Millennial Traits

For

“Deconstructing a Diaspora Deferred: Teaching the Diaspora to the Millennial Student”

Birth years: fluid but circa 1980 - 2000

Ages: 16-36 (in 2016)

Passionate about their values (seek these values in institutions they choose)

Risk-taking

Work-life alignment

Mission-oriented

Quickly change focus

Spontaneity

World Travelers and adventure seekers

Feel special

Sheltered

Confident

Team-oriented, collaborative

Achieving

Pressured

Conventional

Expect technology to work – prefer mobile technology

Social generation (socialize while consuming and in class) – IRL – in real life

Live near urban areas

Not as religious

Marry less than previous generations

Panel and Audience Member Responses

Initial response from one of the panelists:

World lit course and the millennial. Bringing the diaspora into the classroom. Comparative lit study. Some of the work is more modern. Some of the lit is more contemporary. Students share some of these traits: not marrying, external sources are pressuring. Don’t appear to be conventional but are patriarchal in nature. Can be staunch in term in gender politics. Not necessarily in racial politics. Many of the female students are quite confident and assured and okay about waiting about time to marry.

A 16 year old student has already decided upon marriage and has plotted a timeline of goals for a family. What does negotiation look like if one doesn’t obtain these goals in that conventional order?

Some young women dispute their mothers’ attitudes about feminism. These mothers are working to maintain a career, but the daughters are moving against this dynamic.

Phone – in the classroom:

Students showing evidence of draft essays on their phones. Students work on phone while in the classroom. Many are on their phones. Textbooks are one the phone. Some of the professors have embraced it. Some professors are tweeting. Journalism career has changed. Those now on broadcast news have an average age of 45. They are remaining longer within the field instead of making room for younger workers. Use mobile technology to get the type of job within communications that you want. Delivering story content on their phones, along with professor teaching ethical and academic processes on the phone. Use technology to your advantage. Our industry is adapting to them.

What about response time difference and negotiation of that?

Provide a disclaimer to students about our response time. Secondary school environment with grades always posted online so this expectation moves over to the class environment. This affects the college culture. Set the policy about weekend e-mail response. Some have altered due dates so that there is time for online response. Generation X professors might respond faster and use more technology than baby boomers. Gen X and millennials have similar response time habits. Is there a trend for gen x that live in Silicon Valley to be more technically bound? Productivity is privileged over humans. Gen X-ers can code but millennials don’t embrace as much.

Ways in technology affect Gen X-ers more profoundly than millennials. Thinking is being shaped by technology. Baby boomers might experience more frustration based upon understanding history. Also about understanding focus.

How might we move large blocks of history of the diaspora into this technology? How might we trust technology with this vast amount of knowledge? Today’s students aren’t aware of this same history? We have a Hip hop culture of knowledge. We have a diasporic gap with our history that moves past boundaries.

Students like when educators point out the comparison of hip hop music relating to the music of the time. It is more relatable to them.

Technology taking precedence over human connection. Some professors email late at night. A girl friend of a student asked who was sending out emails so late. This is somewhat humorous. Students use technology for their interpersonal relationships and professors are being confused as possible dating partners. Some lack the context of knowing that email is used for work, not just for personal communication.

Work-life alignment:

 – sounds like an employment situation. This might pertain more to the 36 year olds. Commuting might affect them if it’s too far. Should the universities have more class offerings. Who are our students? There’s a huge difference in social status. Some professors had adjusted to responding to email so quickly to hold onto students.

Have to all feel special:

Elementary schools have taken a stance of everyone feeling that things are always ok where they aren’t feeling coping, especially if a student is at risk. Expect the same reward. There’s a sense that education is consumerism instead of academics. They are owed because they paid for it. What do we do about the cost of college and this expectation that they’ve paid so much, so they have to pass?

Global thinking:

With whom are you competing with in the world? How will they handle this competition? Are they really goal-driven? When they are passionate about something, they quickly latch onto it? Prairie View has a study abroad program. Students appear to enjoy these courses. Going to Ghana brought the origin of the diaspora to life for these students via images that they saw. They appeared to be impressed with being American. Ghana, Kenya, South Africa, China, Middle East, etc. are Study Abroad locations at Prairie View A&M. Students pay a study abroad fee so that money is collected to give money to the students that want to go to study abroad programs with that money. Fewer than 1% of the students use it. Some of the students have received up to $3000 on the trips. Up to 6% of the students at PV attend these trips.

Technology/social apps:

Snapchat

Periscope

Twitter

Instagram

Vine (for videos)

Tumbler (for writers)

Youtube

Prezi vs PowerPoints online

References

Burns, D. (2015). 7 millennial traits that baby boomers need to learn. *Inc*. Retrieved from http://www.inc.com/evan-burns/7-millennial-traits-that-baby-boomer-employers-need-to-learn.html

Howe, N. & Strauss, W. (2003). Millennials go to college. Retrieved from https://students.rice.edu/images/students/AADV/Oweek2008AADVResources/Characteristics%20of%20the%20Millenial%20Generation.pdf

Rogowski, J.C, & Cohen, C.J. (2015). Black millennials in America. *Black Youth Project*. Retrieved from http://blackyouthproject.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/BYP-millenials-report-10-27-15-FINAL.pdf

Solomon, M. (2014). 2015 is the year of the millennial customer: 5 key traits these 80 million consumers share. *Forbes*. Retrieved from http://www.forbes.com/sites/micahsolomon/2014/12/29/5-traits-that-define-the-80-million-millennial-customers-coming-your-way/#1bda36672a81