

# The First Generation Of The Twenty-First Century

An introduction to **The Pluralist Generation**  
by  *Magid Generational Strategies*



We've been talking about it for a long time and now it's here. **2014—the most demographically significant year in American history since 1945**, the year the Baby Boom started. Not coincidentally, the significance of 2014 has a lot to do with Baby Boomers and has everything to do with generational change. 2014 marks the point in time when each of the four primary consumer generations in America takes a pivotal, new place in our society.

# FOREWORD

## An introduction to **The Pluralist Generation**

In 2014, **the last Baby Boomer turns 50**, a milestone with ramifications for all American businesses. After several decades of dominating the all-important 18-49 TV demographic, the last 4.5 million Baby Boomers will age out of the demo (at the rate of approximately nine per minute), continually chipping away at the meager 3 percent portion of the demo they held in 2013 and leaving a decidedly different measured TV, and key advertising, audience in their wake. At the same time, the emergence of all 75 million Boomers in the 50-plus category marks a redefinition of consumerism during the “Golden Years,” a life stage long associated with brand rigidity and temperate buying behaviors.

In 2014, **Generation X is at the height of its consumer and social leadership** in America. Primarily in their 40s, the 49 million Gen Xers are key consumers of nearly all product categories and are emerging as the management class in American companies, setting workplace policy and creating consumer products and services. Most importantly, Gen X is firmly in its position as the arbiters of American parenting philosophy. Their style of parenting and their approach to family and community are actively influencing the developing mindset of the Pluralist Generation (the post-Millennial generation).

In 2014, **the last Millennial turns 18 and graduates from high school**. Long thought of as America's youth, this milestone demands American businesses become reacquainted with the 87 million Millennials who are officially the largest and most influential adult population in America's history. These new adults will also make their foray into the 18-49 demo (at the rate of approximately eight per minute) as Millennials begin their own multi-decade dominance of the media demographics so important not only to ad-supported businesses, but all businesses eager to reach a mass audience.

And, in 2014, **the entire youth population in America will be comprised of a brand new generation—the Pluralist Generation**. Plurals, as members of this generation are called, are exerting their will and influence on all aspects of youth, tween and teen-targeted businesses. Generational theory, fortified by decades of supporting evidence, predicts Plurals will be very different than their generational forerunners. Our research confirms these children of Xers are indeed distinct from their Boomer-raised predecessors.

At this time of remarkable change, we re-introduce Plurals, the *first generation of the Twenty-First Century* and America's youth population.

Magid Generational Strategies

 Rich McGuire  Amanda Hensell



# The Twenty-First Century's First Generation

**Generations** are not created by happenstance. Nor are they designated purely by a rigid range of years. Generations are formed.

**History** provides an understanding of how a generation is formed—a gestation of discernible patterns of demographic shifts, societal factors (a combination of the unique aspects of the society of their upbringing and historical events experienced at a similar age and life stage), and parenting styles—leading to the distinct mindsets that notably separate one generation from another.

**Once enough evidence** of these patterns emerges, the core tenets of a generation can be discovered, analyzed and synthesized. Through that process a name surfaces that encompasses the generation in both its distinct mindsets and the impact it will have on society.



The **Silent Generation** (born 1924-1945) got their name from their cautious and withdrawn natures, even in their youth, and for stoically refining the G.I.s' grandiose plans.



The **Baby Boomer Generation** (1946-1964) was a cultural phenomenon of skyrocketing birth rates and economic growth in post-World War II America.



**Generation X** (1965-1976), the latchkey kids, represented the anxiety of that time and how that angst crystallized into a distinct, cynically pragmatic mindset for members of that generation.



The **Millennial Generation** (1977-1996), the first generation of increasing power in the Twenty-First Century, was the result of a second baby boom during a time of unparalleled focus on the health and well-being of children.



**It's been** nearly 15 years since the Millennials were so named. Since then, a new generation has been born and we have seen significant changes in all facets of society.

Through years of research, **Magid Generational Strategies™**, a unit of Frank N. Magid Associates, Inc., has recognized the demographic patterns, parenting styles and societal factors shaping the next generation.

**The continual erosion of dominant media**

**The rapid emergence of fragmented and niche-based voices**

**The power of ground-up consensus building**

**The bold contrast of Gen X and Baby Boomer parenting styles**

**The growing conflicts surrounding demographic changes**

**The second-longest economic decline in U.S. history**

## **Presenting the Pluralist Generation**



**Plurals**, as members of this generation will be known, are:

America's last generation with a  
Caucasian majority

The most positive about America becoming  
more ethnically diverse

Existing in the most diverse social circles

The least likely to believe in the  
"American Dream"

Beginning to reflect the Gen X parenting  
style in their mindset

Affected by blended gender roles

**While no one knows** exactly what will happen in the next 20 or 30 years, our research, coupled with current events and societal factors, allows us to project significant societal trends that will play out.

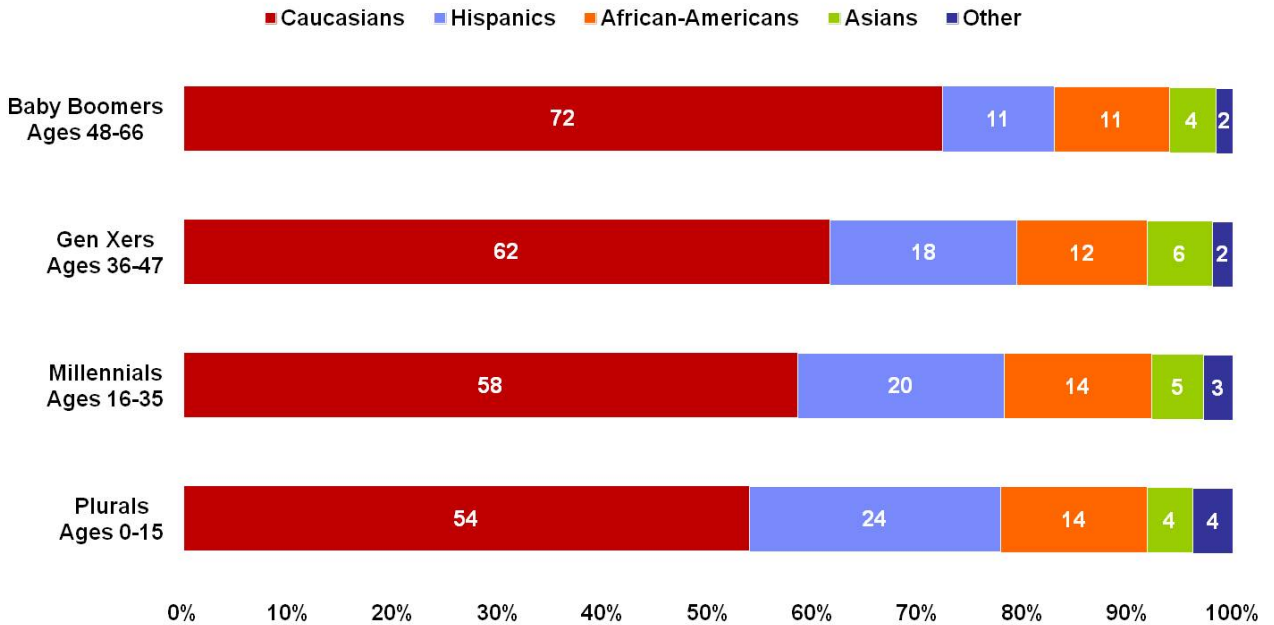
**This inevitable change** is the founding reason Plurals is the right name for this generation. It's not just relevant to what's happening in society currently, or how they are as children now, the name Plurals reflects what lies ahead, for them, and all of America.



# Plurals will be America’s last generation with a Caucasian majority.

**Plurals** are the most ethnically diverse generation to-date—currently only 55 percent of Plurals are Caucasian, compared to 72 percent among Baby Boomers.

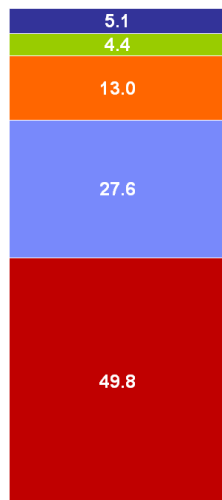
## Ethnic Composition Of U.S. Generations – 2012



Source: U.S. Census projections, released 2008

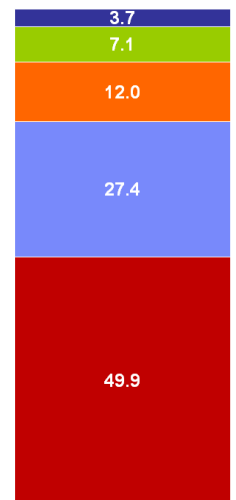
The proportion of Caucasians in America will continue to diminish, creating a pluralistic society, one in which there isn’t a majority ethnicity or race.

In 2019, live births in America will be less than 50 percent Caucasian, making the Pluralist Generation the last generation with a Caucasian majority.



2019 Live Births

In 2042, the entire population will be less than 50 percent Caucasian and America will literally become a pluralistic society.



2042 Total U.S. Population

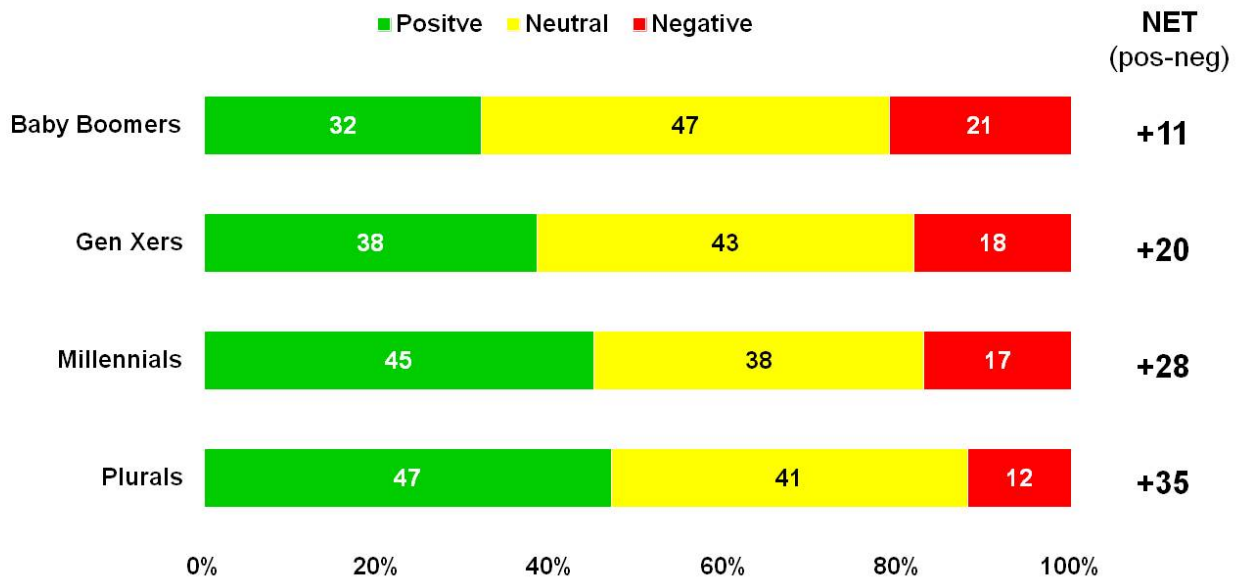




# Plurals are the most positive about America becoming more ethnically diverse.

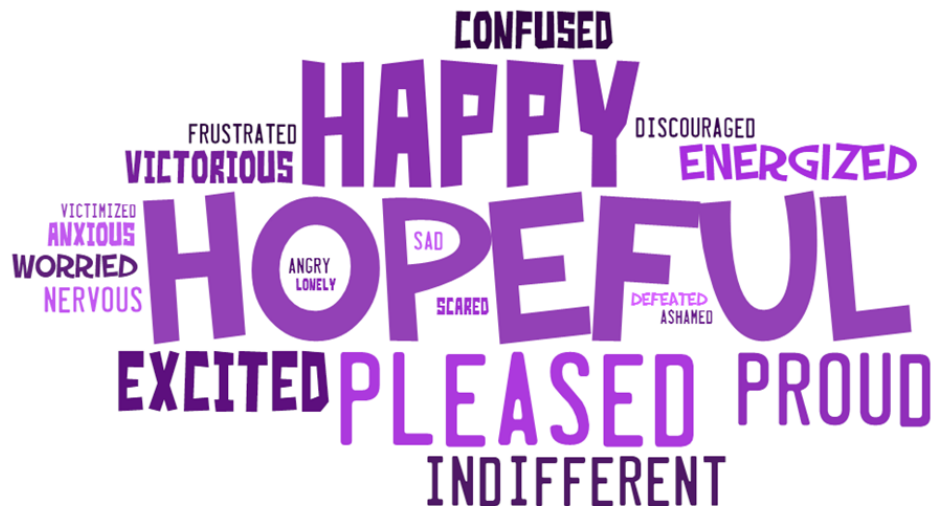
**Plurals** have a more positive opinion than older generations about America becoming more ethnically diverse. Nearly half of Plurals say it's a positive thing and only one in nine think it's negative.

## Opinion Of America Becoming More Ethnically Diverse



**Overall, Americans** use “hopeful” and “proud” to describe their opinion about this ethnic shift, which suggests welcoming and favorable attitudes.

**Plurals** too are “hopeful” and “proud,” but are also **more likely** than adult generations to say “pleased” and “energized,” which suggests an eagerness and willingness to take on their imminent responsibility of ushering in this change.



Plurals: Which words describe your opinion of America becoming more ethnically diverse? (Aided list of 21 items)



# Plurals have the most diverse social circle.

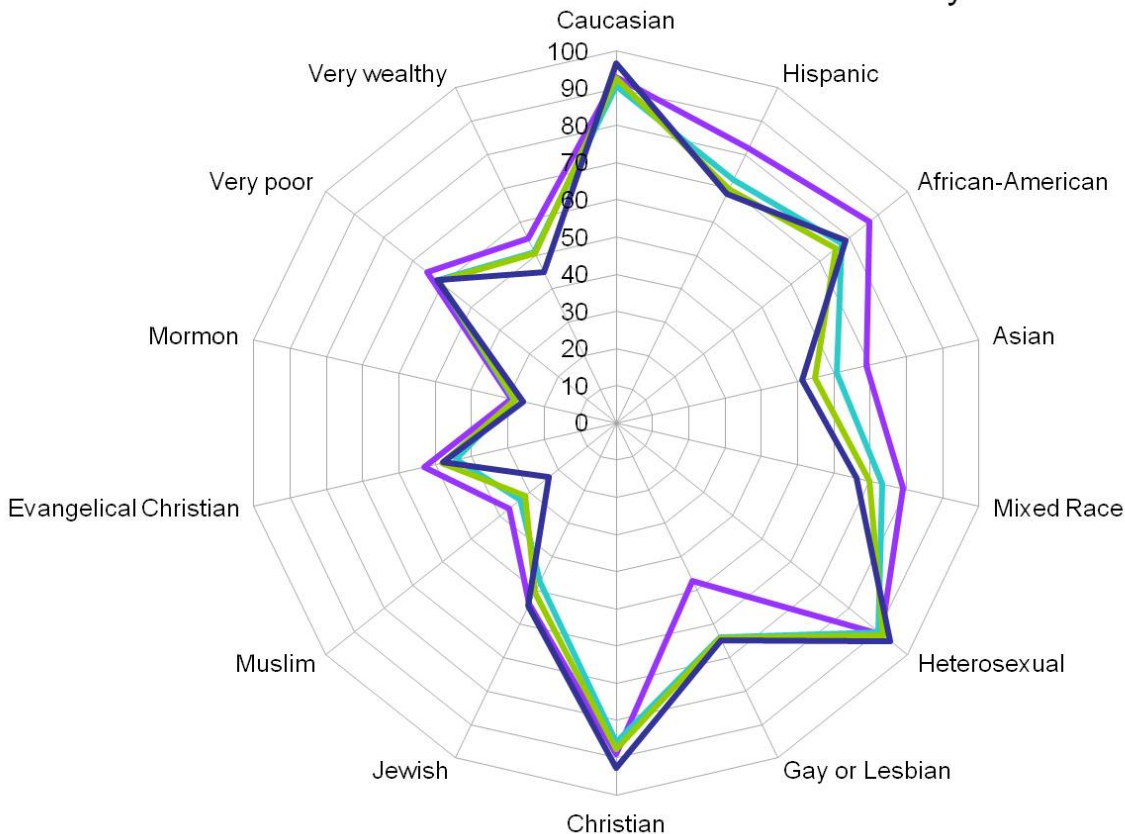
In the minds of most Americans, ethnicity is central to diversity, but diversity also encompasses many other elements. At least half of all Americans aged 8 to 66 said diversity means a mix of: ethnicities or races, sexual orientation, ages, genders, economic backgrounds, political points of view and religious beliefs.

As such, almost all describe the United States as at least “somewhat diverse” (90%), with 60 percent classifying America as “very diverse.” Yet, on a micro level, most Baby Boomers, Gen Xers and Adult Millennials don’t think they actually exist in diversity—few classify their community, workplace or neighborhood as very diverse.

Plurals, on the other hand, knowingly exist in diversity on a micro level. A typical Plurals’ social circle is more diverse than the social circle of a member of an older generation. Plurals are more likely than Baby Boomers, Gen Xers and Adult Millennials to have friends and acquaintances who are African-American, Hispanic, Asian, mixed race, Muslim, Evangelical Christian and very wealthy. Furthermore, more than half of Plurals agree that they would like their social circle to become even more diverse.

## The Social Circle

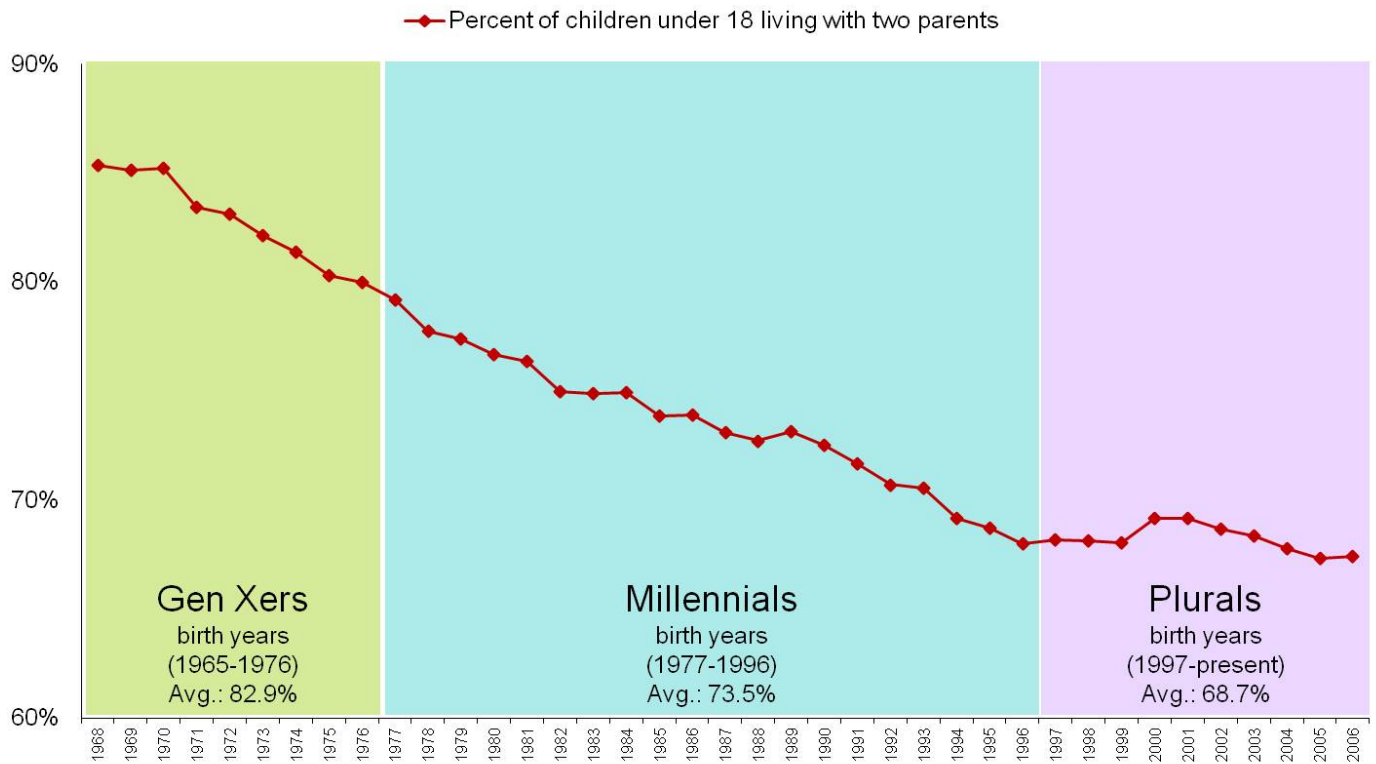
— Plurals    — Millennials    — Gen Xers    — Baby Boomers





The four-decade decline of traditional two-parent households in America adds to the diverse environment Plurals are growing up in. The family unit, the most micro social circle for anyone, is experiencing its own metamorphosis. On average, about two in three Plurals live in a two-parent household, a decline from what Millennials (three in four) and Generation X (four in five) experienced at a similar age.<sup>1</sup>

## Key Shifts In America – Living Situation Of Children



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey and Annual Social and Economic Supplements

**Same-sex marriage** will also change the definition of family for Plurals. Currently seven states have legalized same-sex marriage. Two more have passed legislation to allow it (the laws haven't taken effect yet) and California's ban on same-sex marriage has been struck down by a federal appeals court. An increase in adoption by same-sex couples is also notable. It's estimated that more than 250,000 children are being raised by same-sex parents.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Magid Generational Strategies™ analysis of U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey and Annual Social Economic Supplements

<sup>2</sup> Analysis of Census data by Gary J. Gates, a demographer of the gay and lesbian population at the Williams Institute at the University of California, Los Angeles, Law School

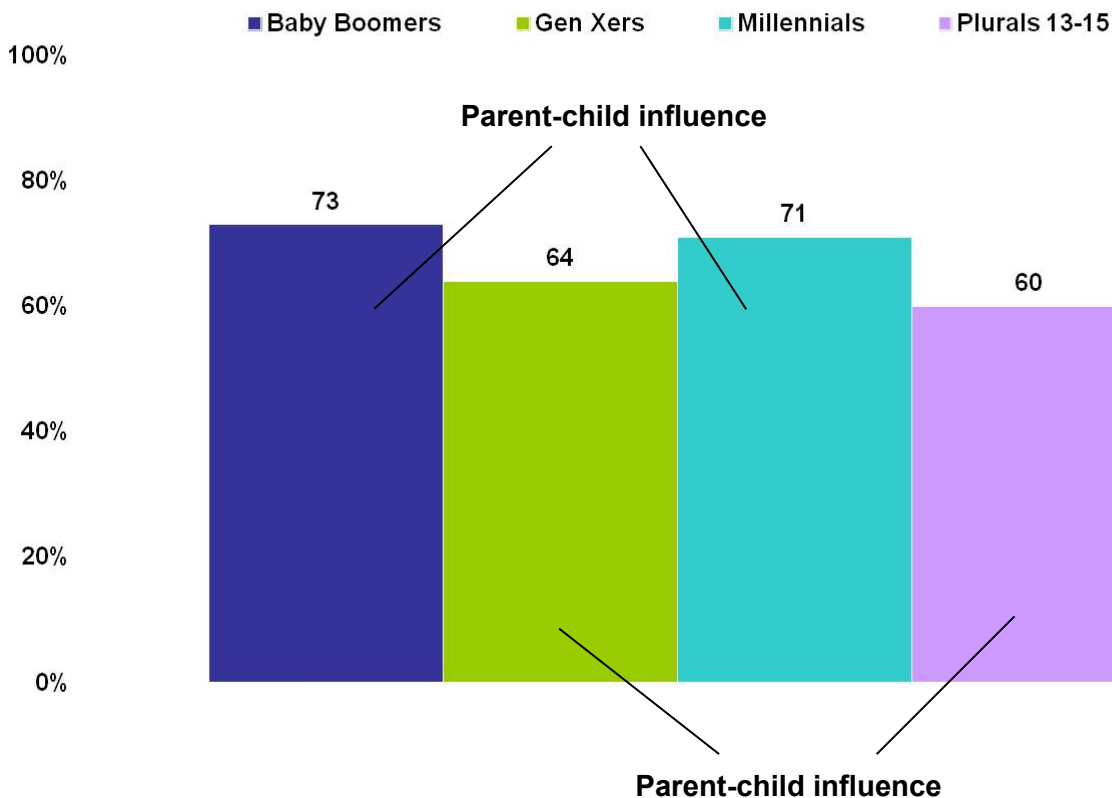


## Plurals are the least likely to believe in the “American Dream.”

**Plurals**—counter to the conventional wisdom that says young people are the most hopeful for their future—are the least likely to believe there is such a thing as the American Dream. Looking at the data through a generational lens reveals a consistent pattern of parental influence.

**Generation X**, the most influential parents of Plurals, demonstrates the least credence in the concept of the American Dream among adult generations. On the other hand, Baby Boomers and their Millennial children are more likely to believe in the American Dream.

### Belief In The American Dream



**Growing up** during the greatest period of economic distress this country has seen since the Depression likely contributes to Plurals' lack of attachment to the American Dream. Their Gen X parents have been absorbing the impact beyond the obvious financial strain — promotion opportunities obstructed by Baby Boomers postponing retirement and the rising tide of Millennials clamoring for a spot on the corporate ladder.

**This directly** affects the family unit and Plurals.

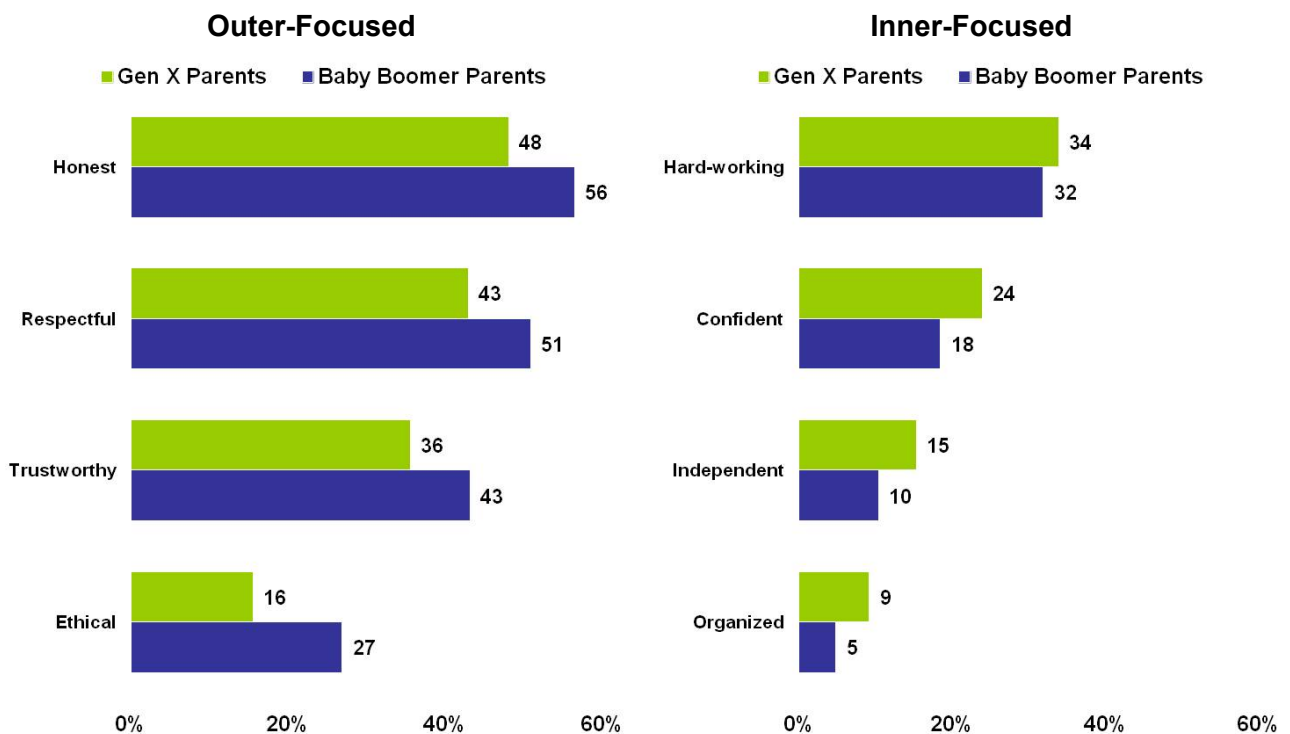


## The Gen X parenting style is beginning to show in the Plural mindset.

The prevailing parenting style of a generation's youth plays a critical role in shaping their mindset. While a child can be a member of the generation immediately following his/her parents, the parental influence for the collective cohort skips a generation. For example, although Boomers followed Silents, G.I.s set the parenting style for Boomers, who in turn set it for Millennials. Silent Generation parents and American society left Xer children to fend for themselves, cultivating the distrust and cynicism so characteristic of Gen X.

Now Gen Xers are the arbiters of America's current parenting style and their approach is different. For instance, when asked what qualities are most important for young people to develop, not surprisingly "honest," "respectful" and "trustworthy" were at the top of the list for parents overall. But, when comparing Boomer and Xer parents, an attitudinal shift is apparent.

### Qualities Important For Young People To Develop



This shift is taking root in the developing mindset of the Pluralist Generation. When Plurals were asked what qualities are important for young people to develop, **Plurals with Xer parents were less likely** than Plurals with Boomer parents to name "dependable" (19% vs. 30%) and "respectful" (34% vs. 44%). Of lesser significance, but still noteworthy, Plurals with Xer parents were more likely to say "creative" and twice as likely to say "independent." Furthermore, in our ongoing qualitative research, Plurals with Xer parents routinely express pride in being an individual and the necessity of learning from their mistakes.



The **Xer parenting style** is more individual-oriented whereas the Boomer style is more group-oriented. Key differences in their approach include:

## Gen X Parenting

vs.

## Boomer Parenting

Protecting through  
surveillance

Protecting through  
involvement

What's best for *MY* child

What's best for the *group*  
of children

*Teaching* children *how to*  
be successful

*Giving* children what they  
need to be successful

Realistic – do what you're  
good at

Aspirations – you can do  
anything

Only the best win

Everyone wins

The **group-oriented** style of Boomers reversed the latchkey kid trend with an unprecedented focus on the well-being of Millennial children at large (e.g., the development and implementation of after-school programs).

The **current transition** to the individual-oriented parenting style of Xers is chronicled in today's headlines (e.g., parent trigger laws and picketing schools about peanut allergy policies).



## Plurals are affected by blurred gender roles.

**The women's liberation** movement of the 1970s and 80s, followed by the girl power movement of the 90s, worked.

**Women have not only** caught up with men in college attendance, but younger women are now more likely than younger men to have a college or graduate degree.<sup>3</sup> Current unemployment rates among Adult Millennials under age 30 with just a high school diploma are three times higher than those with college degrees (28% vs. 9%). Women hold 51 percent of managerial and professional jobs.<sup>4</sup> Unmarried women without children, aged 22 to 30, out-earn men of the same age and circumstances in 39 of the 50 biggest cities in the United States and equal their earnings in another eight.<sup>5</sup>

**Beyond this new societal norm**, enacted largely by Millennials, Plurals are experiencing blurred gender roles within their homes. Historically the husband and wife had separate familial responsibilities of providing (breadwinning) and nurturing (rearing the children), and the lines of responsibility rarely crossed. Gradually lines of distinction blended and sharing responsibilities is now commonplace.

**In Gen X households**, sharing responsibilities has become a game of keeping score, but the players don't see eye-to-eye. **Xer wives are less likely than Boomer and Millennial wives to say their husbands are "very involved"** in caring for the children, helping the children with schoolwork, managing household investments and making decisions about insurance; while **Xer husbands report levels of involvement similar** to Boomer and Millennial husbands.

**All of which** is undoubtedly a factor in half of Gen X moms saying that family is a "chore."<sup>6</sup>



<sup>3</sup>White House "Women in America" report, 2011

<sup>4</sup>White House "Women in America" report, 2011

<sup>5</sup>Analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data by Reach Advisors

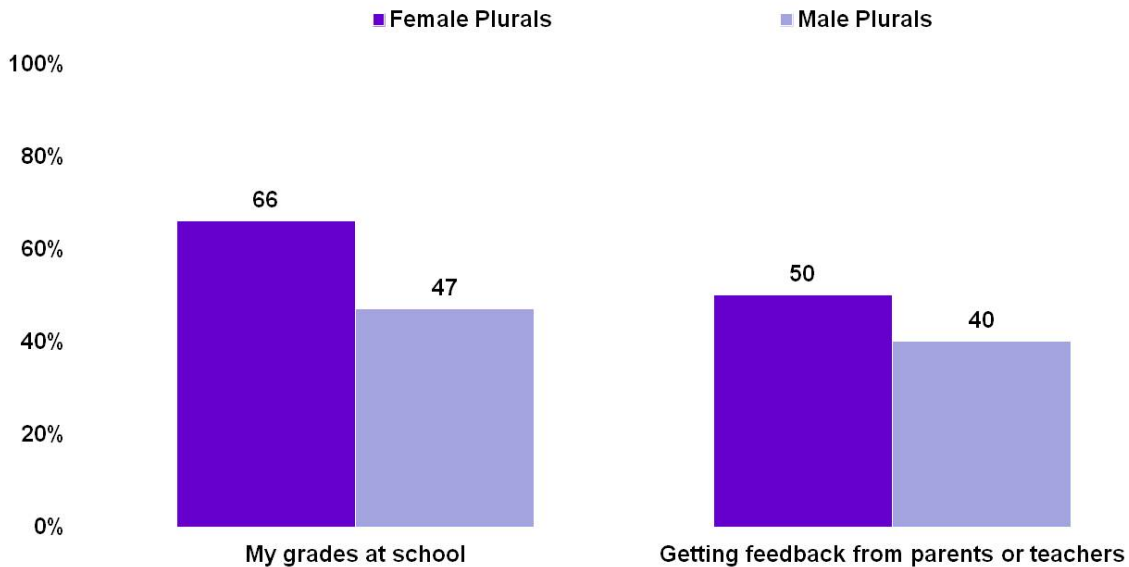
<sup>6</sup>Magid Generational Strategies™ research, 2011



**Male and female** Plurals seem to be already affected by this environment. Girls aged 8 to 15 have greater expectations in obtaining a college degree, helping others live a better life and changing the world. They care more about their grades at school and getting feedback from parents and teachers to help them do things better.

## What's Important To Plural Girls And Boys

### “Care A Lot”



**Plural girls** place a higher value than Plural boys on being respectful, ethical and trustworthy, whereas boys favor being loyal and fun to be with.

**Yet amidst** this increased emphasis on and achievement by girls, female Plurals are just as likely as adult women (38%) to say they have been discriminated against because of their gender.





## The Future Of The Pluralist Generation

**As noted above**, America is transforming and the Pluralist Generation is already an integral part of that transformation. Understanding their role depends on understanding them. Because they are young, there is still much to learn.

**To pinpoint** the Plural mindsets, which will shape their consumer behaviors and the way they interact in society throughout their entire lives, Magid Generational Strategies™ will continue our research and examine today's headlines to connect the dots.



**Media** – How will the rise of the public, crowd-sourced voice affect the way Plurals view mainstream media sources? Will their openness to diversity create demands for more diverse representation in programming and advertising? Will video content piracy wars (e.g., SOPA) be their equivalent of what Millennials experienced with music (e.g., Napster)?



**Politics** – America's first bi-racial president will be the first president most Plurals will recollect. How will this memory impact the way they usher our transition to an ethnically pluralistic society? How will the memory of turmoil over immigration policy influence the way they perceive local and national government? Will their parents' record-low confidence in Congress impact their political involvement when they reach voting age?



**Communication** – Will the easy access, even by the youngest Plurals, to devices that enable fast and continuous communication change the way they learn to communicate? As the Communication Lifestyle spreads and is adopted by young Plurals, will schools and businesses have to make accommodations?



**Business** – Because of the increasing obsolescence of the anchor store (e.g., Sears) and the steady growth of online retailers (e.g., Amazon), will Plurals develop shopping patterns completely different than the generations before them? How will businesses need to adjust? As the open source movement continues to spread, will Plurals gravitate to that influence?



**Education** – Will the upcoming Supreme Court case about affirmative action on college enrollment change the way the ethnically diverse Plurals obtain college education? As Plurals watch their parents fight for more control over the public schools they attend (e.g. parent trigger laws), will it foster distrust in institutions? What will be Plurals' attitude toward higher education as costs climb and their older siblings (Millennials) struggle with college debt?



**Religion** – As contraception stokes the Church and State debate in their youth, will Plurals fight to keep the lines distinct in adulthood? The percentage of Americans claiming no religious affiliation is higher than ever before. Will Plurals continue or reverse that trend?



## Methodology

### Multicultural 2012 – Winter 2012 (Conducted February 8-27, 2012)

Two-sample English-speaking dataset – 3,928 respondents 8-66 years old

Magid Generational Strategies™ National Panel 1,928 respondents

General U.S. Population sample 2,000 respondents

- Respondents randomly invited from high-quality national research panel

	N	Approx. Margin of Error*
Total Sample	3,928	+/- 1.5 percentage points
▪ Baby Boomers (48-66 years old)	1,229	+/- 3.0 percentage points
▪ Gen Xers (36-47 years old)	779	+/- 3.5 percentage points
▪ Millennials (16-35 years old)	1,164	+/- 3.0 percentage points
▪ Plurals (8-15 years old)	756	+/- 3.5 percentage points
▪ Plurals ages 13-15	309	+/- 5.5 percentage points

- Entire sample weighted to be representative of the gender/age/race of the national online population (according to Magid Media Futures™ estimates and the U.S. Census). Geographic distribution representative of U.S. Census.



## FAST FACTS:

### The Pluralist Generation, a.k.a. Plurals in 2014

**Current Age:** 17 and younger

**Born:** 1997- present\*

**Size:** ~72 million

<b>Ethnicity:</b>	Caucasian	52%
	Hispanic	25%
	African-American	14%
	Asian	5%
	Other	5%



*\* Magid Generational Strategies™ has not yet determined the ending year for the Pluralist Generation. Societal factors are currently being evaluated and birthrate data for 2011, 2012 and 2013 is not yet available. An improving economy and an expected rise in birthrates will likely signal the start of the next generation – and end of the birth of Plurals.*



**About Frank N. Magid Associates, Inc.**

Frank N. Magid Associates, Inc. is a leading research-based consulting firm that helps its clients become more profitable by solving problems and helping them take advantage of opportunities. We are unique because for 54 years we have carefully studied human behavior and how communication affects it. We possess an uncanny understanding of what and how marketing and communication will motivate people to behave in certain ways. We leverage this keen understanding of consumers, our practical operational expertise and network of industry leaders to help clients across industries successfully develop and market products and services.

**For more information, please contact:****Frank N. Magid Associates, Inc.**

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Jack heads the Los Angeles office of Frank N. Magid Associates. In that role, he oversees strategic research and consultation to the entertainment industry including leading broadcast networks, cable channels, gaming companies as well as mobile service and content providers. In 2004, Jack founded Magid Generational Strategies™, a unique research and consultancy program focused on developing strategies for the emerging Millennial Generation as well as understanding the evolving needs of the Baby Boom and Gen X generations. Prior to joining Magid, Jack served in management roles in the broadcast television industry, including 10 years at KCNC-TV in Denver.

**Rich McGuire, Vice-President Generational Insights (Gen Xer)**

Rich has worked on a countless number of quantitative and qualitative research activities in his twenty-plus years with Frank N. Magid Associates. His work has focused on user testing, game development, branding and positioning, concept testing, and issues related to moms, kids, and families. In addition to contributing to a variety of entertainment initiatives, Rich currently leads all quantitative and qualitative research conducted for Magid Generational Strategies™ examining the Millennial, Generation X, Baby Boomer and Plural generations. His experience covers entertainment, gaming, the Internet, cable, broadcasting, adult entertainment, professional sports and politics.

**Sharalyn Hartwell, Executive Director Magid Generational Strategies™ (Millennial)**

When Sharalyn joined the Magid Generational Strategies™ team in 2010, she was already a well-known generational expert and Millennial voice, writing a national column about Millennials for an online newspaper since 2009. She leveraged her column and professional experience to start her own consulting business to help companies showcase their brand to the coveted Millennial demographic. Since joining Magid, Sharalyn has broadened her expertise on Millennials to include Baby Boomers, Generation X and Plurals. Her broad media background encompasses not only sales, marketing and new media journalism, but print, television, HD video and satellite technologies.