



Talon

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Photo of the Mississippi River near North Campus by Annika Johnson

Back at 3100



Photo by Annika Johnson

The new North Campus buildings were completed within two years of the Aug. 2, 2017 explosion. The new building features natural light, a new prayer chapel and all new classroom spaces.

100 Years of Student Journalism at Minnehaha

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Teens' values are shifting

Survey: patriotism, religion, children less valued

BY BECK WESTREM
Staff Writer

Rutger Hoekstra, a junior, considers patriotism, having children and religion as "very important" values. These views actually put Hoekstra in the minority among his generation.

According to an August 2019 poll by The Wall Street Journal, young generations consider values like those much less important than older generations do.

Views varied sharply by age. Nearly 4 out of 5 people who were 55 or older said patriotism was very important, compared with 2 of 5 people aged 18 to 38. Two-thirds of the older group recognized religion as very important, compared with fewer than one-third of the younger group.

While it is obvious that Americans are currently more politically divided than they have been in decades, many people would not anticipate that what used to define Amer-

Generation	Birth Year	Population
Gen Z	1995-2015	74 million
Millennials	1981-1994	71 million
Gen X	1965-1980	82 million
Baby Boomers	1946-1964	76 million

ica is now becoming insignificant.

"I am both surprised and saddened to see such fundamental American values being ignored by many across our nation," said junior Nate Sundeen after he saw the poll.

So then what is causing younger people to dissent from the ideology held by their parents and grandparents?

One possibility could be that Millennials and members of Generation Z, who are significantly more progressive than any other age group, associate patriotism and God with conservative ideals. Even though

those ideals once crossed party boundaries, many progressives eventually overlooked them because of their traditional nature.

When the United States was founded, not only did the country have a Christian aspect, but church attendance and religious involvement was far higher. Now, even though a smaller portion of America is religiously involved, society has still indisputably advanced morally since the time of the Founding Fathers.

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Social media as a news source?

More teens get news from web

BY ANN OAKMAN
Staff Writer

Teenagers are more frequently getting news and updates on current events from social media rather than traditional news organizations, a survey conducted by Common Sense Media and SurveyMonkey found.

SurveyMonkey, an online guide to creating professional surveys, along with Common Sense Media, a website focused on reviewing media for children and families, orchestrated a survey investigating teens' engagement with today's current events. The respondents were selected out of over 2 million people in the United States. The 1,005 people selected ranged from 13 to 17 years old. The survey was conducted June 14-25, 2019.

The study showed that only 15 percent of teens read the newspapers or websites of professional news organizations daily, like The New

York Times or The Washington Post. Thirteen percent watch TV news daily. Compared to the 29 percent that get news from social media sites like Twitter and Instagram and the 23 percent that consume theirs from YouTube every day, it is a considerable difference.

The study also shows that it is more common for teens to consume news a few times a week rather than every day. It says that 54 percent of teens consume news from social media sites, with 50 percent consuming news from YouTube a few times a week. The margin is noticeably smaller, with 41 percent reading newspapers or websites of professional organizations and 37 percent watching the news on TV a few times a week.

It could be argued that teenagers and young adults utilize social

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SOCIAL MEDIA: Convenient, but not the most reliable news source

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media as news sources more than adults.

A survey conducted in 2018 by Pew Research Center found that social media is the most popular news source for 18- to 29-year-old Americans at 36 percent.

The young adults are more than four times more likely to use social media as news sources than Americans 65 years and older. They were the youngest group surveyed.

Both studies show that the youngest generations are using social media platforms as news sources much more than the older generations.

“My grandpa, he still reads the newspaper, and that’s just how he gets his news,” said senior Izzy Peterson. “And I think out of conve-

nience our generation likes having everything in the palm of our hands and instant gratification, but I feel like younger generations also have lower standards when it comes to the trustworthiness of our sources, so I think that has a huge impact on it.”

Nevertheless, teens are consuming more news from social media and online sites than ever before.

Why? The study reported that teens prefer news through visual forms above other forms like podcasts and long news stories.

“A majority (64 percent) say that seeing pictures and videos showing what happened gives them the best understanding of major news events, while just 36 percent say they’d prefer to read or hear the facts about what happened,” the Common Sense Media and Survey Monkey study said. But, is the news they are consum-

“I don’t trust [social media]. I think people put a lot of value in social media with no good reason to.”

— Patrick Cullinan, senior

ing accurate?

A significant 61 percent said that information presented to them by influencers on social media is often inaccurate. On the other hand, 38 percent said influencers usually “get the facts straight.” When it comes to legitimate news

organizations, 70 percent said that news reported by them is often accurate. Only 28 percent said their stories are often inaccurate.

Senior Patrick Cullinan recognizes the risk of trusting serious information on social media.

“I don’t trust [social media]. I think people put a lot of value in social media with no good reason to,” said Cullinan. “They’ll say that they do background research and they check their sources when really they don’t.”

Most teens agreed that their main source of news is often inaccurate. So, why do they still rely on social media platforms? Fifty three percent claimed that social media sites helped them better understand what is going on in the world today. Fifty six percent claimed that YouTube was helpful

in the same way.

Although, news organizations come out on top with 65 percent who say news organizations help them increase their understanding of current events.

Whether or not teenagers have found a beneficial way of consuming news and current event updates, 78 percent agree that it is important to follow current events in the news, while 22 percent claim it is not important.

The randomly selected few that filled out this survey are only a small percentage of teens in America today. There are millions of teenagers who are trying to keep up, who are trying to make a difference.

Teens are tuned into what is going on in the world, even if their efforts go unnoticed or are criticized by others.

SURVEY: Youngest generation shows surprising shift in priorities

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David Hoffner, executive director of faith formation and AP Economics teacher, believes it’s a possibility that church attendance has declined because society no longer expects people to attend, not because of less care for the values that define Christianity and other religions.

“There’s no social pressure to do it, so they don’t, and before there might’ve been slight expectation or pressure to do it, so they did. But they were probably never that fervent,” said Hoffner.

If this is true, the decline in true religious worshippers has not declined much; it’s just that fewer people attend religious services because of the status it gives them or the social pressure on them.

Andrew Root, professor at Luther Seminary and author of *The Pastor in a Secular Age* (Baker, 2019), thinks churches and other religious organizations can appear constraining to teens and young adults.

“I think some young people perceive that what religious communities do is tell young people how to live their lives,” said Root.

There are few explanations for

why children are less of a priority for Gen X and Millennials, but a strong case is the growing uncertainty about the future of the country and environment. They may not want children growing up surrounded by the current events, or they may not want to have to redirect their focus to raising children.

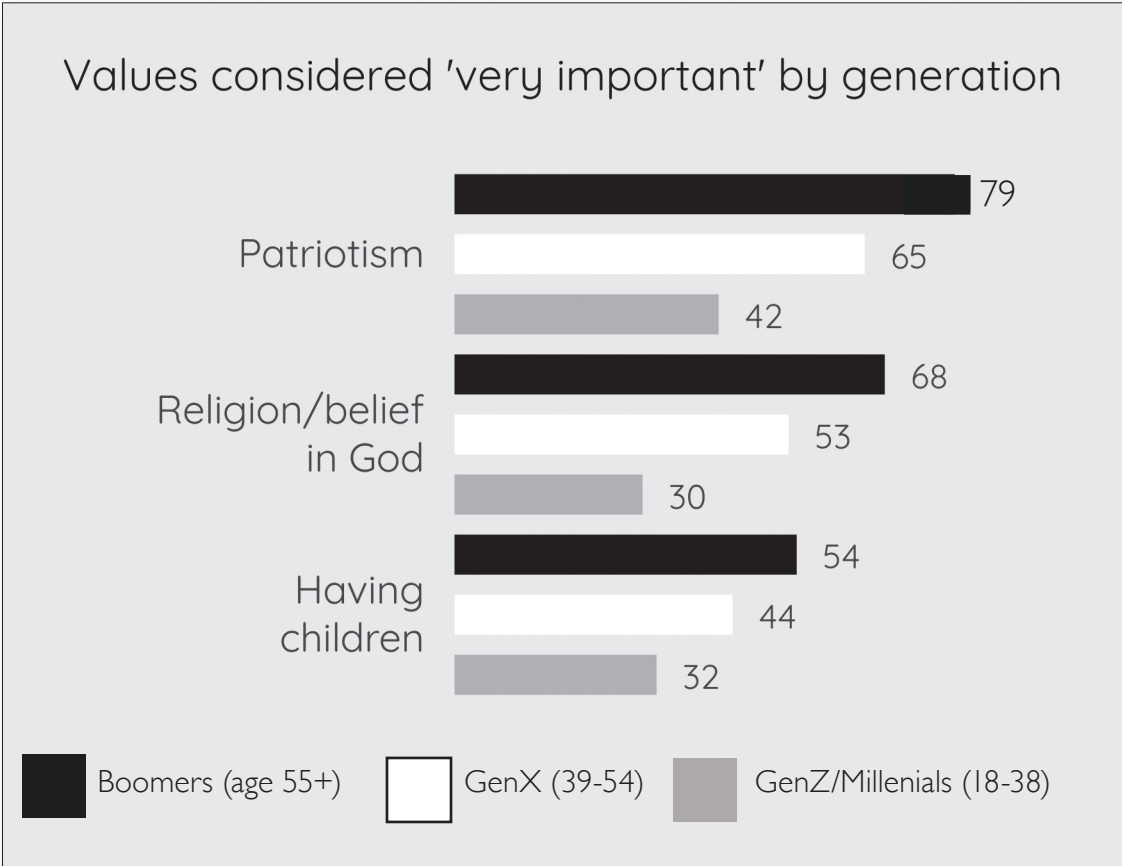
Root believes one factor could be that younger people nowadays value their independence to such an extent that they don’t want to risk sacrificing it for children.

“The dream of living a good life used to include having children in it, and now it doesn’t,” said Root.

He also thinks that because people are going to school for longer and getting full-time jobs later than previous generations, they are delaying having children.

“People are having a harder time entering into a lot of the economic structures that a few generations ago they could’ve,” said Root.

Additionally, another recent study found that birth rates, not just sentiments towards having children, are falling in the US. The data show that the birth rate is the lowest it has been in 32 years, according to the National Center for Health Statis-



tics at the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Regardless of the causes of devaluation in religion, family and patriotism, the fact remains that all three have strongly united people for centuries. If this trend continues, the country could lose several key sources of unity, which could have unknown consequences.

Hoffner believes that Americans will not benefit from individualism without being members of communities.

“If you don’t replace these things with other communal practices, America could look like a really lonely place,” said Hoffner.

Vaping industry under scrutiny

BY JAEDEN MICCO
Staff Writer

It has been a busy fall for the vaping industry. Vaping has been linked to 19 deaths and more than 1,000 illnesses, mostly involving young people, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported on Oct. 3.

In response, several states have banned flavored e-cigarette products, and the Trump Administration has said it would pursue a federal ban.

The Food and Drug Administration is in the process of testing vaping products.

The chief executive of Juul, Kevin Burns, resigned Sept. 25 and will be replaced by an executive at Altria, a tobacco company that owns 35 percent of Juul.

Juul Labs, the leading e-cigarette maker, has lost value recently but is still currently worth about \$24 billion, according to a Wall Street Journal report. A federal ban could cost Juul 80 percent of its revenues.

Juul is also cancelling one of its ad campaigns, “Make the Switch,” which aimed to get people to switch over from traditional cigarettes to e-cigarettes.

In Minnesota, one in four high-school juniors has used a vaping

product in the past 30 days, an increase of more than 50 percent since 2016, according to an October report, Minnesota Student Survey, by the state Department of Health.

Vaping among 8th-graders has more than doubled since 2016, with 11 percent vaping in the past month, the report said.

In the survey, three of four high-school juniors in Minnesota claimed that vaping had no, slight or moderate health risks.

Teens who try vaping are four times more likely to try conventional cigarettes, the health department said.

Soft drinks worse than thought

BY LINDSAY IRMITER
Staff Writer

Everyone knows that soft drinks contain unhealthy amounts of sugar, but new research by JAMA International Medicine suggests that diet soda might be just as bad for you, or even worse.

The JAMA study followed 450,000 Europeans for 16 years and tracked the mortality rate among these soft-drink consumers.

They found that people who drink two or more glasses of sugar-sweetened beverages (diet or regular sodas and juices) a day are 8 percent more likely to die at a younger age as opposed to people who only con-

sume less than one glass of these beverages a month.

They also found that artificially sweetened (diet) drinks leads to an increase in circulatory disease, which can damage the heart’s main blood vessel. Sugar-sweetened drinks can also lead to digestive failure mainly in the liver, appendix, pancreas and intestines.

“We found that higher soft-drink intake was associated with a greater risk of death from any cause regardless of whether sugar-sweetened or artificially sweetened drinks were consumed,” said Neil Murphy of the International Agency for Research on Cancer in Lyon, France.