

A Model for Ethnic Giving to Public Television

Becoming a PTV Viewer

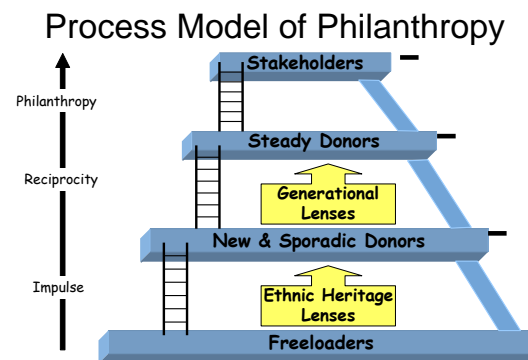
We will begin our discussion of ethnic philanthropy by examining how people come to be PTV viewers. We have outlined an “idealized” paradigm for becoming a viewer below. Clearly not everyone will follow this path, but most people’s journey to viewership will proceed like this:

- A person becomes aware of PTV service somehow, (in the case of minority groups it is often through the children’s programs), begins trial viewing and finds the programming both intellectually and emotionally satisfying.
- The person begins to sample the service regularly (say, once a week or so) and liking increases.
- Eventually the viewer discerns that the station, which provides the programming, is different from the programming itself.
- Identification with the programming and station’s service grows because the programming satisfies the viewer’s needs and is congruent with their values.
- Identification should lead to membership, but some event must trigger the gift – usually a pledge drive and sometimes a piece of direct mail.

Membership and the Transition from Reciprocity to Philanthropy

Once an individual has become a regular PTV viewer their identification with the programming values should make them

open to the idea of membership. The following figure, which we call the “chutes and ladders” model, outlines a variety of forces that are at work in the process of becoming and staying a member. The key concept is process, a series of discrete steps that occur across time. The ladders represent the learning and behaviors needed to move from one stage to another. The stages themselves are fairly self-evident. The chutes represent reasons for lapsing or dropping from one level of giving to a lower level.



The key step in the model is moving from reciprocity to philanthropy, which occurs when someone’s reasons for giving change from reciprocal (donor gets something tangible in return) to philanthropic (expecting nothing in return). Reciprocity arguments for support are quite common both in pledge and in renewal mail (If you use/view PTV you should support it.). However, reciprocity is a two edged sword, since it is as often a reason for lapsing as it is for giving (“I no longer view as much, so

why keep giving?"). When dealing with minority communities, it is especially important not to over-emphasize the reciprocity argument, as all of the minority groups (except possibly Asian Americans) view less PTV than the general public.

Philanthropic reasons for giving are based on an individual's values and their perception of how an institution supports and furthers these values. When a donor has personally identified with a non-profit's values, their giving is no longer based on their usage of a service. The principal motivation for giving has become philanthropic (as opposed to being based on reciprocity), and a member moves toward stakeholder status. PTV's goal should be to move as many members into the philanthropic giving stage as possible.

The membership model above presents a nice continuous series of ladders and levels that people can follow towards stakeholder status, however, it also has some chutes and diving boards which people can use to slip back down to lower levels of giving. The chutes and diving boards represent reasons members give for lapsing. The reasons are varied, but can be reduced to a few valid points:

- A perceived lack of personal resources – however, many unemployed folks continue to renew, albeit at lower levels.
- A critical instance where a member's expectations about PTV were violated, e.g. there was bias in a program, a favorite show was cancelled, bad experience with member services, etc.
- Decline in usage due to cable, satellite, or other lifestyle factors – the reciprocity problem!
- Competition for limited charitable dollars means PTV will have to wait till next year – usually basic human needs take priority.
- Moving away or death.

For those in the reciprocity giving stages, the reasons for lapsing often appear to be trivial (viewer services did not return my call). Yet, like everything else, the tipping point is almost always "a straw that broke the camel's back" situation, that is, a combination of small irritations across time build up until one day something "snaps". When a member strongly identifies with PTV's values and has reached the stakeholder level, they become much more tolerant of a station's relationship errors (such as not receiving a premium or not getting a response to e-mail or phone inquiries) and are unlikely to lapse.

Individual Differences and Ethnic Minorities

People differ greatly in how they react to the same stimuli. When asked to give, some people are generous and others are less so, even though they may view the same amount of PTV. It is impossible to explain this simply, since many variables play a part. Income and education are often singled out as impacting giving. However, given the small amount of money it takes to be a basic member or even a "high end" pledger, we have repeatedly found that income is a poor predictor of membership. On the other hand, education, especially a college education, continues to be a good but imperfect predictor. (For example, just why aren't all Ph.D. English majors PTV members?) The number of variables that influence people and create individual difference is vast; here we want to single out age/generation and race/ethnicity. These two variables have a strong impact on PTV membership and are vitally important when addressing minority groups.

Generational cohort characteristics are proving to be a good explanatory variable for why some people become members,

and especially of why they renew. The older civic generation is slowly passing from the scene and being replaced by the boomers, who are less predictable in their giving patterns. (For a description of the generational effects and characteristics, please see Appendix A. We do not discuss it in the body of this report, because we are focusing on ethnic influences. However, for maximum effectiveness the generational characteristics of members and potential members must be considered when designing support messages, regardless of ethnicity.)

The larger patterns for philanthropy among ethnic groups differ from the mainstream culture. Each ethnic group has its own set of mores and traditions that govern how money is given and how requests for aid should be presented. The various ethnic groups all have favorite charities and tend to place more importance upon having personal relationships with charity recipients. Minority donors generally distrust large institutions and prefer to give to their churches, local community organizations, or to those they know. For a more detailed description of each ethnic group's philanthropic traditions and heritage, please see the Ethnic Philanthropy powerpoint presentation submitted in the first set of deliverables.

The minority groups have giving traditions which make it difficult for PTV stations using standard practices and messages to persuade them to become members. Since minorities generally view less PTV than the mainstream audience, it is important that the messages they hear and programs they see reinforce their identification with PTV's values. For minorities the identification process with PTV will most likely develop through programs that stress tolerance and remind one and all of the ethnic diversity of America's citizens. Attracting more ethnic viewing is largely an issue of programming content, although improved communication

with the communities to make them aware of programming they should enjoy will help.

The good news is that the depth interviews demonstrate that minority members share most of the mainstream PTV members' core values. This means that the model above holds true for minority groups, with just a few interesting and important variations. These variations come into play where we have placed the "ethnic lenses" on the model. These lenses include minority giving traditions as described in the Ethnic Philanthropy presentation, as well as the PTV-specific points listed here:

- First and foremost PTV's children's programming is seen as vital to their communities because it fosters learning and a tolerance for cultural diversity for all.
- Second, ethnic groups distrust the mainstream media for its bias and ignorance toward minorities. PTV is the most trusted of the TV media.
- PTV's programming provides powerful normative lessons for immigrant groups to learn the mores of American society.
- Pledge programs that reflect one's ethnic heritage and/or American culture as it impacts them are loved and appreciated - especially performance programming.

If a station is able to communicate clearly how it serves the minority communities and emphasize the points listed above, it is much more likely to attract and retain minority members.

Another interesting fact which emerged in the interviews is that many minority members were encouraged to call in by the desire to have a particular premium. Of course, this is not unusual – especially for boomers. Donors who are inspired to call by

a premium are not “transactional” folks, as they are well aware that a particular CD or video can be purchased for far less in a store or on the PBS website. They are people who have identified with PTV values and have considered giving in the past, but a particular premium is the incentive to finally pick up the phone. The difference for the minority groups, however, is that premiums take on an added dimension because of their social value. Premiums almost never sit on the shelf in plastic -- they are used, worn out, lent out, and given as gifts. A favorite premium is often the highlight of a social gathering where friends are invited to watch the video or listen to music. The extra enjoyment which ethnic members appear to derive from their premiums makes pledge an important vehicle for reaching them.

We would like to emphasize that ethnic viewers share most of the mainstream member’s core values. Therefore, efforts to conduct outreach to minorities will also connect with your majority membership. The specific points and messages which will help minority viewers pass through that “ethnic lense” and become members should benefit the entire membership file. A few of the most important strategies are:

- In addition to the usual appeals (reciprocity: “if you use it, support it”) the membership persuasion model has to emphasize all of the beneficial non-broadcast activities that the station performs to strengthen the local community – how the station gives back to the neighborhoods. This is particularly important when addressing minority groups, as they tend to view less PTV than the general public and therefore the reciprocity argument carries less weight.
- Schedule programs that feature a variety of characters and situations that ethnic groups can relate to

(e.g., musical heritage, History of Africa etc.)

- Pay attention to the generational needs of the viewers, especially on the weekends when many blue-collar workers are available to view.
- Cultivate and assimilate ethnic members though on air promotions, especially on Sunday mornings. Celebrate community and family life.
- Member spots featuring local community figures have a big impact with minority viewers.

Messages and Cultural Touch Points to Implement in Pledge, Mail, and On-Air

Using the results of the interviews, consultations with experts, and literature review, TRAC has compiled the following list of strategies and language which should be used when addressing the specified minority groups. These message points and ideas should help membership professionals at stations to attract and retain minority members.

Hispanics

- Hispanics think relationally, they respond to messages from people they know or recognize -- use testimonials
- Emphasize PTV’s role in the community
- Stress the importance of PTV’s children’s programs in education, including teaching tolerance
- Discuss how PTV aids new immigrants in learning both the language and mores of American society
- Remind them of PTV’s efforts at diversity in both program content and talent – they may not watch American Family, but they know about it; Ray Suarez on the Newshour, the kids programs, music, etc.
- Offer opportunities for volunteering – they give to organizations they volunteer with

- Stress current needs over planned giving or endowments, future-oriented requests don't resonate as well
- Use community spots featuring local figures – and not just during pledge!
- Assure them that their gift is used in ways they value
- Suggest giving a gift in mother's/father's name
- Utilize Spanish as appropriate
- Do as much outreach with local community groups as possible, these efforts pay off
- In pledge pitching discuss the social value of premiums as gifts to friends, family, or perhaps the local school library
- Have local groups answer the phones during ethnically targeted programs

African Americans

- Emphasize the power of the children's programs to educate underprivileged kids
- PTV is a service to their community – Remind them that PTV is always giving to the community, and they also want to "give back" to help the community if they can
- Emphasize PTV's diversity efforts in programming and talent – African American Heritage month, and music shows, Gwen Ifill, etc...
- Emphasize PTV's independent and honest, well-researched programs – PTV is where they can come for the truth, it's not like the mainstream media
- African Americans tend to give more spontaneously to those in need – present the station's needs and how they can make a difference
- Personal stories help people give, especially when told by a local figure
- Feature African American members in interstitial spots year-round
- Talk about the "Hidden Station" and any outreach you do

- In pledge pitching discuss the social value of premiums as gifts to friends, family, or perhaps the local school library
- Have local groups answer the phones during ethnically targeted programs

Asian Americans

- Talk about the independence and credibility of PTV – they can trust our content
- Diversity in programming and talent -- all the heritage months have a high profile, Sagwa, etc.
- Remind them how children's programming educates and teaches tolerance
- Emphasize getting value for money – they are investing in their community
- Stress how PTV serves the community by educating, enriching and entertaining – especially the arts programming
- Remind them of the way PTV helps immigrants learn English, and understand US customs and history
- Talk about the "Hidden Station" and outreach efforts
- Acknowledge gifts prominently
- Suggest giving to PTV as a way to celebrate life events (birth, death, marriage)

Appendix A

A Review of Generational Psychological Orientations

Ancient Proverb: *Men resemble the times more than they do their fathers.*

The elements that shape each generation -- the economy, wars, popular culture, successes and disasters -- affect children and young people who grow up together. These people forge attitudes, goals, philosophies and behaviors that are more similar than dissimilar because they are created and tempered by the same times and experiences.

Matures

Matures come in two groups: The GI Generation and The Silent Generation. They were forged by similar environments – the Depression, WWII, America’s rise to power. Their resulting attitudes and philosophies, based on the cornerstones of discipline and self-sacrifice, are similar enough to be addressed together.

Through teamwork and idealism the Matures conquered the Depression, won the war and built suburbia for their children. They believe that if everyone pitches in and does their part, they can do anything. Duty counts and conformity helps to build teamwork. Individuality is a semi-dirty word. They believe in institutions, hard work, and saving for a rainy day. They follow their leaders and believe in self-sacrifice and prefer consistency and order to innovation and change.

The GI Generation are the folks who fixed society. They beat the depression, won the war, and developed America into a world leader. They built the American economy to what it is today. They earned the right to get educated and helped America make the turn to meritocracy – being successful for who you are rather than who your father is. The GI generation dominated American politics with their can/do, “we earned it” attitude. They were autocratic, conformist, and opinionated. They felt that their philosophy and attitude guaranteed success. After all, they won the war. They produced more presidents than any other generation: Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan, and G. Bush The Elder.

The Silent Generation, coming after the GI Generation, were overshadowed by them. Silents were the smallest generation in a long time – they were born during the depression when rational people weren’t procreating. Silents played a role as facilitators for GI Generation leaders. They worked behind the scenes to guarantee success and cleaned-up after GI Generation operations. They provided indispensable aides like Pierre Salinger, Bill Moyers, Johan Erlichman, Dick Cheney and James Baker III. All major civil rights leaders came from the Silent Generation: Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, Cesar Chavez. The Silents “fine-tuned” the America battled for by the GIs.

Baby Boomers

The Boomers were the largest, most dominant generation in history. Referred to as “the pig in the python,” they recreated the world. Like the Matures, the Boomers come in two varieties --

the Early Boomers and the later Jonesers. Also like the Matures, both segments have much in common.

Boomers were the focus of the GI Generation and Silent Generation's futures. They have been described as "the most over-parented generation in history." They were very well educated because their parents had fought the battle for higher education and expected it for their children. They grew up feeling important – there were so many of them they could lead markets and trends – and their parents told them, every day, that they were worthy and deserving. They ended up as a self-focused generation. They grew up with expectations, life skills and values created by unending economic growth. They thought prosperity would never stop. Therefore, they didn't need to save. They were free to focus their attention on "what they deserved" and "what I am entitled to." They decided that old rules and conformity weren't meant for them. They were rebellious, feeling no need to compromise, and they wanted to be in control. Boomers have an obsession about being young. "You can't trust anyone over 30" was their touchstone. Now that the older ones are reaching their 50's, they still believe young is good.

The Early Boomers were the lucky ones. They grew up in marvelous times, with undaunted expectations. They got educated, got the good jobs and were able to focus on themselves.

The Jonesers were the unlucky ones. They came later, when recession and stock market problems tempered too-high expectations. They felt just as entitled as the Early Boomers did, but their hopes were unfulfilled. The Early Boomers had filled the colleges, gotten the best jobs, and the Jonesers had less opportunity. The gap between expectations and reality became a very unsettling reality for the Jonesers. It left them "Jonesin," – looking for something, something they deserved but didn't have. In general, the Jonesers don't like the Early Boomers very much. They feel that the Early Boomers got it all -- their share.

Generation X

The Gen Xers see themselves as true independents, the most diverse generation in history, craving permanence, love, and their own homes. They think their parents – the Boomers – were the ones who deprived them of their idealism, their interest in improving society, and who made them into latchkey kids without real homes and families. (In turn, the Boomers don't think much of the Gen Xers -- calling them a generation of slackers with no expectations and no chance of success.) Gen Xers saw recession, saw the good jobs taken by Boomers, and writhed at the self-centered consumerism the Boomers moved into in the '80s after they gave up trying to save the world. Gen Xers' early years taught them not to trust, not to love too deeply and to be extremely wary about what the future might bring.

Gen Xers are a generation that's never been able to presume success. They learned never to take things for granted and to succeed through determination. They supported each other and built their own "pseudo-families" because they lacked real ones – thanks to the Boomers' propensity for "me-ism" and divorce. Gen Xers are the most media-savvy generation of all times, and they distrust commercialism and marketing. Hard sell doesn't work with them; they've been exposed to more diversity and commercial blarney than any other generation. They don't want to be lied to or patronized. They like attitude and to hear things the way they

are. They like pithy and they like humor. They're willing to cautiously make emotional commitments – even though they know you can't count on the future and have to be prepared for change. They're more peer-focused than any other generation – because they feel their own generation is the only one they can count on. They get pierced and tattooed to mark themselves as a part of that generation – which is a lot more permanent cultural commitment than the Boomers' long hair and tie-died clothes. They are the first P.C. generation, and computers, Internet and the Web bring everything into their world. Microprocessors are their future, but also lead them to an increased sense of risk, uncertainty and diversity. Maybe that's why they have a yen for nostalgia. Old, familiar things from different generations used in totally new ways give the Gen Xers a sense of past and future --and maybe an iota of comfort as well.

Millennials

They are young, the oldest graduated from high school in 2000. Yet they've distinguished themselves already and have demonstrated that they, indeed, are a different breed. They are cautiously referred to as "The next GI Generation." Why is that? Because they've picked up idealism and positivism. They are manifesting social habits that haven't been associated with youth in a long time – things like a focus on teamwork, achievement, modesty and good conduct. They show signs of changing the image of youth to upbeat and engaged. What will that do to America? Some folks fear them because they seem on-track to become a "powerhouse generation." Millennials speak of becoming technology planners, community shapers, institution builders, and world leaders. They have great disdain for Boomers. A direct quote from a 17 year old:

"In case you Boomers haven't figured it out by now, you won!!! You guys tore up the institutions that someone will have to rebuild. Millennials or no millennials, somebody has to do it."

These kids **are** different. Millennials believe in convention, community and civic renewal. Things are obviously going to change when they are in charge. The question is, how will the aging Boomers and the world at large handle them? Carefully, because they will be a handful. Here's another quote from **Millennials Rising**, by Neil Howe and William Strauss.

A group of 4th and 5th graders from Aurora Colorado... decided to collect money to buy back slaves in the Sudan. One of the children said, "What are we going to do about this?" Unimaginable 15 years ago. Boomers would have gotten high and contemplated it, Xers would have written Angst-filled songs about it. Millennials, only 10 years old, are doing something about it. When asked why "leaders" aren't doing anything, a child replied, "If they can't... we will."

These kids probably will read newspapers, join civic clubs and vote, like their great-grandparents did back in the G.I. Generation. Something to look forward to?