

# X & Y: What do generations have to do with giving?

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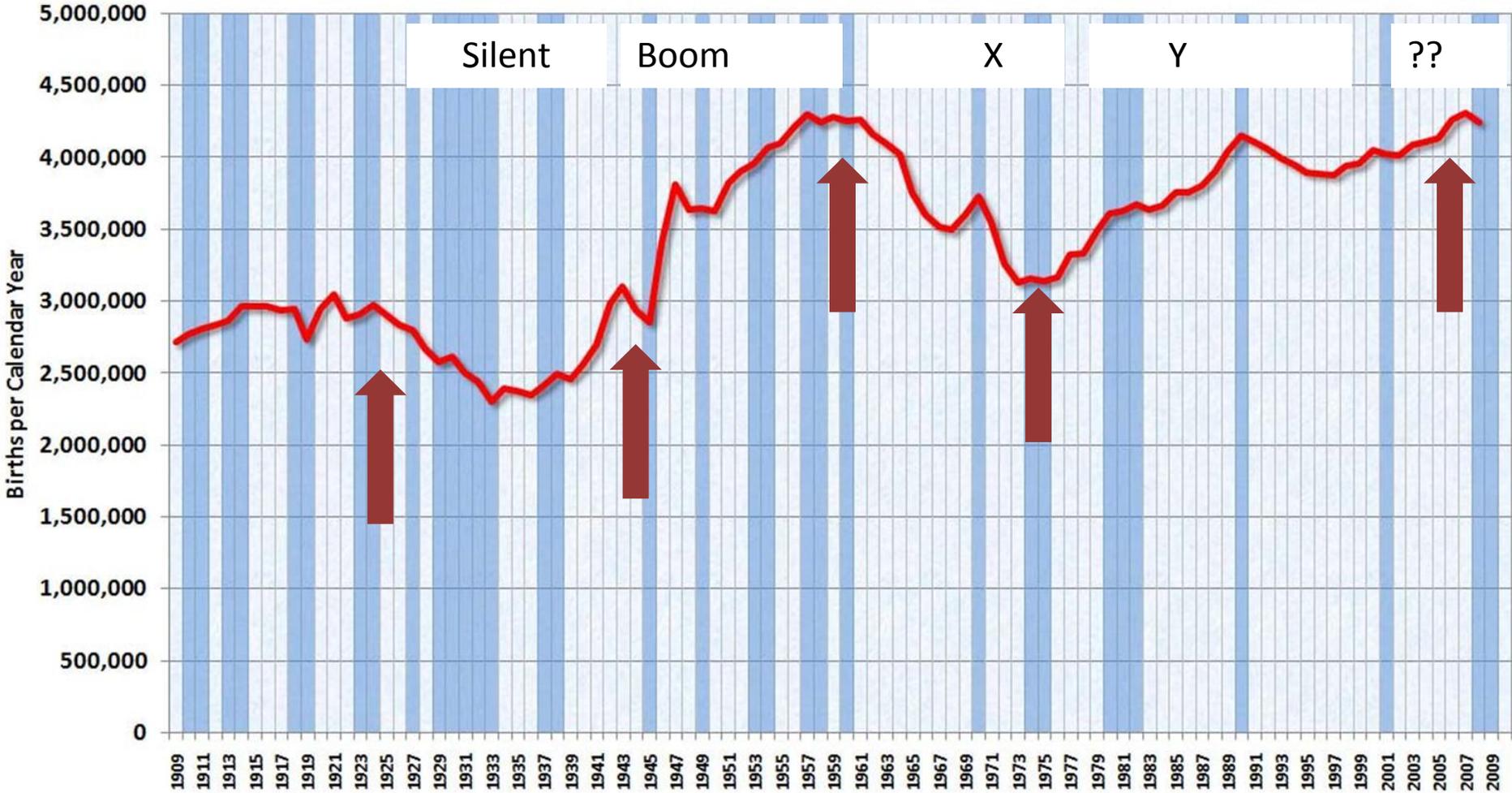
# Overview

- Generational definitions
- Research findings
- Strategies and tactics

Strauss & Howe, *Generations*, 1991  
Strauss & Howe, *The Fourth Turning*, 1997



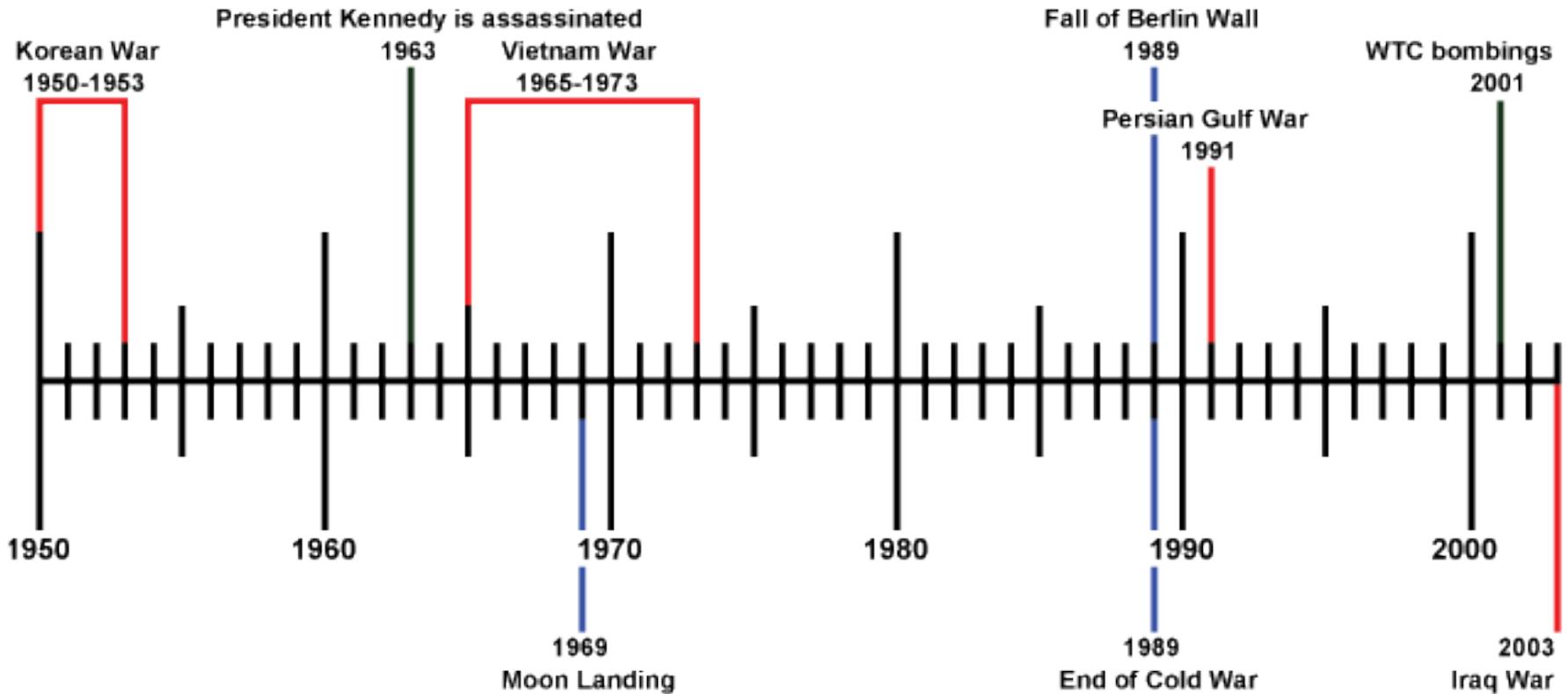
Births per Year in the U.S., Source: www.cdc.gov



<http://www.calculatedriskblog.com/> Note: recessions are marked as full year.

Arrows added for this presentation to illustrate inflection points for change in birth rate. Not intended to be precise definitions of generations.

## History Timeline: 1950-Present



Schuman & Scott, Generations and collective memory, 1989, *Am. Sociological Review*  
and updated by Schuman & Rodgers, Cohorts chronology and collective memories,  
2004, *Public Opinion Quarterly*



**Great/Silent** Tradition, waste not, family  
Before 1945



**Boomer** Achievement, social change  
1946-1964



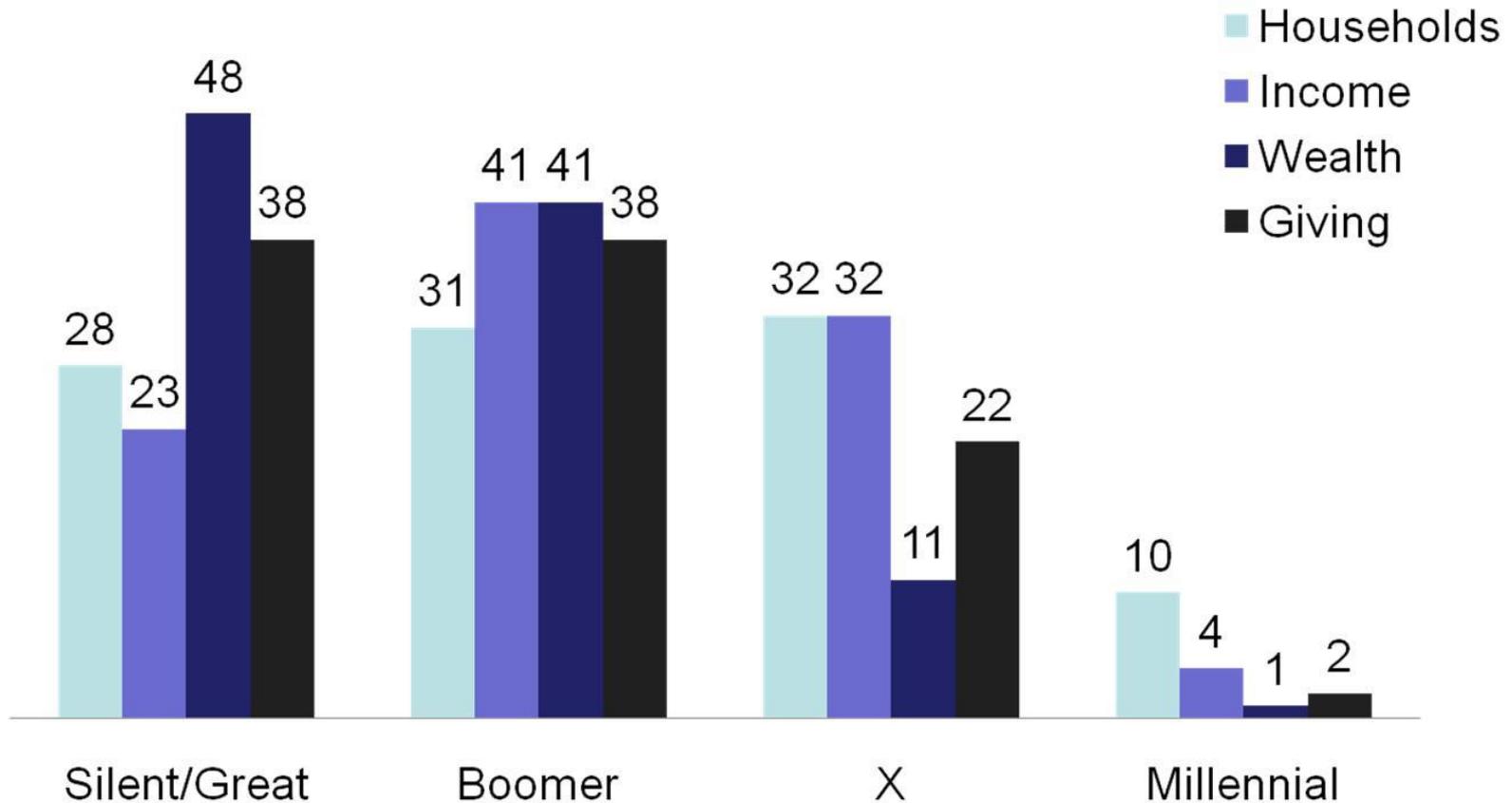
**X** Casual style, independent work  
1964-1976/1980

**Millennial** Technology, team work, diversity  
1976/80 – 1999



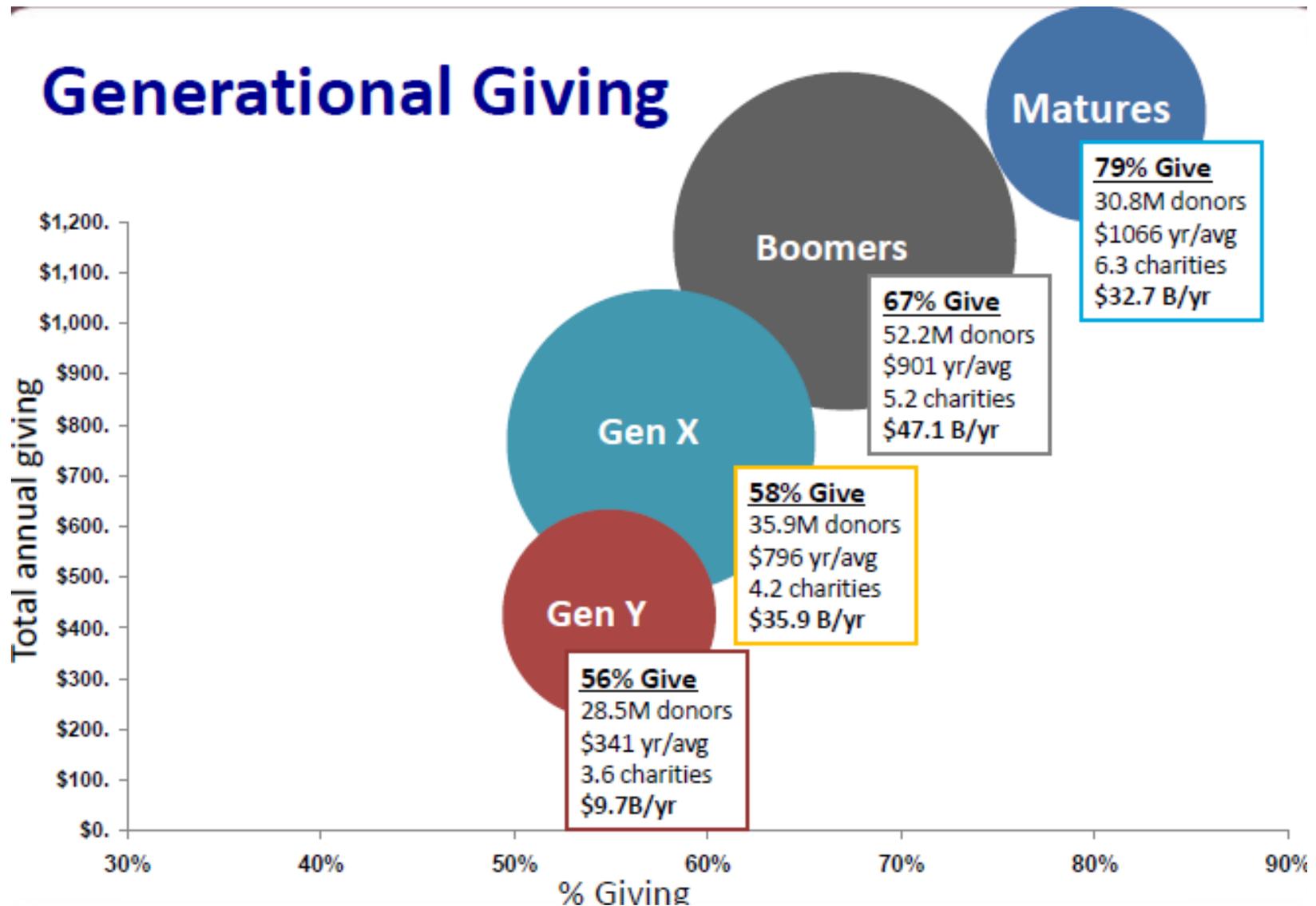
# PERCENTAGES OF ALL IN USA

by Generation, 2006



*Giving USA Spotlight, Issue 2, 2010. Data from 2006-2007.*

# Generational Giving



DONORS surveyed 2010, Convio, *Next Generation of American Giving*, [www.convio.com/nextgen](http://www.convio.com/nextgen).

# Traits Associated with Giving

- Age
- Income and wealth
- Education level
- Marital status
- Religious attendance
- Values or beliefs



Numerous scholars have researched this subject. A good summary is Bekkers & Wiepking, 2010, *Generosity & Philanthropy: A literature review*.

# Types of studies

- What people say when asked.
- What people do in real life.
- What people do in experimental settings.

# What people say about why they give



1. To improve the world
2. To help people meet their basic needs
3. To help people with less than I have
4. To improve my community

# What people say



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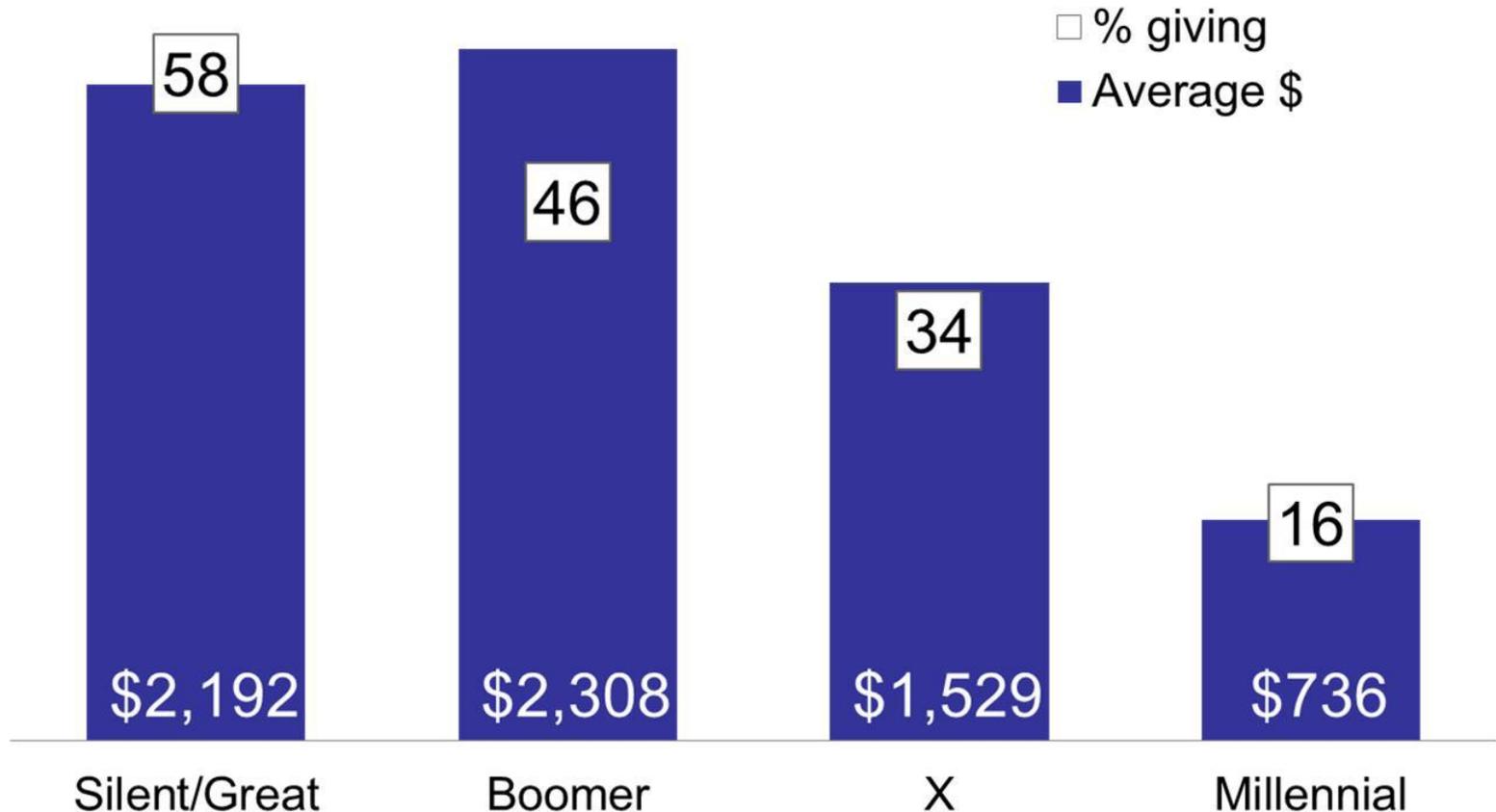
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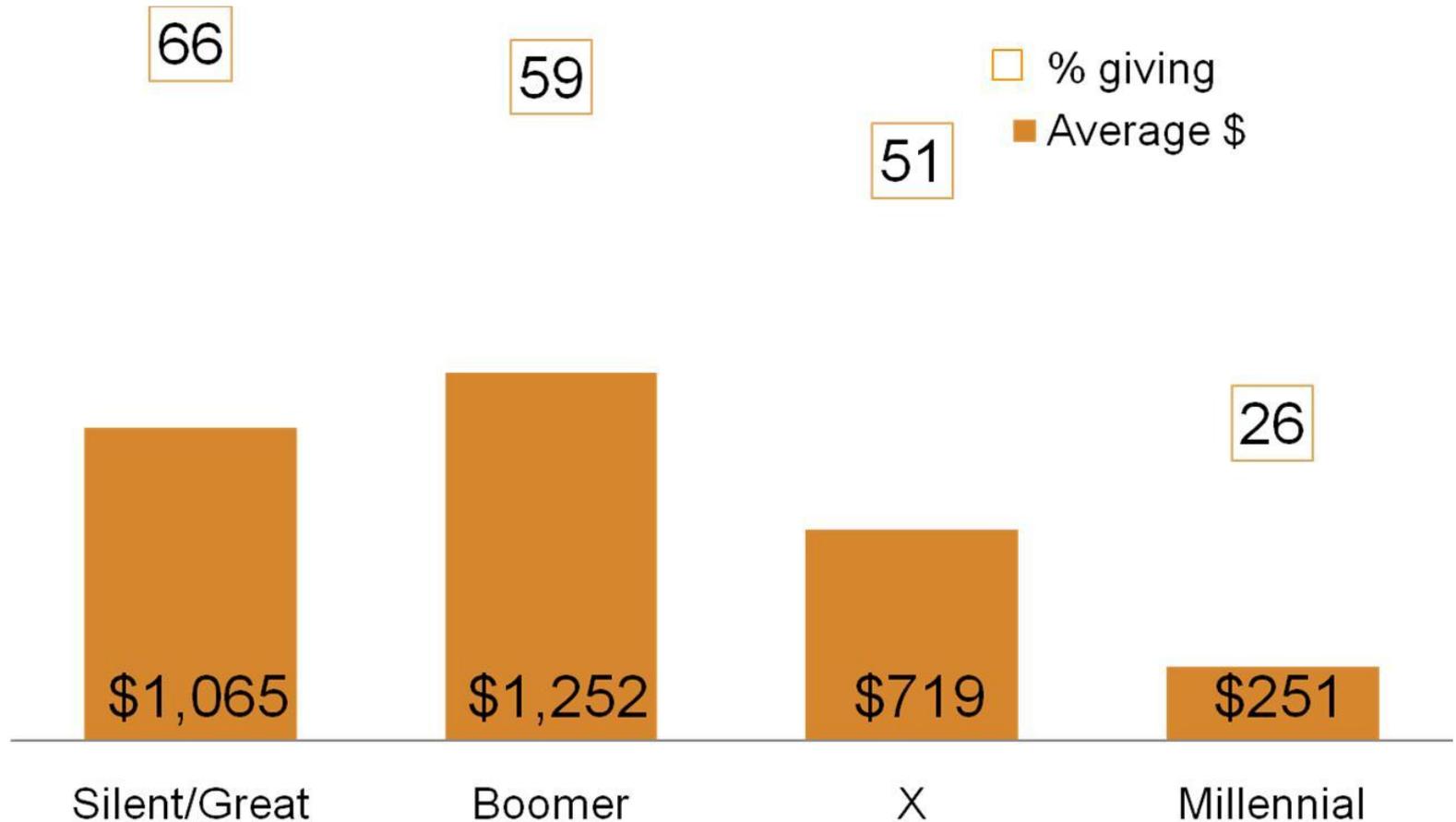
What people do

# Giving to religion



Center on Philanthropy Panel Study, as reported in Giving USA Spotlight, Issue 2, 2010.

# Secular giving



Center on Philanthropy Panel Study as reported in Giving USA Spotlight, Issue 2, 2010.

# Research about values and beliefs

# Experiences in Youth Matter



- Independent Sector, 2001 : Childhood lessons about giving and volunteering
- Wilhelm & Steinberg, 2003 : Parental giving linked closely with adult children's religious giving.
- Grey Matter/Russ Reid, 2011: Active donors and volunteers report parents were active donors and/or volunteers.

# Values associated with giving

- Empathic concern
- “I often have tender, concerned feelings for people less fortunate than me.”
- (and similar statements).
- Principle of care
- “People should be willing to help others who are less fortunate.”
- (and similar statements).



# Silent & Great Generations

- Highly likely to be donors.
- 75% contribute.
- “Summing up” important.
- Usually no longer financially responsible for offspring.
- Women likely to worship.



# Working with Silent/Great



# Boomers

- Roughly 45 to 65 this year.
- 70% give.
- Many responsible for younger generation and for older.
- Peak earnings or long-term unemployment. Some going back to school.
- Lower religious observance rate than Silent/Great.



Boomer women feel responsibility to help those with less.



# Gen X

- Roughly 30 to 45 this year.
- 50% give.
- “Settling down” life stage:  
Career for most. For some,  
a family. For many, a  
house.
- High levels of debt.
- Some are religiously  
observant.



Fun, engaging, interesting

Trust

+

Shared  
Beliefs

+

Personal  
Link

+

Learning

+

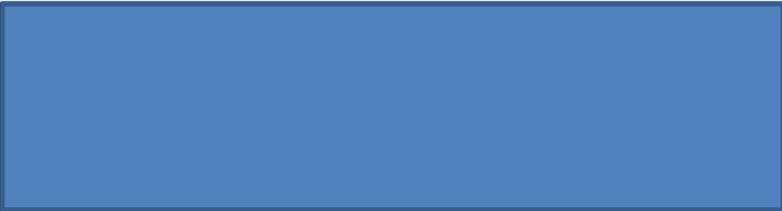
Active  
Commitment

Sargeant & Shang,

# Millennials (Gen Y, Gen Next)

- Roughly 18 to 30.
- 33% gave in 2006. Might be up to 50% now.
- Education and career-building; interest in personal development.
- Seek work-life balance.
- Very high rate of non-observance.





IN 2010

**58%** Said Their Single Largest Gift Was Less Than \$150



**63%** gave to 3+ orgs

**GEN Z**

**#ONLINE**

**WEB SEARCH IS #1 WAY TO FIND INFO ON NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS**

**#1**

**33%**

got info about orgs on facebook



Motivated to give by:

1. Compelling Mission/Cause
2. Personal Connection with leadership
3. Friend or peer endorsement

**65%** want to know how \$ makes a difference

**57%** gave in response to a personal ask



**How do we earn Millennials trust?**

1. Friends or family endorsement
2. Report financial condition
3. Opportunities to meet leadership

# Leadership and volunteers



- Recruit from all generations.
- Equal voice and access to leadership.
- Real work solving organizations problems.

# **STRATEGIES AND TACTICS**

# Communications



- Integrated plan that includes all possible mediums.
- Vary messaging by age-cohort. Test and retest.
- Recruit advocates. Word-of-mouth matters a great deal at all ages.



# Recommends

- Multi-channel two-way communications
  - \* **LETTER** with case for support with online giving site
  - \* Traditional **MEDIA** coverage about organization's work
    - \* **TWITTER** to inspire about organization's work.
      - \* **Facebook** page news of organization; also place to post YouTube videos.
      - \* **Email** with links to online stories
        - \* Volunteer or **engagement opportunities**

a research project of

JGA Johnson  
Grossnickle  
Associates



# recommend

- Be visible, very visible, online
- Provide lots of different ways for people to interact with leaders and key advocates for organization
- Tell great stories about impact
- Give people tools to become advocates and for peer-to-peer requests
- Look for short time commitments, small dollar commitments, frequent contact

# Melissa S. Brown & Associates

We are researchers and communicators. Presentations and studies can be custom-designed for your information needs. Topics covered recently include:

- History of philanthropy,
- Building relationships with prospective funders,
- Generational differences in giving, and
- Forecast of trends and issues, and more.

To contact Melissa, call 317-506-5651.

Thank you for participating in today's session!

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