

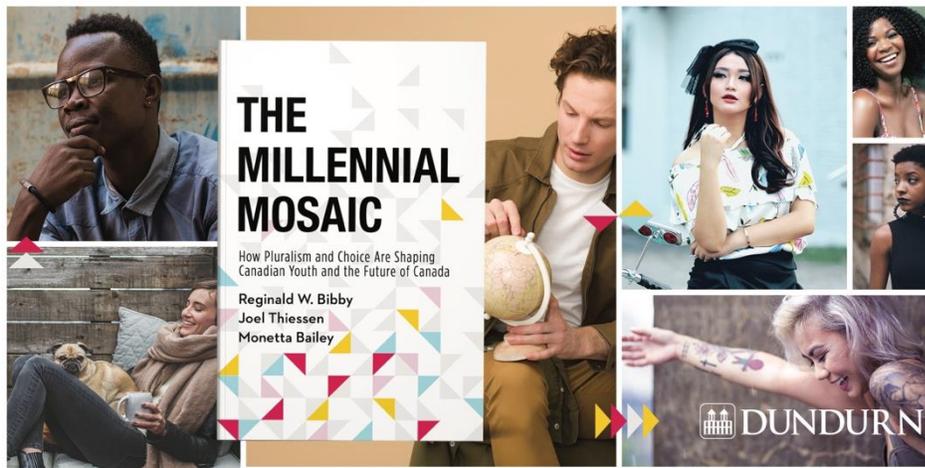


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## Canada’s millennials are an upgrade to previous generations

Contrary to popular opinion that millennials are entitled and narcissistic, three Alberta sociologists have found that millennials are not only looking good, but may well be an upgrade on previous generations.

In their newly released book, *The Millennial Mosaic* (Toronto: Dundurn), Drs. Reginald Bibby, from the University of Lethbridge, and Joel Thiessen and Monetta Bailey from Calgary’s Ambrose University, team up to provide an up-to-date reading on millennials, who are Canada’s youngest adults born since the mid-1980s and now reaching their 30s.



They draw on thousands of national surveys, past and present, to examine young people today and compare them to older Canadians both today and yesterday. No surprise, their research found that millennials love the internet and their

smartphones. That love of technology, combined with higher levels of education, means millennials can expect to be the most informed generation in Canadian history. The research also shows millennials embrace the idea of diversity and are more inclined than older generations to accept social, demographic and lifestyle variations.

“Pluralism is in their DNA,” says Bibby. “Beyond embracing the idea of diversity, millennials maintain the need for a just and fair society.”

While the research shows millennials are more likely than older generations to indicate they are troubled by the future and lack of money and time, it also shows most millennials have high hopes and expectations when it comes to education, careers, income, relationships and family.

When the researchers looked at the levels of concern reported by young people from 1984 through 2000 and to 2016, they found rising levels of concern.

“These data point to changes that are taking place in society and the culture rather than changes that reflect the life cycle as people move from youth to early and middle adulthood,” says Thiessen. “They also reflect an information society where more problems than ever before are being identified.”

When the researchers looked at the levels of personal concerns of young people in the mid-1980s and compared them to the levels the same cohort reported some 30 years later, they found that concern levels had decreased. They attribute the decrease to basic positive realities that, with the help of family, friends, professionals and other resources, young people learn how to live life as they get older.

“Where young people are now is not where they will be years from now,” says Bailey. “While personal concerns among millennials are pervasive, many will be resolved with time, just as they have been in the past. Emerging millennials have many positive features, with the majority saying they are either pretty happy or very happy, much like Gen Xers and baby boomers.”

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