Workshop: Can't We All Just Get Along?

Kimberly Anderson

NEA Center for Organizing

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Can't We Just Get Along?

Understanding the Generations

Presented by
Kimberly Anderson, NEA
kimberlyanderson@nea.org
CAN’T WE JUST GET ALONG?

UNDERSTANDING THE GENERATIONS

Data From
Millennials: Transforming K-12 Education for a Digital Generation
Presented by William Strauss
For International Society for Technology Education

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DOI: 10.58188/1941-8043.1279
QUESTION...
QUESTION...
QUESTION...
QUESTION...

B-4 U X-M-N L-C,
X-M-N R-V.

7/24/07
A GENERATION

- A cohort group
- Span from birth to adulthood
- Shares common:
  - Age location in history
  - Attitude and behavior traits
  - Collective identity
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GENERATION</th>
<th>BIRTH YEAR</th>
<th>FAMOUS MAN</th>
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### GENERATIONAL LINES

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BOOKS BY WILLIAM STRAUSS

- 13th Generation: Abort, Retry, Ignore, Fail?
- Talking About their Generations
- Millennials Go to College: Strategies for a New Generation on Campus
- Generations: History of America’s Future, 1584-2069
- Millennials and Pop Culture
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SILENT GENERATION

Born
1925-1942 (age 71-88)

Sample Members
Colin Powell
Alan Greenspan
Elvis Presley
Martin Luther King, Jr.
Gloria Steinem
Sandra Day O’Connor

Historic Purpose
Conform
Socialize

Educational Endowments
Multicultural Education
Girls Athletics
AP Classes
BOOMER GENERATION

**Born**
1943-1960 (age 53-70)

**Sample Members**
Bill Clinton
Hillary Clinton
Spike Lee
Condoleezza Rice
George W. Bush
Steven Spielberg
Bill Gates

**Historic Purpose**
Individualists
Resist authoritarianism

**Educational Endowments**
Accountability
Zero Tolerance in schools
Small learning communities
GEN X GENERATION

Born
1961-1981 (age 32-52)

Sample Members
Tom Cruise
Michael Dell
Michael Jordan
Tiger Woods
Barack Obama
Quentin Tarantino

Historic Purpose
Adapt to changes in culture, family and society

Educational Endowments
School Choice
Home Schooling
Multimedia Technologies
Multicultural “Melting Pot”
When Boomers were kids, 2 of every 3 moms said they’d stay in a bad marriage for the sake of the kids

When Gen Xers were kids, 2 of every 3 moms said they would not
Through the 1980’s and ’90s, Gen Xer were constantly told that...

their schools were failures.
their schools were dangerous.
their teachers were poorly trained.
students were stupid.
Gen X Generation

Defining characteristic: skeptical
High divorce rate of parents
“Latchkey” generation

As a result:
- More faith in self than institutions
- More resourceful
- More comfortable with change
- More independent
MENTORING

Hands off approach
Provide feedback
Encourage creativity and initiative
Provide clear expectations and measurements
Gen Xers work best when they’re given the desired outcome and then turned loose to figure out how to achieve it

Law Practice Today, August 2004
MILLENNIAL GENERATION

Born
1982-2001 (age 12-31)

Sample Members
LeBron James
Miley Cyrus
Mark Zuckerberg
Bow Wow
Jessica Lynch
One Direction

Historic Purpose
Protect and enhance children
Promote “values”

Educational Endowments
None yet...
MILLENNIAL GENERATION

In the history of polling, no generations of parents and collegians ever got along worse than G.I.’s and Boomers...

And none have ever gotten along better than Boomers and Millennials.
MILLENNIAL GENERATION

Where Boomers have been known as “Helicopter Parents”

Gen Xers are tech-savvy, results-oriented, pull-no-punches, “Stealth Fighter Parents”
MILLENIAL GENERATION

Over 75 million members of this generation are being raised at the most child-centric time in our history (baby on board generation)

As a result, Millennials display a great deal of self-confidence to the point of appearing cocky

NAFSA Conference, 2006
You’re OK, I’m Perfect
In the most closely contested states of the 2004 presidential election, the voting rate for 18- to 29-year-olds was 64%...

Which exceeded the national average in any recent presidential election
MILLENNIAL GENERATION

An estimated 23 million young Americans under the age of 30 voted in the 2008 presidential election.

An increase of 3.4 million compared with 2004.

66% voted for Obama, coining a new term: Generation O.
Ten years ago, in the Gen-X youth era, teenagers were the *most cynical* age bracket.

Now, in the Millennial youth era, teenagers are the *least cynical* age bracket.
MILLENNIAL GENERATION

Defining characteristic: Realistic
Recycling is SOP
No memory of time before MTV and cable
Strong bonds with family and friends
Raised by participation-oriented parents
Civic minded
Technologically sophisticated*
CHANGING WORK ETHICS

BOOMERS
“No one wants to pay their dues anymore”

X-ERS
“What does it matter if I do my job well”

MILLENNIALS
“Let’s get it done here and now”
CHANGING WORK ETHICS

BOOMERS
Work is a life mission

X-ERS
Work is a means to a life mission

MILLENNIALS
Work is discovery or nothing

NAFSA Conference, 2006
CHANGING WORK ETHICS

BOOMERS
Use technology for some work tasks

X-ERS
Use technology as a basic work tool for most tasks

MILLENNIALS
Less than the best is cruelty

NAFSA Conference, 2006
CHANGING WORK ETHICS

BOOMERS
The Boss is to critique my performance

X-ERS
The Boss is to be my coach and mentor

MILLENNIALS
Who’s the Boss?

NAFSA Conference, 2006
CHANGING WORK ETHICS

BOOMERS
Will put in more time than the hours needed for the cause

X-ERS
Will put in needed hours to complete the task

MILLENNIALS
Time is not the issue
CHANGING WORK ETHICS

BOOMERS
Need occasional feedback

X-ERS
Need constant feedback

MILLENNIALS
Need immediate feedback

NAFSA Conference, 2006
What are the implications for:

- teaching millennials
- and colleagues with millennials
HISTORY CREATES GENERATIONS BECAUSE YOUNGER PEOPLE ARE SHAPED BY EVENTS

Generations create history because older people direct the course of events
"There is a mysterious cycle in human events. To some generations, much is given. Of other generations, much is expected. This generation has a rendezvous with destiny."
“Tonight, we are young. So let’s set the world on fire. We can burn brighter than the sun.”
THANK YOU