MILLENNIAL PERCEPTIONS OF SECURITY
RESULTS FROM A NATIONAL SURVEY OF AMERICANS

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By 2040, millennials will make up an even larger segment of the population (see Figure 2). As these young Americans become more prominent in all fields—from politics to government to media to academia to business—their attitudes, preferences, and beliefs will likely have increasing weight in public discourse and U.S. policy (Weinbaum, Girven, and Oberholtzer, 2016).

Although the millennials’ effects on U.S. society have been widely discussed, their attitudes toward security have not been carefully studied. Do millennials’ attitudes toward security differ from the views of previous generations? And, if so, what do these perceptions imply for U.S. security policy in 2040?

This report attempts to answer these questions based on a nationally representative probability sample survey of 1,608 adult Americans conducted from June to July 2017. The survey was administered to a sample of respondents on the RAND Corporation’s American Life Panel (ALP), which is a group of about 6,000 Americans who are 18 years of age or older. Our sample included people ranging in age from 21 to 71 as of 2017. We separated them into three groups: baby boomers; members of Generation X, or Generation X’ers; and millennials.

The survey data revealed some statistically significant differences in the attitudes of younger Americans toward economic and national security, along with some notable continuities with the views of older Americans. In general, younger people reported being more worried about economic security and less worried about national security than older Americans. They were also less likely to report that living in a democracy is very important to them, while older Americans were more likely to report that this was very important to them. Millennials were also the least concerned about illegal immigration, the federal budget deficit, or increasing the size of the U.S. Armed Forces as security issues. They were also less concerned than their elders about protecting the United States against terrorist attacks or halting the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD).

However, on other security issues (i.e., protecting the privacy of U.S. citizens, investing in worker training and education programs, protecting civil rights for minorities, expanding public benefits for families
in need, global climate change), millennials and older respondents did not differ notably in their attitudes, and differences among respondents more strongly patterned with factors other than age.

This report provides detailed analysis of the survey data and what might explain these differences. It examines the question of what defines a generation and whether millennials display generational differences in their views of security when compared with older Americans. It also explores the implications for policymakers looking ahead to 2040.

The definition of a generation is murky, and the definition of a millennial even more so. As we will explain, there is little consensus about when some generations begin and end, or what seminal events influence and unite the people born during those years. To understand the implications of our findings, therefore, requires a more nuanced analysis that includes precise definitions of such terms as security and generation, labels that are widely used but often with vague or conflicting meanings.

For the purposes of this study, we defined the generations as follows (estimates are as of 2016):

- Baby boomers are the estimated 75.4 million people who were born between 1946 and 1964. At the time of the survey in June and July 2017, they were ages 53 to 71.
- Generation X’ers are the estimated 70.1 million people born between 1965 and 1981. As of 2017, they were ages 36 to 52.
- Millennials are the estimated 84.3 million people born between 1982 and 2000. As of 2017, they were ages 17 to 35. For our sample, the youngest person was born in 1996, making him or her 21 years old in 2017.

Millennials’ attitudes might be shaped by such events as the September 11, 2001, (9/11) terrorist attacks and the 2008–2009 Great Recession, while those coming of age in the 1960s might be influenced by the Cuban Missile Crisis or the Vietnam War (Carlsson and Karlsson, 1970). Some research finds that critical periods in the past can affect one’s attitudes in the future (Schuman and Corning, 2012). Thus, people’s recollections of past events (e.g., 9/11 terrorist attacks, the Vietnam War, or the Cuban Missile Crisis) might affect their views today.
Nevertheless, our data did not support the popular characterization of millennials as a generation with attitudes uniquely different from their predecessors. Rather, on most issues, millennial attitudes fell along a spectrum that aligns with broader trends of how Americans’ views tend to change with their age and stage of life.

We therefore hypothesize that “age” is a more meaningful category than “generation” and that popular characterizations of “millennial” attitudes, at least toward security, should be viewed with some skepticism. Where millennial attitudes differ from those of other Americans, we must also consider whether their views are inherently different because of their specific shared life experiences (a generational effect), or whether millennials are different from baby boomers because the young are different from the old (a youth effect). Our data tend to suggest the latter.

**What Is in a Generation?**

The word “generation” means one thing in popular culture and something entirely different to demographers, who prefer to use the term “birth cohort.” A birth cohort, or cohort for short, is a group of people who are born in the same year. The U.S. Census Bureau defines a generation as a group of cohorts that share a statistically meaningful demographic event.

The baby boom generation is the only generation that is officially defined, because the Census Bureau classifies the increase in birth rates after World War II as a meaningful demographic event. An estimated 16.1 million Americans served in World War II between 1941 and 1945. When the war ended, many returned home and had children. Figure 3 displays the birth rate per 1,000 Americans from 1909 to 2015. The birth rate in 1945 was 20.4, increasing to 24.1 births per 1,000 people in 1946. That was the largest increase on record by the National Center for Health Statistics. U.S. birth rates remained above these 1945 levels until 1965, when they dropped to 19.4 births per 1,000 people.

The Census Bureau defines the cohort born between mid-1946 and mid-1964 as the baby boom generation because it was a unique epoch of elevated births, producing a birth cohort that was much larger than in the previous quarter-century and that remained large for another 30 years.

In popular culture, however, the definition of a generation is a group of cohorts who share a meaningful life experience. For example, many men from what is now dubbed the “Greatest Generation” (born

![Figure 3: U.S. Birth Rates per 1,000 People, 1909–2015](image-url)
in the period beginning around 1914 and ending around 1924) fought fascism together as young soldiers during World War II. Baby boomers grew up in a country preoccupied by the threat of nuclear conflagration, and many practiced sheltering under their desks in school. Yet individual and subgroup experiences vary widely. For African-Americans, the assassination of black leaders during the 1950s and 1960s might have been more formative than the threat of nuclear war.

There is some evidence that the 9/11 terrorist attacks and the Great Recession might have affected the attitudes, opinions, and behaviors of millennials. For example, the percentage of young adults reporting that it was likely for them to serve in the military in the next few years increased from 15 percent in August 2001 to 23 percent in November 2001, a few weeks after the attacks (Stafford and Griffis, 2008). Millennials are said to have been heavily influenced by the Great Recession (Archer, 2017). More than half of the millennials in our survey sample reported that one or both of their parents had lost a job at some point (51.2 percent of millennials compared with 33 percent of baby boomers). Furthermore, there is speculation that the Great Recession has led millennials to become more conservative investors than older Americans (Winograd and Hais, 2014).

Generalizing about generations can obscure the individual differences in life experience that might be much more powerful than the year of one’s birth. Despite the widespread belief that generational attitudes matter, there is limited evidence on which experiences are (or are not) meaningful to what percentage of the population and why. Moreover, with only gradual changes in the birth rate over the past 50 years, the definitions of which Americans belong to which generation are arbitrary. Pollsters and others have used conflicting dates and names to define the generations, especially those that followed the baby boomers, creating more confusion. The different names given to various groupings by birth year are shown in Figure 4.

Many of the generation names and dates shown in Figure 4 were given by marketers, pollsters, and
This has led to an explosion of research about the attitudes and opinions of millennials as employees (Ertas, 2015; Myers and Sadaghiani, 2010), consumers (Bakewell and Mitchell, 2003; Gurău, 2012; Noble, Haytko, and Phillips, 2009), and citizens (Jennings and Stoker, 2004). In 2013, *Time* magazine put millennials on a cover that derided the “Me, Me, Me Generation” as “lazy, entitled narcissists” (Stein, 2013). Some argue that millennials were socialized to have an inflated sense of self (Twenge, 2014), while more-flattering assessments suggest that millennials have unique creative and entrepreneurial qualities (Martin, 2005).

This analysis attempts to consider multiple explanations for the survey findings while avoiding value judgment. It rests on survey data, which are highly sensitive to interpretation. For example, how do we distinguish between attitudes that are held by millennials and attitudes that are held by young people in general (as opposed to older people in general)? When we see millennial attitudes diverging from those of their elders, is it because millennials are different? Or is it because the survey question measures something beyond attitudes—for example, whether their income comfortably meets their financial obligations to older parents, children, and so on.

To shed light on whether the differences we measured were a “generational effect” or a “youth effect,” we disaggregated the generational categories and redefined them as age categories. Across numerous questions, we observed strong and steady age trends. Furthermore, we found support for these trends on most questions when we replaced generational categories with age categories or age in models. We discuss these trends in the next section.

**Survey Methods and Results**

The objective of this project was to study millennials’ security perceptions and then assess how their views could affect U.S. policy in the year 2040. To do this, we surveyed adult Americans across age groups about a range of economic and national security issues and compared their responses.
Survey Methods

We administered our survey in June and July 2017 on RAND’s ALP, which is a panel of about 6,000 Americans who are 18 years of age or older. The ALP recruits a nationally representative probability sample of American adults to complete online surveys each month. If panel members do not have a computer or internet access, the ALP provides these resources. People who become respondents in the ALP regularly receive emails with a request to visit the ALP member portal to fill out questionnaires on the internet. Typically, an interview will not take more than 30 minutes. Respondents are paid an incentive based on survey length, at a rate of $40 per hour (Pollard and Baird, 2017).

We invited a sample of 2,062 respondents from the ALP to complete our survey. Of these, 452 people (21.9 percent) did not respond, while fewer than 1 percent began the survey but did not complete it. Our final sample comprised 1,608 respondents who completed all of the survey questions, representing 78 percent of our selected sample. (Table B.1 in Appendix B shows statistics about the response rate for our survey.)

We attempted to control the sample for party affiliation, despite missing data for 14.5 percent of our sample (Pollard and Mendelsohn, 2016). Controlling for party affiliation did not substantively change most results unless otherwise noted. In this report, we define statistically significant to mean a p-value of 0.05 or lower, using a two-tailed test. (A probability—or p-value of 0.05 or lower represents a 5-percent or lower chance that we erroneously found a statistically significant difference.)

Survey Results

There were significant demographic differences between the baby boomer and millennial respondents in the sample, as would be expected from U.S. Census and other data about the changing makeup of the U.S. population. There were more women and more ethnic diversity in the millennial sample than in the baby boomer sample. Millennials self-identified as Hispanic at more than four times the rate of baby boomers. Only 43.2 percent self-identified as white, compared with 78.5 percent of baby boomers. Fewer millennials were married, and they reported lower household incomes. These differences are highlighted in Table 1 and discussed at greater length in the following sections.

**TABLE 1**
Demographic Characteristics of the Unweighted Sample, by Cohort

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Millennials</th>
<th>Generation X’ers</th>
<th>Baby Boomers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age*</td>
<td>30.23 (3.50)</td>
<td>43.80 (4.94)</td>
<td>61.38 (5.20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>64.78</td>
<td>61.77</td>
<td>53.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>51.16</td>
<td>57.90</td>
<td>63.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race and ethnicity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>43.19</td>
<td>54.68</td>
<td>78.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African-American</td>
<td>13.95</td>
<td>14.84</td>
<td>9.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>5.32</td>
<td>4.19</td>
<td>1.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>2.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>34.22</td>
<td>23.55</td>
<td>7.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not graduate collegeb</td>
<td>38.21</td>
<td>40.16</td>
<td>38.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College graduate</td>
<td>61.79</td>
<td>59.84</td>
<td>61.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household income</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under $35,000</td>
<td>36.54</td>
<td>30.53</td>
<td>25.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$35,000 to $74,999</td>
<td>35.88</td>
<td>31.66</td>
<td>35.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$75,000+</td>
<td>27.57</td>
<td>37.80</td>
<td>39.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>17.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwest</td>
<td>15.26</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>18.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>36.9</td>
<td>33.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>30.1</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>30.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 301 620 688


* Means and standard deviations displayed for age. All other variables in this table display percentages. Some percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding. Unweighted sample statistics displayed.

b It is likely that a percentage of younger millennials in our sample were still enrolled in college and reported that they had not yet graduated.
As shown in Figure 5, a sizable number of millennials reported high levels of financial anxiety: 53 percent of millennials reported being worried about making ends meet each month. Nearly 81 percent worried about saving enough, 68 percent about paying off debt, and 36 percent about job loss. Furthermore, Table B.2 in Appendix B shows four logistic regression models predicting the odds that people in our sample were worried about making ends meet each month, saving enough money, paying off debt, or losing their job. For each of these models, we found that millennials and Generation X’ers were significantly more worried about their finances than baby boomers were (after controlling for socio-demographic background—i.e., gender, race, marital status, education, household income, and region of residence), but the two former groups were not statistically different from each other. We also reran these models using age instead of birth cohort categories: Results showed a significant age effect for each measure. However, millennials look similar to Generation X’ers in their financial concerns after controlling for these same factors.

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These findings are not surprising; we would expect younger workers with less experience to have lower wages and lower household incomes than older, experienced workers. However, there is growing evidence that current generations of younger workers are not earning as much as previous generations did at the same age, suggesting that people in this group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affiliation</th>
<th>Millennials</th>
<th>Generation X’ers</th>
<th>Baby Boomers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>36.61</td>
<td>43.50</td>
<td>38.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republican</td>
<td>19.20</td>
<td>22.41</td>
<td>27.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>21.43</td>
<td>21.09</td>
<td>26.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other/ not sure</td>
<td>22.77</td>
<td>12.99</td>
<td>7.72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTES: Data represent the 1,377 respondents who completed the first wave of the 2016 RAND Presidential Election Panel Survey from December 12, 2015 to January 6, 2016 (Pollard and Mendelsohn, 2016) and this Security 2040 survey from June 21 to July 17, 2017. Some percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.
FIGURE 5
Percentage of Respondents Worried About Finances, by Birth Cohort

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Making ends meet each month</td>
<td>34.6</td>
<td>53.6</td>
<td>52.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saving enough money</td>
<td>62.5</td>
<td>78.4</td>
<td>80.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paying off debt</td>
<td>39.7</td>
<td>60.8</td>
<td>67.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Losing your job</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>37.1</td>
<td>36.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: Unweighted sample of those who answered with an opinion and who reported being “very worried” or “somewhat worried” about finances.

will not earn as much as previous generations have over the courses of their lifetimes.

For example, if we look at the share of Americans ages 25–34 who earn less than $30,000 today (or, adjusting for inflation, the equivalent of $30,000 in earlier time periods), 25 percent of American men and 79.6 percent of women earned less than this amount in 1975, compared with 41.4 percent of men and 58.1 percent of women in 2016 (Vespa, 2017).

A study from the Pew Research Center reported that households in 2009 headed by someone who was 65 or older had 42 percent more median net worth (in 2010 dollars) than households from the same age group in 1984 (Fry et al., 2011). In comparison, households headed by adults younger than 35 had 68 percent less wealth than similar households in 1984.

A separate analysis using data from the U.S. Social Security Administration found that lifetime earnings, not just a point-in-time comparison, will be lower, particularly for men (Guvenen et al., 2017). Hence, these insecurities could reflect that young workers are earning less in the current period, are earning less relative to older adults did when they were younger, or are likely to earn less over their lifetimes.

Across the board, these percentages are lower than those for baby boomers but similar to those of Generation X’ers, indicating that millennials are not distinct but reflect greater financial worries among younger Americans.

Again, this finding is not surprising: Baby boomers are more likely to be retired or approaching retirement age while younger Americans are more likely to be paying off loans for education, housing, or cars and to rely on individual or employer-sponsored savings plans for retirement (Brown et al., 2012). We cannot predict whether the higher rates of economic anxiety among millennials will persist until 2040 or whether millennials will experience rising incomes and fewer worries as they age.

Generation X’ers expressed more economic anxiety than baby boomers. As shown in Figure 5, 53.6 percent reported worries about making ends meet each month, 78.4 percent reported worries about saving enough money, 60.8 percent reported worries about paying off debt, and 37.1 percent were worried about losing their jobs. This might reflect the
financial responsibilities typical of their life stages. For example, Generation X’ers range in age from 36 to 52, might have more children, and have had more time to save for retirement than millennials under the age of 30.

Perceptions of National Security

We asked respondents, “How worried are you, if at all, about the following?” with the following statements: “North Korea’s nuclear program,” “growing authoritarianism in Russia,” and “Islamic extremist groups, such as Al Qaeda or ISIS.” For each statement, people could select one of five answers: “no opinion,” “very worried,” “somewhat worried,” “not too worried,” or “not worried at all.” Figure 6 displays the percentage of people who reported that they were very or somewhat worried about each of these three topics by their birth cohort.

As shown in Figure 6, concern about national security threats tends to rise with age categories. Baby boomers worried most about North Korea, Russia, and Islamic extremism, followed by Generation X’ers and then millennials. Appendix B shows three logistic regression models predicting the odds that people in our sample were very or somewhat worried about these national security issues. Specifically, Table B.3 shows that millennials and Generation X’ers were significantly less likely to report being worried about these issues than baby boomers were. These differences were statistically significant after controlling for sociodemographic background (i.e., gender, race, marital status, education, household income, and region of residence). We also reran these models using self-reported age instead of birth cohort categories: Results showed a significant age effect for each measure displayed in Figure 6.

Once again, the differences between Generation X and millennials were much smaller. The difference was statistically significant for North Korea’s nuclear program and Islamic extremist groups, but not for growing authoritarianism in Russia, once these same demographic factors were controlled for.

The Importance of Living in a Democracy

The survey asked a single question: “How important is it for you to live in a country that is governed...
democratically? People could select one of four answers: “very important,” “somewhat important,” “not that important,” or “no opinion.” Figure 7 shows the distribution of these responses by birth cohort, excluding people who reported that they had no opinion.

While all of the respondents reported that living in a democracy was important to them, the greatest number of baby boomers found it very important, followed by Generation X’ers. Millennials were the least likely to report that living in a democracy was important to them. Only 1.8 percent of people from the baby boom cohort said that living in a democracy was not important to them. These effects were significant after controlling for party identification and demographic background—i.e., gender, race, household income, college education, region, and marital status. (The largest differences by age category on this democracy question were between those selecting “very” versus “somewhat” important.

Results from a separate logistic regression model showed no significant differences in the odds that respondents selected “not that important” versus “very” or “somewhat” important.)

Appendix B shows the results from an ordered logistic regression model predicting the importance of living in a democracy. Specifically, Table B.4 shows that millennials and Generation X’ers were significantly less likely to report that living in a democracy was important to them after controlling for various sociodemographic background characteristics (i.e., gender, race, marital status, education, household income, and region of residence). Furthermore, we found no statistically significant differences between millennials and Generation X’ers after controlling for other background characteristics.

We were not able to address the question of whether Americans in general become more concerned with democracy as they get older or whether the finding reflects a growing disillusionment with democracy among younger Americans. Longitudinal studies using more-detailed questions would be required to shed light on this finding.

However, within our own survey data, when we substitute age categories for generational categories, we see the same age pattern. As shown in Figure 8, enthusiasm for democracy increases steadily with each category of age. Moreover, as shown by the ordered logistic regression analyses in Table B.4 of Appendix B, we find significant age effects when dividing the sample by generation, by age categories, and by self-reported age.

**Policy Priorities**

This survey also asked people to prioritize a range of domestic and foreign policy issues. One question asked individuals, “How much priority do you think the U.S. should give to the following policy goals?” The survey then listed a set of 11 issues:

1. “preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction”
2. “protecting the U.S. from terrorist attacks”
3. “reducing illegal immigration”
4. “increasing the size of the U.S. armed forces”

![Figure 7](source: RAND ALP, June 21 to July 17, 2017.)

NOTES: Unweighted sample of those who answered with an opinion. Percentages might not sum to 100 because of rounding.
In contrast to their elders, millennials cared slightly less than baby boomers or Generation X’ers about reducing the federal budget deficit (42.5 percent named the issue a “top priority”) and a great deal less about reducing illegal immigration (only 17.3 percent called it a “top priority”). Although both issues have been considered partisan dividing lines in U.S. politics, controlling for party affiliation did not change these results.

While a higher percentage of baby boomers (38.5 percent) than Generation X’ers (30.0 percent) said that reducing illegal immigration was a top priority, the difference was not statistically significant.

Younger Americans were also less likely to say that increasing the size of the U.S. armed forces was a priority. While 32.8 percent of baby boomers deemed it a top priority, only 24.5 percent of Generation X’ers and 17.9 percent of millennials did. Controlling for party identification had no effect for millennials, Generation X’ers, or baby boomers.

Large majorities in every age group said that protecting the United States from terrorist attacks and preventing the spread of WMD were top priorities, but millennials deemed these issues somewhat less of a priority than their elders. Controlling for party identification did not change these results.

Appendix B shows the details from separate logistic regression models predicting the odds that people in our sample reported each issue a top policy priority. Specifically, Table B.5 shows that millennials were significantly less likely than baby boomers to report each issue as a top policy priority after controlling for their sociodemographic characteristics. The same was true for Generation X’ers except on the issue of reducing illegal immigration. In general, we found that millennials were more similar to those from Generation X than baby boomers after controlling for other background characteristics in our models.

**Where Millennials Are Not Different**

On five issues, our models showed no statistically significant differences among baby boomers, Generation X’ers, and millennials after controlling for demographic factors. These issues were protecting the privacy of U.S. citizens, investing in worker training and education programs, reducing the federal budget deficit, protecting civil rights for minority groups, and strengthening local and state law enforcement.

Respondents could select whether these policy topics were a top priority, somewhat a priority, no priority, or whether they had no opinion on the topic. The results displayed in Figure 9 highlight only the issues on which millennials and baby boomers significantly differed in what they considered a “top priority.” On these five issues, opinions varied predictably by age group.

5. “protecting the privacy of U.S. citizens”
6. “dealing with climate change”
7. “investing in worker training and education programs”
8. “reducing the federal budget deficit”
9. “protecting civil rights for minority groups”
10. “strengthening local and state law enforcement”
11. “expanding public benefits for families in need.”

Respondents could select whether these policy topics were a top priority, somewhat a priority, no priority, or whether they had no opinion on the topic. The results displayed in Figure 9 highlight only the issues on which millennials and baby boomers significantly differed in what they considered a “top priority.” On these five issues, opinions varied predictably by age group.
FIGURE 9
Largest Differences Among Generations on Top Policy Priorities

![Bar chart showing differences among generations on top policy priorities]

**SOURCE:** RAND ALP, June 21 to July 17, 2017.
**NOTE:** Unweighted sample of those who answered with an opinion and named the issue a top priority.

training and education programs, protecting civil rights for minority groups, expanding public benefits for families in need, and global climate change.

Millennials’ reported that top domestic priorities were protecting the privacy of U.S. citizens (55.1 percent), worker training programs (51.8 percent), protecting civil rights (47.5 percent), and expanding benefits for families in need (46.5 percent). In addition, 49.5 percent named climate change as a top priority.

Appendix B shows the details from separate logistic regression models predicting the odds that people in our sample reported each issue a top policy priority. Specifically, Table B.6 shows no significant differences between baby boomers, Generation X’ers, and millennials. These results suggest that there is little difference in perceptions for some policies among these groupings once we control for their sociodemographic background characteristics.

**Conclusions: Implications for 2040**

In this section, we apply results from this research to attempt to assess possible implications for U.S. decisionmakers in 2040. Such projections are inherently limited; even if the response rates were perfect and all respondents understood the questions in the same manner, people change over time. We do not know whether the differences between millennials and older Americans will disappear as the millennials age, marry, have children, divorce, or experience other seminal life events. Will their attitudes be more like those of their parents when they reach the same age?

On most issues, respondents’ attitudes and opinions tended to pattern with their age, not their generation. For example, the older the respondent, the more she or he tended to express worry about nuclear weapons, terrorism, North Korea, authoritarianism in Russia, and Islamic extremist groups (such as Al Qaeda or ISIS); the younger the respondent, the less he or she expressed worry about national security issues. More baby boomers reported being worried.
about national security, followed by Generation X’ers, then by millennials.

On issues of economic security, the reverse tended to be true. Millennials and Generation X’ers were most concerned about financial security—making ends meet each month, saving enough money, paying off debt, losing one’s job—whereas baby boomers, who tend to be wealthier and nearing retirement age, worried much less.

Millennials were also the least likely to report that living in a democracy was very important to them (66.2 percent). Generation X’ers and baby boomers placed much higher importance on living in a democracy (80.8 percent and 89.4 percent, respectively).

The differences among the generations were sharpest on five issues, with millennials placing far less priority than their elders on reducing the federal deficit, reducing illegal immigration, increasing the size of the U.S. armed forces, protecting the United States from terrorist attacks, and preventing the spread of WMD.

How do we interpret these results to understand security in 2040? The answer will differ based on whether we think these results are the effects of age, period, or cohort. While it is difficult to disentangle the age-period-cohort effect (Danigelis, Hardy, and Cutler, 2007; Robinson and Jackson, 2001), there is some evidence that cohort effects exist based on when someone was born (Davis, 2004; Pampel, 2016) and experiences of past key events (Schuman and Corning, 2012) can influence one’s current attitudes and opinions.

If our results are based on period effects, then people from different age groups might interpret the same situations in different ways. We would expect the attitudes and opinions of millennials to remain the same (e.g., the 9/11 terrorist attacks’ effects on millennials or the Vietnam War’s effects on baby boomers would remain) unless another key event occurs (e.g., a future terrorist attack, another war, economic recession). If our results are cohort effects, then we expect that key experiences from people’s lives would stick with them as they age. Thus, our results suggest that millennials will be more worried about their economic security, less worried about national security issues, and less likely to believe that living in a democracy is important by 2040.

Finally, if there are age effects (which we suspect is key), then the current observations about millennials will turn out to be just another example of the perennial expressions of dismay about young people. We suspect that all three explanations—age, period, and cohort—are plausible, assume that it mostly is age, and propose that longitudinal studies are necessary to give a more definitive answer than we give here.

We propose that these findings could affect U.S. security policy in 2040 in two different ways. A public that places higher priority on domestic-related security (e.g., personal finances) than on foreign policy (e.g., national security) might allow policymakers more freedom in their decisionmaking. However, the American public might prefer that more resources go toward domestic and economic security at the expense of U.S. foreign policy activities aimed at improving global security.

The finding that millennials are less attached to living in a democracy can also be interpreted in three ways. Millennials who did not experience the Cold War clash with Communist countries might assume democracy is a given. Or they might feel that U.S. democracy is not bringing them the desired benefits. Finally, they might be disillusioned with democracy, viewing its current paralysis as evidence that, in its current form or given current levels of polarization, the process is “broken.” If any of these explanations are true, support for core U.S. institutions could decline below current levels. However, it is also possible that millennials’ views will change as they age.

Given the significance of this question, we suggest that more quantitative and qualitative research is necessary to understand the specific assumptions, motivations, attitudes, and opinions that underlie the seeming devaluation of democracy by millennials.
Appendix A: Survey Instrument

Appendix A displays the survey instrument completed by people on RAND’s ALP. The variable is listed first, followed by the question wording, and then the answer choices. People did not see the variable names when answering each question.\(^\text{a}\)

**DEMOGRAPHICS**

What is your gender?
1. Male
2. Female

What is your age?
[Integer]

Could you tell us what your current living situation is?
1. Married or living with a partner
2. Separated
3. Divorced
4. Widowed
5. Never married

Were you born in the United States?
1. Yes
2. No

Which category represents the total combined income of all members of your family (living here) during the past 12 months? This includes money from jobs; net income from business, farm or rent; pensions; dividends; interest; Social Security payments; and any other money income received by members of your family who are 15 years of age or older.
1. Less than $5,000
2. $5,000 to $7,499
3. $7,500 to $9,999
4. $10,000 to $12,499
5. $12,500 to $14,999
6. $15,000 to $19,999
7. $20,000 to $24,999
8. $25,000 to $29,999
9. $30,000 to $34,999
10. $35,000 to $39,999
11. $40,000 to $49,999
12. $50,000 to $59,999
13. $60,000 to $74,999
14. $75,000 or more

[If “14” was selected for previous question] You told us that the total combined income of all members of your family (living here) during the preceding 12 months was more than $75,000. Thinking about the total combined income of your family from all sources, approximately how much did members of your family receive during the previous 12 months?
1. $75,000 to $99,999
2. $100,000 to $124,999
3. $125,000 to $199,999
4. $200,000 or more

Now, we would like to know about other members of your household, if there are any. How many other people live with you? (enter 0 for no one else). [Range: 0 to 10]

Do you work for someone else, are you self-employed, or what?
1. Work for someone else
2. Self-employed
3. Other

What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?
1. Less than first grade
2. First, second, third, or fourth grade
3. Fifth or sixth grade
4. Seventh or eighth grade
5. Ninth grade
6. Tenth grade
7. 11th grade
8. 12th grade—no diploma
9. High school graduate, high school diploma or the equivalent (for example: GED)
10. Some college but no degree
11. Associate degree in college occupational/vocational program
12. Associate degree in college academic program
13. Bachelor’s degree (for example: BA, AB, BS)
14. Master’s degree (for example: MA, MS, MEng, MEd, MSW, MBA)

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\(^\text{a}\) For more information about this survey and the data, see RAND Corporation, undated.
Do you consider yourself primarily white or Caucasian, Black or African American, American Indian, or Asian?
1 White/Caucasian
2 Black/African American
3 American Indian or Alaska Native
4 Asian or Pacific Islander
5 Other

Do you consider yourself Hispanic or Latino?
1 Yes
2 No

EVENTS
Have you ever skipped meals because you were unable to afford food? Select one.
1 Yes, in the past year
2 Yes, more than a year ago, but less than five years ago
3 Yes, more than five years ago
4 No

Have you ever been more than one month behind on a bill payment, such as rent, mortgage, heating, or electricity? Select one.
1 Yes, in the past year
2 Yes, more than a year ago, but less than five years ago
3 Yes, more than five years ago
4 No

Have you ever had a debt go into third-party collection? Select one.
1 Yes, in the past year
2 Yes, more than a year ago, but less than five years ago
3 Yes, more than five years ago
4 No

Have you ever lost your job (i.e., you were laid off or fired)? Select one.
1 Yes, in the past year
2 Yes, more than a year ago, but less than five years ago
3 Yes, more than five years ago
4 No

What is your current employment situation?
1 Working now
2 Unemployed and looking for work
3 Temporarily laid off, on sick or other leave
4 Disabled
5 Retired
6 Homemaker
7 Other

Which of the following categories best describes the type of work you do?
1 Management occupations
2 Business and financial operations occupations
3 Computer and mathematical occupations
4 Architecture and engineering occupations
5 Life, physical, and social science occupations
6 Community and social services occupations
7 Legal occupations
8 Education, training, and library occupations
9 Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media occupations
10 Health care practitioner and technical occupations
11 Health care support occupations
12 Protective service occupations
13 Food preparation and serving related occupations
14 Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance occupations
15 Personal care and service occupations
16 Sales and related occupations
17 Office and administrative support occupations
18 Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations
19 Construction and extraction occupations
20 Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations
21 Production occupations
22 Transportation and material moving occupations

15 Professional school degree (for example: MD, DDS, DVM, LLB, JD)
16 Doctorate degree (for example: PhD, EdD)
When you were growing up, did either of your parents lose their job at one point? Select one.
1. Yes, my father
2. Yes, my mother
3. Yes, both parents
4. No

Do you feel that you have been discriminated against because of your membership in a group? If yes, select the group(s) that apply, if not, select no.
1. Race
2. Age
3. Sex
4. Religion
5. National origin
6. Handicapping condition
7. Marital status
8. Sexual orientation
9. Political beliefs
10. Income
11. No

At any point in your life, has a family member or close friend been deployed to an active conflict zone while serving in the U.S. military? Select one.
1. No
2. Yes

[If “yes” was selected for previous question] How are you related to the person who deployed? Select one. If more than one applies, please select the closest family member.
1. N/A
2. Grandparent
3. Parent or stepparent
4. Aunt or uncle
5. Sibling
6. Cousin
7. Friend

When they were at their largest, how much, if anything, did you owe in student loans? (The balance on student loans is typically largest when you left school.) Select one.
1. I have never had a student loan
2. Less than $25,000
3. $25,001 to $50,000
4. $50,001 to $100,000
5. $100,001 to $200,000
6. More than $200,000

There are many things that people value in a job. How important is job security to you? Select one.
1. Extremely important
2. Very important
3. Somewhat important
4. Not too important
5. No opinion

How worried are you that there will soon be another terrorist attack in the United States? Select one.
1. Very worried
2. Somewhat worried
3. Not too worried
4. Not worried at all

Do you think a terrorist attack in the United States is more likely from a U.S. citizen, an immigrant, a refugee, or a short-term visitor (tourist)? Select one.
1. U.S. citizen
2. Immigrant
3. Refugee
4. Short-term visitor

[The following questions are displayed as a table]
Have you voted in U.S. elections over the past 10 years? Check yes or no.
1. Yes
2. No

1. Yes
2. No

1. Yes
2. No

I vote in most local elections.
1. Yes
2. No

[End of table display]

[The following questions are displayed as a table]
How worried are you, if at all, about the following?
[Randomize Display]
Making ends meet each month
1. No opinion
2. Very worried
3. Somewhat worried
4. Not too worried
5. Not worried at all
Saving enough money
1  No opinion
2  Very worried
3  Somewhat worried
4  Not too worried
5  Not worried at all

Paying off debt
1  No opinion
2  Very worried
3  Somewhat worried
4  Not too worried
5  Not worried at all

Growing authoritarianism in Russia
1  No opinion
2  Very worried
3  Somewhat worried
4  Not too worried
5  Not worried at all

Islamic extremist groups, such as Al Qaeda or ISIS
1  No opinion
2  Very worried
3  Somewhat worried
4  Not too worried
5  Not worried at all

Global climate change
1  No opinion
2  Very worried
3  Somewhat worried
4  Not too worried
5  Not worried at all

How much priority do you think the United States should give to the following policy goals?

Preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction
1  No opinion
2  Top priority
3  Some priority
4  No priority

Protecting the U.S. from terrorist attacks
1  No opinion
2  Top priority
3  Some priority
4  No priority

Reducing illegal immigration
1  No opinion
2  Top priority
3  Some priority
4  No priority

Threats to civil rights of minority groups
1  No opinion
2  Very worried
3  Somewhat worried
4  Not too worried
5  Not worried at all
Increasing the size of the U.S. armed forces
1  No opinion
2  Top priority
3  Some priority
4  No priority

Protecting the privacy of U.S. citizens
1  No opinion
2  Top priority
3  Some priority
4  No priority

Strengthening local and state law enforcement
1  No opinion
2  Top priority
3  Some priority
4  No priority

Expanding public benefits for families in need
1  No opinion
2  Top priority
3  Some priority
4  No priority

How much priority do you think the United States should give to the following policy goals?

Dealing with climate change
1  No opinion
2  Top priority
3  Some priority
4  No priority

Investing in worker training and education programs
1  No opinion
2  Top priority
3  Some priority
4  No priority

Reducing the federal budget deficit
1  No opinion
2  Top priority
3  Some priority
4  No priority

Protecting civil rights for minority groups
1  No opinion
2  Top priority
3  Some priority
4  No priority

How important is it for you to live in a country that is governed democratically? Select one.
1  Very important
2  Somewhat important
3  Not that important
4  No opinion

This survey asked about several national policies and policy concerns. Is there any policy (defense or domestic) that you think we left out?

Could you tell us how interesting or uninteresting you found the questions in this interview?
1  Very interesting
2  Interesting
3  Neither interesting nor uninteresting
4  Uninteresting
5  Very uninteresting

Do you have any other comments on the interview? Please type these in the box below. (If you have no comments, please click next to complete this survey.)

[Blank field for written response]
Table B.2: Logistic Regression Models Predicting Responses of “Very” or “Somewhat” Worried About Finances

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Making Ends Meet Each Month</th>
<th>Saving Money</th>
<th>Paying Off Debt</th>
<th>Losing Your Job</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women (versus men)</td>
<td>1.23 (0.21)</td>
<td>1.30 (0.23)</td>
<td>1.26 (0.20)</td>
<td>0.88 (0.16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White (versus non-white)</td>
<td>0.96 (0.19)</td>
<td>1.11 (0.23)</td>
<td>0.95 (0.18)</td>
<td>0.87 (0.19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>0.86 (0.17)</td>
<td>0.78 (0.17)</td>
<td>0.91 (0.18)</td>
<td>1.06 (0.21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest level of education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not graduate college</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College graduate</td>
<td>0.71 (0.13)</td>
<td>0.97 (0.17)</td>
<td>0.88 (0.15)</td>
<td>1.08 (0.20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household income</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than $35,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$35,000 to $75,000</td>
<td>0.68 (0.15)</td>
<td>1.67 (0.40)*</td>
<td>1.00 (0.22)</td>
<td>0.70 (0.16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$75,000 or more</td>
<td>0.29 (0.08)**</td>
<td>1.34 (0.35)</td>
<td>0.84 (0.21)</td>
<td>0.48 (0.13)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwest</td>
<td>0.60 (0.18)</td>
<td>0.88 (0.26)</td>
<td>0.76 (0.21)</td>
<td>0.81 (0.24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>1.01 (0.27)</td>
<td>1.05 (0.29)</td>
<td>1.12 (0.28)</td>
<td>1.15 (0.31)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>1.08 (0.29)</td>
<td>1.37 (0.38)</td>
<td>1.07 (0.27)</td>
<td>1.56 (0.41)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth cohorts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millennials</td>
<td>1.56 (0.35)*</td>
<td>2.03 (0.46)**</td>
<td>2.95 (0.64)***</td>
<td>1.60 (0.38)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generation X</td>
<td>2.16 (0.39)**</td>
<td>2.15 (0.41)***</td>
<td>2.33 (0.39)***</td>
<td>2.06 (0.39)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baby boomers</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>1.03 (0.46)</td>
<td>0.88 (0.39)</td>
<td>0.59 (0.25)</td>
<td>0.44 (0.18)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of observations</td>
<td>1,519</td>
<td>1,519</td>
<td>1,519</td>
<td>1,519</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wald Chi-squared</td>
<td>82.32***</td>
<td>31.38***</td>
<td>55.65***</td>
<td>40.18***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pseudo R-squared</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Notes: Odds ratios reported. Sample weights used; robust standard errors reported; * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001.
TABLE B.3
Logistic Regression Models Predicting Responses of “Very” or “Somewhat” Worried About National Security Issues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>North Korea’s Nuclear Program</th>
<th>Growing Authoritarianism in Russia</th>
<th>Islamic Extremist Groups, Such as Al Qaeda or ISIS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women (versus men)</td>
<td>1.40 (0.25)</td>
<td>1.50 (0.23)**</td>
<td>1.43 (0.22)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White (versus non-white)</td>
<td>1.23 (0.26)</td>
<td>0.87 (0.16)</td>
<td>0.96 (0.17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>1.06 (0.21)</td>
<td>1.06 (0.19)</td>
<td>1.11 (0.19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest level of education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not graduate college</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College graduate</td>
<td>1.19 (0.22)</td>
<td>1.22 (0.20)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household income</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than $35,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$35,000 to $75,000</td>
<td>1.50 (0.34)</td>
<td>1.19 (0.24)</td>
<td>0.96 (0.20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$75,000 or more</td>
<td>1.74 (0.47)*</td>
<td>1.49 (0.35)</td>
<td>1.27 (0.30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwest</td>
<td>0.86 (0.25)</td>
<td>0.76 (0.19)</td>
<td>0.65 (0.16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>0.77 (0.20)</td>
<td>0.92 (0.21)</td>
<td>1.00 (0.22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>1.00 (0.28)</td>
<td>0.94 (0.22)</td>
<td>0.65 (0.15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth cohorts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millennials</td>
<td>0.27 (0.06)***</td>
<td>0.39 (0.08)***</td>
<td>0.22 (0.05)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generation X</td>
<td>0.49 (0.10)***</td>
<td>0.57 (0.10)***</td>
<td>0.49 (0.08)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baby boomers</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>1.72 (0.70)</td>
<td>0.80 (0.29)</td>
<td>0.55 (0.20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of observations</td>
<td>1,519</td>
<td>1,519</td>
<td>1,519</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wald Chi-squared</td>
<td>57.69***</td>
<td>37.52***</td>
<td>70.99***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pseudo R-squared</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


NOTES: Odds ratios reported. Sample weights used; Robust standard errors reported; * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women (versus men)</td>
<td>0.63 (0.13)*</td>
<td>0.63 (0.13)*</td>
<td>0.62 (0.13)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White (versus non-white)</td>
<td>1.55 (0.36)*</td>
<td>1.54 (0.36)</td>
<td>1.52 (0.36)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>1.23 (0.27)</td>
<td>1.24 (0.27)</td>
<td>1.21 (0.26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest level of education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not graduate college</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College graduate</td>
<td>1.90 (0.41)**</td>
<td>1.85 (0.40)**</td>
<td>1.86 (0.40)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household income</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than $35,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$35,000 to $75,000</td>
<td>0.59 (0.15)</td>
<td>0.60 (0.15)*</td>
<td>0.58 (0.15)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$75,000 or more</td>
<td>1.23 (0.41)**</td>
<td>1.25 (0.42)</td>
<td>1.24 (0.41)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwest</td>
<td>0.96 (0.33)</td>
<td>0.96 (0.34)</td>
<td>0.95 (0.33)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>0.98 (0.28)</td>
<td>1.00 (0.28)</td>
<td>0.98 (0.28)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>1.22 (0.36)</td>
<td>1.25 (0.36)</td>
<td>1.24 (0.36)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth cohorts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millennials</td>
<td>0.33 (0.08)***</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generation X</td>
<td>0.51 (0.13)**</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baby boomers</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age categories</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 to 29</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 to 39</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 to 49</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 to 59</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60+</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of observations</td>
<td>1,439</td>
<td>1,439</td>
<td>1,439</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wald Chi-squared</td>
<td>66.56***</td>
<td>64.92***</td>
<td>64.74***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pseudo R-squared</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


NOTES: Odds ratios reported. Sample weights used; Robust standard errors reported; * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001. The empty spaces in the models represent the different ways we measured cohorts. Model 1 uses our breakdown of millennials, Generation X'ers, and baby boomers; Model 2 uses age categories; and Model 3 uses age as a continuous variable.
## TABLE B.5
### Logistic Regression Models Predicting Top Policy Priorities, with Significant Differences by Birth Cohort

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Reducing the Federal Budget Deficit</th>
<th>Reducing Illegal Immigration</th>
<th>Increasing the Size of the U.S. Armed Forces</th>
<th>Protecting the U.S. from Terrorist Attacks</th>
<th>Preventing the Spread of WMD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women (versus men)</td>
<td>0.85 (0.13)</td>
<td>0.87 (0.14)</td>
<td>1.16 (0.20)</td>
<td>1.24 (0.23)</td>
<td>1.09 (0.18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White (versus non-white)</td>
<td>1.01 (0.19)</td>
<td>1.67 (0.33)**</td>
<td>0.76 (0.15)</td>
<td>0.93 (0.21)</td>
<td>1.02 (0.21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>0.93 (0.16)</td>
<td>1.18 (0.22)</td>
<td>1.12 (0.23)</td>
<td>0.92 (0.19)</td>
<td>1.16 (0.21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest level of education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not graduate college</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College graduate</td>
<td>0.90 (0.15)</td>
<td>0.69 (0.12)*</td>
<td>0.70 (0.13)*</td>
<td>0.93 (0.18)</td>
<td>1.02 (0.17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household income</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than $35,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$35,000 to $75,000</td>
<td>1.35 (0.28)</td>
<td>0.72 (0.16)</td>
<td>0.78 (0.18)</td>
<td>1.37 (0.32)</td>
<td>0.93 (0.20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$75,000 or more</td>
<td>1.83 (0.44)**</td>
<td>0.97 (0.24)</td>
<td>0.74 (0.20)</td>
<td>1.36 (0.39)</td>
<td>0.85 (0.21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regions</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwest</td>
<td>1.52 (0.38)</td>
<td>1.17 (0.33)</td>
<td>0.56 (0.17)</td>
<td>0.82 (0.24)</td>
<td>0.69 (0.18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>1.56 (0.35)*</td>
<td>1.75 (0.45)*</td>
<td>1.45 (0.36)</td>
<td>0.99 (0.27)</td>
<td>1.32 (0.32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>1.35 (0.31)</td>
<td>0.99 (0.26)</td>
<td>0.84 (0.22)</td>
<td>0.79 (0.21)</td>
<td>0.86 (0.20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth cohorts</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millennials</td>
<td>0.63 (0.13)*</td>
<td>0.37 (0.09)**</td>
<td>0.26 (0.07)*****</td>
<td>0.26 (0.06)*****</td>
<td>0.34 (0.07)*****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generation X</td>
<td>0.69 (0.11)*</td>
<td>0.89 (0.15)</td>
<td>0.59 (0.11)****</td>
<td>0.66 (0.13)*</td>
<td>0.60 (0.10)****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baby boomers</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>0.88 (0.31)</td>
<td>0.52 (0.19)</td>
<td>0.71 (0.28)</td>
<td>3.32 (10.39)**</td>
<td>2.09 (0.78)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of observations</td>
<td>1,519</td>
<td>1,519</td>
<td>1,519</td>
<td>1,519</td>
<td>1,519</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wald Chi-squared</td>
<td>22.23*</td>
<td>48.36***</td>
<td>62.74***</td>
<td>43.62***</td>
<td>41.90***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pseudo R-squared</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SOURCE:** RAND ALP, June 21 to July 17, 2017.

**NOTES:** Odds ratios reported. Sample weights used; Robust standard errors reported; *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001.
TABLE B.6
Logistic Regression Models Predicting Similar Top Policy Priorities, by Birth Cohort

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Protecting the Privacy of U.S. Citizens</th>
<th>Investing in Worker Training and Education Programs</th>
<th>Protecting Civil Rights for Minority Groups</th>
<th>Expanding Public Benefits for Families in Need</th>
<th>Global Climate Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women (versus men)</td>
<td>0.73 (0.12)*</td>
<td>0.86 (0.15)</td>
<td>1.36 (0.22)</td>
<td>1.17 (0.20)</td>
<td>1.10 (0.17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White (versus non-white)</td>
<td>0.82 (0.15)</td>
<td>0.65 (0.14)**</td>
<td>0.41 (0.08)**</td>
<td>0.52 (0.10)**</td>
<td>0.62 (0.11)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>0.65 (0.12)*</td>
<td>0.87 (0.17)</td>
<td>0.86 (0.16)</td>
<td>0.92 (0.18)</td>
<td>0.84 (0.15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest level of education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not graduate college</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College graduate</td>
<td>0.86 (0.14)</td>
<td>0.83 (0.15)</td>
<td>1.66 (0.29)**</td>
<td>1.52 (0.27)*</td>
<td>1.89 (0.32)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household income</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than $35,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$35,000 to $75,000</td>
<td>1.09 (0.23)</td>
<td>1.01 (0.24)</td>
<td>1.01 (0.21)</td>
<td>0.71 (0.16)</td>
<td>1.29 (0.27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$75,000 or more</td>
<td>1.12 (0.26)</td>
<td>1.17 (0.32)</td>
<td>0.84 (0.22)</td>
<td>0.46 (0.12)**</td>
<td>1.12 (0.28)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwest</td>
<td>0.65 (0.17)</td>
<td>1.33 (0.35)</td>
<td>0.60 (0.16)*</td>
<td>0.60 (0.16)*</td>
<td>0.75 (0.19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>1.04 (0.24)</td>
<td>1.67 (0.41)*</td>
<td>0.58 (0.13)*</td>
<td>0.73 (0.18)</td>
<td>0.86 (0.18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>1.01 (0.24)</td>
<td>1.33 (0.33)</td>
<td>0.60 (0.14)*</td>
<td>0.93 (0.24)</td>
<td>1.09 (0.24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth cohorts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millennials</td>
<td>0.70 (0.14)</td>
<td>0.87 (0.21)</td>
<td>0.83 (0.18)</td>
<td>0.88 (0.20)</td>
<td>0.84 (0.17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generation X</td>
<td>0.79 (0.13)</td>
<td>0.80 (0.14)</td>
<td>0.99 (0.17)</td>
<td>1.16 (0.20)</td>
<td>0.81 (0.13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baby boomers</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>3.67 (1.43)**</td>
<td>2.51 (0.98)</td>
<td>1.03 (0.38)</td>
<td>1.14 (0.45)</td>
<td>0.65 (0.23)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of observations</td>
<td>1,519</td>
<td>1,311</td>
<td>1,519</td>
<td>1,519</td>
<td>1,519</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wald Chi-squared</td>
<td>23.88</td>
<td>49.66</td>
<td>44.98***</td>
<td>49.57***</td>
<td>29.45**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pseudo R-squared</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


NOTES: Odds ratios reported. Sample weights used; Robust standard errors reported; * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001.
Notes

1 Panel members generally do not give notice about their intent to leave the panel; rather, they simply stop participating in surveys. To avoid retention of disinterested panel members, RAND periodically attempts to contact members who have not been active for more than a year and removes from the panel those who no longer wish to take part or cannot be contacted. For more details on the ALP, see RAND Corporation (undated).

2 The effect of birth cohort was statistically significant after controlling for the party identification of people in our sample when it was available.

3 When we controlled for responses to questions about economic worries, we still found the same pattern of results. Thus, we do not believe that economic worries are replacing worries about national security across birth cohorts.

4 The specific wording of this answer choice was “some priority.”

5 While these projections are based on cross-sectional survey data, the time horizon (i.e., two decades) means that our projections represent informed speculation.

References


Acknowledgments

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Security 2040

This report is part of a broader effort, an initiative of RAND Ventures, to envision critical security challenges in the world of 2040, considering the effects of political, technological, social, and demographic trends that will shape those security challenges in the coming decades. The research was conducted within the RAND Center for Global Risk and Security.

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About This Report

Millennials, those born between 1982 and 2000, are the largest segment of the U.S. population, with 84.3 million people, and by 2040, they will account for an even larger segment of the population. As these young Americans become more prominent in all professional fields—politics, government, media, academia, business—their attitudes, preferences, and beliefs will have increasing weight in public discourse and U.S. policy toward security. But the millennial outlook has not been carefully studied. Do their attitudes toward security differ from the views of previous generations? And if so, what do these perceptions imply for U.S. security policy in 2040? This report—part of a series examining critical security challenges in 2040—analyzes survey data from a nationally representative sample of adults, examines perceptions of economic and national security, compares attitudes and opinions of millennials with previous generations, and concludes by making inferences about potential millennial concerns about security in the year 2040. The report reveals that attitudes and opinions of security tend to pattern with age, not generation. Specifically, older people expressed more worry about national security topics than younger people, while younger people expressed more worry about economic security. Younger people also were less likely than older people to report that living in a democracy was important to them.