

## **Generational Definitions (loosely derived from Wikipedia):**

The **Silent Generation** is the demographic cohort following the G.I. Generation, roughly those born from the mid-1920s to the early-to-mid 1940s. While there were many civil rights leaders, the "Silents" are called that because many focused on their careers rather than on activism, and people in it were largely encouraged to conform with social norms. As young adults during the McCarthy Era, many members of the Silent Generation felt it was dangerous to speak out. This was the first generation in American history to be smaller than the generation that preceded them. People of this generation have been referred to as the "The Lucky Few", because even though they were born during the Great Depression and World War II, they moved into adulthood during the relatively prosperous 1950s and early 1960s. For men who served in the Korean War, their military service was not marked by high casualties as much as the previous generation. The Lucky Few also had higher employment rates than the generations before and after them, as well as better health and earlier retirement.

**Baby Boomers** (also known as **Boomers**) are roughly the demographic cohort with birth years ranging from the early-to-mid 1940s and ending birth years ranging from 1960 to 1964. Baby boomers are associated with a rejection or redefinition of traditional values. As a group, baby boomers were the wealthiest, most active, and most physically fit generation up to the era in which they arrived, and were amongst the first to grow up genuinely expecting the world to improve with time. They were also the generation that received peak levels of income; they could therefore reap the benefits of abundant levels of food, apparel, retirement programs, and sometimes even "midlife crisis" products. The increased consumerism for this generation has been regularly criticized as excessive. One feature of the boomers was that they have tended to think of themselves as a special generation, very different from those that had come before. In the 1960s, as the relatively large numbers of young people became teenagers and young adults, they, and those around them, created a very specific rhetoric around their cohort, and the changes they were bringing about. This rhetoric had an important impact in the self-perceptions of the boomers, as well as their tendency to define the world in terms of generations, which was a relatively new phenomenon.

**Generation X**, or **Gen X**, is the demographic cohort following the Baby Boomers and preceding the Millennials. To describe Generation X demographers and researchers typically use birth years ranging from the early-to-mid 1960s to the early 1980s. Members of Generation X were children during a time of shifting societal values and as children were sometimes called the "latchkey generation", due to reduced adult supervision as children compared to previous generations, a result of increasing divorce rates and increased maternal participation in the workforce, prior to widespread availability of childcare options outside the home. As adolescents and young adults, they were dubbed the "MTV Generation" (a reference to the music video channel of the same name). In the 1990s they were sometimes characterized as slackers, cynical and disaffected. Some of the cultural influences on Gen X youth were the musical genres of grunge and hip hop music, and indie films. In midlife, research describes them as active, happy, and achieving a work-life balance. The cohort has been credited with entrepreneurial tendencies.

**Millennials**, also known as Generation Y or the Net Generation, are the demographic cohort that directly follows Generation X. The term *Millennials* is usually considered to apply to individuals who reached adulthood around the turn of the 21st century. The precise delineation varies from one source to another, however. Neil Howe and William Strauss, authors of the 1991 book *Generations: The History of America's Future, 1584 to 2069*, are often credited with coining the term. Howe and Strauss define the Millennial cohort as consisting of individuals born between 1982 and 2004. Learn more about this generation at [Agenda:Alexandria](#) on March 26!