A Generation in Transition: Religion, Values and Politics among College-Age Millennials

Findings from the 2012 Millennial Values Survey

Analysis by
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Daniel Cox, Director of Research
A Generation in Transition
Type of College Attended or Attending

Among those who have attended at least some college

Source: Public Religion Research Institute, Millennial Values Survey, March 2012 (N=2,013)
Relationship with Parents

Frequency of Talking With Parents

- At least once a day: 60
- Once or twice a week: 25
- A few times a month: 8
- Seldom/Never: 5
- DK/Refused: 2

Source: Public Religion Research Institute, Millennial Values Survey, March 2012 (N=2,013)
"In Their Own Words": Millennials Compare their Generation to their Parents

13% General negative
- More selfish, less respectful
- Worse off/more challenges
- Lazier
- Less religious/moral
- Entitled

16% More tech savvy
- Faster paced
- More open-minded/tolerant
- More liberal
- General positive

5% Better educated/informed/wordy
- Independent/tolerant
- More entitled/moral

22% Neutral

19% Positive

18% Other

Source: Public Religion Research Institute, Millennial Values Survey, March 2012 (N=2013)
# Religious Switching

## Religious Change Among Millennials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Childhood Religion</th>
<th>Entering Group</th>
<th>Exiting Group</th>
<th>Current Religion</th>
<th>Net Gain/Loss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unaffiliated</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>24.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-White Catholic</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Latino Catholic</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Other Catholic</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Mainline Protestant</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Evangelical Protestant</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Protestant</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Christian</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Christian Religions</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DK/Other</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Public Religion Research Institute, Millennial Values Survey, March 2012 (N=2,013)
THE 2012 ELECTION

Likelihood of Voting in 2012
Voter Preference & Excitement
Registered to Vote by Race

Are You Registered to Vote?
By Race/Ethnicity

- **Yes**
- **No**
- **DK/Refused**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>DK/Refused</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Millennials</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Millennials</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Millennials</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic Millennials</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Public Religion Research Institute, Millennial Values Survey, March 2012 (N=2,013)
Findings from the 2012 Millennial Values Survey
Barack Obama vs. Republican Candidate by Race

Source: Public Religion Research Institute, Millennial Values Survey, March 2012 (N=2,013)
Findings from the 2012 Millennial Values Survey

Barack Obama vs. Republican Candidate by Religion

- All Millennial Voters: 48% Obama, 41% Republican, 11% Other/DK
- Black Protestant Voters: 95% Obama, 1% Republican, 4% Other/DK
- Unaffiliated Voters: 64% Obama, 28% Republican, 8% Other/DK
- Catholic Voters: 50% Obama, 39% Republican, 11% Other/DK
- White Mainline Voters: 63% Republican, 27% Other/DK
- White Evangelical Voters: 79% Republican, 11% Other/DK

Source: Public Religion Research Institute, Millennial Values Survey, March 2012 (N=2,013)
Voter Excitement: Obama vs. Romney

Findings from the 2012 Millennial Values Survey

Percent Excited to Vote for Obama & Romney Among Candidate Supporters

- **Barack Obama**
  - Excited: 72%
  - Not Excited: 27%

- **Mitt Romney**
  - Excited: 54%
  - Not Excited: 45%

Source: Public Religion Research Institute, Millennial Values Survey, March 2012 (N=2,013)
Favorability: Obama vs. Romney

View of Political Leaders and Parties Among Millennial Voters

Source: Public Religion Research Institute, Millennial Values Survey, March 2012 (N=2,013)
ISSUES AND POLICIES
Issue Priorities

Critical Issues Facing the Country

Jobs and unemployment
- Critical Issue: 76%
- One among many: 19%
- Not that important: 2%

Federal deficit
- Critical Issue: 55%
- One among many: 37%
- Not that important: 6%

Education
- Critical Issue: 54%
- One among many: 38%
- Not that important: 5%

Growing gap between the rich and poor
- Critical Issue: 40%
- One among many: 44%
- Not that important: 13%

Environment
- Critical Issue: 35%
- One among many: 47%
- Not that important: 15%

National security
- Critical Issue: 34%
- One among many: 53%
- Not that important: 10%

Immigration
- Critical Issue: 34%
- One among many: 48%
- Not that important: 16%

Abortion
- Critical Issue: 22%
- One among many: 42%
- Not that important: 34%

Same-sex marriage
- Critical Issue: 22%
- One among many: 35%
- Not that important: 41%

Source: Public Religion Research Institute, Millennial Values Survey, March 2012 (N=2,013)
Optimism About Economic Outlook

Better Off Than Parents Financially by Race/Ethnicity

- **Better off**
- **About the same**
- **Less well off**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Better off</th>
<th>About the same</th>
<th>Less well off</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Millennials</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic Millennials</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Millennials</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Millennials</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Public Religion Research Institute, Millennial Values Survey, March 2012 (N=2,013)
One of the big problems in this country is that we don’t give everyone an equal chance in life. It is not really that big a problem if some people have more of a chance in life than others.

Source: Public Religion Research Institute, Millennial Values Survey, March 2012 (N=2,013)
The economic system in this country unfairly favors the wealthy

The government should do more to reduce the gap between the rich and poor

Poor people have become too dependent on government assistance programs

Source: Public Religion Research Institute, Millennial Values Survey, March 2012 (N=2,013)
Support for the “ Buffett Rule”

The " Buffett Rule" by Party Affiliation

Increasing the tax rate on Americans earning more than $1 million a year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party Affiliation</th>
<th>Favor</th>
<th>Oppose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Millennials</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Millennials</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Millennials</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republican Millennials</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Public Religion Research Institute, Millennial Values Survey, March 2012 (N=2,013)
Support for the DREAM Act

The DREAM Act by Religious Affiliation

Allowing illegal immigrants brought to the U.S. as children to gain legal resident status if they join the military or attend college

Favor  Oppose

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religious Affiliation</th>
<th>Favor</th>
<th>Oppose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Millennials</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unaffiliated</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Christian Affiliated</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Protestant</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>38</td>
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<tr>
<td>White Mainline</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>44</td>
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<tr>
<td>White Evangelical</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>54</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: Public Religion Research Institute, Millennial Values Survey, March 2012 (N=2,013)
TRADITIONALISM, SOCIAL ISSUES AND PERSONAL MORALITY
Traditionalism vs. Change

What Makes America Great?

- It is open to change and new ways of doing things
- It protects traditional values and ways of doing things

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Open to Change</th>
<th>Protecting Traditions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Millennials</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Evangelical</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Mainline</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Protestant</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unaffiliated</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Public Religion Research Institute, Millennial Values Survey, March 2012 (N=2,013)

Findings from the 2012 Millennial Values Survey
Same-Sex Marriage

Allowing Gay and Lesbian People to Marry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Favor</th>
<th>Oppose</th>
<th>DK/Refused</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Millennials</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Evangelical</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Protestant</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Mainline</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Christian Affiliated</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unaffiliated</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Public Religion Research Institute, Millennial Values Survey, March 2012 (N=2,013)
Making it More Difficult to Access Pornography on the Internet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Favor</th>
<th>Oppose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Millennials</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millennial Women</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millennial Men</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Public Religion Research Institute, Millennial Values Survey, March 2012 (N=2,013)
Covering Contraception Costs

Should religiously affiliated colleges and hospitals be required to provide employees with health care plans that cover contraception at no cost?

- Yes, should have to provide
- No, should not have to provide
- DK/Refused

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All Millennials</th>
<th>All Americans</th>
<th>All Seniors (65+)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DK/Refused</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Public Religion Research Institute, Millennial Values Survey, March 2012 (N=2,013); Public Religion Research Institute, Religion & Politics Tracking Survey, Feb. 2012 (N=1,009)
Abortion

Legality of Abortion by Education

Source: Public Religion Research Institute, Millennial Values Survey, March 2012 (N=2,013)
Morality vs. Legality

Findings from the 2012 Millennial Values Survey

Same-sex Marriage
Among those who say sex btw two people of the same gender is wrong

- Strongly favor
- Favor
- Oppose
- Strongly oppose

Source: Public Religion Research Institute, Millennial Values Survey, March 2012 (N=2,013)

Abortion should be...
Among those who say abortion is wrong

- Legal in all cases
- Legal in most cases
- Illegal in most cases
- Illegal in all cases

Source: Public Religion Research Institute, Millennial Values Survey, March 2012 (N=2,013)
Racial and Religious Divides

Findings from the 2012 Millennial Values Survey
Reverse Discrimination

Discrimination Against Whites Has Become as Big a Problem as Discrimination Against Blacks and Other Minorities

Source: Public Religion Research Institute, Millennial Values Survey, March 2012 (N=2,013)
Government Support for Minorities

The Government Has Paid Too Much Attention to the Problems of Blacks and Other Minorities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minority</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Millennials</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Millennials</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic Millennials</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Millennials</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Public Religion Research Institute, Millennial Values Survey, March 2012 (N=2,013)
Ambivalence About Present-Day Christianity

College-age (18-24) Millennials' Views of Present-Day Christianity

Percent saying term describes present-day Christianity somewhat or very well

- **Christian**
- **Religiously Unaffiliated**

- **Judgmental**
  - Christian: 54
  - Religiously Unaffiliated: 84

- **Hypocritical**
  - Christian: 49
  - Religiously Unaffiliated: 84

- **Anti-Gay**
  - Christian: 58
  - Religiously Unaffiliated: 79

- **Too Involved in Politics**
  - Christian: 40
  - Religiously Unaffiliated: 73

- **Teaches Same Basic Idea as Other Religions**
  - Christian: 65
  - Religiously Unaffiliated: 68

- **Has Good Values and Principles**
  - Christian: 56
  - Religiously Unaffiliated: 88

- **Consistently Shows Love for Other People**
  - Christian: 41
  - Religiously Unaffiliated: 76

- **Relevant to Your Life**
  - Christian: 18
  - Religiously Unaffiliated: 77

Public Religion Research Institute, Millennial Values Survey, March 2012 (N=2013)
A GENERATION IN TRANSITION: RELIGION, VALUES AND POLITICS AMONG COLLEGE-AGE MILLENNIALS

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