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**AN
AMAZING +
POWERFUL
GENERATION**



➤ Who Are Generation We?

First, a few simple factual definitions. Generation We includes people born between 1978 and 2000. They follow two other well-known generations: the Baby Boomers (born 1946-1964), famous for their battles over sex, drugs, and rock 'n' roll, and currently holding most positions of power and influence in American society, and Generation X (born 1965-1977), a politically and socially conservative cohort that has struggled to define itself against the vast and dominant Boomer group it followed.

Of course, there is no absolute or objective definition of a generation. No one issues a decree from on high declaring “as of January 1, a new generation will begin.” But the definition of Generation We we’ve adopted represents the emerging consensus among social commentators, statisticians, and demographers.

It would be simplistic to claim that everybody in a particular generation is the same or holds the same views. Of course they don’t. Bill Clinton and Newt Gingrich are both Baby Boomers, and when they held political power, they fought tooth and nail over the best direction for the country. Being members of the same generation didn’t give them identical perspectives on anything.

But members of a generation do have some things in common. Clinton and Gingrich, for example, were both members of the first generation to grow up after World War II, in an era of relative affluence. They were among the first Americans to watch and be shaped by TV, to dance to rock ‘n’ roll, to take geographic and social mobility for granted, and to participate in the sexual revolution. Maybe it’s not an accident that they battled over issues from tax policy to healthcare: Baby Boomers have been fighting ideological and social battles with one another for almost 50 years.

So being part of a certain generation does have an influence on people, even if every generation has all the range of psychological, emotional, and personal variation human beings have always exhibited.

"We must use time wisely and forever realize that the time is always ripe to do right."

NELSON MANDELA

That's why the generation you belong to is genuinely meaningful and important—not a bit of fun but irrelevant trivia. Members of a generation tend to share a range of interests, beliefs, and values, as well as defining historical moments and cultural experiences that shape their point of view. It is these shared features that define a generation.

THE MILLENNIAL TIDAL WAVE

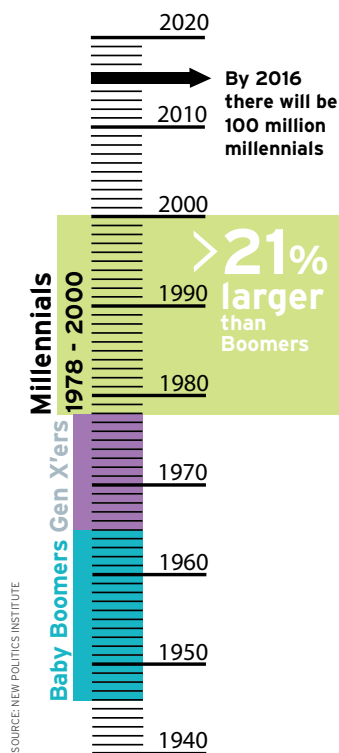
What, then, are the characteristics that make Generation We unique? One of the most important is their *huge numbers*. The Millennials are the largest generation in American history. Yes, you read that right—there are more Millennials than any other similar age group that has ever been born in this country.

Everyone has heard about the huge size and importance of the Baby Boom generation. (If you haven't, just ask any Boomer—most Boomers are endlessly fascinated by themselves and their special place in history.) American culture, business, politics, and society have all been transformed by the Baby Boom wave as it rolled through the history of the fifties, sixties, seventies, eighties, and nineties. Now, as they prepare to enter retirement, their vast numbers are about to seriously stress the nation's Social Security and Medicare systems.

There are 78 million Boomers—a larger number than any prior American generation, and more than the "baby bust" group that followed them, Generation X. But the Millennials are even more numerous—95 million strong, over 21 percent larger than the Baby Boom generation.

You might object that our definition of Generation We includes more birth years than we assigned to the Baby Boomers—maybe that's why the Millennials seem to be so numerous. Actually, it's not true. Even if you use a narrower definition of the Millennials, cutting off their birth years at 1996, they still outnumber the Boomers, 80 million to 78 million. (And note that other generations are routinely defined as including the larger number of birth years—for example, the group known as the Greatest Generation spans 22 years.) Sheer numbers mean that Generation We is going to have a gigantic impact on American society, and in turn, on the world.

Every life experience the Millennials pass through together will have a huge effect on the world. We already see this happening. Generation We includes the people who have made social networking (Facebook, MySpace, and so on) an important technological and societal trend. They live on instant messaging (IM), text each other continually, and have created entire new industries such as massive multi-player online gaming. Through their vast numbers and economic power, they forced the music business to accept free downloading as a fact of life, and they appear poised to do the same to the TV and movie businesses. They've made the Internet the world's most important and fastest-growing medium for entertainment and information. And



Millennials → 95 million
Boomers → 78 million

SOURCE: NEW POLITICS INSTITUTE

they've begun affecting the outcome of national elections, especially as participation rates by young voters climb steadily—a reflection, as we'll see, of the values of Generation We.

In years to come, the world will be changed by the shared life-cycle stages of Generation We. When large numbers of Millennials start buying houses and having children, it will affect industries such as real estate, education, and automobiles. When Millennials get older and more affluent, they will transform businesses like travel and the market for luxury goods. When Millennials reach their forties and fifties, they will take over positions of power in corporations, bringing with them their generational attitudes about consumerism, the environment, and society (all of which we'll discuss in a moment).

But think about their political impact. By 2016, there will be 100 million Millennials (taking immigration into account), and all will be old enough to vote. Even if Generation We follows past generations in voting at somewhat lower rates than older Americans, they will constitute some 30 percent of the electorate. On the other hand, if their rates of participation increase (as is already happening), their clout will be even greater. It will only increase over time, as the Millennials age and become a proportionately larger share of the voting-age population. For the first time, the youth could have *more* voting clout than their elders.

Generation We is about to rock the world. There are so many of them, they can't help doing it even if they wanted to.

A NEW FACE FOR AMERICA

Sheer numbers would make Generation We a powerful force for change even if they were basically similar to past American generations. But they're not. In many ways, the Millennials represent a brand-new America, transformed by demographic and cultural trends that have been building for decades.

Generation We is America's *most diverse* generation ever, with more Hispanics (18 percent), Blacks (14 percent), and Asians (five percent) than any previous cohort. This is due, in part, to the unprecedented numbers of immigrants to the United States over the past several decades.

They are also the *best-educated* generation in history, boasting a higher percentage of well-educated men and women than any other. Enrollment rates in postsecondary education are increasing; in 2004, the rate for 18- to 19-year-old Millennials was 64 percent. By comparison, the enrollment rate for Boomers of that age in 1970 was only 48 percent. Similarly, the enrollment rate for 20- to 24-year-olds was 35 percent in 2004, compared to just 22 percent in 1970.

According to 2005 Census data, about 28 percent of workers in their twenties had a B.A. degree or higher.¹ Generation We is also hanging out on college campuses longer than past generations. The median





BEST EDUCATED

2004

64%
18 - 19 year olds
College Enrollment Rate

20 - 24
year olds
35%
College Enrollment Rate

2005

28%
workers in
their twenties
Have a Bachelor's Degree

SOURCE: US CENSUS DATA

Generation We is poised to spearhead one of the decisive turning points in American history.

years taken for college completion went up from four to five years between 1970 and 2000. As a result, today 45 percent of college students are 21 or older, compared to just 25 percent in 1970.

THEY KNOW WHO THEY ARE

As we've seen, the demographic characteristics of Generation We are unique. But even more interesting and important are the attitudes and opinions of the Millennials. It is these qualities that tell us Generation We is poised to spearhead one of the decisive turning points in American history.

In the rest of this chapter, we'll be presenting the results of a major research study into the characteristics of the Millennial generation conducted especially for this book. It was sponsored by author Eric Greenberg and conducted by Gerstein | Agne Strategic Communications, one of the most respected research organizations in the United States, and included both extensive oral and written surveys and a series of in-depth focus groups. We'll refer to this study as the Greenberg Millennials Study (GMS). Detailed information about how this study was conducted, as well as a wealth of specific data, can be found in the appendix of this book.

From time to time, we'll also cite some other important studies of Generation We.² As you'll see—and as other commentators and analysts have observed—practically every study of the Millennials agrees on certain conclusions. The points we'll be making about the Millennials are about as well documented as any findings from social science can be.

One of the most significant basic findings of every study of Generation We is that they are a highly *self-aware* generation. They readily identify themselves as a unique age group with shared attitudes, experiences, and characteristics.

Findings from the GMS indicate that Millennials have a clear sense of generational identity. By 10 to 1 (90 percent to 9 percent) they agree that their generation “shares specific beliefs, attitudes, and experiences” that set them apart from generations that have come before them. By 68 to 31, they believe their generation has a great deal or a fair amount in common with young adults of their generation in other countries, rather than just a little or nothing at all. They even say, by 54 to 44, that they have more in common with young adults of their generation in other countries than they have with Americans of older generations.

Note, however, that Millennials are not convinced that the needs and goals of their generation are necessarily *opposed* to that of older generations in their own country. Half believe that “[t]he needs and goals of my generation are similar to those of older generations, and

our best course is to work together to advance common interests” rather than “[t]he needs and goals of my generation are fundamentally at odds with those of older generations, and accomplishing our goals will require removing those currently in power and replacing them with ourselves” (49 percent).

This tells us some important things about Generation We. They know who they are. They see themselves as a unique group, and identify strongly with others of the same age. Yet they *don't* define themselves in opposition to other generations—as the Baby Boomers did, for example. (Remember the Boomer slogan, “Don’t trust anybody over 30”?) The Millennials are ready to work together with those who are older and younger than they. It’s one of several qualities we’ll point to that make Generation We especially well-positioned to serve as leaders for the revolutionary social changes we think are coming.

GENERATION WE AROUND THE WORLD

In this book, we’ll focus primarily on Generation We in the United States. We have several reasons for choosing this focus: American youth are the Millennials about whom most is known. We, the authors, are Americans immersed in the political, social, and economic circumstances of our own country; and we view the United States as being at a crossroads in history, which Generation We is uniquely positioned to affect.

Since the United States is perhaps the most powerful nation on the planet—certainly in military terms, and arguably in cultural and economic terms as well—trends and changes driven by American Millennials are likely to have an enormous impact on the population of the whole world. But we live in an increasingly interdependent world, and American Millennials themselves believe that they are called to work with their counterparts from other nations and continents. We cannot—and must not—ignore the important role that youth from around the world will play in shaping the decades to come. Let’s take a brief detour into the world of Millennials outside the United States. As you’ll see, there are some notable similarities—as well as some striking differences.

First, whereas American Millennials are children of both the out-sized Baby Boom generation and significant immigration from Latin America and Asia (which accounts, in large part, for their vast numbers), global Millennials are the offspring of a world in which fertility rates have generally been on the decline, especially in the developing world. Nonetheless, the number of young people around the world who are currently under the age of 30 is still huge, more than half of the world’s population. In 2005, the median age of the world’s population was 28 and falling. Current estimates suggest that the number





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of people in the world in their twenties (which does *not* include the youngest Millennials, now 18 and 19 years old) is over 1.1 billion, or nearly 17 percent of the total population.³

Second, in cultural and social terms, it seems likely that most non-U.S. Millennials are several years “younger” than their American counterparts. As generational scholars Neil Howe and William Strauss explain in their study *Millennials Rising*, this fits the differing historical circumstances they and their parents experienced in the post–World War II period. The affluence, security, and freedom that characterized life in the United States during the 1950s (and which shaped the world of the Baby Boomers) came later to Europe and Asia. Therefore, young people outside the United States are still catching up to Americans in terms of their social and cultural characteristics.

But they’re catching up fast. Thanks to the Internet and other global communications technologies, youth culture is rapidly becoming a planetary rather than national or regional culture. As Howe and Strauss put it (at a time when Generation We was still mostly in its early teens), “Millennials are today forging a mind-set borrowed from bits and pieces of their countries of origin. The amalgam is part Ricky Martin, part Harry Potter, part Lego, part Kwanzaa, and part Pokémon.”⁴

The crucial point is Generation We around the world is an incredible force, and one that sees itself as a single, closely linked generation with much more in common than dividing them. They all watch TV together, go online together, and swap ideas and information continually. As a result, they will make crucial social and political decisions within a framework that is multicultural and planetary rather than nationalistic, making their combined global power even greater.

A WIRED GENERATION

American Millennials share a remarkable number of personal and attitudinal traits regardless of geographic, gender, religious, and ethnic differences.

The first and most striking trait is this: *Generation We is incredibly smart about and driven by technology.* They are profoundly shaped by, and comfortable with, the new technologies that connect people around the world electronically, and they have already played a major role in creating and shaping some of those technologies (such as social networking).

The GMS asked Millennials to rate a series of events or trends for their importance in shaping the attitudes and beliefs of their generation. The clear leader was “the rise of the Internet, cell phones, text messaging, email, and similar advances in personal technology,” with

an average importance rating of 8.3 (where 10, the highest rating, represents extremely important, and 0, the lowest rating, represents not at all important). Moreover, 48 percent of Millennials gave this trend a perfect 10 rating for its effect on their generation. (The next most important influence was the terrorist attacks of 9/11, with an average 7.9 rating and 36 percent giving it a perfect 10.)

This impression is borne out by a wealth of other survey data. A survey of “Generation Next” by the respected Pew Research Center in January 2007, shows rates of Internet usage (86 percent) and email usage (77 percent) are high among Millennials (18–25-year-olds). And more than half of Millennials (54 percent) say they have used a social networking site such as Facebook or MySpace.


Even stronger results come from an April 2006 survey of 18- to 25-year-olds by Greenberg, Quinlan, Rosner Research (no relation to author Eric Greenberg). In that survey, respondents reported spending an average of 21.3 hours a week online, including time spent emailing and instant messaging (IM). In the June 2007 Democracy Corps survey, 18- to 29-year-old Millennials reported a lower average weekly time online of 15.1 hours.

Also in the April 2006 GQR survey, 86 percent reported using email every day; 56 percent said they read news online every day; 41 percent said they used MySpace, Facebook, or something similar every day; and 40 percent said they instant messaged every day. More than half (52 percent) said they had a personal page on MySpace and 34 percent said they had one on Facebook.

But perhaps the most striking and distinctive aspect of technology usage by Generation We is their embrace of mobile media. For example, in a March 2005 mKids World Study survey (reported in NPI’s 2006 study, *Mobile Media in 21st Century Politics*), 28 percent of 18- to 24-year-olds reported text messaging regularly, compared to 16 percent of 25- to 34-year-olds and just 7 percent of 35- to 54-year-olds. Even more impressive, in the 2005 Pew Gen Next survey, a majority (51 percent) of 18- to 25-year-olds said they had sent or received a text message *in the past 24 hours*, compared to 22 percent of those 26 to 40 and 10 percent of those 41 to 60.

So Generation We is deeply involved in using new technologies. They also *like* the new technologies and feel good about their impact on the world.

Generation We is generally optimistic about the social and economic impact of new technologies. In the May 2006 Young Voter Strategies poll, 69 percent of Millennials believe new technologies (such as the Internet, cell phones, text messaging, IM, iPods, etc.) make people more efficient, 64 percent believe they make you closer to old friends and family, and 69 percent believe they make it easier to make new friends (the latter two figures are substantially higher than among older generations). On the other hand, 84 percent believe these



EMBRACING MOBILE MEDIA

sent or received text messages in the past day **51%**

69% believe new technologies make people more efficient

believe they make you closer to friends + family **64%**

69% believe they make it easier to make new friends

SOURCE: YOUNG VOTER STRATEGIES POLL, MAY 2006



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new technologies make people lazier (more than any other age group), 67 percent believe they make people more isolated, and 68 percent believe they make people waste time.

In a June 2006 Pew survey, 18- to 25-year-old Millennials were more likely than any other age group to believe that email and new ways of communication have helped American workers (88 percent). They were also the only age group where a majority thought that the automation of jobs has helped American workers (54 percent). In an April 2006 GQR survey of 18- to 25-year-olds, 86 percent agreed that the benefits of the Internet far outweigh any dangers it presents.

The fact that the largest generation in history is also the first generation for whom technology is as basic as eating, drinking, and breathing will revolutionize economies around the world. Metcalfe's Law states that the value of a network expands logarithmically as its volume/usage doubles; in other words, as participation in the wired economy grows, the impact of that economy grows even faster. Look at how the Internet has transformed life in the last 15 years. The long-term effects of the technological innovations Generation We will spearhead will be even greater, impacting business, finance, communications, entertainment, education, government, and healthcare in ways we can't even conceive of today.

In short, we're living in the Millennials' world, part of a global economy and technological infrastructure that is in the midst of transformational change and whose future will be based on *their* behavior.

A HOPEFUL GENERATION

Generation We is optimistic. As a generation, they are generally convinced that today's children will grow up to be better off than people of today.

A June 2007 Democracy Corps survey of 18- to 29-year-old Millennials bears out this impression. In that poll, 79 percent thought "hopeful" described most people their age very well or well, 78 percent thought "independent" well-described their age group, and 77 percent thought "forward-looking" and "progressive" well-described their generation. When asked how well specific terms described themselves, 93 percent picked "forward-looking," and 90 percent, 91 percent, and 86 percent, respectively, felt that about the terms "hopeful," "independent," and "progressive."

What's more, according to the Pew Center's September 2006 Gen Next survey of today's 18- to 25-year-olds, 84 percent believe that, compared with young adults 20 years ago, they have better educational opportunities, 72 percent believe they have access to higher-paying jobs, 64 percent they believe they live in more exciting times, and 56

percent believe they have better opportunities to bring about social change.

In terms of their overall views, as measured in the same Gen Next survey, 50 percent thought it was better to be a young adult today than 20 years ago, compared to 45 percent who thought those 20 years ago had the better deal.

Another sign of optimism in the Gen Next survey among 18- to 25-year-olds was that, while most believe they currently do not have enough money “to lead the kind of life you want” (63 percent among those not employed and 70 percent among those who are employed), almost all of those individuals believe they *will* have enough money to do so in the future.

Other Pew surveys also show considerable optimism among members of Generation We. In a February 2006 survey, 18- to 29-year-olds (Millennials would include the 18- to 28-year-olds in this group) were the most optimistic age group in assessing whether today’s children would grow up better or worse off than people are now (45 percent better/39 percent worse; other age groups were more negative than positive by margins of from 17–27 points). In a July 2006 survey, 18- to 29-year-olds were the most optimistic about whether they would move ahead in life (as measured by self-placement on a “ladder of life” going from 0 as lowest to 10 as highest) in the next five years. Seventy-two percent thought they would, compared to 13 percent who expected no change and 8 percent who thought things would get worse. They were also more likely to believe they had made progress in life in the last five years (58 percent thought so, while 20 percent thought they’d stayed the same and 18 percent thought they’d slipped).

...a generation that believes in the power of human ingenuity and creativity to develop solutions to the problems we face.

At the same time, despite their optimism in life, Generation We has a sober sense of reality and of the problems their generation faces. Many worry that, if current trends continue, the world will be worse off, and they understand the peril of not doing anything at all.

A plurality in the GMS (46 percent) believed that 20 years from now their generation will live in a country that is worse off than the one we live in today, compared to 34 percent who thought the country will be better off. In a June 2007 *New York Times*/CBS News/MTV survey of 17- to 29-year-old Millennials, almost half (48 percent) thought their generation will be worse off than their parents’ generation, compared to 50 percent who thought their generation would be the same (25 percent) or better off (25 percent).

Certain aspects of the way things have changed in the last 20 to 30 years elicit clearly negative views from Generation We (though even here they tend to be less pessimistic than older generations about these changes). Pluralities or majorities of 18- to 29-year-olds believe

hopeful
optimistic
progressive
forward-thinking
independent

there is less job security for the average worker today than 20 to 30 years ago; there is more on-the-job stress; retirement benefits are worse; and people need to work harder to make a decent living.

Yet despite these concerns, Generation We is optimistic about their potential and believe that their destiny is in their own hands. Combine the Millennials' belief in technology with their fundamental optimism, and you get a generation that is strongly committed to the idea of *innovation*—a generation that believes in the power of human ingenuity and creativity to develop solutions to the problems we face.

Later, we'll be looking at some of the problems Generation We will face as they gradually take responsibility for the world they are inheriting. Those problems are serious—even frightening. Sobering statistics suggest that the Millennials may, in fact, be the first generation in American history to face tougher life prospects than their parents did. This makes their optimistic attitude toward the future all the more remarkable—and admirable.

A RESPONSIBLE GENERATION

Generation We is a responsible group. In comparison with other generations, they shy away from drugs, unsafe sex, and other high-risk behaviors that harmed the two preceding generations, the Baby Boomers and the Generation Xers.

The first Millennials entered their senior years in high school in 1996 and 1997. Those years generally marked the peak of drug use by twelfth graders (as measured by the National Institute on Drug Abuse's annual Monitoring the Future survey), which had been rising throughout the early 1990s, when the later Gen Xers were reaching that grade. Since then, drug use has been declining for almost all drugs tracked by the survey. For example, 42 percent of twelfth graders in 1996 said they had used some illicit drug in the last year, compared to 37 percent in 2006. Perhaps of even more significance is the fact that drug use is now being delayed by adolescents. In 1996, 24 percent of eighth graders said they had used an illicit drug in the last year; that's now down to 15 percent.

These levels are still higher than they were in the very early 1990s, before measured drug use started increasing. But if current trends continue, measured adolescent illicit drug use should fall below those levels in several more years.

Teens are also waiting longer to have sex. According to the Guttmacher Institute, some 13 percent of females and 15 percent of males ages 15 to 19 in 2002 had sex before they were 15; that's down from 19 and 21 percent, respectively, in 1995. In addition, currently 75 pregnancies occur every year among females age 15 to 19; that rate is down 36 percent since its peak in 1990. Births among this age group

are also down by 31 percent over this time period.

Recent rates of juvenile crime have also declined dramatically. For example, in 1994, the rate of violent crime by juveniles was 40 percent above its average for the last several decades; the latest data show that rate is now 15 percent *below* its average. Also, between 1994 and 2002, the number of murders involving a juvenile offender fell 65 percent, to its lowest level since 1984.

Furthermore, as Millennials are shying away from dangerous or health-threatening behaviors, they are also enthusiastically taking up socially beneficial activities, including volunteerism, activism, charity, blogging on social issues, political organizing, and voting. The youth of Generation We care more deeply about the poor, the disenfranchised, and the vulnerable than past generations. They are especially concerned about the environment and the effects of our past bad stewardship over it, and as we'll show in later chapters, they are changing their behaviors to reflect these concerns. These are all impressive signs of responsibility, all the more remarkable in a generation that is still so young.

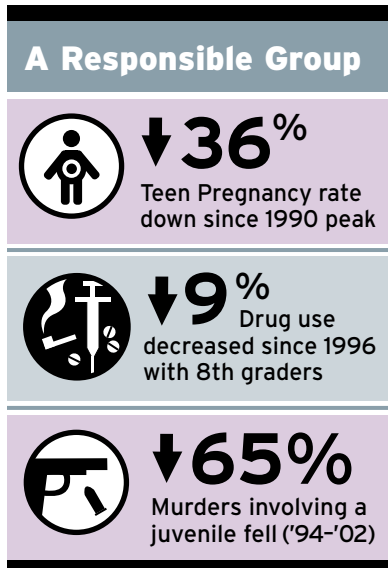
Many people, especially Baby Boomers, make the assumption that irresponsible behavior is just a natural part of being young. (President George W. Bush, himself a Boomer, responded to rumors of his substance abuse by saying, "When I was young and irresponsible, I was young and irresponsible.") But what was true of the Boomers isn't true of Generation We. They tend to take life and its responsibilities seriously—the kind of trait most of us like to see in a generation that will soon be helping to guide the fate of our nation and our world.

READY FOR CHANGE

Generation We is innovation-minded. They've adopted the pioneering American spirit and embraced it in the form of a profound belief in innovation—technological, social, political. This belief is the hallmark of their generation. Millennials do not see a world of limits but one of possibilities in which anything can be accomplished with enough creativity and determination.

Generation We is also comfortable with risk, as evidenced by their embrace of the ideal of entrepreneurship. In our focus groups, when we asked Millennials to name their personal heroes, they rarely mentioned politicians, athletes, or entertainers, choosing instead creative visionaries from the worlds of business, technology, and social innovation—people such as Bill Gates, Steve Jobs, Nelson Mandela, Muhammad Yunus, and even Oprah Winfrey (whom Millennials view not as a talk show host but as a pioneering female business leader and human rights advocate).

With their affinity for technology, Generation We is pursuing their belief in innovation personally. They are working in the world's top



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charity
volunteerism
activism
entrepreneurship
political organizing

university research labs, witnessing the laws of chemistry, physics, materials science, and electrical engineering being transformed by their own research. They know from personal experience that the future is in their hands, and their comfort with the latest technology along with their open-minded attitude makes them a more formidable force for innovation than any previous generation.

Survey results bear out these impressions. The GMS asked Millennials whether their generation was more likely or less likely than earlier generations of Americans to be characterized by

various attitudes and behaviors. Topping the list was *embracing innovation and new ideas*. More than three-quarters (78 percent) thought Millennials were more likely than earlier generations to embrace innovation and new ideas, compared to a mere 7 percent who thought Millennials were less likely than earlier generations to do so, for a net score (more likely minus less likely) of +71. *This is by far the strongest result for any of the 14 characteristics we tested.*

Consistent with this finding, another question in the GMS found 87 percent of Generation We agreeing with the statement, “Throughout our history, America’s success has been built on innovation and entrepreneurship.

As we confront the many challenges facing us today, it is that same spirit of innovation and entrepreneurship that is needed to maintain America’s strength in the 21st century.”

Equally important, *Generation We is noncynical and civic-minded*. They believe in the value of political engagement and are convinced that government can be a powerful force for good. What’s more, there are many signs that Generation We is already acting on these beliefs, getting far more involved in social and political activism at a young age than other recent American generations.

One of the most significant findings from the GMS is Millennials’ interest in and belief in collective social action. When asked about the best way to address the challenges facing the country, the leading choice by far was “through a collective social movement” (60 percent made that their first or second choice) over through individual action and entrepreneurship (35 percent), through the media and popular culture (33 percent), through government action (40 percent), or through international cooperation (30 percent). Note that the number choosing a collective social movement (38 percent) as their first choice was more than twice the number that chose any other option as their first choice.

Consistent with this belief in collective action, Generation We

has a strong and activist sense of generational mission. The results of these four questions from the GMS show just how robust that sense of mission is:

In our country, each generation has a responsibility to wisely use the country’s resources and power so that they can provide the next generation a secure, sustainable country that is stronger than the one they inherited (91 percent agree, 53 percent strongly agree).

Young Americans must take action now to reverse the rapid decline of our country. If we wait until we are older, it will be too late (89 percent agree, 48 percent strongly agree).

Life in the future in America will be much worse unless my generation of Americans takes the lead in pushing for change (85 percent agree, 42 percent strongly agree).

My generation of Americans has better opportunities to make a difference and produce structural change than previous generations (79 percent agree, 31 percent strongly agree).

Moreover, Generation We explicitly rejects the idea that individuals shouldn’t step forward and try to make a difference. More than three-quarters (78 percent) say they are willing to make significant sacrifices in their own life “to address the major environmental, economic, and security challenges facing our country.” By 4 to 1, Millennials say that *addressing the big issues facing my generation starts with individuals willing to take a stand and take action (80 percent) rather than individuals can’t make a real difference in addressing the big issues facing my generation (20 percent).*

Consistent with these sentiments, volunteerism is unusually high among Millennials. According to UCLA’s American Freshman survey—conducted for the past 40 years with several hundred thousand respondents each year—83 percent of entering freshman in 2005 volunteered at least occasionally during their high school senior year, the highest ever measured in this survey. Seventy-one percent said they volunteered on a weekly basis. (Some data sources indicate that rates of volunteering among Millennials may actually have been highest right after—and presumably in reaction to—9/11, but differences in question wording and population surveyed prevent a definitive judgment on this possibility.)

Generation We is deeply concerned about the common good. They also believe in social change—and they are ready, even eager,

Millennials do not see a world of limits but one of possibilities in which anything can be accomplished with enough creativity and determination.

Generation We is deeply concerned about the common good. They also believe in social change—and they are ready, even eager, to play their role in making positive changes happen.



to play their role in making positive changes happen. Committed to innovation, they are determined to leave the world better off (even if this means they must take on the difficult challenge of reversing decades of environmental, economic, and social damage), and they are prepared to work outside the traditional boundaries and institutions to drive change.

Combined with their technology-driven culture, this means the Millennials are ready to mobilize differently, more powerfully, more collaboratively, and more creatively than past generations. The results are likely to be astounding.

POLITICALLY ENGAGED

By comparison with past generations, *Generation We* is highly politically engaged. In the 2006 American Freshman survey, more freshman reported they discussed politics more frequently as high school seniors (34 percent) than at any other point in the 40 years covered by the survey. According to the December 2006 Pew Research Center Gen Next data, Millennials who are 18 to 25 today (birth years 1981–1988) are running about 10 points higher than Gen Xers at the same age on following what’s going on in government and in level of interest in keeping up with national affairs. In a Greenberg Quinlan Rosner (GQR) April 2005 survey of 18- to 25-year-olds, respondents gave themselves an average of 7 on a 10-point scale as to how well “I read a lot about politics” describes them (higher even than the 5.6 they gave themselves on reading about technology).

More recently, in a January 2007 Pew Research Center survey, 77 percent of 18- to 29-year-olds said they are interested in local politics, up 28 points from 49 percent in 1999—the highest increase of any age group surveyed. The survey also found that 85 percent of 18- to 29-year-olds report they are “interested in keeping up with national affairs,” a 14-point increase from 71 percent in 1999 and nearly the same level of interest as adults of all ages (89 percent).

Generation We also comes out well in measures of election-related political engagement. According to the University of Michigan’s National Election Study (NES), 18- to 29-year-olds in 2004 (an age group dominated by Millennials who were 18–26 at the time), were either higher or matched previous highs on a wide range of political involvement indicators, when compared to 18- to 29-year-olds in previous elections. These indicators included level of interest in the election, caring a good deal who wins the election, trying to influence others’ votes, displaying candidate buttons or stickers, attending political meetings, and watching TV programs about the campaign.

More detail on political engagement is provided by the Harvard Institute of Politics (IOP) November 2007 survey of 18–24-year-olds.

In that survey, 50 percent said they had signed an online petition, 28 percent had written an email or letter advocating a political position, 23 percent had contributed to an political discussion or blog advocating a political position, 21 percent had attended a political rally, 15 percent had donated money to a political campaign or cause, and 12 percent had volunteered on a political campaign for a candidate or issue. In addition, 60 percent said they closely followed news about national politics.

In the same survey, 63 percent also thought political engagement was an effective way of solving important issues facing the country, 66 percent thought such engagement was an effective way of solving important issues facing their local community; the analogous figures for community volunteerism were 61 and 80. The GMS found somewhat stronger results, with 69 percent saying political activism was a very or somewhat effective way of solving the major challenges facing our country and 73 percent saying community volunteerism was an effective way of solving those challenges.

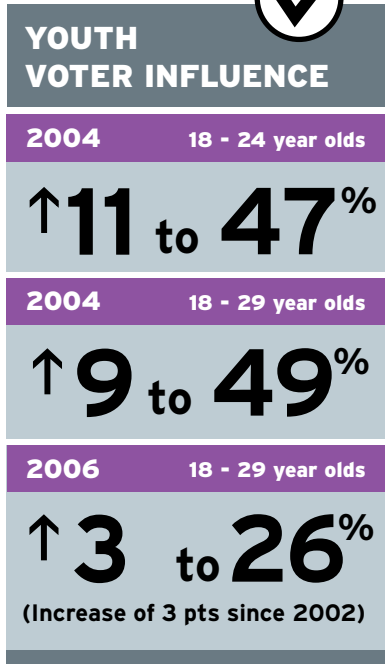
Given Generation We's strong support for collective action, sense of generational mission, and high levels of activism and political interest, it is not surprising that Millennials' voter turnout so far has been exceptionally strong.

In the 2004 election, Census data indicate that the 18- to 24-year-old group, completely composed of Millennials, increased their turnout 11 points to 47 percent of citizens in that age group, while 18- to 29-year-olds—dominated for the first time by Millennials—increased their turnout 9 points to 49 percent. These increases were far higher than among any other age group.

Studies from 2006 also suggest that turnout went up even more in precincts where a special face-to-face, door-to-door effort was made to get young voters to the polls. CIRCLE's analysis of nonpartisan voter turnout efforts in student-dense precincts indicated that turnout, on average, doubled over 2002 in these precincts. Evidence continues to accumulate that direct contact (as opposed to phone-banking) turnout efforts are extraordinarily effective with Generation We voters.

The long-term trends at work here are huge and spell a steady increase in the influence of youthful voters. Pundits called the electoral shift of 2006 a mandate on the war in Iraq, but it reflected even more the rise in youth voting combined with their strongly progressive attitudes (as we'll explain in the next section).

Turnout among members of Generation We, even with these increases, still lags behind older cohorts—a long-standing pattern among American voters. But the gap has narrowed dramatically. If we take into account volunteerism and community activism levels that are already on a par in most respects with older cohorts, it is clear that Millennials are poised to make a big impact on society with their unusually high rates of civic participation, political involvement, and voting.



SOURCE: THIS PAGE: GREENBERG MILLENNIAL STUDY 2007

YOUTH PRIMARY VOTING



↑ 333%

In Iowa



↑ 91%

In New Hampshire



↑ 253%

In Florida

SOURCE: CIRCLE

In the 2008 primaries, Generation We is continuing their trend toward increased voter participation in dramatic fashion. Here's a summary by CIRCLE of youth (18- to 29-year-olds—all Millennials) turnout in early primaries where comparison to previous elections was possible:

[Y]outh turnout rose dramatically in Iowa, Florida, and New Hampshire. In Iowa, the youth turnout rate rose to 13 percent in 2008 from four percent in 2004 and three percent in 2000. Young voters expanded as a proportion of all caucus-goers, and the total number of Iowans who caucused grew, producing a three-fold increase in youth participation. Similarly, in New Hampshire, the youth turnout rate rose sharply to 43 percent in 2008 compared to 18 percent in 2004 and 28 percent in 2000. Young people increased their turnout more than the older voters. The youth turnout rate increased by 15 percentage points over 2000 while the turnout rate for those ages 30 and above increased by only six percentage points. In Florida, the youth voter turnout tripled compared to 2000 despite the fact that the Democratic primary was not fully contested.

These trends continued into Super Tuesday. The basic results in states that had previously participated in Super Tuesday were as follows: in California, youth turnout went up from 13 percent to 17 percent; in Connecticut, youth turnout went up from 7 to 12 percent; in Georgia, youth turnout tripled; in Massachusetts, youth turnout doubled; in Missouri, youth turnout tripled; in New York, youth turnout was steady while overall turnout fell; in Oklahoma, youth turnout tripled; and in Tennessee, youth turnout quadrupled. Granted these turnout increases are measured against a low base, but they are impressive nonetheless. And typically the percentage point increase in youth turnout exceeded the percentage point increase among voters as a whole.

Paradoxically, members of Generation We are not quick to claim for themselves the mantle of being particularly active or politically engaged, even though they are, in fact, among the most involved young people in history. In our focus groups, many Millennials criticized their own generation as being “apathetic” or “materialistic.” There are a number of possible explanations for this paradox.

One is that the Millennials are measuring their and their generation's activism—actually high relative to earlier generations of young people—against the seriousness of the planetary problems they face and finding it wanting. They are worried that their generation has not yet launched the kind of social and political movement they see as necessary to address the major issues of our time. This attitude is a re-

flection of their strong sense of responsibility—and also a measure of their readiness to step forward when conditions are right and a clear agenda emerges for Millennials to rally around.

Negative media coverage of youth probably also plays a role. It is intriguing to note that although Millennials in the June 2007 Democracy Corps survey were overwhelmingly convinced (87 percent) that the word “materialistic” well-described people their own age, only 35 percent felt that term well-described themselves. Generation We as a group strongly condemns materialism even as they believe (or fear) it is rampant among their peers.

The fact is Generation We is ready to work for large-scale change and to support the kind of collective movement they consider necessary for such change to occur. Perhaps only such a movement—one that empowers individuals to become, in Gandhi’s words, “the change they wish to see in the world”—can overcome the barriers Millennials see as holding them and their generation back.

We’d argue that a movement aimed at engaging and mobilizing Generation We must build on the distinctive aspects of the Millennial personality: a view that overcoming tradition and innovating to create a better future is both necessary and a central strength of their generation; a wish to embody in their lives and actions the kind of change they are seeking to make; an unabashed willingness to use their economic power as consumers; a deep embeddedness in social networks; a clear-eyed assessment of the difficulties of change, which leads them to seek not just action but plans for successful action; and of course, an appreciation of the potential of the new technologies that have done so much to shape this generation.

By comparison with past generations, Generation We is highly politically engaged.

In short, Generation We is becoming more active and increasingly ready to support a collective social movement that embraces both government and entrepreneurship focused on the greater good. Based on their numbers and their sense of urgency, once such a movement emerges it is certain to be large, powerful, and lasting.

THE PROGRESSIVE SHIFT

The political attitudes of Generation We reveal a distinct pattern that is markedly different from that of their immediate predecessors, the Gen Xers—the most politically conservative cohort in American history. *Thanks to their open-mindedness and their overwhelming embrace of the greater good, Generation We is developing strongly progressive views on a wide range of issues and is poised to lead the most dramatic leftward political shift in recent American history.*

On the political stage, Generation We is already beginning to make their influence felt. The oldest Millennials were eligible to vote for the first time in 1996. In their first few elections, Generation We has voted



GEN WE: Voting Heavily Democratic



Since 2002 there has been a steady increase in a progressive direction with Millennial voters.

In 2002 Millennials voted Democratic by a 49 to 47 margin. **2002**

2004 In 2004 Millennials voted Democratic by a 56 to 43 margin.

SOURCE: RUY TEIXEIRA, 2008

This is the largest progressive shift since the New Deal—the movement launched in the 1930s by Franklin D. Roosevelt that earned him four terms in the White House...

more heavily Democratic than other recent generations. For example, in 2002 (otherwise a terrible year for Democrats), Millennials (then 18- to 24-years old) voted Democratic by 49 to 47 percent. In 2004, Millennials age 18 to 24 favored Democrat John Kerry for president by 56 to 43 percent. (Polling data for the entire Millennial cohort aren't available.) If young people ruled America, Kerry would have been elected with a landslide victory of 372 electoral votes to 166 for Bush.⁵ In 2006, Millennial voters (then 18- to 29-years old) favored

Democrats for Congress by a margin of 60 to 38 percent. They were the swing vote role that delivered the Democratic takeover of Congress during that year's mid-term elections.

The Democratic leanings of Generation We extend beyond voting choices into party identification. According to the most recent survey by the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press (released in April, 2008), Americans age 18 to 29 identify themselves as Democrats (or "lean" Democratic) over Republicans by a 58 to 33

percent margin.

This is the largest progressive shift since the New Deal—the movement launched in the 1930s by Franklin D. Roosevelt that earned him four terms in the White House, a rewriting of the social contract between Americans and their government, and nearly a half-century of political dominance for the Democratic Party, buoyed by the loyalties of voters whose sensibilities were shaped by the politics of

the New Deal. Thus, the progressive shift of Generation We isn't going to be an important trend for one or two years or even one or two elections. It's likely to shape American politics for several decades to come.

You might wonder whether the Democratic preferences of Generation We simply reflect their youth. After all, it's a common folk belief that young people are generally liberal and gradually become more conservative as they get older. But that's not the case. When we compare today's Generation We with their predecessors the Gen Xers, we see a huge crash in Republican support. Back in the 1990s, when the Gen Xers were the same age as Generation We is today, they identified with the Republicans at a 55 percent rate. Those same Gen Xers, now in their thirties, continue to be the most Republican generation today.

The fact is that party identification and other voting behaviors formed in a generation's twenties tend to persist for a lifetime, as demonstrated by many political science studies.⁶ This is good news for the Democratic Party. On Election Day in 2006, the exit polls showed the

Q92

Democrats with a 12-point lead in party identification among 18- to 29-year-old voters. Polls taken since then typically give the Democrats even larger leads in party identification among this age group, as well as substantial leads in generic presidential and congressional voting intentions for 2008.

Of course, party preference is one thing—political attitudes are another. Does the Millennial leaning toward the Democratic party merely represent a swing in “brand preference” from one vaguely defined collection of positions to another—or does it reflect a real shift in attitudes?

Our research demonstrates that the latter is true. In fact, *Generation We is far more wedded to progressive political and social views than to the Democratic party.* On issue after issue, Generation We favors progressive positions, even as they resolutely *reject* familiar labels, party banners, and ideological straitjackets. For example, in the GMS, fully 70 percent of respondents agreed with this statement:

Democrats and Republicans alike are failing our country, putting partisanship ahead of our country’s needs and offering voters no real solutions to our country’s problems.

And more Millennials surveyed described themselves as independents (39 percent) than either Democrats (36 percent) or Republicans (24 percent).

The fact is that the progressive shift of Generation We is not about party politics. It’s about a belief in the future; about embracing possibility and hope (the themes that have driven Barack Obama’s popularity among the young); and about rejecting the divisive rhetoric, penchant for social control, and protection of entrenched interests that young Americans identify with the conservative movement.

Members of Generation We see their friends coming home from war with permanent injuries; they find themselves unable to afford healthcare, to save for retirement, or to fill up their tanks with gas. They blame the right for these problems, and they see the obstinacy and narrow-mindedness of conservatives as being antithetical to their own optimism and spirit of innovation. So they reject the failed solutions of the right, even as they refuse to commit themselves wholeheartedly to any political party.

Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a Democrat, a Republican or what?

	Total
Strong Democrat	16
Weak Democrat	20
Independent-lean Democrat	11
Independent	22
Independent-lean Republican	6
Weak Republican	14
Strong Republican	10
(Don't know/refused)	1
Strong Affiliation	48
Lean/Weak Affiliation	50
Democrat/Lean Democrat	47
Republican/Lean Republican	30

SOURCE: GREENBERG MILLENNIAL STUDY 2007



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A TOLERANT GENERATION

Generation We is remarkably open-minded and tolerant on social issues. They are more accepting of gender equality, gay rights, racial blending, and immigration than any other generation.

Gender equality is rapidly becoming a nonissue with Generation We. In the 2004 National Election study, respondents were asked to place themselves on a 7-point scale relative to the following statements: “Some people feel that women should have an equal role with men in running business, industry and government. Others feel that women’s place is in the home,” where 1 is the strongest support for women’s equal role and 7 is the strongest support for women’s place being in the home. Two-thirds of Millennials selected 1, the strongest support for women’s equal role, and 88 percent of Millennials picked 1, 2, or 3—both figures that are higher than for any other generation.

In another NES question on whether government should see to it that women receive equal treatment on the job, Millennials (18- to 26-year-olds in their 2004 survey) were significantly stronger than other generations in the women’s equality direction. Eighty-five percent of Millennials felt that government should do this, compared to 68 percent of Xers and 71 percent of Boomers.

To some extent, Generation We is just responding to the lived reality of their generation—for them, gender equality is a “fact on the ground.” Indeed, women are not only equal in their experience but frequently taking the lead. For example, today girls tend to outperform boys in elementary and secondary school, getting higher grades, following more rigorous academic programs, and participating in advanced placement classes at higher rates. They also now outnumber

boys in student government, in honor societies, on school newspapers, and in debating clubs. And more girls are attending college than boys: 56 percent of today's undergraduates are women, compared to 44 percent who are men. Reflecting this disparity, women now earn 170,000 more bachelor's degrees each year than men do. Finally, while in 1970 fewer than 10 percent of medical students and four percent of law students were women, today women are roughly half of the nation's law and medical students, not to mention 55 percent of the nation's professionals as a whole.

On race, too, there's strong trend among Generation We toward seeing race as fundamentally a nonissue. In 2003, almost all (89 percent) of white 18- to 25-year-old Millennials said they agreed that "it's all right for Blacks and Whites to date each other," including 64 percent who "completely" agreed. Back in 1987–1988, when the same question was posed to white 18- to 25-year-old Gen Xers, just 56 percent agreed with this statement.

Gallup data from a 2005 poll underscore these findings; 95 percent of 18- to 29-year-olds said they approve of Blacks and Whites dating, and 60 percent of this age group said they had dated someone of a different race. In addition, 82 percent of white 18- to 25-year-old Millennials in 2003 disagreed with the idea that they "don't have much in common with people of other races."

But it is their views on sexual preference issues that are perhaps the most strikingly liberal. On gays, the views of Generation We are far more liberal than that of their elders. For example, in a 2007 Pew survey, an outright majority (56 percent) of 18- to 29-year-olds supported allowing gays and lesbians to marry, while the public as a whole opposed gay marriage by a 55-to-37 majority.

Millennials are also concerned about political trends that put tolerance at risk. In an April 2005 GQR poll of 18- to 25-year-olds, 64 percent believed that religious conservatives had gone too far in invading people's personal lives, and 58 percent thought the country needs to work harder at accepting and tolerating gays, rather than work harder at upholding traditional values.

Sexual tolerance was not a big subject of the GMS focus group discussions. Nevertheless, it is striking just how much tolerance of diversity and difference defines this generation's perspective. In fact, they pride themselves on this tolerance and see it as distinctive to their generation. Consequently, they believe divisive social issues will have far less effect on their generation than on previous generations.

Generation We also has an open and positive attitude toward immigration, much more so than older generations. In the Pew Gen Next poll, 18- to 25-year-olds, by 52 to 38, said immigrants strengthen the country with their hard work and talent, rather than are a burden on the country because they take our jobs, housing, and healthcare, compared to very narrow pluralities in this direction among Gen Xers

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and Boomers and 50–30 sentiment in the other direction among those 61 and over. In a 2004 Pew survey, 67 percent of 18- to 25-year-old Millennials thought the growing number of immigrants strengthens American society and only 30 percent believed this trend threatens our customs and values—again, much stronger positive sentiment than among any other generation.

Generation We not only believes in the concept of “live and let live,” they are prepared to act on it—and to vote by it. The “culture war” politics that were used effectively by right-wing politicians during the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s appears to have little power over the tolerant, open-minded Millennial generation.

The socially tolerant attitudes of Generation We mirror and link to their openness to new ideas and approaches toward solving our problems. It also means that the Millennials are ready to consider themselves a part of a planetary humankind not divided by race, religion, or national boundaries, but ready to accept differences in beliefs and values in exchange for progress, peace, and a better life for all.

A GENERATION OF GREEN ACTIVISTS

Generation We is overwhelmingly pro-environment. Having grown up—unlike any previous generation—with the image on their computer monitors of Planet Earth as a precious, fragile blue sphere floating like an island of life in the darkness of space, the Millennials have a more profound environmental consciousness than earlier Americans. They can’t even remember a time when they thought of themselves as disconnected from other peoples, nations, or continents, their behavior of no consequence to others. They’ve always understood the deep interdependence of all humans on one another and on the environment we share.

They worry about global warming and believe strongly that we need to move away from dependence on fossil fuels and embrace the need for major investments in new energy technologies. In fact, one of the strongest elements of Millennials’ generational identity is making environmental protection a top priority—two-thirds said their generation is more likely than earlier generations to have this orientation.

Not only does Generation We embrace the cause of environmental protection and a new energy paradigm, they have a real sense of urgency about it. For example, in the GMS, 74 percent say, “We must make major investments now to innovate the next generation of non-fossil fuel based energy solutions,” compared to just 26 percent who say, “We should continue on our current path, gradually shifting the mix of sources used to meet our energy needs.” In addition, 94 percent agreed that “our country must take extreme measures now, before it is too late, to protect the environment and begin to reverse the damage we have done.” Seventy-four percent say this situation is either a



SOURCE: GREENBERG MILLENNIAL STUDY 2007

“crisis that our country must address immediately” or a major problem.

The sentiments underlying this sense of urgency are vividly highlighted by responses to three other GMS questions:

Our nation’s continuing dependence on oil has weakened our economy and stifled innovation, left us dependent on foreign countries—some of whom sponsor terrorism against us—and dragged us into unnecessary wars (93 percent agree; 79 percent say this situation is either “a crisis that our country must address immediately” or a major problem).

Man-made causes are destroying our environment and the Earth’s delicate ecosystem. As a result, we could see massive, irreversible damage to the Earth’s landscape during our lifetimes (91 percent agree; 74 percent say this situation is either “a crisis that our country must address immediately” or a major problem).

Our reliance on fossil fuels is a byproduct of the interests of those currently in power. We need to invest in and innovate new energy sources in order to protect our quality of life and prosperity (96 percent agree; 76 percent say this situation is either “a crisis that our country must address immediately” or a major problem).

In light of these views, it should come as no surprise that Generation We is highly supportive of ambitious ideas for changing our paradigm on energy and the environment. (Such ambitious ideas also closely track their penchant for innovation, collective social movements, and optimism.) For example, the following proposed solution received an average effectiveness rating of 7, where 10, the highest rating, represents extremely effective in dealing with that challenge and 0, the lowest rating, represents not at all effective in dealing with that challenge. Moreover, 71 percent gave it a rating of between 6 and 10 and about half (49 percent) rated it between 8 and 10 on the effectiveness scale.

Launch a concerted national effort, similar to the Apollo Program that put a man on the moon, with the goal of moving America beyond fossil fuels and inventing the next generation of energy, based on new technologies such as hydrogen or fusion. This aggressive plan would require a huge national investment

93% AGREE
Our nation’s continuing dependence on oil has weakened our economy and, stifled innovation, left us dependent on foreign countries—some of whom sponsor terrorism against us—and dragged us into unnecessary wars.

but would produce millions of new jobs, could dramatically reduce environmental damage, and free us from our dependence on fossil fuels and foreign oil.

Given the scale of the proposed solution, this is an impressive response to which national leaders must pay attention. (We'll have more to say about the energy issue and this proposed solution a little later in the book.)

Evidence from other surveys is consistent with the GMS findings. According to the Pew Gen Next survey, Generation We overwhelmingly believes that the country should do “whatever it takes” to protect

the environment, that stricter environmental laws and regulations are worth the cost and that people should be willing to pay higher prices in order to protect the environment. They also, according to the Magid Associates 2006 survey of Millennials, were more likely than any other age group to favor environmental protection, even at the cost of economic growth.

Concern about global warming, as in the GMS, is also high. In the June 2007 Democracy Corps poll of Millennials, 61 percent thought that “global warming represents an immediate threat and we need to start taking action now,” rather than “global warming represents a long-term threat and we need to study the problem before taking drastic action.”

Generation We is also concerned about the possibility of large-scale environmental disasters and the ability of government to prevent them. In a GQR December 2005 survey of 18- to 25-year-olds, 71 percent thought it was very or somewhat likely that environment damage caused by global warming would happen in their lifetime, and 88 percent thought a natural disaster would wipe out another U.S. city, like what happened to New Orleans. Sixty and 49 percent, respectively, did not trust the government to deal with the problem.

The GMS focus groups confirmed the centrality of protecting the environment, promoting alternative energy and combating global warming to the Millennials' generational agenda. In particular, focus group participants fully endorsed the idea that reliance on fossil fuels, since it both threatens our national security and contributes to global warming, must be eliminated as rapidly as possible. They were willing to endorse very bold efforts to try to accomplish this goal.

A quest to develop the next generation of energy sources also seemed to engage the focus group participants more personally than most of the other big challenges presented to them. In keeping with the Millennials' view that innovation, entrepreneurship, collective action, and advanced technology are the best ways to solve our biggest problems, they saw energy as an area within which they could really



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“Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn’t pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same.”

RONALD REAGAN

make a difference and where advancing American technology could potentially achieve something quite spectacular and alter the course of America’s future.

ECONOMIC WORRIES

Generation We is deeply concerned about a host of large-scale economic problems affecting the country. They are worried particularly about health-care, but also about education, inequality, the decline of middle-class jobs, and the national debt. What is most striking, though, is their understanding of the financial costs of social problems and how these will impact their future.

In the GMS, Millennials register high levels of concern about the U.S. healthcare system and endorse the need to fundamentally overhaul it. These views are highlighted by the following two statements:

With costs rising out of control and the quality of health coverage declining, the health care system in our country is broken, and we need to make fundamental change (96 percent agree; 80 percent say this situation is either “a crisis that our country must address immediately” or a major problem).

The health of our country is collapsing under an epidemic of chronic, preventable diseases as we slowly poison our own bodies through environmental pollution, overmedication, and unhealthy diets (93 percent agree; 71 percent say this situation is either a “a crisis that our country must address immediately” or a major problem).

It’s worth noting that among the 15 situations tested, the first listed above elicited the highest levels of Millennials saying the situation was a crisis to be addressed immediately. It also had the highest levels saying it was either a crisis or a major problem.

The solution proposed below to the healthcare crisis also elicited the highest effectiveness rating from Millennials of the nine solutions tested. Generation We gave this solution an average effectiveness rating of 7.3, and 75 percent rated it between 6 and 10 on the 10-point effectiveness scale.

Provide quality health care and nutrition for all children in our country, regardless of their financial condition. Poor nutrition is creating an epidemic of preventable chronic diseases, including diabetes and obesity, that will cost our country billions of dollars and ruin the lives of millions of children.

Consistent with this, in the June 2007 *New York Times*/CBS News/MTV survey of 17- to 29-year-olds, Generation We endorsed having one health insurance program administered by the government cover all Americans, rather than the current system, by a 62–32 margin. This contrasts with a 47–38 split among all adults in a February, 2007 survey that asked the same question.

Generation We also registers high level of concern about the educational system, as shown by the GMS question below.

We have an unequal education system in our country, where students in affluent areas enjoy better resources and learning environments while those in rural areas and inner cities too often receive an inferior education (92 percent agree; 71 percent say it is “a crisis that our country must address immediately” or a major problem).

This translates into a desire to reform the educational system to mitigate this inequality and meet global challenges. The solution to educational system problems proposed below elicited the second-highest effectiveness rating from Millennials of the nine solutions tested. Millennials gave this solution an average effectiveness rating of 7.2, and 73 percent rated it between 6 and 10 on the 10-point effectiveness scale.

Provide equal funding for public education and learning resources for all children and all communities, regardless of economic class. This is a critical investment in the human potential of our country and its ability to compete in a global economy.

Concern about inequality is generally high and goes far beyond the educational system, as shown by the question below (also from the GMS):

Hurricane Katrina revealed the extent to which our country is divided into two Americas, one of which lacks many basic needs and is largely ignored by our government. The growing gap between the wealthy and the rest of us must be addressed, because no democracy can survive without a large, vibrant middle class (90 percent agree; 70 percent say this situation is either “a crisis that our country must address immediately” or a major problem).

Related to this, there are strong concerns that middle-class jobs and benefits are eroding drastically in today’s economy:

The changing nature of America’s economy, where we import most of our goods and export millions of jobs to developing countries, is threatening America’s middle class (92 percent agree;



69 percent say this situation is either “a crisis that our country must address immediately” or a major problem).

Long-term jobs that provide comprehensive health benefits and retirement security are becoming a thing of the past, and individuals in our generation will have to provide for their own health care and retirement security (93 percent agree; 74 percent say this situation is either “a crisis that our

country must address immediately” or a major problem).

An issue underlying all of these questions is that of equality of treatment and the claim of America to be a land of opportunity for all. The fairness issue is a major one for Generation We; their commitment to the greater good makes them intolerant of economic structures that benefit the few at the expense of the many.

Finally, the GMS also finds high levels of concern about the national debt and strong support for a serious effort to deal with it. The high level of concern is demonstrated by results from two GMS questions:

The growing burden placed on our country by our massive national debt is hurting our economy, stifling job growth and investment, and making it harder for American businesses and entrepreneurs to be competitive in the global marketplace (94 percent agree; 74 percent say this situation is either “a crisis that our country must address immediately” or a major problem).

The federal debt is exploding, with no end in sight, shifting a tremendous burden onto future generations to pay for the failed leadership of the current generation and weakening America’s economic growth for decades to come (92 percent agree; 65 percent say this situation is either “a crisis that our country must address immediately” or a major problem).

Support for a bold solution is indicated by response to the proposal below. Millennials gave this proposal an average effectiveness rating of 6.8, with 69 percent rating it between 6 and 10 on the 10-point effectiveness scale.

Balance the federal budget, but also eliminate the 8 trillion

dollars of national debt that have been built up over decades of irresponsible spending. This debt makes it impossible for our country to keep pace and leaves us indebted to other countries who are potential competitors.

Another budget-related proposal also received a positive response. The proposal below on fully funding Social Security and Medicare received an average effectiveness rating of 6.7, with 66 percent rating it between 6 and 10 on the 10-point effectiveness scale.

Fully fund Social Security, Medicare, and other social insurance commitments being passed on to future generations, which have doubled to over 40 trillion dollars just since 2000 and are increasing by several trillion every year. These commitments must be met by current generations because it would be morally wrong to pass on unfunded liabilities of this size to our own children.

Evidence from other surveys is consistent with findings from the GMS, particularly on inequality and jobs. In the 2004 NES, 84 percent of Millennials (18- to 26-year-olds) said the gap between rich and poor had grown in the last 20 years and 94 percent thought that the change in the gap between rich and poor was a bad thing. Also, despite their personal optimism about their own future, they do worry about how poorly the economy has been performing for ordinary people. In June 2005 Democracy Corps polling, 62 percent of 18- to 29-year-olds (Note: Only the 18- to 27-year-olds in this group qualify as Millennials.) believed the economy wasn't doing well and jobs were scarce, incomes stagnant, and benefits being cut back, compared to 35 percent who thought the economy was doing well, with rising incomes and home ownership.

The focus groups, consistent with the GMS, documented Generation We's deep feelings about the healthcare crisis and interest in large-scale change in this area. They see the healthcare crisis, including cost, quality, and coverage problems as not just a tragedy for the country but as a problem of catastrophic proportions for their own generation—a problem that makes the society they live in and are inheriting so much worse than it needs to be.

They are also hugely concerned with the prevention aspects of the healthcare crisis and believe the country in general, and their generation in particular, is being encouraged to consume food and prescription drugs that worsen health, even as they enhance corporate profit margins. In their view, this is outrageous and should be combated by a new emphasis on healthy diet and lifestyles. They are less sure about how exactly to reform the healthcare system but clearly see

An issue underlying all of these questions is that of equality of treatment and the claim of America to be a land of opportunity for all.



HEALTHCARE CONCERNS

96%
AGREE With costs rising out of control and the quality of health coverage declining, the health care system in our country is broken, and we need to make fundamental change

The health of our country is collapsing under an epidemic of chronic, preventable diseases as we slowly poison our own bodies through environmental pollution, overmedication, and unhealthy diets

93%
AGREE

71%
AGREE This situation is either a “a crisis that our country must address immediately” or a major problem

big change as necessary, leading to a system where universal access is combined with a far stronger emphasis on prevention.

Focus group participants were also concerned with the various aspects of economic insecurity that affect today’s labor market and the jobs they hope to attain. And they definitely saw rising inequality as a problem that was having a deep effect on their society and themselves. They particularly worried about how inequality is entrenched in the educational system and is putting an unfair burden on many members of their generation who are not getting the education they need. They appeared willing to support aggressive action to address this problem, including diversion of tax revenue to areas that are educationally distressed. But focus group participants did not feel a comparable level of urgency about economic problems that were more distant from their day-to-day experiences and concerns—the primary example here being the national debt.

To summarize, members of Generation We tend to be hopeful and ready, as a group, to take collective action to solve problems. However, they see the

national economy as having been badly mismanaged, and systems such as healthcare and education as broken and in need of repair. They’re also more mature in their attitudes than earlier generations, and because of their belief in technology and innovation, they are impatient when it comes to demanding change.

This combination of attitudes offers fertile ground for a powerful response to these vexing national issues. Given the right leadership and inspiration, they will be ready to provide the political will that change agents can rely upon, much as Roosevelt’s support helped galvanize the transformation of America in the New Deal era.

FOR A PEACEFUL WORLD

Generation We strongly believes in a cooperative, multilateral approach to foreign policy and solving global problems. The Millennials already see themselves as part of an interconnected planet linked by the Internet and other technologies that are integral parts of their lives. Tolerant and accepting of different cultures, they consider isolationism contrary to their social and political mores. Further, deeply influenced by what they perceive as a failed U.S. response to the terror attacks of 9/11 and a disastrous war in Iraq, they are ready to jettison the unilateral approach to world affairs that has characterized the far right, the

neoconservatives, and the Bush Administration.

Generation We seems more oriented toward a multilateral and cooperative foreign policy than their elders. Pew Values data show that 18- to 25-year-old Millennials in 2002–03 were split down the middle on whether military strength is the best way to ensure peace, while older adults endorsed this idea 61 to 35.

In 2004 Pew data, only 29 percent of 18- to 25-year-old Millennials believed that “using overwhelming force is the best way to defeat terrorism,” compared to 67 percent who thought “relying too much on military force leads to hatred and more terrorism.” By contrast, those 26 and over were much more closely split (49–41). In addition, 62 percent of 18- to 25-year-olds believe the United States should take into account the interests of its allies even if it means making compromises with them, compared to 52 percent of their elders.

Furthermore, in November 2004 Democracy Corps polling, 57 percent of 18- to 29-year-olds (Note: Only the 18- to 26-year-olds in this group qualify as Millennials.) believed that America’s security depends on building strong ties with other nations, compared to just 37 percent who believed that, “bottom line,” America’s security depends on its own military strength. This was the most pro-multilateralist sentiment of any age group.

Moreover, when the same question was asked of 18- to 29-year-olds in 2007 in the GMS, when all members of that age group were Millennials, sentiment was even stronger on the multilateral side. In that survey, 69 percent said that America’s security depends on building strong ties with other nations, compared to only 30 percent who thought that America’s security depends on its own military strength.

Millennial 18- to 25-year-olds also tend to be less worried about terrorists attacking the United States. In 2004, 53 percent of this age group said they were very or somewhat worried about this, compared to 63 of those 26 and older. In addition, just 27 percent of these Millennials say they are more suspicious of those with Middle Eastern origins since 9/11.

They also take different lessons from 9/11. In an April 2005 GQR poll, 18- to 25-year-olds believed by 55 to 44 that the attack on 9/11 means America needs to be more connected to the world, rather than have more control over its borders. And in the 2004 NES, 57 percent of Millennials (18- to 26-year-olds) said that promoting human rights was a “very important” goal of U.S. foreign policy, a figure substantially higher than among any other generation.

Comments from our focus groups suggested that these reactions to 9/11 are widespread among Generation We. One participant made the following comment, to general agreement:

Generation We rejects dogma and propaganda that pits one race or nation against another.

9/11 made our society paranoid. The security measures that are in place now are just ridiculous. You even have to justify where your money is going when you do a simple bank transaction. People overreact to a silly joke. And the media encourages us to be afraid of one another. Americans seem to believe everything scary they hear on TV.



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Millennial 18- to 25-year-olds are now most hostile to the war in Iraq and to George W. Bush's handling of it. In 2006 Pew polls, an average of 26 percent of this age group approved of Bush's handling of the Iraq war, compared to 69 percent who disapproved. In the 2006 exit polls, 62 percent of 18- to 29-year-old voters disapproved of Bush's

handling of Iraq, including 43 percent who strongly disapproved. Sixty-five percent—more than any other age group—thought the United States should start withdrawing troops from Iraq. In addition, a majority of those voters did not think the Iraq war had improved the long-term security of the United States.

Similarly, in an April 2005 GQR poll of 18- to 25-year-olds, 63 percent of this age group thought the war in Iraq wasn't worth the costs and 64 percent thought the Iraq war wasn't part of the war on terrorism. In the June 2007 Democracy Corps poll of Millennials, 65 percent thought "the current course cannot bring stability [in Iraq] and we need to start reducing the number of U.S. troops in Iraq." Sixty-six percent thought "we should withdraw our troops from Iraq" rather than give the president's plan a chance. Finally, in the June 2007 *New York Times*/CBS News/MTV survey of 17- to 29-year-old Millennials, only 31 percent thought the war in Iraq had made the United States safer from terrorism, compared to 66 percent who thought it had either made no difference (47 percent) or made the country less safe (19 percent).

As for patriotism, Generation We members in the same poll gave themselves a 7.2 out of 10 on whether they consider themselves patriotic, higher than any other trait tested except for being a healthy person. But almost 70 percent say they would be unwilling to join the U.S. military.

Although this area was not one explored in any detail in the focus groups, two factors in Millennials' experience appeared to move them strongly toward a global mindset and orientation: 9/11 and the Internet. The former forced them to see their country as part of a global system that could not be ignored, and the latter has made it vastly easier to know about and interact with people in other parts of the world.

More than any other recent generation, Generation We rejects dogma and propaganda that pits one race or nation against another. Boundaries mean little to them, especially in comparison to their idealistic vision of a peaceful world. Having lived much of their lives in a nation at war, they yearn for a united planet in which the environment is being cleaned up and resources that might be squandered on arms and warfare are devoted instead to creating a prosperous, secure world. Generation We wants the same opportunity previous generations had to raise their families in peace, and given the opportunity they will vote, organize, and act in support of that objective.

IDEALISTIC ABOUT GOVERNMENT, YET FRUSTRATED

Generation We believes strongly in the potential of government to do good. They don't see government as a panacea for all problems and reject socialist doctrine as outdated and discredited. But they believe in the power of the collective—including government—to achieve the greater good for society as a whole. At the same time, they have serious reservations about the ability of today's politicians and political parties to realize that potential. They believe in our American system, but fear it is being hijacked by special interests and self-serving power elite.

Generation We endorses ambitious problem-solving goals for our nation on a scale that can only be achieved with government playing a large role. They are ready to embrace that role for government, provided individual action, private enterprise, and entrepreneurship are also given free rein to contribute.

Here's some specific supporting data. Millennials in the GMS strongly endorsed the idea that *government needs to do more to address the major challenges facing our country* (63 percent) rather than agreeing that *Government is already too involved in areas that are better left to individuals or the free market* (37 percent).

Similarly, Millennials in the GMS said that *Government has a responsibility to pursue policies that benefit all of society and balance the rights of the individual with the needs of the entire society* (63 percent) rather than *The primary responsibility of government is to protect the rights of the individual* (37 percent).

But Generation We's views about whether today's government, political leaders, and political parties are meeting these responsibilities are decidedly negative, consistent with their self-image as a generation less likely than earlier generations to "trust government and political leaders." Consider these results from two GMS questions about the current role of government:

Government is dominated by special interests and lobbyists,

Q95

How often do you talk about politics with your friends and co-workers?

A

Frequently	19
Sometimes	45
Hardly ever	26
Never	10
(Don't know/refused)	-
Frequently/sometimes	64
Hardly ever/never	36

SOURCE: GREENBERG MILLENNIAL STUDY 2007

who give millions of dollars in campaign contributions to politicians, who in turn give even more back to those special interests, while the rest of us are left holding the bag (95 percent agree; 73 percent say this situation is either “a crisis that our country must address immediately” or a major problem).

From the failed response to Hurricane Katrina to persistent fraud, corruption, and abuse, our government has failed to meet its most basic responsibilities and violated the very taxpayers who fund it (90 percent agree; 71 percent say this situation is either “a crisis that our country must address immediately” or a major problem).

Similarly, 82 percent of Millennials in the GMS agree (45 percent strongly) that “[o]ur current political and corporate leaders are abusing their power for selfish gains, wasting our nation’s resources for their own short-term gain and threatening our long-term security.”

As discussed earlier, Generation We tends to lean Democratic in elections and in party identification, probably because they consider Democrats more sympathetic to their progressive ideals and because they reject the conservative dogma that has controlled the Republican Party for the past 25 years. Despite these partisan leanings, however, both political parties and the two-party system in general tend to be regarded with considerable dissatisfaction by Millennials. For example, Millennials overwhelmingly say that *Democrats and Republicans alike are failing our country, putting partisanship ahead of our country’s needs and offering voters no real solutions to our country’s problems* (70 percent) rather than *The two-party political system in our country is working because it offers voters a clear choice between two different visions for our country’s future* (29 percent).

Not surprisingly, given these sentiments, Generation We expresses some interest in the possibility of a third party that might offer an alternative to the Democrats and Republicans:

There should be a third political party in our country that fits between the Democrats and Republicans and offers a viable alternative to the two major parties (76 percent agree, 35 percent strongly agree).

This is consistent with their generational self-image as a generation more likely than earlier generations to “support an emerging third political party.” (As we’ll discuss later, although we share the Millennials’ frustration with the failures of the two leading political parties, we don’t advocate a third party as a solution.)

Findings from other surveys are generally consistent with GMS findings on Millennials’ positive view of government’s potential role.

For example, in June 2005 Democracy Corps polling, 63 percent of 18- to 29-year-olds (Note: Only the 18- to 27-year-olds in this group qualify as Millennials.) believed the role of government should be to promote the principle of a strong community and policies that expand opportunity and promote prosperity for all not just a few, compared to 35 percent who thought the role of government should be to promote the principle of self-reliance and policies of limited government and low taxes. This split was by far the most pro-active government/strong community of all the age group; 30- to 39-year-old Xers, for example, were split 50 to 45 on this question.

Similarly, the 2006 CIRCLE Civic and Political Health of the Nation survey of 15- to 25-year-olds found strong endorsement among this age group of the idea that “government should do more to solve problems” (63 percent), rather than “government does too many things better left to businesses and individuals” (31 percent), a view that is essentially unchanged in that survey since 2002.

And in a June 2007 Democracy Corps poll of 18- to 29-year-olds, Millennials even declared themselves in favor of “a bigger government providing more services” (68 percent), rather than “a smaller government that provides fewer services” (28 percent).

In addition, the Harvard IOP October, 2006 survey of 18–24-year-olds found considerable evidence of a rejection of political cynicism among Generation We. Seventy-one percent disagreed that “politics is not relevant to my life right now”; 84 percent disagreed that “it really doesn’t matter to me who the president is”; 55 percent disagreed that “people like me don’t have any say about what the government does”; 59 percent disagreed that “political involvement rarely has any tangible results”; and 56 percent disagreed that “it is difficult to find ways to be involved in politics.” In addition, 67 percent agreed that “running for office is an honorable thing to do”; the analogous figures for community service and getting involved in politics were 88 and 60.

The GMS focus groups strongly support the survey findings that, for Generation We, although government has much potential to do good and *should* be doing good, at this point, it is falling woefully short of that potential. Participants in our focus groups expressed considerable contempt for many current political leaders and the system that is producing them. Because of their disgust with the system, they tend to lump all political leaders together, seeing many of them as venal and self-serving, making little effort to deal with the challenges that are putting America and the world as a whole at risk. They are “fiddling as Rome burns,” in the old phrase, and Generation We fears they will inherit the consequences.

Our focus group participants were particularly incensed at the influence of lobbyists and special interests on government and politicians. They believe that this breeds pervasive corruption that strongly impedes positive change. In their view, rooting out government pan-

They believe in our American system, but fear it is being hijacked by special interests and self-serving power elite.

dering to special interests and the plundering it permits is critical to getting the country moving in the right direction again.

Given these views, it's not surprising that the focus group members found little satisfaction with the two parties as currently constituted. They may lean Democratic when they vote, but both Republicans *and* Democrats came in for withering criticism as institutions not up to the task of change and more responsive to the wishes of lobbyists than the needs of the country.

**...eager to experiment with new solutions
no matter where they may come from
and no matter what political orientation
they may be associated with.**

That said, conservatives and the policies they have come to represent were a particular focus of Millennials' ire. They are seen as hopelessly out of touch and reactionary in the classic sense of the term. When asked to define

"conservatism," most focus group participants referred not to political positions or ideological tenets (small government, low taxes, strong national defense) but rather to personal traits and qualities, and mostly negative ones: rigidity, close-mindedness, intolerance, moralism, and even hypocrisy.

This is a striking political development. It means that, for Generation We, the conservative movement has been fundamentally discredited. Having seen "conservatism" used to justify bigger government, limitation of free debate, and an economic free-for-all that serves the rich and powerful, they appear poised to reject this label decisively for the next 30 to 40 years.

But this doesn't mean the focus group participants were comfortable with the label of "liberal." *Generation We tends to reject conventional labels as not well representing their views and preferences.* They see extreme liberalism as being almost as flawed as conservatism, pointing toward large government programs that are self-justifying rather than tailored to serving human needs and that end up limiting rather than expanding the scope of human freedom.

Interestingly, though this was not a spontaneous form of self-identification, the word "progressive," when brought to their attention, did seem to capture much of the way they like to think about themselves. They see themselves as creators of the future, and the progressive word resonates with their sentiments. They believe in a government that does good things, but they do not want a socialist state that dictates how the economy works, nor do they desire a moralist state that tells them how they should think and live. They see the progressive label as representing a moderate approach that is focused on the important issues of the day rather than ideology.

Millennials' rejection of current political institutions also extends to institutions outside the government, especially dominant business interests. Perhaps the chief difference here with our focus groups par-

ticipants was that they did not necessarily expect big business to act in a way that promoted the common good, while they had some expectation or hope that political institutions could act in this way. Much of the vitriol toward government and parties is, therefore, an expression of frustrated idealism as much as anything else.

Generation We believes that government can do a lot to help people, even though it is currently failing to live up to that responsibility. Rather than echoing the conservative mantra that “government should just get out of the way and let individuals solve their own problems,” the Millennials expect government to play a positive role in helping people help themselves. They’re ready to support a new effort to reform government along more responsive, responsible lines.

POST-IDEOLOGICAL, POST-PARTISAN, POST-POLITICAL

Determined to find their own solutions to the major problems we face, and convinced that their unprecedented levels of education and technological prowess will enable them to do so, Generation We shares a social orientation that might best be described in terms of what they have left behind. Speaking in broad terms, Generation We is post-ideological, post-partisan, and post-political.

They are post-ideological because they are uninterested in learning about and defending the “conservative” or “liberal” approaches to the problems our country faces. Instead, they are pragmatic, open-minded, and innovation-oriented, eager to experiment with new solutions no matter where they may come from and no matter what political orientation they may be associated with.

They are post-partisan because, although they lean Democratic, they are disgusted with what they perceive as the narrowness, pettiness, and stagnation that often characterize both major parties. Though they are open to the possibility of a third party, the Millennials are far more interested in getting beyond party identification altogether and in focusing on cooperative efforts to make America and the world a better place.

They are post-political because they are fed up and bored with the interest-group conflicts, identity-based appeals, and power-seeking maneuvers they see as dominating the public arena. More tolerant and accepting than any previous generation, Generation We is ready to call a halt to “culture wars” that pit people of different religions, races, ethnicities, regions, cultures, values, and sexual orientations against one another for political gain. They believe that all of us—not only all Americans, but all humans around the planet—will ultimately share the same destiny, and therefore must find ways to work together for the common good. And they stand ready to lead the effort.

How can Americans build on the promise of Generation We to cre-

PHOTO: ERIC GREENBERG



Q34

Please tell me whether the **FIRST** statement or the **SECOND** statement comes closer to your own views, even if neither is exactly right.

	1st Stmt Much	1st Stmt Smwt	2nd Stmt Much	2nd Stmt Smwt	DK-Ref	Total 1st Stmt	Total 2nd Stmt	1st - 2nd
America's security depends on building strong ties with other nations. OR Bottom line, America's security depends on its own military strength.	37	32	18	12	0	69	30	39
Addressing the big issues facing my generation starts with individuals willing to take a stand and take action. OR Individuals can't make a real difference in addressing the big issues facing my generation.	47	33	15	5	0	80	20	60
The two-party political system in our country is working because it offers voters a clear choice between two different visions for our country's future. OR Democrats and Republicans alike are failing our country, putting partisanship ahead of our country's needs and offering voters no real solutions to our country's problems.	12	18	31	39	0	29	70	-41
Businesses and corporate leaders have a responsibility to try to make the world a better place, not just make money. OR Businesses and corporate leaders' responsibility to their shareholders is to make money, not to worry about making the world a better place.	44	30	17	9	0	74	26	48
Government has a responsibility to pursue policies that benefit all of society and balance the rights of the individual with the needs of the entire society. OR The primary responsibility of government is to protect the rights of the individual.	27	35	23	14	0	63	37	25
The needs and goals of my generation are fundamentally at odds with those of older generations, and accomplishing our goals will require removing those currently in power and replacing them with ourselves. OR The needs and goals of my generation are similar to those of older generations, and our best course is to work together to advance common interests.	19	30	34	16	1	40	50	-1
Government needs to do more to address the major challenges facing our country. OR Government is already too involved in areas that are better left to individuals or the free market.	34	29	22	15	0	63	37	26
I believe that spending money with companies that reflect my values and priorities is an effective way to express my values and to promote change through my daily life. OR My consumer choices are based on economics, not values, and I don't see my purchasing decisions as an effective way of expressing my values or promoting change.	23	31	29	16	0	55	45	10
We must make major investments now to innovate the next generation of non-fossil fuel based energy solutions. OR We should continue on our current path, gradually shifting the mix of sources used to meet our energy needs.	46	29	17	8	0	74	26	49

SOURCE: GREENBERG MILLENNIAL STUDY 2007

Q43

Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the statement.

	Strng Agree	Smwt Agree	Smwt Dis Agree	Strng Dis Agree	DK-Ref	Total Agree	Total Dis Agree	Agree Dis
In our country, each generation has a responsibility to wisely use the country's resources and power so that they can provide the next generation a secure, sustainable country that is stronger than the one they inherited.	53	38	8	1	0	91	9	82
Our current political and corporate leaders are abusing their power for selfish gains, wasting our nation's resources for their own short-term gain and threatening our long-term security.	45	37	15	3	0	82	18	64
Young Americans must take action now to reverse the rapid decline of our country. If we wait until we are older, it will be too late.	48	41	9	1	0	89	11	78
Life in the future in America will be much worse unless my generation of Americans takes the lead in pushing for change.	42	43	13	2	0	85	15	70
I am willing to personally make significant sacrifices in my own life to address the major environmental, economic, and security challenges facing our country.	27	51	18	4	0	78	22	56
My generation of Americans has better opportunities to make a difference and produce structural change than previous generations.	31	48	17	3	0	79	20	59
Throughout our history, America's success has been built on innovation and entrepreneurship. As we confront the many challenges facing us today, it is that same spirit of innovation and entrepreneurship that is needed to maintain America's strength in the 21st century.	38	49	11	2	0	87	13	75
When something is run by the government, it is necessarily inefficient and wasteful.	14	40	36	9	0	54	45	9
There should be a third political party in our country that fits between the Democrats and Republicans and offers a viable alternative to the two major parties.	35	41	18	6	1	76	24	52