**Millennials, Hope and Social Change:**From “Portrait of the Millenials” video by Pew Research Center, 2011 (on YouTube), summarizing the PEW Report “Confident, Connected, and Open to Change” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a3D2ui5Yf\_M

**Some key issues that shape this generation:**

* Optimistic, but burdened by debt and impact of recession (37% of 18-29 year olds unemployed or not in the work force.)
* Higher education greatest than any time in U.S. history.
* Previous markers of adulthood don’t much apply: Grew up during two wars, but less exposure to burdens of military service than any generation in U.S. history. Low rates of marriage.
* 25% are unaffiliated to any religion, also unprecedented.
* 25% say technology is the key definer of their generation. Social media has supplanted the mall for youth congregating.
* Two biggest values they define for themselves: work ethic and being respectful.
* Much more diversity in this generation than previous generation, and they think transracially.
* Not interested in “pointing fingers” at the previous generation, yet they don’t want the past’s “bad vibes” around race and other social issues.
* May be some defensiveness about being blamed for the current state of things.
* Feel there is a generation gap, but it’s not based in conflict. See difference in morals and values, but actually think the older generation has better morals and values. They *like* their parents.
* Raised with a sense of specialness.
* This generation is surprisingly conventional: want to have a balanced life, be good citizens, good neighbors, get married and have kids, spend time with their parents.

**Attitudes toward change and civic engagement:**

* Most telling is what they are *not* doing: not protesting in the streets, but rather hanging out on Facebook and in school trying to work toward a brighter future.
* Very open to change.
* Have a “complex view of government
  + more democratic, more liberal
  + but less participation in formal avenues of politics
  + a lot of action in community volunteering, see change coming from small groups of people coming together to do things
* Implications: “If you think change happens through changing laws and policies, then you’re more likely to be involved in campaigns and… speaking to to elected officials, but if you think change occurs because at a very localized level people get together and run a soup kitchen, and they’re not worrying about what policies led to the need for that soup kitchen, that gives you a very different way of think thinking about the way politics works or the way society improves itself or..solves its problems. “
* Volunteering is a norm (versus community service seen as a punishment by Gen Xers). Complex motivations: they think it’s important and also see it as a cultural expectation to win approval and credentials.
* Moving technology back to the community, using for political action.
* Millennials want to bring everyone into the mainstream and not marginalize/stigmatize others others.

Questions for Discussion (after videos) DRAFT

What were the key take-aways from these videos and the PEW summary. Any surprises? Any observations you would add (from your own research, teaching and other experience, etc.)?

Considering Capstone’s focus on forms of civic engagement and social responsibility, do you see any challenges for your teaching to hope and change in these generational trends?

What opportunities in these generational attitudes can we tap into?