

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Fundraising as women's work? Examining the profession with a gender lens

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Fundraising is a mission-critical area for nonprofit organizations and has emerged as a professional field in the past 50 years. This paper explores the gendered nature of fundraising work and its feminization as a profession over time, while simultaneously documenting the persistence of a gender pay gap and male overrepresentation in senior-level positions in both North America and in the UK. The application of gender theory reveals that fundraising roles and responsibilities rely on key relationship-building and organizational tasks, which are commonly associated with stereotypical women's work and are, thus, valued less in a patriarchal society. As a result, the devaluing of fundraising as mission-critical work, and a career suitable for both women and men, may limit the credibility and power of the nonprofit sector to represent diverse voices and enhance democratic values in society. The article concludes with recommendations for research and practice.

1 | INTRODUCTION

The Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP), the leading membership organization for nonprofit development professionals in North America, includes the “impact of the feminization of fundraising” on its active research agenda (AFP, 2003). However, only a handful of studies exploring this topic have been conducted to date, and even fewer incorporate an explicit “gender lens” in analyzing the state of the field (see Mesch & Rooney, 2008; Sampson & Moore, 2008, discussed below). In fact, the majority of research has simply confirmed that a gender gap persists in both salary and leadership positions in fundraising, even as women now outnumber men by a ratio of three to one in the profession overall (AFP, 2014). At the same time, very little research has examined the experiences of fundraisers, choosing more often to study philanthropic giving from the perspective of donors (as noted by other papers in this special edition).

In the case of nonprofit organizations, a sector that is already female-dominated in much of the world due to the number of service-delivery positions in teaching, nursing, child care, and social work, why should women's recent dominance in fundraising matter? Almost 20 years ago, fundraiser and researcher Julie Conry (1998) wrote,

Within a sector where the majority of the workforce is now female, nonprofit theorists, researchers, and analysts can hardly afford not to incorporate aspects of gender into contemporary studies. Given its proper

place, gender, as an issue, has considerable potential to generate both a greater understanding of the present dynamics of the fundraising labor market and the future state of the profession. (p. 90)

Yet few scholars have heeded her call. Similarly, Steinberg and Jacobs (1994) wrote, “The fact that most nonprofit-sector workers are women and that most occupations within the sector have historically been staffed by women has been insufficiently studied” (p. 80). Stivers (1990) and Hutchinson (2011) note the lack of a feminist perspective or theory in the field of public administration, where nonprofit management is often located. Although nonprofit scholars have researched topics pertaining to women as fundraisers, this research has not integrated feminist theory or incorporated a gender analysis. What is at stake is that fundraising, a mission-critical activity for nonprofits, will be accepted as a “pink ghetto.”

This article highlights the value of bringing a gender lens to analyze the fundraising profession. As the nonprofit sector has grown, the number of paid fundraising positions has also increased, providing professional opportunities outside of direct-service positions. Yet fundraising also operates in an environment that is fraught with tension, caught between the two poles of mission and business, which often operate as two different, and opposing, gendered domains (Burlingame & Hulse, 1991). As women's paid work has been historically devalued, and the gender pay gap persists, using a gender lens helps illuminate women's contemporary dominance in the fundraising field and their simultaneous under-representation at the most senior-level positions.

Why has this occupational sex segregation continued to persist, and what practices could remedy this imbalance? Could this segregation also place the nonprofit sector at risk of uncritically adopting a masculine bias and limit the sector's potential to enlarge democratic participation, represent minority interests, and contest the decisions and policies of government, values often attributed to the sector overall (Nank, 2011)?

This paper proceeds in five parts. First, I present a summary of women's work in the nonprofit sector and the presence of a glass ceiling. Next, I review the occupation and practice of fundraising and its historical development. Third, I assess the recent feminization of fundraising and the contemporary research on pay and leadership. Fourth, I use gender theory to discuss why fundraising may be considered women's work and why women may experience difficulty in reaching the most senior-level and well-respected positions. Finally, I consider the implications of this discussion and present recommendations for future research as well as for practitioners concerned with increasing gender equity in their organizations.

2 | WOMEN IN THE NONPROFIT SECTOR

Women play a key role in the nonprofit sector labor force, and historically, voluntary organizations offered a path for middle- and upper-class white women to forge public careers (Nank, 2011; Odendahl, 1996). Women have a rich history of volunteerism and activism in the nonprofit sector, although their roles and influence continue to be obscured (Odendahl, 1996; Prochaska, 1980; Steinberg & Jacobs, 1994). Kathleen McCarthy (1990), a prominent historian of women's philanthropy, argues that, in the 19th century, women created "parallel power structures" within philanthropic and voluntary associations, which allowed them to develop and maintain public identities while adhering to traditional gender roles and family obligations. By working in voluntary associations, often in unpaid roles, women learned organizational and leadership skills, managed money and property, and developed personal confidence. Indeed, it was through the voluntary sector that women became the "moral mothers" of society, advocating for issues related to women's and children's needs, temperance, morality, and public health (McCarthy, 1990).

Although the concept of women's parallel power structures offers recognition of women's historical role within the voluntary sector, scholars have addressed a number of factors that have simultaneously served to undermine women's philanthropic work. The notion of selfless womanhood—helping and giving of oneself to others—is often seen as women's traditional gender role and an implicit expectation of women's voluntary work (Rose, 1994). Similarly, the image of "Lady Bountiful" has served to stigmatize women's philanthropy and trivialize women donors' contributions (Chambré, 1993; Daniels, 1985; McCarthy, 1990). Women's work on fundraising committees, and, in particular, their work to create large-scale benefits and galas remained one of the few available roles for upper-class white women to engage in philanthropic work well into the late 20th century (Caster, 2008; Daniels, 1985). In 1985, scholar Arlene Kaplan Daniels (1985) highlighted the invisibility of women's traditional fundraising and helping roles in her study of women volunteers. As these roles were also unpaid, she termed them "invisible careers," which

focused attention on the fact that some women were able to create meaningful work, despite the limitations of unpaid, sociability work, and its lack of recognition.

Today, nonprofit work, which began on a voluntary basis, has transformed into a profession, in which organizations have paid staff and a market orientation that exists in a competitive environment. In 2010, there were an estimated 2.3 million nonprofit organizations in the United States, with nearly 1.6 million organizations registered with the Internal Revenue Service, an increase of 24% since 2000 (Blackwood, Roeger, & Pettijohn, 2012). Yet the sector has also remained "gendered female" in important ways that are often unacknowledged by researchers and practitioners alike (Odendahl, 1996; Odendahl & Youmans, 1994; Steinberg & Jacobs, 1994). This refers to what feminist theorists call the "social construction of gender," a primary way of organizing society, including labor, and conferring status unequally on women and men.

Gender theories are based on the premise that women's disadvantaged position in the labor market is caused by and a reflection of the patriarchal ordering of society and women's subordinate position (Anker, 2001). Gender, like race, class, and sexual orientation, among other characteristics, operates as a form of oppression and confers power and status. This includes social norms such as defining housework and child care as women's responsibilities whereas "breadwinning" is perceived as men's main responsibility. Even if these social norms bear little relation to the daily lives of men and women, they influence people's behavior and larger patterns of gender discrimination, such as the gender wage gap (Anker, 2001).

Despite tremendous growth in the 20th century, the nonprofit sector has always drawn from a predominantly female workforce where up to three-fourths of its workers are women (Preston, 1994). In the UK, nearly two-thirds of the voluntary sector workforce are women, compared to women occupying 39% of the private sector workforce (The National Council for Voluntary Organisations, 2014). This is in large part based on women's dominance of the health, education, and social welfare occupations, which continue to employ more women than men in both for-profit and nonprofit contexts—as many as 22 million U.S. women as of 2006 (Nank, 2011). Regardless of whether women first choose an occupation or a particular sector to work in, it results in a concentration of women in the nonprofit sector, regardless of any individual preference (Burbridge, 1994). There is also a widely held assumption that the nonprofit sector is secondary in status to government or for-profit activities, because of its lack of profit motivation and emphasis on social care, values which continue to be under attack (Eikenberry & Kluver, 2004).

Second, despite women's prevalence as workers in the nonprofit sector, an elite male power structure continues to exist among positions of leadership and authority, resulting in a "glass ceiling" for women (McPherson & Smith-Lovin, 1982; Odendahl & Youmans, 1994). Gibelman (2000) defines a glass ceiling as "transparent but real barriers, based on discriminatory attitudes or organizational bias, that impede or prevent qualified individuals, including (but not limited to) women, racial and ethnic minorities, and disabled persons, from advancing into management positions" (p. 251). These barriers can range from hiring and advancement into management positions to equal pay for equal work.

Although few in number, studies from the United States and Holland substantiate the existence of a glass ceiling for women's representation among upper management in the nonprofit sector (Damman, Heyse, & Mills, 2014; Gibelman, 2000; Sampson & Moore, 2008). In Gibelman's (2000) study of 74 large human service organizations in the United States, women comprised 70% of total employees. However, women were overrepresented in direct-service positions (62% of women vs. 48% of men), and men were overrepresented in management positions (22% of men vs. 11% of women). Similarly, a study of Médecins sans Frontières Holland showed women make the transition to management positions less quickly than men (Damman et al., 2014). With respect to fundraising positions, Sampson and Moore (2008) found that women and men track fairly evenly by job title until the director level, after which men outrank women in senior management titles such as Chief Development Officer, Vice President, Executive Director of Development, and Assistant Vice President. Women hold more director-level positions as well as lower-level administrative jobs than men. This leadership gap reflects trends in other occupations that have been feminized over time.

The feminization of certain jobs over the past 40 years can be documented time and again, in fields as diverse as banking, pharmacy, real estate, and public relations (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2015; Reskin, 1998). Typically, as women enter male-dominated positions, the field undergoes a hierarchical stratification, whereby men move into higher-paid, higher-status positions, and women occupy, and soon dominate, the lower levels (Reskin, 1998). In the case of banking, as women became bank tellers, men moved into commercial lending. In pharmacy, as drug companies took over the compounding of drugs and chain pharmacies began to outnumber independent stores, pharmacy no longer offered the opportunity for individuals to own their own businesses. Again, men gravitated to research and management positions, whereas women became "retail" pharmacists dispensing drugs for larger chains and companies (Reskin, 1998). Cultural industries, like public relations and marketing, also became majority female, whereas men occupied the more prestigious creative roles (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2015). Although neo-classical and human capital theories argue that women may be less qualified than men for certain occupations based on differences in education and years of work experience, labor market segmentation theories show that such segmentation serves to reduce wages in female occupations through an overcrowding effect of women in lower-level positions (Anker, 2001).

In the nonprofit sector, striking disparities in compensation and wages also exist based on gender and are further complicated by race and class. At almost every level of staff, men earn higher salaries than women, and women of color earn lower salaries than white women (Gibelman, 2000; Preston, 1994). White, upper-class women are most likely to serve on boards, whereas middle-class women dominate non-executive paid jobs, and poor women and women of color are most invisible as both workers and volunteers (Odendahl, 1996). Odendahl (1996) concludes, "The sector may be gendered female, but [is] colored white and ranked upper class in terms of ideology and image" (p. 2).

Other factors, such as organizational subsector, size, benefits, and satisfaction, also underscore a gender gap. Men are more likely to work in educational, religious, and consulting organizations, whereas women

are more likely to work in social services and arts and cultural nonprofits (Mesch & Rooney, 2008). Men are also more likely to work at national and international organizations, whereas women are more likely to work at local nonprofits. Relatedly, the organizations women do lead are often smaller in both size and budget, again a signal of lower status (McPherson & Smith-Lovin, 1982; Odendahl & Youmans, 1994). Women are also less likely to have been hired through a recruiter, have pension plans, and be satisfied with their salaries (Mesch & Rooney, 2008; Sampson & Moore, 2008).

Finally, similar to how women's entry into nonprofit work was seen as a "safe" departure from their culturally assigned roles in the home, the symbols, images, and values embedded in the nonprofit sector are often seen as "feminine" and "soft," and nonprofit work is often seen as an extension of work done in the family (Odendahl, 1996). Traditionally, nonprofits engage in more reproductive than productive labor, focusing on caring and helping others and often addressing moral concerns. Nonprofit work is also patterned on the patriarchal family, which Odendahl (1996) explains as, "men are the fathers who make policy" (p. 3) whereas women do the maintenance and nurturing work, which is often associated with motherhood. Finally, the values of voluntarism, pluralism, and altruism are commonly associated with charity, service, and good works, the unpaid work often performed by women. Thus, although the nonprofit sector has offered women an opportunity to gain access to public roles and paid work, gender stereotypes have simultaneously devalued the work and may even result in limiting roles. However, the work of fundraising has not been analyzed as closely to understand the impact of gender on the profession.

3 | WHO ARE FUNDRAISERS, AND WHAT DO THEY DO?

Fundraising as paid work developed in the early 20th century. Duronio and Tempel (1997) write that fundraisers "refer to people whose jobs involve the acquisition of revenues from private sources for nonprofit organizations" (p. 1). As an occupation, fundraising can describe "a complex, multifaceted, multistep, honorable process with complex goals and objectives far beyond a bottom-line dollar figure" (Duronio & Tempel, 1997, p. 1). Fundraising seeks to gain the public trust through ethical behavior, serves as an important function of nonprofit management and leadership, and has established its own membership associations and standards in a desire to promote and achieve excellence in performance.

Despite women's prevalence in fundraising today, they were not central to the development of the profession, although women certainly were present as unpaid volunteers as described above. In the United States, fundraising emerged as paid work in the Progressive Era, as the large-scale efforts of Andrew Carnegie and his "Gospel of Wealth" created philanthropists and foundations and the microlevel social work efforts of Jane Addams, who established Hull House in Chicago, expanded private-sector social welfare. As both kinds of institutions developed rapidly, the number of citizens being asked to contribute to "nonprofit"¹ causes grew and was no longer limited to donations from the very rich (Harrah-Conforth & Borsos, 1991).

The organization of professional fundraising in the United States, as well as the development of a number of specific techniques, can be traced to Charles Sumner Ward and Lyman Pierce, both of whom worked for the Young Men's Christian Association. Instead of a year-round appeal for funds, Ward and Pierce conceived of the organized fundraising campaign—setting a specific amount to be raised in a defined period of time, with heavy, intense competition by volunteers (Harrah-Conforth & Borsos, 1991). Their approach proved highly successful but remained largely within the Young Men's Christian Association until the national Red Cross campaign during World War I. Another key figure, John Price Jones, applied the methods of public relations to fundraising as he worked on a \$10 million endowment campaign at Harvard in 1916 (Harrah-Conforth & Borsos, 1991). These three pioneers (notably all white men) were instrumental in the creation of the professional fundraiser, and they went on to establish the first consulting firms to counsel others in the business of raising money. Although fundraising remained a behind-the-scenes career, it continued to grow as more men entered the profession, either by inheriting a fundraising firm or by “falling into the profession” after they had “failed at something else” (Harrah-Conforth & Borsos, 1991, p. 28). In these first decades, fundraising had few standards and required no specialized education or training.

As fundraising continued to professionalize in the second half of the 20th century, it moved from fundraising counsel to in-house development staff, and it expanded rapidly, creating more permanent paid positions in nonprofit organizations (Harrah-Conforth & Borsos, 1991). Although paid fundraising staff working for a single organization was initially limited to the largest organizations, such as universities, hospitals, and museums, today, full-time and part-time staff are found in all types and sizes of nonprofit organizations (Hager, Rooney, & Pollak, 2002). These professionals are often recognized as an important part of a nonprofit's management team.

Examining professional membership organizations, such as the Association of Fundraising Professionals, testifies to the growth of the profession. In 1980, AFP had 2,500 individual members in 37 chapters. By 2001, AFP's membership had grown to more than 25,000 members in 163 chapters in both the USA and Canada (Hager et al., 2002). Fundraising was promoted as an attractive career with high salary potential, offering the ability to engage in meaningful work on behalf of a social cause or mission. This growth also occurred at the same time nonprofits were increasingly relying on private philanthropic gifts to support their work (Conry, 1998).

Although approaches to fundraising are as diverse as the organizations that comprise the nonprofit sector, key scholar-practitioners, such as Robert Payton, Henry Rosso, and Eugene Tempel, identify several main organizing principles. These are important to outline as I assess the occupation from a gender lens. First, fundraising is justified through the mission of the organization to respond to a human or social need and its ability to translate the values and beliefs of its mission into an actionable program (Payton, Rosso, & Tempel, 1991). As Henry Rosso put it, “development is a call to service” (as cited in Taylor, 1998, p. 1). Rosso and others have argued that development is a calling focusing on the moral action that ideally drives the fundraising process for a social purpose. Second, fundraising is relational; whereas philanthropy is ultimately between a donor and

recipient, fundraisers act as facilitators, educators, and ambassadors representing their organizations to donors. Third, fundraising relies on organizational skills, which “requires entrepreneurship, leadership, and management” (Payton et al., 1991, p. 13) but also detail and care. Finally, fundraising depends on truthfulness, responsibility, positive thinking, accountability, and stewardship, all of which form an ethical basis that extends beyond the self-interest of the individual.

Organizational attitudes toward fundraising also matter for the way fundraising work is carried out. Fogal (2010) outlines three stages of fundraising development that reflect the organizational philosophies of fundraising programs: formative, normative, and integrative. In the formative stage, fundraising takes a sales or transaction-based approach that focuses on the need to raise money. In the normative stage, fundraisers become facilitators between the donor and organization, solicit gifts, and begin building relationships with donors. Finally, in the integrative stage, fundraising is conceived of as philanthropy, and donors are highly valued and integrated within the organization. A second useful framework is the comparison between the technocrat fundraiser and the philanthropic partnership builder (Taylor, 1998). The technocrat fundraiser resembles Fogal's formative stage, where sales techniques are applied to fundraising and donors are seen as “prospects” and “targets” who can provide money to meet financial goals. In contrast, the philanthropic partnership builder is akin to the integrative stage, whereby fundraisers work to identify donors' interests and goals and place the donors' interests above self or organization. Both models also present a tension inherent in fundraising between the mission-driven nature of the organization and the need to operate efficiently and effectively as a business. These attitudes and tensions are important in understanding the feminization of fundraising today.

4 | THE FEMINIZATION OF FUNDRAISING

With the social movements of the 1960s, and especially the women's movement in the 1970s, women began entering the paid fundraising occupation (Conry, 1991; Harrah-Conforth & Borsos, 1991; Perry, 2013). Like the men who preceded them, women did not need any specific education or professional training to enter the field and could apply past volunteer work to their roles.

By the late 1980s, women represented a majority of members in the top three professional organizations of fundraisers in the United States: The National Society of Fund Raising Executives (now AFP), the Council for Advancement and Support of Education, and the Association for Healthcare Philanthropy (Conry, 1991, 1998). The shift was rather startling. Just 15 years earlier, 79% of fundraisers in higher education were men (Desruisseaux, 1987, as cited in Conry, 1991), and the American Association of Fund-Raising Council, which comprised fundraising consultants, was commonly referred to as a “male club.” In interviews with 82 male and female fundraisers in the 1990s, many individuals expressed an awareness of women's significant entry into the profession and the changing nature of the field (Duronio & Tempel, 1997). Further, within certain fundraising specialties, such as prospect research and special events, women were now filling 75% to 100% of the positions (Conry, 1998). As a result of women's entry into the field and to counter the perception of development as an “old boys'

network," women also began forming their own professional groups to network, develop skills, share job opportunities, and collect data on salaries and job descriptions that would help them advance in the profession (Fanger, 1998).

However, in the two decades since Conry was writing, compensation rates and positions of leadership have continued to show a significant gender disparity. Although men and women start at near-equal salary levels today, men consistently earn more than women throughout their fundraising careers (Sampson & Moore, 2008). This finding is true even when educational levels and experience are taken into account. Sampson and Moore (2008) found the difference between men's and women's weighted average salaries at \$18,994: The average salary for women was \$67,271 versus \$86,265 for men. In a separate study, controlling for factors such as education, experience, and organizational characteristics, Mesch and Rooney (2008) found that female chief development officers are paid approximately 11% lower salaries than male chief development officers, and female deputy directors are paid 8% less than males. Female fundraising consultants received 36% lower salaries than male consultants. In addition to men having significantly higher salaries, they also have larger shares of income from bonuses. In fact, men's bonuses are, on average, 70% higher than those of women (Mesch & Rooney, 2008).

Even more alarming is that the wage difference has not changed significantly over time. In 1982, a Council for Advancement and Support of Education survey found women earned 20% less than men, regardless of experience, education, or other qualifications (Turk, 1986 as cited in Conry, 1991). By 1990, the difference in salary based on gender was 14.2%. Perhaps, it is not surprising that, in 1990, women made less than their male counterparts and that the gender gap widened with more experience, as women's entry into the profession was still relatively new. Yet in the mid-2000s, Mesch and Rooney (2008) found differences in salary ranging from 8% to 36%, depending on position. Between 1988 and 2005, the wage gap had effectively doubled as the real dollar growth in salaries was highest in senior-level positions, where men hold a higher proportion of jobs (Sampson & Moore, 2008). These findings are true for the UK as well. A 2013 study found male fundraisers were paid on average 12% more than their female colleagues (Pudelek, 2013). Gibelman (2000) concludes, "Thus, not only are women less likely to occupy management positions but they also earn less money than men for the work they do at almost any level of the organizational hierarchy" (p. 260).

Over the past 15 years, AFP has conducted an annual compensation and benefits study of its members to study and advance the profession. Occasionally, this survey has been analyzed by gender. In 2014, AFP surveyed 24,138 members with valid email addresses, and 3,378 members responded. Although the respondents represented older and slightly more senior practitioners and were 77% women (compared to 75% of overall members), the survey still draws on a diverse sample. The mean (average) salary for all U.S. respondents (2,952 individuals) was \$75,483, but the dramatic difference in the compensation of males and females persists. The average salary of male fundraisers was \$94,497, whereas women were paid an average of \$70,145, a difference of \$24,352. This pay disparity also holds for individual positions:

- Male CEOs (across all subsectors) earned a mean salary of \$100,627, compared to female CEOs' mean earnings of \$81,840.
- Male chief development officers earned a mean salary of \$99,985, compared to \$76,422 for women.
- For deputy development officers, men earned \$96,393 on average, compared to women's average of \$70,568.
- Male program managers earned an average \$73,270, compared to \$62,551 for women managers.
- Among all other staff positions, the salary gap is smallest, with men earning on average \$47,630, whereas women earned \$42,733.

Comparing the percentages of male and female respondents by positions also reveals that men tend to be overrepresented in executive and managerial positions (Table 1). Both women's dominance in the profession and men's outsized leadership exist in the UK fundraising sector too (Institute of Fundraising, 2013). The theory of feminization posits that as more women enter the profession, lower compensation levels will become the norm, and men will seek to preserve their advantage by continuing to dominate the highest-paying, highest-status positions (Conry, 1991). This is exacerbated by a two-tiered hierarchy, where women dominate middle- and lower-level staff positions with short career ladders and lower pay, whereas organizations reward top-level positions with higher salaries, which increase the salary gap within the profession as a whole. Further, organizations with modest revenues are more apt to hire women into entry-level jobs where they are willing to accept lower salaries (Conry, 1991). The failure to provide equal wages, whether there is the belief that someone does not need the income, as is often the case with a female employee instead of a male, or because the organization does not have much money, also works to keep all salaries lower (Shaw-Hardy, 1998).

Critics and practitioners offer several reasons for why the gender gap in fundraising persists, mostly focused on differences in education, experience, and management expertise, but these reasons alone only explain about half of the pay difference (Conry, 1998). Time off from work may present another factor but that is contested as well. One study found that women were twice as likely as men to take time off of their careers for family reasons; however, the majority of women (58%) had never taken time off from their jobs "discounting opting out as a reason for limited advancement" (Sampson & Moore, 2008, p. 331). Sampson and Moore (2008) found that men take time off from their careers too, though it is most often due to unemployment instead

TABLE 1 Percentage of male and female respondents occupying fundraising roles in the United States

Fundraising role	Percentage male	Percentage female
Chief executive	32.4	67.6
Chief development officer	22.9	77.1
Deputy development officer	23.2	76.8
Program manager	16.0	84.0
Other positions	12.3	87.7
Total	21.8	77.3

Source: AFP (2014) Compensation and Benefits Study

of for family reasons. Thus, gender theory may serve to best explain the feminization of the profession.

5 | FUNDRAISING AS WOMEN'S WORK

Even though men occupied the majority of fundraising positions until recently, I argue that two central elements have served to feminize the profession: first, the day-to-day job of fundraising is closely aligned with the stereotypes of women's work; and second, nonprofit executive-level culture has been based on traditionally masculine models of management. Further, the contemporary push for nonprofits to adopt more business-like practices and for-profit values, which are traditionally male domains, present a tension that limits women's potential to transform the profession into one that recognizes and values women's contributions and roles.

5.1 | Looking through a gender lens at fundraisers' daily work

The foundation of fundraising is based on interpersonal relations, skillful communication, and managing emotions and motivations, in essence, a set of job functions that personify "traditional" female characteristics and traits (Conry, 1991; Conry, 1998). In the discussion above, the description of fundraising work assumed such characteristics as genderless, when in fact, they are not. Instead of viewing occupational changes as a result of labor theory or human capital theory, Anker (2001) argues that "gender theory makes a valuable contribution to explaining occupational segregation by sex by showing how closely the characteristics of 'female' occupations mirror the common stereotypes of women and their supposed abilities" (p. 139). Anker (2001) groups stereotypical female occupational characteristics into positive, negative, and other. The positive stereotypes are a caring nature; skill and experience in household-related work; greater manual dexterity; greater honesty; and an attractive physical appearance. The five negative stereotypes are disinclination to supervise others (which leads to vertical occupational segregation); lesser physical strength; lesser ability in science and mathematics; lesser willingness to travel; and lesser willingness to face physical danger and to use physical force. Finally, three other stereotypes for women are presented: greater docility and lesser inclination to complain about work and working conditions; greater willingness to accept lower wages and less need for income (presumably because of a male earner); and greater interest in working at home.

Fundraising work mirrors a number of these so-called female occupational characteristics including a caring, relational approach; an emphasis on communication; a need to put others before yourself; and the production of events that draw on hospitality and entertaining-type skills. Similarly, fundraising does not pose significant physical danger, require physical strength, or rely on extensive scientific or mathematical knowledge. In fact, in a popular fundraising textbook, Jim Greenfield (2002) suggests that fundraising is female-dominated because it "matches well with women's natural ability to engage people in social settings, to cope with diverse personalities, and to nurture relationships" (p. 522). Such essentialist positions only reinforce the

idea that women are better suited for a position that was, at one time, occupied by nearly all men.

In interviews, women who work as development officers often mention "female" characteristics as being helpful in their work, but those same traits also pose constraints. Beneficial skills include listening, nurturing, being open, being empathetic, building relationships, and attention to detail (Shaw-Hardy, 1998). However, these skills are not valued equally to the "male" characteristics of being direct, making quick decisions, focusing on outputs, and increasing profits. Reskin (1998) argues that such skill differentiation is fundamental in hierarchical systems and serves as basis for differential evaluation and, thus, differential rewards. With occupational sex segregation, men's activities are valued above women's, and both men and women come to devalue women's efforts (Reskin, 1998). In particular, Reskin (1998) writes,

Task differentiation generally assigns to lower-status groups the least desirable, most poorly rewarded work... This practice symbolizes and legitimates the subordinate group's low status, while making it appear to have an affinity for these undesirable tasks. As an added benefit, members of the dominant group don't have to do them! (p. 284–285)

In contrast, women may have less visible roles in making presentations, may be seen as less able to comment on financial matters, and were taken less seriously or had difficulty being heard because of their gender (Shaw-Hardy, 1998; Taylor, 1998).

Within fundraising, the most economically rewarded tasks are those directly related to securing gifts at the highest dollar amounts. Taylor (1998) writes, "Access to money brings power and prestige" (p. 14). Executive-level and major gift work are valued above all else, whereby fundraisers work with leadership volunteers and donors (often wealthy individuals and/or those with public prominence) to secure contributions ranging from the thousands to millions of dollars. As compared with men, women report having less access to top-tier donors and prospects and occupy fewer planned giving, major gifts, or management positions (Taylor, 1998). Instead, women dominate less-highly valued roles, including prospect research, grant writing, event management (a sociability function), or the annual fund, which is composed of soliciting modest-sized gifts from large groups of people, often via phone or mail (Conry, 1998; Taylor, 1998). Women also can be pigeonholed into working with just women donors or women's programs, which are typically areas of limited advancement and recognition (Taylor, 1998).

Although fundraising may be an essential function for nonprofit organizations, it still competes for status and recognition, both among non-fundraisers in the organization as well as the general public (Duronio & Tempel, 1997). Unlike service delivery, it is an administrative function, even termed a "necessary evil" to maintain the organization's ability to provide services (Breeze, 2017). It is also assigned low status in society as a result of a lack of understanding among the public about fundraising, combined with a negative public perception, in part, due to rare but well-publicized, ethical breaches (Duronio & Tempel, 1997).

Further, fundraisers often remain behind-the-scenes whereas other individuals play more prominent roles. Many fundraisers are

responsible for preparing volunteers or executives before visiting with current or potential donors, debriefing with staff and volunteers afterward, and handling any follow-up work. In this way, fundraising may be a role more women than men may be willing to take, as they end up supporting, and occupying a subservient role to, executives and board members who are disproportionately male.

Additionally, many female fundraisers must balance their paid work with the demands of family and child care roles and negotiate this tension on a daily basis. Gibelman (2000) found that although nonprofits' personnel practices generally adhere to equal opportunity hiring and federal affirmative action guidelines, organizations take a broad-brush approach that fails to acknowledge women's child-care obligations and, increasingly, elder care as well. Fundraising and working with volunteers may involve significant work time during evenings and weekends, and many gift officers engage in frequent travel to visit donors in person. Career advancement can also require fundraisers to relocate to achieve greater responsibility, which may limit women's opportunities if they are unable to move due to family responsibilities (Conry, 1991).

5.2 | Looking through a gender lens at fundraising management

The second way we can conceive of fundraising as women's work is the disparity between men and women in positions of management and preference for masculine characteristics at the executive level. Stivers (2002) writes that a "cultural masculinity" predominates in our images of managers and leaders, which inhibits women's pursuit of executive-level positions as well as their management styles, should they achieve such positions. Even though women represent a majority of the nonprofit workforce, the dominant executive-level culture requires female nonprofit executives to adapt to "traditionally masculine models of management," which emphasize directness and focus on the bottom line (Nank, 2011). Should a woman rise to a management position, she is often the exception and may even be required to function as what Acker (1990) termed, "a biological female who acts as a social male" (p. 139) adopting masculine characteristics and traits in order to succeed. Nonprofit organizations are not immune from this culture.

Further, the characteristics of female work, described above, are not seen as directly transferable to advancing into management, thereby further reinforcing the hierarchical segregation of women fundraisers as the "technicians," whereas men are the "managers" (Conry, 1991). Characteristics such as being cooperative, collaborative, and inclusive may limit women's ascension into executive positions (English, 2006; Shaw-Hardy, 1998). Nonprofits also tend to be structurally flat organizations, which limits the number of pathways to managerial positions and opportunities for internal advancement (Linscott, 2011). Conry (1998) quotes Phyllis S. Fanger, one of the founders of Women in Development, a Boston-area organization for women fundraisers, as saying,

Women are not yet on an equal footing with men in top management in development. Our strength is in the numbers, but the perception is not yet widespread that

women can handle the top positions. ...On the way up, women are too often given roles that are out of the spotlight, have lower gift dollar potential, or are gender-defined. (Women in Development, 1992, as cited in Conry, 1998, p. 89)

Therefore, the day-to-day work of fundraisers and its similarity to stereotypically female work place women at a systematic disadvantage in the profession and enable men to maintain a disproportionate share of the most financially lucrative and executive-level positions.

5.3 | Looking through a gender lens at for-profit "professionalization"

Finally, a gender analysis cannot ignore the recent trends of both nonprofits and funders to place greater emphasis on adopting more business-like practices and the values of the private sector, which reflect the masculine bias of society at-large (Fogal, 2010; Nank, 2011). As Gibelman (2000) writes, "The underlying values of the nonprofit sector, which include humanitarianism, charity, human rights, and human well-being, suggest that representative organizations would voluntarily and systematically seek to adhere to principles of affirmative action and nondiscrimination in their labor force practices" (p. 254). However, these organizations are not immune from larger societal pressures and, thus, may still discriminate against women and favor the dominant, sociocultural model. Although a number of values within the nonprofit sector align with the characteristics of women's work and may have even served to draw women into paid fundraising roles, the values of the private sector are closely aligned with a masculine culture that is taken for granted as neutral (Conry, 1998; Nank, 2011). For example, the essence of major gift work is relationship building; however, this can be contested by organizations that follow a sales or marketing model. Dominant approaches to management also emphasize hierarchy, achievement, and results. Although behaviors that are inclusive, participatory, and transformative are acknowledged in management literature as important to organizational success, the external expectations from funders for a more business-like environment are in opposition to these values (Fogal, 2010; Nank, 2011). Even contemporary nonprofit management education reflects both the preference for entrepreneurship and professionalization instead of community-based, care-related work (Mirabella, 2013).

In addition to values, the language of fundraising is also male-oriented. The term "campaign," one of the original fundraising inventions, is borrowed from a military model (Taylor, 1998; Turner, 1991). Taylor (1998) writes that "to 'solicit' someone has been used in a context that is derogatory toward women" (p. 12). Even "moves management" emphasizes a sales approach and may devalue women's more relational communication styles (Taylor, 1998). In short, what this analysis shows is that, although the nonprofit sector offers the potential to revalue care-centered work and women's contributions, the existing structures, positions, language, and pressures are forcing it to comply with patriarchal models. Acknowledging these structures is the first step required to enable women's equality in the fundraising profession.

6 | ENVISIONING AN EQUITABLE FUTURE IN FUNDRAISING

Researchers and practitioners, both male and female, have called for equity in the fundraising profession at the same time that recent, but limited, research confirms the persistent gender gap in pay and position (AFP, 2014; Duronio & Tempel, 1997; Odendahl, 1996). Dominant groups are reluctant to give up their advantages and will remain privileged because they write the rules that enable them to continue in their positions of power (Reskin, 1998). Still, just because an occupation is feminized does not mean its status and value cannot change through both collective action and concerted effort, through grassroots approaches from women at the bottom as well as through the work of allied male leaders who are willing to give up some of their control (Anker, 2001). Below, I propose five remedies to envision a more equitable future, which are supported by the management and research literature but have not yet been grouped together. At the same time, researchers need to revisit studying the fundraising profession and empirically test how gender stereotypes are attributed to women's unequal status.

1. Institute comparable worth. Comparable worth is a remedy to unequal compensation. Although some scholar-practitioners have encouraged women to improve their negotiation skills to remedy the wage gap, this places the burden unfairly on women (Shaw-Hardy, 1998). Instead, boards and managers should evaluate salary data by gender, looking to see where men and women in similar positions receive different wages and correct the imbalance so that every fundraiser earns equal pay for equal work (Fischer, 1996; Odendahl, 1996). This practice could also be used to remedy racial disparities in compensation. For example, rather than privileging major donor work over work with annual fund supporters, compensation could be based on goal-attainment and not exclusively on dollars raised.
2. Promote women into leadership roles. A number of recent studies and articles have referenced an impending nonprofit leadership gap as the Baby Boomer generation retires (Linscott, 2011). Nonprofits should engage in direct succession planning and mentoring of women who have significant experience and success in the sector to take over leadership positions (Nank, 2011). Active recruitment is a necessity, as women may need additional skill development to increase their leadership capabilities and/or may not seek out leadership roles on their own.
3. Value emotional labor and new styles of management. Not only should the number of women in organizational leadership reflect women's proportion of the profession at-large, but organizations also need to embrace a diversity of leadership styles to combat the notion that there is only one successful way to manage. This means appreciating "feminine" leadership styles for the opportunities they provide for broader participation (Fischer, 1996). At the same time that we want organizations that are efficient and effective, we also need to value leaders' abilities to build community, be responsive, and create trust among donors, clients, and staff. Emotional labor is an important form of work that needs to be recognized as essential in the nonprofit sector, especially when working with donors (Fischer, 1996; Hochschild, 1983).

4. Create stronger family leave and flex-time policies for men and women. Because women still carry out a higher proportion of family- and care-related work at home, their ability to take positions with significant travel or evening and weekend commitments may be viewed less favorably by those making hiring decisions. Instead of simply remunerating jobs with travel responsibilities more highly, the profession should work on two approaches: balancing individual jobs to be more equitable in terms of evening and weekend work and issuing "flex time" for work conducted outside of typical business hours. Similarly, employers can work to counter the notion that women take more time off from work by offering equal family leave policies for men and women and encouraging all employees to take it.
5. Revise fundraising language. The dominant values of the nonprofit sector of humanitarianism, democracy, participation, and community clash with the values of the for-profit sector and the push for the nonprofit sector to continue to professionalize. Instead of continuing to use the masculine terminology of military and business, fundraisers should revise their language to be gender-neutral and embrace the moral imperative present in philanthropic work. For example, an organization might "ask" or "invite" a "potential donor" instead of "soliciting a prospect." Expanding the profession's language (instead of limiting it) will offer new possibilities for thinking about philanthropy (Fischer, 1996).

Fundraising is an essential task in nonprofit organizations and can offer meaningful work for women as well as men. Yet the profession, and perhaps even the entire sector, may be at risk if women continue to be held back. The nonprofit sector offers the potential for a more just, humane, and equitable future. Beginning with those individuals who ask for the gifts that make that future possible is the ideal place to start.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ I have placed nonprofit in quotation marks here to signal that the term was not in use at the time that Carnegie was establishing his philanthropic foundations or when Addams founded Hull House in Chicago. The term "nonprofit" is frequently identified as gaining prominence in the 1950s.

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