeks to be remembered for his philanthropy rather than his riches.

Philanthropy certainly pays. The more money I give away, the richer my life seems to become. Philanthropy allows me to work with congenial people on worthwhile projects. It has given significance to the wealth it took me a lifetime to create. Once classed as the seventh wealthiest

woman in Britain, I'm proud to have given away enough to take me out of the *Rich List*. Gone are the days when wealthy women had always married or inherited their money.

Do women give in different ways? Do they support other women? Oprah Winfrey supports girls' education; Sigrid Rausing supports women's empowerment. But then, both are generous to a large number of causes.

Givers, speaking especially for women, care about the issues and are 'care-ful' about them. A man typically might ask “what does society expect a man in my position to do?” and “what recognition will I get out of it?” Women seem less interested in these fripperies and perhaps focus more on “which charity most deserves support?” and “how can I make the most difference?” We also outlive men on average and the classic 'widow's mite' can provide solace in bereavement.

Let me attempt to summarise:

First, **concentrate on what you know and care about**. There are so many worthy causes but each person knows whether it's animals or children or the developing

world or the elderly or medical causes, or whatever that touches their heart. Perhaps, like me, you decide you need to start your own charity – the important thing is not to duplicate what is already happening elsewhere.

Money is wonderfully effective but the **passion and human touch must also be there if we're not to patronise the beneficiaries**. I know from having received charity myself and expected to be grateful, how easy it is to patronise people. So give with a warm hand and generous spirit.

Philanthropists enjoy tax advantages; it behoves us to be efficient and effective. So **use all the business skills you have available**. Let IT keep your contacts straight and records secure; plan, measure, benchmark, manage the process. Leverage your investments by funding infrastructure, partnerships and challenge grants. Make your money work with loans and underwriting. But move from a corporate aim such as to be the 'best in the world' to whatever is 'best for the world'.

'Just' writing a cheque demeans both giver and receiver, so always **add time and skills, energy and contacts**. Apart from anything else, it makes giving much more fun.

Finally, heed the words of John Wesley:

*“Do all the good you can,  
By all the means you can,  
In all the ways you can,  
In all the places you can,  
At all the times you can,  
To all the people you can,  
As long as ever you can.”*

*This article first appeared in the March 2008 issue of the Philanthropy UK Newsletter.*



# philanthropy|uk: *inspiring giving*

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We publish the *Philanthropy UK Newsletter*, the leading publication on British philanthropy read in over 50 countries around the globe, and *A Guide to Giving*, the essential handbook for philanthropists.

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**Women & Philanthropy:** *inspiring women, inspired giving*

March 2008

ISBN: 978-1-897916-33-9

Produced by Philanthropy UK

Design and artwork by Carrington Griffin Design

Published by Association of Charitable Foundations

Central House, 14 Upper Woburn Place, London WC1H 0AE

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