

## Know Our Students

*This information was previously published by Rick Barnes in the Summer 2002 edition of Perspectives magazine.*

Dr. Don Mills, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs at Texas Christian University, has written much about our current generation of students, including the following. He recognizes that our students have certainly changed. Our environment shapes us. This common sense statement has broad implications for our understanding of various population cohorts in our society. For example, those who were brought up during the Depression have a set of values shaped by that period in our history. Likewise, those who came of age during the Vietnam War have had their world-view influenced by the events in our country during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Generation X came of age during the 1980s and 1990s. Often seen as self-centered, somewhat pessimistic, focused on technology and measuring success by monetary gain, Generation X is succeeded by a new generation that now is matriculating in our colleges and universities.

Generation Y, also known as the millennial generation, is the second largest (following the baby boomers) population cohort in America. By 2015, it will be the largest. Of those who will go to college, 55% are women. The leading edge of Generation Y was born about 1980. This has some interesting implications for those of us in this profession. It means that the following factoids have influenced the current college student body – specifically looking at the class of 2005...those who are now stepping into leadership roles within our undergraduate organizations.

Our current generation of students is about experiences and emotions. These students seek connections to others and look for the human element in a cold “techie” world. They are about relationships and sensory experiences. They are also about purpose and giving back to their community. The typical Generation Y student is seeking to find meaning in his/her life. They are also very independent and self-reliant, characterized by a sense of being able to achieve without the help of others. They understand that the world is an interconnected place, or at least they understand the economics of that interconnectedness. One of their most important goals is to be married and to raise a family (although the definition of family is far broader and more expansive than at any previous time in our history).

Many observers defined Generation Xers as pessimistic, but all indications are Generation Y is filled with those optimistic about the future. Perhaps one of the most interesting characteristics of Generation Y is the belief that an individual can make a difference in improving society. That seems contrary to evidence that voting in this generation is quite low. And, in truth, there is a certain cynicism about the ability of federal government to be effective. But at the local level, the millennials believe they can make a difference by their individual actions. So we see community involvement at an unprecedented level and an interest in local politics that is quite high.

Spirituality is at a very high level among college students; however spirituality should not be confused with religion. The Class of 2005 is not necessarily a church-going class, but it is a class that looks to a deeper understanding of life and for purpose in individual lives.

An interesting aspect of the Generation Y population is the high value placed on independence and personal control. Many have voiced an opinion that working 80 or 90 hours a week is inappropriate and that they would not work where they could not control their hours. But Generation Y has yet to go to work. This value may clash with the Generation X value of work as an avenue to personal wealth. Our society will be shaped by whichever value becomes transcendent.

We enjoy having Generation Y on our campuses and in our organizations. They exhibit a tolerance, optimism, a sense of purpose, and a commitment and connection to others that is exciting. They will certainly challenge our profession to provide the type of environment that enables them to grow and to be prepared for their responsibilities in a changing and changed century

## **BELOIT COLLEGE RELEASES THE CLASS OF 2006 "MINDSET LIST"**

In the coming weeks, a new generation of students will arrive on campuses throughout the country to mark the start of their first year of college. Most of these students were born in 1984. It was a different time, with computers becoming part of our daily lives, videotape changing the way we looked at television, and the explosion of the digital age—from watches to telephones.

For the fifth year, Beloit College, the liberal arts college in Beloit, Wisconsin, is distributing the Mindset List to its faculty and staff as an indicator of the many ways in which entering 17 and 18 year-olds see the world differently from their professors, coaches and mentors. The list is a reminder that the world-view of today's new college students is significantly different from the intellectual framework of those students who entered only a few years earlier. Beloit College Prof. Tom McBride, one of the list's creators, says "It is an alert for those of us who may be suffering from hardening of the references."

This year's entering students have grown up in a country where the Presidents have all been Southerners, and in a world with AIDS and without apartheid. Saturns have always been on the street, the Fox Network has always been on television, and prom dresses have always come in basic black. The evil empire is not earth-bound, the drug "ecstasy" has always been available, and with the breakup of AT&T, nobody has been able to comprehend a phone bill.

Over the past five years, thousands have read and requested copies of the Beloit College Mindset List. Educators, clergy, parents, and business people have all used it to improve their communications or marketing approach with a younger generation of adults, and in training those whose work is focused on a different generation. This year at Beloit College, the theme for the semester-long First Year Initiatives (FYI) program, a rigorous academic program for entering students described as a "safety net and a trampoline," is "Too Soon to Tell." It was prompted by a commencement address delivered in 1987 by journalist and humorist Calvin Trillin. (He will return to the campus in September to re-examine those views offered first when the class of 2006 was in its "terrible two's.") In researching the Mindset List for this year, it became clear that age does not carry with it the wisdom to recognize when it is perhaps "Too Soon to Tell." In 1984, perceptive and thoughtful individuals were suggesting that there was no market for briefcase-sized computers and that George Lucas needed to get a life since interest in Star Wars was clearly on the wane.

It is critical that we recognize the talents of each new generation, notes Prof. McBride who heads the College's First Year Initiatives Program. "While they are learning from us, we need to make ourselves understood or we run the risk of failing to convey the base of ideas that will allow us to share the road to wisdom."

## "MINDSET LIST" FOR THE CLASS OF 2006

Most students entering college this fall were born in 1984...

1. A Southerner has always been President of the United States.
2. Richard Burton, Ricky Nelson and Truman Capote have always been dead.
3. South Africa's official policy of apartheid has not existed during their lifetime.
4. Cars have always had eye-level rear stoplights, CD player, and air bags.
5. We have always been able to choose our long distance carriers.
6. Weather reports have always been available 24-hours a day on television.
7. The "evil empire" has moved from Moscow to a setting in some distant galaxy.
8. "Big Brother" is merely a television show.
9. Cyberspace has always existed.
10. Bruce Springstein's new hit Born in the USA could have been played to celebrate their birth.
11. Barbie has always had a job.
12. Telephone bills have always been totally incomprehensible.
13. Prom dresses have always come in basic black.
14. A "Hair Band" is some sort of fashion accessory.
15. George Foreman has always been a barbecue grill salesman
16. Afghanistan has always been a front-page story.
17. There has always been an heir to the heir to the British throne.
18. They have no recollection of Connie Chung or Geraldo Rivera as serious journalists.
19. Peter Jennings, Dan Rather, and Tom Brokaw have always anchored the evening news.
20. China has always been a market-based reforming regime.
21. The United States has always been trying to put nuclear waste in Nevada.
22. The U.S. and the Soviets have always been partners in space.
23. Mrs. Fields' cookies and Swatch watches have always been favorites.
24. Nicholas Cage, Daryll Hannah, Eddie Murphy, and John Malkovich made their first major film impressions the year they were born.
25. The GM Saturn has always been on the road.
26. The "Fab Four" are not a male rock group, but four women enjoying "Sex in the City."
27. Fox has always been a television network choice.
28. Males do not carry a handkerchief in a back pocket.
29. This generation has never wanted to "be a Pepper too."
30. Ozzy's lifestyle has nothing to do with the Nelson family.
31. Women have always had tattoos.
32. Vanessa Williams and Madonna are aging singers.
33. Perrier has always come in flavors.
34. Cherry Coke has always come in cans.
35. A "hotline" is a consumer service rather than a phone used to avoid accidental nuclear war.
36. The drug "ecstasy" has always been around.
37. Genetic testing and DNA screening have always been available.
38. Electronic filing of federal income taxes has always been an option.
39. Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) has always been available to doctors.
40. Trivial Pursuit may have been played by their parents the night before they were born.
41. The U.S. has always maintained that it has a "clear right to use force against terrorism."
42. The drinking age has always been 21 throughout the country.
43. Women have always been members of the Jaycees.
- 44 The center of chic has shifted from Studio 54 to Liza's living room, live!
45. Julian Lennon had his only hit the year they were born.
46. Sylvan Learning Centers have always been an after-school option.
47. Hip-hop and rap have always been popular musical forms.
48. They grew up in minivans.

49. Scientists have always recognized the impact of acid rain.
50. The Coen Brothers have always been making films.

And in 1984, perhaps it was "Too Soon to Tell"...Technology analysts questioned the need for briefcase-sized computers...The National Children and Youth Fitness Study announced that children were overweight and underactive...A CPA organization heralded that computerized audit systems were being used to avoid errors and they were doing much better at spotting mistakes and providing internal audit controls...Film critics declared that George Lucas was looking for new directions because Star Wars interest was waning...Videotape technology was said to be killing the film industry and slowing cable network development...Analysts stated there was no market for Direct Broadcast Satellite systems...The U.S. Supreme Court declared sleeping to be a form of free speech.

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# Student Behavior

~~Meeting the Changing Needs of College Students.~~ Dr Schroeder

some students today may have as many as 22 items that plug in!!

39% of students come from divorced parents (8% in the 60's)

Peter Drucker: The dominant factor for Business in the next two decades ... is not going to be economics or technology. It will be demographics. <1965 European countries, <sup>Latin American</sup> and

>1965 50% Caribbean, 35% Asia And Africa 3%

25% of US households are occupied by married couples w/ children

70% of married mothers w/ children work outside the home

since 1965 8000% increase in students fueled by student loans => egalitarian society where all should have access

5esalevels are twice as high as men

# 5.5 bil is spent on alcohol (1/3 of a student's discretionary funds)

Advanced technology: they expect web based services, programming

Reasonable expectations need to be agreed upon by all interested parties

