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WHAT ARE THE FACTORS THAT MOTIVATE NONDONORS? UNDERSTANDING THE REASONS TO NOT PARTAKE IN PHILANTHROPY.

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Introduction

The opportunity to donate money is omnipresent. The nonprofit sector in France represents 8,5 billion euros as of 2023 (France Générosités). Most charitable organisations are constantly looking for donors. As a consequence, solicitations are many, and one has to make several decisions to donate, or more often to not donate, almost every day.

There is a considerable body of research focused on why people give to charitable organisations (Bennett and Sargeant, 2005; Bekkers & Wiepking 2010; List 2011). Comparatively, far fewer papers have tried to understand why people do not give to charity (Chatzidakis et al. 2016).

One question that has not been explored much in research is the difference between donors and nondonors. Specifically, the distinction between a potential donor, who could donate depending on the context, and a nondonor, who will not donate.

In other instances, abstention does not necessarily mean not wanting to act. A simple parallel is the study of voting systems. When an individual does not vote, it is generally unclear whether they abstained because of a failure to care or because of a general disapproval of the voting options. Some jurisdictions have introduced a “none of the above” (NOTA) option. This NOTA vote can be used to differentiate abstention from disinterest. While this has had little effect in changing voting systems, such a fine-tuning does not exist for the study of donations.

Understanding nondonors and the motivations behind nondonations will allow nonprofits to develop better tools for fundraising, and create a framework to transform nondonors into potential donors or even regular donors, if they find a cause they feel positive about supporting.
Our research question is the following:

What are the motivations of nondonors to not participate in charitable giving?

I. Nondonation and donation models

Altruism is generally defined as behaviour that benefits others at a personal cost (Kerr et al. 2004). Its study spans many disciplines. One of the most influential books written on the subject is Marcel Mauss' 1925 Essai sur le Don. Mauss, a sociologist and anthropologist, made influential contributions to the study of gift giving, especially challenging, at the time, the western notion of utilitarianism and altruism.
The central idea of Mauss's theory is that gifts and exchanges in archaic, as he calls them, and indigenous societies, are not simply free expressions of generosity but instead governed by implicit social norms and obligations. The act of giving a gift establishes a social bond and creates an obligation for the recipient to reciprocate in the future. Mauss identified three inter-related obligations of the gift exchange:

- The obligation to give
- The obligation to receive
- The obligation to reciprocate

This cycle of reciprocity binds groups together. It is a way of creating and maintaining social ties and hierarchies.

In the hundred years that followed Mauss' publication, many theories and models have enriched our comprehension of altruism. One can find an explanation for altruistic behaviour in social biology or evolutionary psychology. Sociology and psychology both have several frameworks that help frame the motivations for altruism and prosocial behaviour.

a. Macro-level theories

We have chosen three models to explore theoretical reasons an individual might have to not donate. These theories focus on the macro-level factors. We use many different viewpoints from several disciplines like sociology, psychology and marketing to enrich our comprehension of nondonations.

i. Structural functionalism

Structural functionalism is a rather broad theoretical perspective that presents society as a complex system, composed of interconnected parts that work together to maintain stability and social order (Lane, 1994; Macionis & Gerber, 2011). It typically focuses on the macro-level. Under this perspective, altruism can be understood as a necessary process to maintain social order. Helping others promotes stability and social harmony. Reducing inequalities and alleviating social pressure furthers the continuity of the system as a whole. Donating money or resources to charities can help meet the collective needs. Volunteering to distribute food or to answer the suicide hotline can also be seen as sustaining key structures, that the individual might feel that society or the state does not maintain enough.

If the system is supposed to be working properly, people may very well not feel the need to participate in charitable giving. This also might be caused by a crowding-out effect, where people contribute less when they feel that there already are enough contributions, either by other actors or by the state (Andreoni & Payne, 2010; Wit & Bekkers, 2016).
Individuals may also believe that social stratification and inequality serve functions in society, such as motivating people to work hard. Redistributing resources across social classes could disrupt the stratified order. They may also believe that some causes, like homelessness, are structural and that their help is not needed.
The functionalist view of society and the market may also discourage individuals from giving, so as not to disrupt the proper functioning of these institutions.

ii. Conflict theory

Conflict Theory is the sociological study of society through the lens of social tension, domination, and conflict (Turner, 1975; Collins & Sanderson, 2009). One of the tenets of both Conflict Theory and Critical Theory (Horkheimer, 1982) is that power is distributed unequally among social groups and individuals. This asymmetry breeds conflict and requires active maintenance.
Under this framework, altruism from the privileged classes serves to sustain social power and domination. It can be used as a tool to further their economic self-interest, such as using high-

profile philanthropy to reap economic benefits like tax deductions. It can also increase public recognition as well as create a positive public image for the donor. Critical Theory posits that altruism can be seen as a construction by the dominating classes to dictate the terms of assistance to the deserving poorer classes. In doing so they are supporting the dominant cultural narrative of capitalism and individualism.
An individual might be motivated to not partake in charitable giving to keep their disposable income. They could also be suspicious of corporate philanthropy, while also suspecting rich donors to benefit from donations via tax incentives.

iii. Norm of reciprocity

The Norm of Reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960) is another well-known model. Altruism has deep societal roots that manifest in culturally ingrained norms. These norms favour cooperative and altruistic behaviour. People are more likely to engage in prosocial acts if they know that others will reciprocate in the future. For example, sharing notes or tutoring other students operates on the reciprocal norm that such favours will be returned when need be. Donating blood operates mostly on the understanding that if the donor came to need blood in the future, they could reciprocally get some through the blood donation system.

The norm of reciprocity has some explaining power when donations can be reciprocated. However, it is unclear that an individual should behave prosocially when they know they will not benefit from reciprocal altruism. Tipping at a restaurant is such a situation. The norm of reciprocity can be extended as a universal understanding that people should be rewarded for the services rendered. It is not too dissimilar from the karmic notion of reciprocity (White et al. 2018). Some individuals might not believe in karma, or feel that they deserve the services they benefit from, and abstain from altruistic behaviour.
People also might desire a reciprocal exchange. If an individual feels that giving money would create an imbalance of debt that cannot be easily reciprocated, they may choose not to give to maintain the balance. The notion of reciprocity relies on trust. When it is unclear that one party can trust the other to be able or willing to reciprocate in the future, not giving may be a more favourable option.

	Structural functionalism	**Conflict theory**	**Norm of reciprocity**
Brief definition	Society is a complex system, made of interconnected parts that work together to maintain social order and stability.	Study of society as defined by conflict and social tension. Power is distributed unequally among social groups.	Social psychological principle stating that people generally feel obligated to reciprocate favours, gifts or other positive gestures.
Main authors	Émile Durkheim, Talcott Parsons	Randall Collins, Max Horkheimer	Alvin W. Gouldner
View of altruism	Altruism serves to maintain social order.	Altruism is used to reinforce domination.	Altruism stems from culturally ingrained norms.
Motivations for donation	Helping others to promote stability and social harmony, reduce inequalities.	Helping others to maintain social power and privilege, to obscure the root causes of systemic inequality.	Helping others because the social norms infer that we will be helped in the future.
Motivations for nondonations	Belief that the system works as intended.	Being suspicious of the current cultural interpretation of altruistic behaviour.	Being unsure that the beneficiaries of altruism will be able to reciprocate. Feeling like one deserves to benefit from prosocial behaviour.
Examples	Donating time, money or food to local charities or organisation helps meet the collective needs. Philanthropic donations to hospitals, universities or cultural institutions as a way of funding and sustaining the key structures that benefit society.	Individuals or corporation engaging in high profile philanthropy to reap benefits like tax deductions or public relations gains.	Donating blood is mostly done with the understanding that if one ever needs blood in the future, they can receive it from the blood donation system that relies on reciprocal giving. Holding the door is also done with the implicit expectation that others will reciprocate.
Key concepts	Social function, value consensus, institutional altruism	Class struggle, power dynamics, domination	Social norms, values, reciprocity
Strengths and limitations	Strength: accounts for institutionalized forms of altruism, explains altruism as a vital process for social order. Limitation: may overlook social conflicts, may downplay individual agency in determining altruistic motivations.	Strength: analyses how elite altruism can reinforce power imbalances and domination. Highlights the value for mutual aid emerging from collective struggles as authentic altruism. Limitation: may overlook genuine altruistic motivation from privilege group. May lack explaining power for altruistic acts between non-stratified groups.	Strength: explains altruism from culture and provides a self-perpetuating model of exchange within groups. Limitation: may overlook altruism driven by motivations like empathy, has less explaining power for altruism towards outgroups where reciprocity is less likely.

Table 1: comparative analysis of macro level theories.

b. Micro-level analysis

4 models can be used to explore the micro-level reasons people might have not to give. These are different from the societal forces, and focus more on the individual.

i. Social Exchange Theory

Social Exchange Theory, abbreviated as SET, posits that individuals generally desire to maximise benefits and minimise costs. This can explain their choice of social interactions (Thibaut and Kelley, 1959; Homans, 1961). According to SET, people help others because they get something out of it. There are certainly many real-life examples where a simple cost-benefit analysis justifies altruistic behaviour. Donating to receive public recognition and enhance one's reputation could fit the narrative. College students or court-convicted individuals performing assigned unpaid community service would be another example.
In some cases, these behaviours can be interpreted as competitive altruism. Competitive altruism occurs when individuals compete to act altruistically to gain status, reputation and access to cooperative relationships (Hardy and Vugt, 2006; Barclay and Willer, 2007).
The motivation to not donate can be quite straightforward. It makes perfect financial sense to want to keep one's disposable income rather than give it away. Individuals also might not derive a clear benefit from investing time, energy and resources into prosocial behaviour. While social exchange theory offers a simple model to explain most behaviours, it fails to take into account actions driven mostly by emotions, like empathy.

ii. Empathy Altruism

Empathy is the ability to share the feelings of others, to understand their affective experiences and to apprehend their state of mind (Hogan, 1969; Bernhardt & Singer, 2012; Singer et Klimecki, 2014). The Empathy-Altruism hypothesis stipulates that people help others out of empathy and generally without regard for their own benefit (Batson et al. 1991). Research has found that when individuals feel empathy for someone, they are much more likely to help them. If empathy is absent, a cost-benefit analysis can predict altruistic

behaviour (Batson et al. 1981). This suggests that social exchange theory and the empathy-altruism hypothesis might be complementary.

Under this framework, a lack of empathy would lead to a failure to donate. The lack of empathy can be trait-based, meaning that the individual feels lowered empathy in general, or contextual, meaning that the specific situation does not elicit empathy for them.
A nondonor might be lacking empathy. The lack of emotional connection will therefore reduce the motivation to engage in altruistic behaviour. Inversely, a nondonor might experience emotional or compassion fatigue and withdraw from prosocial activities as a self-protective mechanism.

	Social Exchange Theory	Empathy-altruism Hypothesis
Brief definition	Explains social interactions and relationships in terms of costs and rewards. Individuals are motivated to increase their upside and reduce or limit their downside.	Proposes that empathic concern produced by observing another person's distress or need elicits altruistic motivation to help that person.
Main authors	Peter Blau, George Homans	Daniel Batson
View of altruism	Altruism is the result of a cost-benefit analysis.	Altruism stems from feelings of empathy.
Motivations for donation	Helping others with the expectations of returns or benefits, either tangible (reciprocal help) or intangible (approval, guilt avoidance or reduction).	Feeling empathy for others triggers altruistic motivation stemming from a concern for that person's welfare rather than self-interest.
Motivations for nondonations	Not deriving a clear benefit from giving away resources such as time and money.	Not feeling empathy and failing to create an emotional connection. Being burned-out from compassion fatigue.
Examples	Volunteering for resume building, helping coworkers for reciprocal benefits, environmental activism, such as joining a cleanup effort to improve their living condition or property value.	Donating to disaster relief efforts after seeing images or accounts of victims. Adopting a rescue animal after learning of its neglected living conditions.
Key concepts	Cost-benefit analysis	Empathy, empathy-altruism
Strengths and limitations	Strength: provides a rational choice explanation for behaviour. Limitation: may overlook genuinely selfless motivations of acts that involve major sacrifices.	Strength: identifies a key predictor of altruistic behaviour, backed by experimental evidence indicating empathic states. Limitation: lacks explaining power when altruism is not motivated by empathy, may blur the line between feeling empathy and actually taking altruistic action.

Table 2: comparative analysis of SET and Empathy-Altruism.

iii. Symbolic interactionism

Symbolic interactionism is a sociological branch that focuses on the construction of subjective meaning by individuals (Dennis & Martin, 2005; Carter & Fuller, 2016). It proposes a system to think about how people might comprehend and derive value from the interpretation of their behaviours, their interactions, and other symbols. Under this perspective, altruism and prosocial behaviour is fundamentally subjective. Helping others might be motivated by the construction of a positive self-identity, or taking on a role that is valued because of the shared view, or symbol, of altruism.

The meaning of giving money away can be interpreted along different lines. The first factor is certainly the meaning of money itself. If an individual sees it as a scarce resource that is difficult to obtain, they may be less inclined to give it away.

An individual's decision will also be influenced by their perception of the social norms and expectations of their social environment. If donating money is not a prevalent practice, or is frowned upon, they may be less likely to engage in it. People also have a perceived identity. If making a donation is seen as contradictory to their self-concept (e.g. being frugal), they may resist to maintain their own image. The act of giving money can also clash with their own values in some circumstances. They might feel like charity breeds dependence and strips people of their inner will to thrive by themselves.

People also interpret situations in a subjective manner. If they perceive the situation as undeserving, illegitimate or manipulative, they may be less inclined to give. Finally, an individual may be influenced by their own past experiences with giving and not giving money. Negative experiences and interpretations may discourage future giving.

iv. Sociobiology

Sociobiology is the systematic study of the biological basis for social behaviour. It offers frameworks to explain behaviours such as cooperation, reproduction, altruism or conflict from an evolutionary perspective. The central idea of sociobiology is that many social

behaviours have a genetic or biological basis and are/were shaped by natural selection to increase genetic fitness and reproductive success. This model provides a good explanation for kin altruism, which is defined as altruistic behaviour directed towards genetic relatives (Eberhard, 1975). Sacrificing one's resources, or reducing one's own fitness, could be beneficial if the recipient is a parent with common genes and with high survival value. In the case of reciprocal altruism, which is directed at unrelated relatives, like neighbours or co-workers, sociobiology can make sense of altruism by valuing interaction and cooperation as stand-ins for common genes (Becker, 1976).

Sociobiology outlines some motivations for nondonation. Because people are more likely to engage in prosocial behaviour that benefits their kin, individuals may prefer to not help outgroups or strangers. Similarly to what the norm of reciprocity states, if there is no expectation or possibility of future reciprocation, individuals may be less inclined to give. Individuals may also act on a resource preservation strategy, and decide to not give so as to keep their resources for their own future needs.

	Evolutionary psychology / sociobiology	**Symbolic Interactionism**
Brief definition	Study of biological basis for social behaviour, like cooperation, altruism or conflict.	Individuals assign subjective meaning to objects, events and behaviours.
Main authors	William D Hamilton, Robert Trivers	George Mead
View of altruism	Altruism promotes one's genetic survival.	Altruism is constructed and valued through interactions.
Motivations for donation	Kin selection (helping genetic relatives) or reciprocal altruism (helping others with the expectation of future reciprocation).	Helping others to derive a positive self-identity and to take on a role that carries a symbolic meaning.
Motivations for nondonations	Wanting to preserve resources, not wanting to extend altruism to outgroups or strangers.	Interpreting the act of giving money as foreign to their value system.
Examples	Ostentatious altruism, or public displays of altruism might be done with the understanding that they promote one's attractiveness and mating value. Taking care of a relative also furthers one's genes survival.	Volunteering to reinforce one's identity as a "helper". Becoming an organ donor after relatives construct it as an admirable behaviour.
Key concepts	Kin altruism, reciprocal altruism	Shared symbols, meaning, interactions
Strengths and limitations	Strength: explanation based on the biological factors that govern human development. Limitation: may overlook social and cultural influences.	Strength: explains how altruism stems from socially constructed meanings and role identities. Limitation: may lack explaining power for macro-level or institutionalised forms of altruism.

Table 3: comparative analysis of sociobiology and symbolic interactionsim.

The micro-level analysis outlines four factors that can explain nondonations. Social Exchange Theory posits that individuals might want to keep their resources if they don't retrieve a sufficient benefit from giving them away. The Empathy-Altruism hypothesis puts forward that a lack of empathy will result in a failure to act prosocially.

c. Types of nondonations and donations

There are many different types of donations. As such, there are probably different types of nondonation, depending on the resources that can be given. In order to understand the types of nondonation, it is useful to get a sense of the types of donations.
Prosocial behaviour, helping another at one's own expense, can be interpreted as giving money, time, expertise or other resources. Donating to charities or individuals, or providing

help to others are common instances. Some practices are rarer and depend heavily on the context, the individual and the recipient of the donation. We have selected three types of donations, philanthropy, blood donation and tipping. All three are certainly among the more common forms of donations, and thus have a large corpus of research available.

i. Philanthropy

Philanthropy is private giving by individuals, corporations or foundations (Barman, 2017). Philanthropy is very dependent on the culture and the economic incentives in place. It is estimated that US charities received $499,33 billion in 2022, while France's nonprofits received only €8,5 billion over the same period, according to selected data from France Générosités. The difference is large, even when taking into account the relative size of the two countries. The table below splits the total donations between individuals, corporations and bequests, in the US and in France. The values are expressed in euros, based on the exchange rate for the 1st of January 2022. Foundations in the US gave $105 billion, or €92,5 billion in 2022. Due to differences in fiscal law, we were not able to obtain the data from foundations based in France.

	United States	France	US per capita	France per capita
Individuals	280,515 billion €	3,686 billion €	842,39 €	11,07 €
Bequests	40,093 billion €	1,353 billion €	120,40 €	4,06 €
Corporations	25,920 billion €	3,500 billion €	77,84 €	10,51 €
Total	346,530 billion €	8,539 billion €	1 040,63 €	25,64 €

Table 4: market data about philanthropy in the US and in France.

The above data suggest that there are strong cultural and contextual macro-factors at play in philanthropy.
Financial donations can be done via a number of different channels. Money can be donated directly to organisations or people in need. It can also be donated to companies via Cause Related Marketing, or rounding up a transaction at checkout. A nondonor can be global, and refuse to give via any channel. There may also be channel-specific nondonors, who would maybe donate in some situations but systematically refuse in others. An example would be buying products promoted via Cause Related Marketing, but categorically not giving money to homeless individuals.

ii. Donating blood

Donating blood is another common example of prosocial behaviour. The World Health Organization aggregates data about the state of blood donations worldwide. This is a major health priority. Donating blood is a behaviour deeply influenced by culture, context and national legislation.
Blood donors are usually divided into 3 types: voluntary unpaid, family/replacement and paid. They can easily be mapped onto the types of altruistic, or non-altruistic behaviour. Voluntary unpaid donors are people who donate blood of their own free will and receive no payment or compensation for it. This is akin to pure altruism or reciprocal altruism. Family/replacement donors are individuals who give blood when it is required by a member of their family or community who would receive the blood, akin to kin altruism. Paid donors receive money or some other form of payment in exchange for giving their blood.

Data collected up to 2018 from the WHO Global Database on Blood Safety indicates that Out of the 194 member states of the WHO, 64 countries collect more than 99% of their blood supply from voluntary unpaid donors. High-income countries are overrepresented in the blood, collecting 40% of the total yearly supply, while being home to 16% of the world population.
When it comes to nondonors, some studies have looked at the reasons for non-participating in blood collection. Nondonation appears to be a result of fear of the unknown, apathy or the

belief in medical disqualification (Oborne and Bradley, 1975; Leibrecht et al. 1976). Another study by Burnett (1981), published in the Journal of Consumer Research, looked at the psychometric and demographic characteristics of blood donors. The author outlined that donors "tend to be male, married with children, have rare blood types and low self-esteem, to be low risk takers, very concerned with health, better educated, religious, and quite conservative." It makes sense that blood donors would tend to have rarer blood types. The sex also might have a relation to blood collection, because of the medical requirements to give being different for men and women.

Sociodemographic factors like education and marital status, and psychometric factors like self-esteem, risk-taking, political leaning, religiosity and being health conscious are potential determinants of donor and nondonor behaviour.

iii. Tipping

Tipping is supposed to be a reward or incentive for good service. It is however far from a purely transactional behaviour. Tipping is optional, by definition, but also very incentivised through culture and social norms. It is related to and influenced by many factors, like social norms, culture, patronage frequency, social approval or service quality (Lynn et al. 1993).
It can be a display of power or status and a sign of interpersonal attraction (Lynn and Graves, 1996). In some countries, and for some professions, tipping is the main form of compensation, increasing the pressure to give for the patrons.
Tipping can be an altruistic behaviour. Lynn (2015) suggests that altruistic people tip more. Research has identified many clever ways to increase tipping, not always related to altruism. For example, simply drawing a smiling face on the back of the check increases tipping (Rind and Bordia, 1995; 1996).

In their 2002 paper, *Sweetening the Till: The Use of Candy to Increase Restaurant Tipping*, Strohmetz et al. find that giving a small piece of chocolate to customers increases tips. Two pieces of candy increase the tip even more. Having the server give one piece of candy, pretend to leave the table, come back and "spontaneously" offer a second piece of candy increases the tip even more, even though the final given amount of candy would be the

same. This indicates that the apparent generosity of the server is being rewarded, hinting at the strong reciprocal nature of tipping.
Attractive servers earn a lot more in tips than unattractive servers (Parrett, 2015). Hinting at the hope that tipping will, in turn, also be reciprocated.

Aggregated data about the donation market is hard to come by. This is because the nonprofit sector is very segmented. Organisations rarely release public data about their donors, and the market as a whole is quite opaque.
Such data could be very helpful to identify the elements that influence donation and nondonation behaviour.

Fortunately, tipping is quite similar to donating money and has been adopted by some major corporations to incentivize workers, such as Lyft or Uber.
Some research has been conducted internally about the effects of tipping on workers' compensation and on the predictors of tipping. The companies have publicised some of it, which gives better insight about tipping in the broader population.

It is generally accepted that a tip is a reward for good service. This is especially true when the tip is made privately after the transaction has ended. In the case of ride sharing, tipping is only possible after the trip has ended and both parties. At this point, the rider and the driver are no longer together. This relieves the social pressure that might explain tipping behaviour face to face. In this scenario, one might assume that service quality will be the deciding factor for tipping.

One study in particular (Chandar et al. 2019) has looked at the "drivers of tipping behaviour". For a given ride, many factors might account for a tip being made. Average speed, punctuality, gender of the rider and the driver, age, driver and rider ratings, number of rides are all possible candidates to predict tipping. However, it has been found that the best explanation is not driver-side but rider-side, mainly, does the rider usually tip, or not.
The authors report that the variation due to the rider effect is three times larger than other sources of variation.

Across the 40 million trips and the many individuals observed, 15% of trips are tipped. That behaviour is very much not homogeneous. 60% of people never tip. 39% of riders sometimes do, while 1% always do. This strongly suggests that, while prosocial behaviour and donations can be incentivized, the majority of the population is impervious to such solicitations. In the case of ride sharing, efforts to increase tipping might only have an impact on 39% of the riders.

d. Discussion

We don't know how similar the distribution is for more standard altruistic donations. However, it seems like the split between absolute tippers, potential tippers and non-tippers can be mapped with some accuracy to absolute donors, potential donors and nondonors.

One report, by the Charities Aid Foundation, a UK based nonprofit, found that about 50% of individuals donate money every year, with that proportion increasing with age. In those 50% of donors, 28% were regular donors, with the rest giving occasionally or rarely. In total, the regular donor cohort represents 14% of the global population. The occasional donors represent 36%. This is in line with previous estimates that 15% of people give regularly (Bryant et al. 2003; Bekkers, 2005a).

Some papers have proposed another segmentation method. Durango-Cohen et al. (2013) have found that donation behaviour can be of three types. "Low variance" donors give often and the same amount. "Transient" donors typically give just once and then churn, while "high variance" donors' behaviour is harder to predict frequency wise. The latter might be the most susceptible to solicitation. The data compiled by the authors indicates that regular donors are a minority, representing 16% of donors. High variance donors make up 27%, while the remaining 57% is made up of transient donors.

Understanding that most of the variance is carried by the individual rather than by the context allows us to focus our efforts. However, some individuals may very well be regular donors for some causes, and absolute nondonors for other causes. To go further, we will explore how we can characterise nondonors.

II. Characteristics of donors and nondonors

We will focus on three distinct fields to characterise individuals: cognitive biology, psychology and socio-economic status. In many cases, a large body of research has been trying to identify the characteristics of individuals who don't behave in a prosocial manner. In other cases, we will need to look at the characteristics of altruistic people to make assumptions about nondonors.

a. Cognitive biology

Cognitive biology is the systematic study of the impact of biology on cognition. We are specifically going to focus on the biology of the brain and its impact on prosocial behaviour.

i. Psychopathy and non-altruistic behaviour

The study of psychopathy provides a practical first base to study altruistic behaviour. (Marsh et al. 2013). Psychopathy is usually characterised by lack of empathy, lowered emotional responses and a heightened tendency for antisocial behaviour (Anderson & Kiehl, 2014; Blair & Mitchell, 2009). Other traits might include emotional detachment, absence of guilt, arrogance, egocentricity and tendencies for predation (Hare & Neumann, 2009). These traits translate, quite unsurprisingly, in tendencies to engage less in costly helping of others (Sakai et al. 2019). Other studies of donations have noted that individuals who score higher in dark personality traits tend to partake less in charitable giving, but value public recognition a lot more when they do (Bonfá-Araujo et al. 2023).

Psychopathy has been studied extensively and is generally considered to be well understood. It is a developmental disorder, meaning that it originates in childhood, with strong genetic components. Its onset can generally be traced back to childhood or adolescence. It is generally admitted that the prevalence of psychopathy in adults ranges between 0,6% and 1% (Coid et al. 2009).

Several tools exist to aid the diagnosis of psychopathy. They are often scales. Upon reaching a certain threshold, a trained professional would be able to make an official diagnosis about a subject.

The Psychopathy Checklist - Revised, also known as PCL-R (Hare et al. 2000) is a three-factor model, revised from originally two factors. It was designed to be completed during a structured interview by a professional. External information on the subject could be incorporated as needed. This model has been challenged and updated to better reflect the complexity of the disorder (Cooke and Michie, 2001).
The Psychopathy Personality Inventory, or PPI-Revised (Lilienfeld et al. 1996) is a self-report scale. It is used to measure three factors: Fearless-Dominance, Impulsive Antisociality and Coldheartedness, with the first two factors being mostly orthogonal and the third being dependent on the other two.
The Triarchic Psychopathy Measure, shortened as TriPM (Patrick et al. 2009), is another self-report instrument. It uses three factors: Disinhibition, Boldness and Meanness.
The scales typically have specific use cases.

	Psychopathy Checklist - Revised	**Psychopathy Personality Inventory**	**Triarchic Psychopathy Measure**
Shortened as	PCL-R	PPI-R	TriPM
Created by	Robert Hare, 1991	Scott Lilienfeld and Andrews, 1996	Patrick, Fowles, Krueger, 2009
Self -report	No	Yes	No
Number of items	20	154	58
Number of factors	2: Factor 1 (interpersonal/affective traits) Factor 2 (lifestyle/antisocial traits)	8 traits: Machiavellian Egocentricity, Rebellious Nonconformity, Blame Externalization, Carefree Nonplanfulness, Social Influence, Fearlessness, Stress Immunity, and Coldheartedness. 3 factors: Fearless dominance, Self-centred impulsivity, Coldheartedness	3: Boldness, Meanness, Disinhibition
Use cases	Forensic and correctional facilities	Research and community samples	Institutional and community settings

Table 5: comparative analysis of psychopathy diagnosis scales.

A large body of research focuses on the causes and physical manifestations of psychopathy. Abnormalities in the activation of the amygdala (Blair, 2013; Moul et al. 2012; Marsh et al. 2014), or disruption in the interaction between the amygdala and other brain areas, like the prefrontal cortex and the neocortex (Contreras-Rodríguez et al. 2014) are characteristic of psychopathy and antisocial behaviour.

This shows that there are physical determinants to non-altruistic behaviour, in the extreme case of psychopathy. A logical next step will be to explore if such physical predictors exist for the opposite behaviours: extraordinary altruism (Marsh et al. 2013).

ii. Extraordinary altruism

A lesser amount of research has been conducted about extraordinary altruism as has been about psychopathy. We know, however, that extraordinary altruists exhibit neural characteristics similar to psychopaths (Marsh et al. 2014). Biologically speaking, altruism exists on a continuum, where the two extremes of the distribution are extreme altruists and psychopaths.

Extraordinary altruists exhibit a range of behaviours and traits that are diametrically opposed to psychopaths. They are characterised by selfless actions, such as risking their lives to save others, or making anonymous organ donations while alive (Rand & Epstein, 2014; Carney 2017). While it is clearly established that extraordinary altruists behave more selflessly and are overrepresented in body and organ donations, no research has been conducted to study their propensity to engage in philanthropy.

Extraordinary altruists tend to process others' pain and distress as their own, and thus react more strongly to it (Brethel-Haurwitz et al. 2018). Generally speaking, they exhibit reduced social discounting (Vekaria et al. 2017). Social discounting refers to the tendency of an individual to ascribe less value to an outcome that happens to a socially distant relative. The greater the social distance, the greater the discounting. This seems to suggest that extraordinary altruists would be susceptible to engage in a large array of prosocial behaviours.

A better understanding of extreme altruism helps further our understanding of what ordinary altruism is and how it functions (Marsh, 2016). There are neurobiological determinants that describe the extreme ends of the altruism spectrum. It has some predictive power for the

edge cases. Another perspective offered by neurobiology is the exploration of the differences in donation behaviour between men and women.

iii. Gender and empathy

There seems to be notable and debated differences between men and women when it comes to charitable behaviour. A lot of research has focused on the reported feelings of empathy, citing sizable differences between both genders. More recently, work has been done on the more complex pro-social behaviours.

A large body of research puts forward the idea that women test higher for empathy. This difference appears to be quite large for self-report scales (Eisenberg & Lennon, 1983). However, the authors reported observing no difference between the genders when the measures were either physiological or "unobtrusive observations of nonverbal reactions to another's emotional state".
These findings have been corroborated by a number of other studies using different measures of empathy. Women also score significantly higher than men using the Empathy Quotient (Baron-Cohen & Wheelwright, 2004).

Some hypotheses have been proposed to explain the differences between genders. There are biological components. Gender, sexual preferences and prenatal hormone exposure have been shown to have an impact on empathy (Christov-Moore et al. 2014). Brain circuitry is also the source of some variability. Empathy and emotional contagion have been observed to be much stronger in women than men. This is in part because of the increased use of mirror neurons when performing self-related processing tasks in women compared to men (Schulte-Rüther et al. 2008). Self-related processing is defined as processing where an individual evaluates a concept in relation to their sense of self (Northoff et al. 2006). Overall, women also show stronger neural activation in emotion-related areas, while men activate more cognitive-related areas, when solving emotional tasks (Derntl et al. 2010).

It also seems that this difference in empathy leads to a difference in sensitivity to advertising messages. Women respond more favourably to messages involving a "help-others", empathetic approach, while men respond better to a "help-self", utilitarian appeal. It is proposed that a difference in worldview and values has good explaining power for the differences.

In keeping with the predictive factors of neurobiology and the empathy-altruism hypothesis, a higher reported empathy should translate into higher prosocial behaviour and higher donations. Men would probably tend to be nondonors more often than women.

iv. Gender and prosocial behaviour

While the preference for empathy in women over men seems to be clearly established, there is still some debate between the differences in gender when it comes to the observation of altruistic behaviour.

In the case of philanthropy, some authors have put forward that women not only give more often than men, they also give larger amounts (Piper and Schnepf, 2008). Many papers agree and find specific instances of women giving more, such as in the workplace (Leslie et al. 2013).

However, a large body of research indicates that when it comes to prosocial behaviours as a whole might be more complicated. Altruistic behaviour is the result of many factors, internal or external. Empathy is evidently one of the predictors. Social pressure, the need to conform to social norms, has also been identified as a potential strong candidate to explain the difference between women and men.
The study of prosocial behaviour is facilitated by the participation of willing subjects in economic laboratories. However, many authors have written on the clear preference for unselfish behaviour in the lab and the need to differentiate it from the field (Andreoni and Miller, 2002; Iriberri & Rey-Biel, 2013, Chandar et al. 2019).

Experiments on altruism in labs are often done using the dictator game, either in its original form or with some adjustments. There are two players, a "dictator" and a "recipient". The dictator is given a sum of money and must decide how much, if any, to give to the generally anonymous recipient. The recipient typically has no opportunity to reciprocate or retaliate. In its purest form, following basic economic logic, every player should maximise their value every time and always keep all the money when given a choice. This setup and variations allow to study what parameters cause the players to choose selfishness over altruism or vice versa.

There does not seem to be a clear consensus about whether men or women are more altruistic when playing the dictator game. Bolton and Katok (1995) found no evidence of differences between genders, while Eckel and Grossman (1998) found that women shared twice as much, on average. Other studies indicate that the results might depend on the context. Andreoni and Vesterlund (2001) suggest that men might be more altruistic when it is cheap to be so, and that women are more prosocial when altruism is expensive.

Data about the field is no more clear-cut. Two studies about blood donation found that women are sometimes overrepresented (Misje et al. 2010) and sometimes underrepresented (Bani and Giussani, 2010), relative to men.

One set of studies focused on the separation of altruism and social pressure. DellaVigna, List, Malmendier and Rao (2013) conducted a field experiment where US-based individuals would be solicited door to door to make donations for a local children's hospital or an out-of-state nonprofit. They tested two treatments, taking the form of flyers placed in advance on doorknobs of some households. In one variation, the flyer simply indicated the exact time of the solicitation the next day. In the other, the flyer included a "do not disturb" box, inviting individuals to opt-out altogether and not be solicited.
The authors report that the flyer reduced the probability of people opening the door for the fundraisers by 10%. If the flyer included a "do not disturb" box, the probability was reduced by 25%. Most of the reduction concerned households making small donations, equal to the median donation of $10 or less, hinting at the fact that social pressure was responsible for some altruistic behaviour.

The authors also split the data concerning the frequency of giving by gender of the respondent to the solicitors. They found that the opt-out flyer almost halved the rate at which women gave, from between 3% to 3,5% in the control and simple flyer treatment, to just above 1,5% in the "do not disturb" treatment.

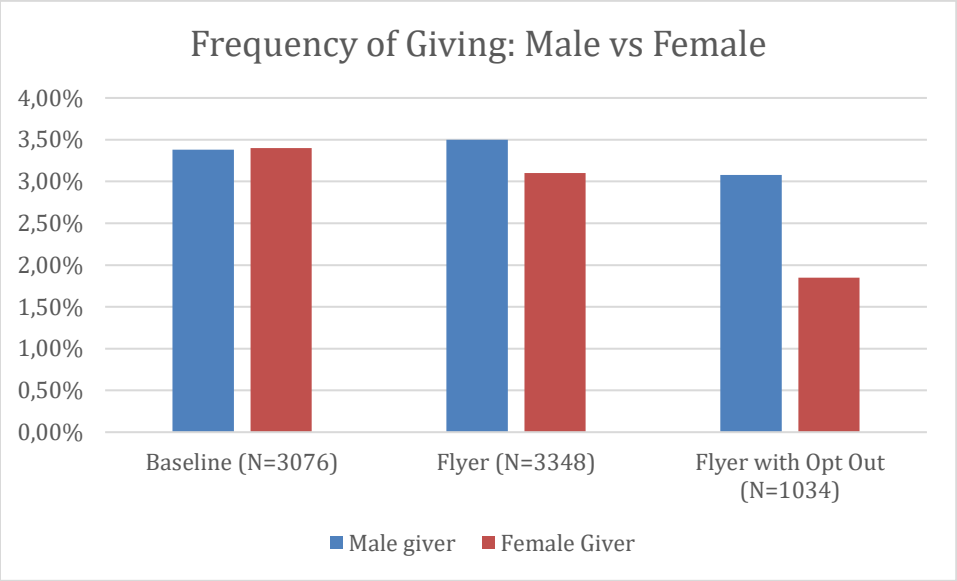

Figure 1: rates of donation by gender and by experimental cell, DellaVigna et al. 2013.

This seems to indicate that women are more often on the margin of participation. They can be more swayed by social pressure than men, and thus would probably be potential donors more often. In the absence of social pressure, men tip more often and larger tips than women (Chandar et al. 2019).

The larger picture for gender is quite inconclusive. It is clearly established that women feel more empathy, and give more and more often in classical settings. When factoring in social pressure, women give less. A nondonor is someone who does not partake in charitable giving. It makes sense that an absolute nondonor, who does not donate, even when solicited, and a potential nondonor, who, knowing they can be easily swayed, evades solicitation, would be different types of nondonors. Their non-action can only be measured when solicited. To go further, we will study the psychology of prosocial behaviour.

b. Psychology

There has been a lot of research about the psychology of altruistic behaviour. Many tools have been developed and used to try to measure altruism or the lack thereof.

i. Big Five and personality models

The main scale used to measure personality is the Big Five Inventory - BFI, or simply the Big Five (John et al. 1991). It is a psychological traits model that factors personality into five dimensions: Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness and Neuroticism. Each of these dimensions is normally distributed.

The following is a very brief description of the five factors.
Openness to experience includes traits such as intellectual curiosity, imagination, creativity or unconventionality (Kaufman, 2013). Conscientiousness refers to the ability to self-discipline, to regulate and to control impulses. Extraversion includes feeling energised by social contact and overall sensitivity to positive emotions. Agreeableness is the general tendency for prosocial behaviour and to strive to get along with others. Neuroticism refers to the sensitivity to negative emotions, like anger, stress or depression.

A psychological trait is a basic disposition that gives rise to habits, behaviours, attitudes or other characteristic adaptation (McCrae et al. 2001).
Traits hardly change in the short term. They can sometimes be modified by external stimulus or training. Some traits also tend to evolve predictably with age. This is far from universal. For example, trait hypnotisability appears to not be modifiable or trainable, and also does not change throughout life (Perry, 1977; Piccione et al. 1989). The traits that make up the Big Five are also quite stable, with little change observed over a four-year period and intra-individual changes being unrelated to negative external stimuli (Cobb-Clark & Schurer, 2012).

The Big Five Inventory is widely used in many fields, including marketing, and appears to be a good predictor of individual behaviour (Fleeson & Gallaher, 2009). Many studies have tried to outline a link between the BFI and altruism or empathy.

One study (Oda et al. 2014) found conscientiousness to be positively linked to altruistic behaviour towards family members; agreeableness to be linked to altruism towards friends and acquaintances and openness to be linked to altruism towards strangers. Only extraversion was linked to altruism towards all three types of recipients. Another research paper (Melchers et al. 2016) has found that agreeableness and conscientiousness were key predictors of empathy, measured by the Empathy Quotient or the Interpersonal Reactivity Index.
Other personality scales, like the HEXACO model, or the Supernumerary Personality Inventory (Paunonen, 2015), have not produced any new strong predictor of empathy or altruistic behaviour (Oda & Matsumoto-Oda, 2022; Dargan & Schermer 2022, Kowalski et al. 2021).

If we assume that a nondonor is the opposite of a donor, they would logically tend to score lower on extraversion, agreeableness and empathy. No study has directly studied this link.

ii. Trait-altruism and measuring prosocial behaviour

While the relation between the Big Five and altruism is not clear cut, there is a lot of extant research focused on the altruism trait.
The most common measure for altruism is a self-report scale. The first one was developed by Rushton et al. in 1981. It is composed of 20 statements. The subject simply has to indicate the frequency with which they have performed or would perform selected actions, from "never" to "very often". The answers give one to five points, with higher scores being awarded to higher frequency of prosocial behaviour. Very often" gives five points, being the maximum. "Never" gives only one. The maximum score is 100, the lowest, only 20. Averages usually range from 50 to 60, with little differences between men and women (Rushton et al. 1981). Based on this measure, it appears that altruism is its own psychological trait (Rushton et al. 1981). The tool has been refined, specifically to incorporate distinctions based on the recipient of the altruistic behaviour, into the Self-Report Altruism Scale Distinguished by the Recipient, SRAS-DR (Oda et al, 2013).

	Never	Once	More than once	Often	Very often
5. I have given money to a stranger who needed it (or asked me for it).					
7. I have done volunteer work for a charity.					
13. I have pointed out a clerk's error (in a bank, at the supermarket) in undercharging me for an item.					
18. I have offered to help a handicapped or elderly stranger across a street.					
19. I have offered my seat on a bus or train to a stranger who was standing.					

Table 6: Sample items from the Altruism Scale, Oda et al, 2013.

Instructions: tick the category on the right that conforms to the frequency with which you have carried out the following acts.

The lower the final score, the lower the tendency to behave prosocially. As such, we should expect nondonors to self-report lower on the scale.

Altruistic behaviour might also be predicted by measuring related traits. Trait empathy has long been considered as a potential determinant of altruism.

The empathy-altruism model states that empathy is a good predictor of altruistic behaviour (Batson, 1986c). Oneness, a construct similar to empathy, has been proposed to have better predictive power (Cialdini, 1997). Oneness refers to the overlap between perception of the self and others. This has not gathered much steam; we are instead going to use the more recent definitions of empathy.

It has more recently been defined as the ability to share the feelings of others; to rejoice vicariously and to empathise with someone's pain (Singer & Klimecki, 2014). Recent findings have established that empathy is a valid predictor of altruistic behaviour, and that it has significant predictive power (Klimecki et al. 2016; Bethlehem et al. 2017).

Measuring empathy has been the focus of many research papers. A number of tools have been specifically designed for this purpose. Two seem to have gathered the majority of the attention, both of the general public and of the researchers working on the subject.
The Empathy Quotient - EQ measures empathy along three factors: cognitive empathy, emotional reactivity and social skills (Lawrence et al. 2004). The Interpersonal Reactivity Index - IRI (Davis, 1983) uses four factors to measure four distinct empathy dimensions. Both scales can be self-administered. Empathy has been consistently linked to prosocial and cooperative behaviour, either as a general concept (Eisenberg & Fabes 1990, Roberts & Strayer 1996) or even in daily occurrences of altruistic acts (Morelli et al. 2014). It should be noted that the strength of the relations is influenced by the method of assessing empathy (Eisenberg & Miller 1987).

Similarly to how we would expect nondonors to report lower scores of altruism, they would probably report lower scores of empathy. It is important to note that trait altruism and trait empathy are aggregate measures of several types of behaviours. To get a more precise view, we will focus on the relation between a nondonor and specific causes.

iii. Reasons to and not to donate

While few research papers have explored the reasons as to why someone does not participate in charitable giving, some professional studies and surveys have been conducted. The 2023 edition of the "Observatoire du Don en Confiance", published in France, lists some reasons given by individuals as to why they don't give to nonprofits.

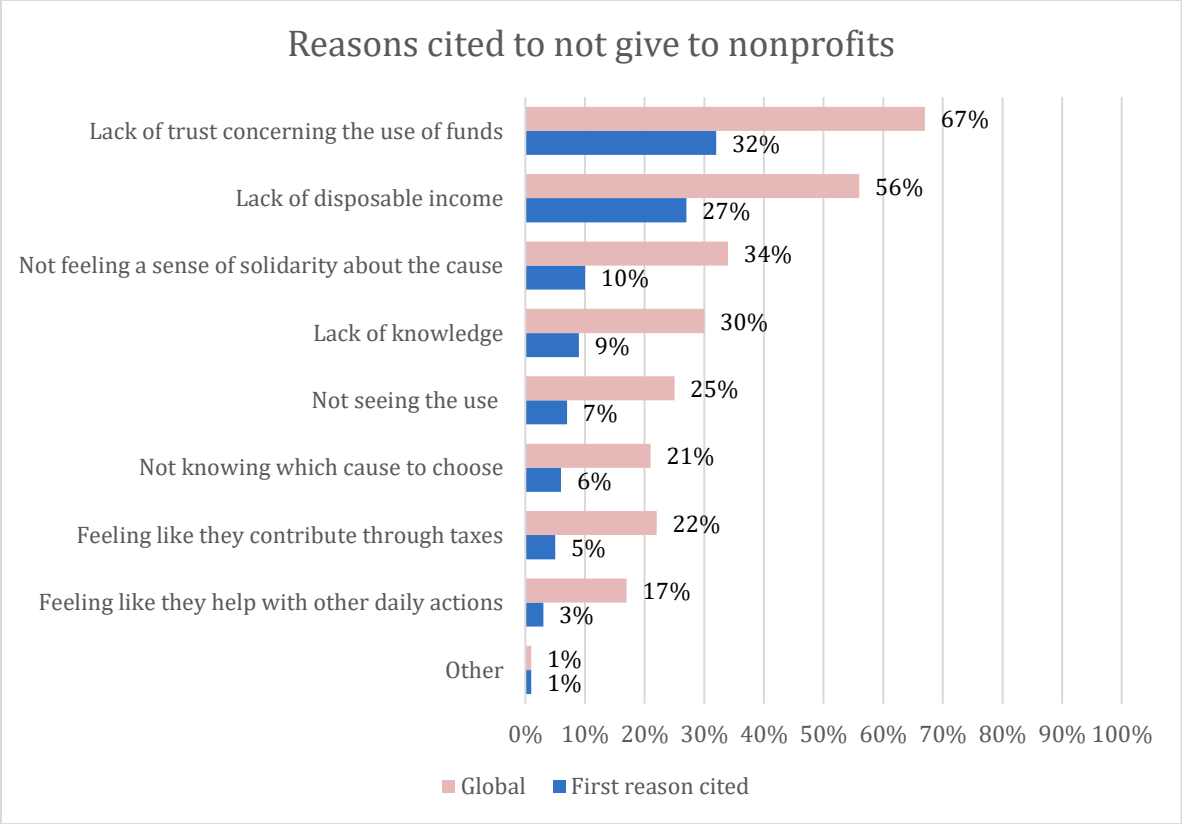

Figure 2: reasons cited to not give to nonprofits, Observatoire du don en Confiance, 2023.

These reasons make intuitive sense. The majority of individuals cite a lack of trust concerning the use of funds, followed by a lack of disposable income. However, all the reasons cited, but one, suppose that the individual actually wants to give money to a nonprofit, and that they would if they could. While this is possible, extant research has shown that the majority of individuals do not want to partake in charitable giving, such as tipping or philanthropy (Chandar et al. 2019; DellaVigna et al. 2012). It seems like most people do not give, even though they can, because they have no desire to do so. Nondonors are simply not motivated. The literature on motivation has produced several scales to measure motivation towards a given pursuit.

The "Echelle de Motivation en Education" (Vallerand et al., 1989), translated in the Academic Motivation Scale (AMS) (Vallerand et al. 1992) is used to measure motivation in students. The scale typically divides motivation between internal, internal and amotivation. Amotivated

individuals experience feelings of incompetence and expect outcomes to be uncontrollable. They are neither intrinsically nor extrinsically motivated and do not see a point to their own actions.
While there is no measure of motivation towards charitable giving, the AMS has been modified to fit other types of behaviours. The Sport Motivation Scale (SMS, Pelletier, 1995) measures individuals' motivations to exercise. The Motivation Towards the Environment Scale (MTES, Pelletier, 1998) measures people's motivation for environmental behaviours.
The creation of a scale to measure the level and the type of motivation, or absence thereof, towards charitable giving would be useful to better understand nondonors and how to potentially reach them.

iv. Donor or nondonor identity

If the nonprofit operates in a controversial field, individuals might also not give because they dislike or don't feel comfortable supporting the cause. This is rarely going to be a problem for the larger and more popular charities, but can prove thorny for many other cases. In 2007, Eveland and Crutchfield studied the impact of social stigma on donation behaviour to organisations serving persons with HIV/AIDS, or PWA for short. They found that the sexual orientation and history of drug use in the potential beneficiary causes the potential donor to feel less situational empathy and thus to withhold donations.
The authors suggest that in some situations, people might not be very open as to their reason for not giving, and that nonprofits should "better learn how to find the personality types that are more compassionate and target them".

Since then, little research has focused on the relation between an individual donor and the causes they support. Even less research has explored the relation between nondonors and potential charitable causes. Most people don't donate, and the few that do only support a single cause or a small subset of causes. Studying the relation between a nondonor and the causes they don't support would be an arduous task. Instead, it would be useful to understand what makes a nondonor, who has never donated in the past, start to give money to a specific nonprofit.

b. Sociodemographic factors for nondonation

Sociodemographic factors are widely used in marketing to target potential donors. It makes logical sense that when trying to get individuals to give money, it can be preferable to target higher-income individuals. Demographic data is usually widely available, making it easy to study.

i. Income level

The relationship between donor income and giving behaviour can be quite unintuitive. A logical assumption would be that individuals who enjoy less disposable income would be less prone to make financial donations. They might also be less available to donate time or to volunteer, because of the constraints imposed by lower revenues. Disregarding the emotional and psychological factors, one might expect nondonors to be mostly in the bottom quartiles of the revenue distributions.

The Carnegie Hero Award is a civilian award for heroic acts. It is typically given to people who have braved grave physical danger to save others' lives. A 1996 study of its 676 recipients from 1989 to 1995 concluded that individuals from lower economic groups were overrepresented, relative to their share of the general population (Johnson, 1996). Men are more likely to attempt to rescue others. The stereotypical rescuer is a low-status male (Lyons, 2006). This behaviour is different from simply donating money to a nonprofit, but the findings have been generalised.

Poorer households also happen to donate more, in terms of income percentage.

Total annual household income in $	Donation as % of household income
under 20000	12%
20001-40000	5%
40001-60000	3%
60001-75000	3%
75001-100000	2%
100001-130000	3%
>130000	2%

Table 7: percentage of donated income by household income ranges. The Center on Philanthropy Panel Study (COPPS) Module of the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID), The Market from Charitable Giving, List (2011).

The distribution of donation in terms of income percentage has been described as U-shaped (List, 2011). The rate of donation peaks at 12% for poorer households. It decreases rapidly as income increases. As income rises, the rate slightly increases back up, from 2% to 3%. Even though poorer individuals give much more, as a proportion of their income, most of the money donated comes from the richer households. In 1995, 40% of the total charitable donations were made by only 4% of the families (Havens & Schervish, 1999). This is to be expected and targeting richer households has been a standard fundraising best practice for some years. Because income follows a power law (Drăgulescu & Yakovenko 2001), the combined 4% richer households may have similar wealth to the combined remaining 96%. Fewer richer households contribute, and they make smaller contributions, relative to their total income, but their help is still substantial for the nonprofit economy.

Income also has an impact on what causes people choose to donate to. Lower-class individuals are more prone to support urgent causes, like disaster relief or alleviating hunger. The opposite is observed in higher-class individuals, who are more prone to donate to non-

urgent causes, typically like culture. It is believed that donation preferences are shaped by people's experience with scarcity, resulting in differences across social classes (Vieites et al. 2022).

Following these findings, nondonors are more likely going to be found in the higher income brackets. One question that has not been studied is the evolution of a nondonor, as their revenue increases. While fewer people give as income increases, it becomes more financially comfortable to do so, individuals who decided to not partake in charitable giving due to a lack of disposable income might be able to do so now.

ii. Social environment and non-altruistic behaviour

Behaving altruistically is influenced by the neighbourhood in which people live. More specifically so, by the socio-economic characteristics of an area. This typically is measured by income deprivation, the proportion of the population living in an area and experiencing deprivation due to low income. It can also include the crime rate, the ethnic makeup, or the population density of a given neighbourhood.
Milgram, Mann and Harter created the lost letter technique in 1965. The method includes dropping letters, enclosed in stamped but not yet posted envelopes in the streets. By varying the name of the addressee, authors of the study could measure community orientation towards a given cause.
In their original study, the authors decided on four addresses. "Medical Research Associates", "Friend of the Communist Party", "Friends of the Nazi Party", and a personal address for a personal letter. They scattered 25 letters for each address at four possible locations, in the street, in telephone booths, in front of shops and under automobile windshield wipers. In the last variation, "found near car" would be written in pencil on the envelope.

In later studies, based on the same technique, socio-demographic and economic data was introduced. Controlling for the characteristics of the neighbourhood produces a measure of the level of prosocial behaviour per neighbourhood (Holland et al. 2012). There appears to be a significant relationship between income deprivation and the return rate of the letters. Richer areas, in the first and second quartile saw the letter being returned at a rate of 80%. In

the poorer areas, third and fourth quartile, the response rate was closer to 35%. The results suggest that individuals living in poor neighbourhoods are less prone to behaving altruistically. The authors underline several potential reasons for that. The crime rate is very correlated to income deprivation (r=0.90). As a result, social cohesion might be lowered. Individuals could choose not to invest in prosocial behaviour due to their environmental situation.

This indicates that the socio-demographic characteristics of the environment have an impact on people's tendencies to act altruistically. Specifically, the poorer the neighbourhood, the less individuals act prosocially. This has also been observed for organ donations, with areas less deprived socioeconomically having a higher organ donor registration rate (Wadhwani et al. 2020). At the same time, poorer households give more often than richer ones (List 2011). More research will be needed to reconcile the increase in donations and the decrease in prosocial behaviour.

d. Discussion

Nondonor behaviour depends on several factors. It seems like the context has less predictive power than the intrinsic characteristics of a given individual. Whether someone typically partakes in charitable giving or not is hard to determine, because nonprofits are many. A person that donates to some causes, or even a single cause, can still be considered as an absolute nondonor for all the other causes they don't contribute to.

Assuming that a nondonor is the opposite of a donor, nondonors would tend to report lower scores of altruism and empathy. Their big five index might report lower scores of extraversion, agreeableness and conscientiousness. A nondonor might also not be neither intrinsically nor extrinsically motivated by charitable giving.

The assumption that a nondonor is the opposite of a donor can be simplistic. While nondonation is, by definition, the opposite of a donation, antisocial behaviour has different precursors than altruism (Krueger et al. 2001). As such, reasons to give and reasons not to give are distinct (Chatzidakis, 2016) and should be addressed distinctly.

Professional marketers intuitively understand that donations need to be positively incentivised. However, as we have outlined, it is crucial to select individuals who are actually motivated to give, and to reduce the obstacles they might have towards donating.

III. The marketing for donations and nondonations

a. Types of financial donations

Donations can be made via many different channels. The nonprofit sector has embraced omni-channel marketing to improve the customer journey in hopes that more avenues to donate will result in more donations (Verhoef et al. 2015, Barwitz & Maas, 2022). A nondonor now has more opportunities than ever to make a donation. Some systems, like checkout donations, are seamlessly integrated and bring minimal changes to the customer journey. To not donate would require refusing most solicitations.
We have divided the types of financial donations based on whether or not they rely on an external company product to function.

i. Donation via a for profit company

A very common technique is asking for donations at checkout. This closely resembles tipping, with the only difference being the recipient of the tip. Considering only campaigns that broke the 1 million dollar mark, 749M$ were given last year in the US via this system (Meet America's Charity Checkout Champions 2023 report, Engage for Good). This practice is quite widespread over the globe, and typically allows for collecting donations of up to a few dollars. Over the last 10 years, another very similar technique has gained attention: rounding-up at checkout. There are two differences between both practices. The first being the amount given. When the checkout amount is rounded-up, the maximum donation is .99 cents, much lower than a regular donation. The second difference relates to tax deductions, which are available in some countries when a charitable donation is made. While the donation of a few dollars does not represent a huge monetary incentive in case of a tax relief, it is still a possibility. In the case of the rounding-up donations, such a rebate is not allowed by most

companies, because emitting the necessary paperwork would prove too costly compared to the amount given.

In an effort to make donations possible on more and more channels, online payment companies and social networks have rolled out products to help nonprofits. Paypal and Apple Pay are widely used, helping collect more money combined than credit cards in France for 2022, according to the report “Modes de paiement du don en ligne” by France générosités, 2023. Credit cards and online payment processors fulfil very similar roles in the customer/donor journey. A user wanting to make a donation online would typically have to choose between both options. Meta has also been quite public about the results of their efforts to help individuals and organisations set up fundraisings. A nonprofit can join the platform and get verified to enable individuals to create fundraising campaigns. The functionality was beta tested in 2015, launched in 2017 on Facebook and later deployed to Instagram. Meta announced that more than 8 billion dollars had been given since the global launch (Meta, giving together, 2021). This functionality will sunset in July 2024 for the European Economic Area.

Cause-Related Marketing, or CRM is a marketing tool based on the association of a nonprofit organisation and a for profit company. This joint venture allows companies to benefit from the goodwill of the nonprofit and with it, good public relations. Charitable organisations benefit from the money raised by the collaboration (Varadarajan & Menon, 1988; Gourville et al. 2004). Donations are usually linked to the purchase of a product. Customer response to CRM depends heavily on the perceived fit between the cause and the company (Melero & Montaner, 2016). This is a potentially risky strategy. Customers might believe that the corporation is only after the financial and reputational benefits and cares little about helping the nonprofit. If this happens, customers’ image of the company and relationship with it will logically be negatively impacted (Hui & Wenan, 2022).

Donations that go through a for profit organisation are often beneficial for both parties. The charity usually gets increased donations, or a new revenue stream, while the company gets positive public relation content. Some customers may prefer donating directly to a charity, to a cause or to someone in need, potentially due to a distrust of the for-profit system.

ii. Direct donations to nonprofits or people

The majority of individuals are probably familiar with face-to face fundraising. It might happen in the street or door-to-door. Fundraisers might be volunteers, employees of the nonprofit, or quite commonly, private contractors hired by the charity. Because of the higher costs of this method, fundraisers are specifically trying to collect recurring donations. To do so, donors have to give them their bank details as well as sign a direct debit authorisation. This seems rather complicated compared to simply asking for change, but for good reason. Regular donors contribute a lot more than occasional ones, even when factoring in the high churn associated with this fundraising technique. However annoying it may seem for the individual passerby, face-to-face fundraising is very common in most large cities, indicating that it is quite profitable.

Some countries and companies also allow organisations to collect payment through SMS. This is the case in France, where the af2m has laid out a technical framework for monetisation. Short numbers, composed of 5 digits, can be created and assigned a price. When a user texts such a number, a payment is made and the user is billed the associated amount on their phone bill. This is a very practical method for solicitation, especially when the user cannot easily be directed to go to a website, such as when they are watching TV. This is not exactly a very popular method of giving, with only 380000 such SMS being sent in 2022, for a raised amount of 1,9 million euros, out of the 3 billion euros given in total the same year in France.

Tipping, as discussed earlier, is another form of direct donation. We have not been able to locate satisfying data about cash donations that happen directly face to face or in the street. Money given to panhandlers, people who solicit money from passersby, is very hard to track (Bose & Hwang, 2002).

b. Reducing nondonations

The purpose of understanding nondonors is to find a way to connect them to a cause they would feel positively about supporting. In order to do so, we have looked at the characteristics of potential donors and absolute nondonors. It seems that the main challenge for fundraisers will be to effectively target potential donors and to avoid nondonors.

i. Targeting donors

Differentiating potential donors and nondonors is difficult. Little research has focused on a similar global indicator that can be measured in the case of donations. Marketing research has identified purchase intent (Jamieson & Bass, 1989; Morwitz et al. 1993) as a good predictor of purchase behaviour. Willingness to pay has also been shown to be related to subsequent purchases (Han & Windsor, 2011), and some research seems to indicate that it is a useful measure for donation behaviour (Koschate-Fischer et al. 2012). The concept of willingness to give has been identified but much remains to be explored (Liu & Aaker, 2008).

Because willingness to give, defined as the tendency to partake in donation behaviour, is mostly intrinsic, most professional fundraisers target people who are likely to have donated in the past. They can be past donors to the same organisation, or donors to another nonprofit. Past donors have been shown to give more and more often (Landry et al. 2008).
If such data about potential donors is unavailable, it seems like the best bet will be to target individuals who report higher altruism scores. This data is also very hard to come by, as it is private, and there is no simple proxy to measure it.

Other targeting criteria might be easier to use. Political affiliation has been shown to have an impact on the causes people support, with liberal donors being more generous towards causes framed in a larger social context, and conservative donors responding more to appeals that blame individual failings (Lee et al. 2020). Political affiliation is a targeting criterion that can easily be used on Meta Advertising.

Until research identifies a practical framework to convert nondonors into donors, nondonors should be avoided. Krebs, citing Hartshorne and May in 1978, indicates that "just about everyone will help in some situations; just about nobody will help in other contexts; and the same people who help in some situations will not help in others". There is a chance that finding a cause that resonates with a nondonor will transform them into a potential donor.

ii. Eliciting contextual empathy

Empathy has been described as either situational or dispositional (Eisenberg et al 1994; Fultz et al., 1986). Dispositional empathy refers to the trait-like tendency to feel and share others' feelings while situational, or contextual empathy refers to the amount of empathy someone might feel in a particular instance (Fultz et al., 1986). Both types of empathy have been linked to altruistic behaviour (Eisenberg & Miller, 1987).

There are many ways to influence empathy. One meta-analysis (Shariff et al. 2016) found that religious priming was a reliable way of eliciting prosocial behaviour. However, the findings did not translate to non-religious individuals. Being exposed to altruism quotes similarly has a large impact on tipping behaviour (Jacob et al. 2013). However, it is not clear whether this intervention has an impact on absolute nondonors, or if it simply increases the frequency of giving of occasional donors.

Altruistic tendencies appear to be trainable. One study found that two-week compassion training was linked to altered activation in brain regions implicated in social cognition as well as increased altruistic behaviour (Weng et al. 2013). While this is promising, it is hardly a process that can be used or scaled for fundraising purposes.
It is also important to mention that altruism appears to increase with age, with "older adults showing significantly greater altruism than younger adults", according to a meta-analysis of 16 studies by Sparrow et al. in 2021. This has direct consequences for fundraisers. All things equal, one might be better off targeting older individuals for philanthropy rather than younger adults.

Future research could explore the relation between willingness to give, contextual empathy and the available causes. Some nondonors might be more open to participating in charitable giving if they are presented with a sensible solicitation about a cause they care about. In keeping with this question of converting nondonors, we will look at the recent research on how to incentivise donations.

c. Incentivising donations

A lot of research has focused on how to improve charitable solicitations. While there is no one-size-fits-all recipe, some recent techniques are widely accepted and easy to implement. A very rich literature exists about the best practices (Bekkers & Wiepking, 2011). We will focus on research that came after this article.

i. Creating an effective message

Crafting a good advertising message has been the focus of many researchers and copywriters. Eliciting emotions is key. It appears that people in negative states donate more money relative to other emotional states, and tend to favour causes that alleviate current rather than future suffering (Huang et al. 2021). However, not all negative emotions are effective, feeling disgusted by an external stimulus appears to lower empathy and subsequently decrease donations (Chan & Septianto, 2022).
At the same time, some positive emotions have been shown to increase donations, hinting that the cause and subtleties in the message lend themselves to several effective emotional appeals.
Eliciting sympathy increases donations on present and past donors (Sudhir et al. 2016). Cockrill and Parsonage (2016) have identified that surprise, interest and compassion are key factors of effective shock advertising for charities.

Some research has also focused on what functions best as a charitable advertising creative. Donors tend to donate more when the ad shows beneficiaries engaged in physical self-help than to ads portraying people engaged in non-physical self-help or no self-help at all (Perez et al. 2023). It also seems like donors react poorly to images of cold objects (Choi et al. 2016).

The leading theory is that exposure to visually cold stimuli leads to feelings of physical coldness, which lead in turn to feelings of loneliness. Such images perform worse than neutral or warm images.

A lot of research has been published about the role of status and charitable giving. This can also be used to create an effective ad appeal. People tend to give more when a high-status individual has been cited as a donor in a campaign (Kumru & Vesterlund, 2010). Social proof and social integration theory both offer explaining mechanisms for this effect. However, people also tend to give more when they observe lower class people give (Cha et al. 2020). This is also seemingly explained by social proof, and by the notion that lower class people can serve as a source of self-reflection and cause prosocial action.

Finally, name similarity has been identified as an effective tactic to increase donations. A study conducted via Donorschoose.org documented that donors give more and more often when a teacher shares their last name (Munz et al. 2020). This is probably harder to replicate, because most nonprofits do not have a large database of potential beneficiaries to match the names of potential donors.

In addition to constructing the advertisement, the structure of the donation system has a substantial impact on the donors' willingness to give.

ii. Structure of the donation system

The structure of the donation system refers to the incentives put in place to encourage donors. These are different from simple copywriting or advertising design, and usually cannot be as easily changed.

A large-scale study has focused on the benefits of donor word of mouth after a donation has been made (Silver & Small, 2023). The cheap and simple intervention consisted in modifying the thank you email, that donors receive after donating, to include a solicitation to consider sharing their donation on social networks. This logically increased the signup of new donors.

The authors estimate that the intervention would earn the nonprofit an extra $130’000 per year. This would be roughly equal to an increase of 0,1% in their total income.
Another study has focused on the impact of word of mouth (Yang & Hsee, 2022). However, the authors note that individuals may feel uneasy about publicising their contribution. This is because donors may fear that their motives be considered impure rather than purely altruistic. Campaigns that include obligatory publicity as a feature recruit more donors and more donations.

The use of defaults has also been thoroughly studied. Suggesting the amount to give increases donations (Edwards & List, 2013; Moon & VanEpps, 2023). Using defaults works better than citing a global target amount (Park & Yoon, 2022).

Research has also determined that matching donations is effective. However, there is a limit to the effect. Larger match ratios, like 3:1 and 2:1 have no additional impact over smaller ratios like 1:1 (Karlan & List 2006).

Discussion

Donating to charitable organisations appears to be a niche behaviour. While virtually everyone knows that there are many nonprofits out there that need donations to function, it seems like most people do not want to participate in it (Landry et al. 2008).

Research has shown that not donating is a default and that the context of the solicitation has only a limited impact (Chandar et al. 2019). The main predictors for donations are donor-side, or rather, nondonor-side.

Many theoretical models have identified active motivations to give, and some pose interesting questions concerning the motivations to not give. Social-Exchange Theory offers a simple explanation: individuals are going to part with their resources or their money when they make it up elsewhere, either from heightened reputation or a positive emotional feeling, like the warm glow effect. The Empathy-Altruism Hypothesis suggests that empathy is a valid predictor of altruistic behaviour. The two models generally work well together. They posit that a nondonor does not give because they don't feel empathy towards the cause and they don't see how they would benefit from donating.

Other models enrich our understanding of motivations to not donate. Sociobiology indicates that people might avoid donating to strangers or outgroups. Structural functionalism posits that nondonors may believe that society works well as is, and that their donation does not matter. The Norm of Reciprocity states that nondonors might not donate if they feel that their donation will not be reciprocated. Symbolic interactionism posits that nondonors will not give if they don't ascribe meaning to the act of donating money.

The potential motivations for not donating are many. Fortunately, many papers point to the importance of targeting for an effective fundraising campaign.

Focusing on the individual characteristics, cognitive biology has some predictive power to identify the extremes of prosocial behaviour, in the forms of psychopathy and extreme altruism (Marsh, 2013, 2014). It also appears that women might feel more empathy, but the extent to which they are more altruistic than men is still contentious. Psychology offers some

practical tools, like the Big Five Index of personality, and several scales to measure altruism and empathy. Nondonors most likely have lower scores on those scales. Unfortunately, the scales are mostly self-report and there is still no practical, easy and cheap way to determine if somebody has a good potential for altruistic action.
Sociodemographic data can also be used, but, perhaps counter to intuition, donation behaviour is inversely correlated to income, with higher class individuals contributing less often than lower class ones (List, 2011). This is very practical, because sociodemographic data is very easy to come by. Targeting people based on postcodes has been done for a few decades. However, lower income households have less disposable income to give, making their targeting not necessarily the most effective. Avoiding nondonors is still not an easy task. The best bet for marketers will be to either retarget active or past donors, or to target donors of other nonprofits. Both can easily be done with the current tools available for targeting.

A lot of research has focused on the most effective ways to craft an ad. This is promising, but as we have outlined, nondonors are typically not very influenced by the context at any given time. There is still a lot to learn about nondonors to mitigate their effect on the nonprofit sector, and to, maybe, transform them into donors.

Before being a donor, an individual is inevitably a nondonor. The inflexion point probably has some significance for them that justifies the change in behaviour. Study this shift in perspective, research could learn a lot about the motivations and the context that transforms nondonors them into an active donor, possibly extracting some valuable insight.

Amotivation appears to be a promising concept in explaining why people might fail to donate. Self-determination Theory (SDT, Ryan & Deci, 2000) has been applied to academic and environmental behaviours with interesting findings. Future research could extend SDT to include altruistic behaviour in general and the propensity to donate to charitable organisations in particular.

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