Generation NeXt Goes to Work:
Issues in Workplace Readiness and Performance

Mark Taylor

Many traditionally aged graduates from Generation NeXt are having significant difficulty in successfully transitioning from college into the workplace and in adapting to the expectations of the workplace (Kearnes and Shirley 2006; Taylor 2006a). Many schools have been slow to recognize the significance and magnitude of this epidemic of work-life unreadiness so are not making the necessary institutional, programmatic, and instructional changes necessary to improve the work-related abilities of their graduates (Levine 2005b).

Who Is Generation NeXt?

Generation NeXt is the age cohort of young people born during the "baby boomlet" of roughly 1980 to 1994. These young people, twenty-five years old and younger, comprise the majority of students at most colleges and of new hires in the workforce and are increasingly being recognized as a unique cohort (Pew Research Center 2007).

Though this age cohort has also been described as "the Millennials," there is little evidence, especially from college campuses, that these young people are adopting the civic social roles vacated by the "greatest generation" as predicted (Howe and Strauss 2000, 2003; Strauss and Howe 1991). Nor are they showing themselves to be the conventional conformists who are respectful of social norms and institutions, extremely focused on grades and performance, busy with and eager for extracurricular activities and community projects, interested in math and science, and demanding of a secure and regulated environment (especially as it impacts their personal freedoms) as also predicted by Howe and Strauss (2000; 2003).

The typical, modal traditionally aged Generation NeXt student as observed on most campuses might more fit the "emerging stereotype" described by President William C. Durden in his convocation address in August 2005 at Dickenson College; they expect high grades without significant effort and often just for showing up; demand comfort and luxury more than a rigorous education; see themselves as consumers and expect services and extended and direct personal attention on demand; have little respect for authority and show distain for collegial and social rules of conduct, instead asserting personal privilege; fail to differentiate between civil exchange of reasoned ideas and shouting personal beliefs, yet grow defensive when faced with constructive criticism; and have a naïve sense of the future. Durden succinctly described the postmodern college student where "facts don't really matter; what matters is the uninhibited, unedited and immediate assertion of your egotistical opinions and thereby, the preservation of your self-esteem at all costs. It truly is all about you." While painting a somewhat bleak picture, this description tends to resonate with more college faculty and staff members than does the description of the Millennials. Even the members of Generation NeXt themselves report that their most important life goals are fortune and fame, that they are more disengaged from civic life and the political process (focused instead on personal or internal issues), and that they are more likely to have casual sex, resort to violence to solve conflicts, use drugs, and binge drink (Pew 2007).

The modal traits of Generation NeXt, with appropriate caveats against overgeneralization, have been described by this writer and others (Kearns and Shirley 2006; Levine 2005a, 2005b; Taylor 2003, 2004a, 2004b, 2005, 2006a, 2006b; Twenge 2006). These über-consumers tend to feel a sense of entitlement, and they want to negotiate and will protest vigorously (or leave) if their expectations of ease and success are not met at school or at work. Their entertainment orientation, short-event horizons, and expectations for immediate gratification interfere with protracted work either at school or on the job. Their high self-esteem, self-importance, and self-interest are exacerbated by the consumer and developmental orientations of college campuses and often devastated by the expectations of the workplace. Generation NeXt has little evidence that it is not all about them. It has been argued that the hyperprotective and supervigilant management by many parents (and their agents) of children's lives during a sanitized childhood prevents young NeXters from developing important interpersonal and self-management skills or a belief in their own efficacy, thereby making them fragile and anxious, contributing to their delayed adolescence, and creating a "nation of wimps" (Marano 2004; Sacks 1996; Taylor 2006b; Twenge 2006).

The Consumer Employee

Just as Generation NeXt was (and is) a cohort of consumer students, they bring these consumer expectations to the workplace, asking not what they can do for the organization, but what the organization can do for them. The core message that to be a vigorous consumer one must also be an active and effective producer has been lost on many in Generation NeXt. Dissatisfied with entry-level positions, they tend to expect high salaries, quick promotions, and moderate work hours in a friendly, supportive, positive environment that uses

and develops their talents. Unfortunately, many employers, recognizing the availability of a limited pool of qualified workers, may tend to think that they need to offer these conditions to young workers to hire and keep them; an eerie parallel to colleges' acquiescing to students' consumer demands to recruit and retain them.

Strengths of Generation NeXt

Certainly, these descriptions of Generation NeXt do not apply completely to every young person in the cohort. Many students are hard-working. Many students struggle with self-esteem issues and have little or no parental support. But the problems are real and must be realistically appraised if they are to be solved.

The young people of Generation NeXt have many strengths. They are young and have many years of maturing, moderating development ahead of them. NeXters tend to be positive; they feel good about themselves and assume that things will work out well for them. They are informal and often not constrained by old-fashioned and traditional social expectations that might limit their directness in communication or resourcefulness in problem solving and needs meeting. NeXters are used to multitasking in high-stimulation environments with multiple sources of input. They are technology oriented and many are tech talented, though recent evidence suggests that the depth of their tech skills rarely translates much past surface applications and into meaningful problem solving (Weede and Bogan 2006).

Issues in Higher Education Outcomes and Workplace Readiness

Ample evidence indicates that colleges have problems in preparing young people for the realities of the workplace. There is a highly publicized and dangerous gap between what the public needs from higher education and how colleges and universities are serving those needs (Bok 2006; Grossman 2005; Hersh and Merrow 2005; Levine 2005b). Levine describes a pandemic of workplace unreadiness as many of today's graduates are unable to think long term, handle details, or delay gratification (2005b).

There is increasing evidence of the underpreparation for work of Generation NeXt (Bok 2006). To quote from the report of the Spellings Commission on the Future of Higher Education, "Many students who do earn degrees have not actually mastered the reading, writing and thinking skills we expect of college graduates. Over the past decade, literacy among college graduates has actually declined" (2006, 1).

There is widespread dissatisfaction among employers with the college product, both in hard and soft skills (Bok 2006, Levine 2005b). While there does appear to be an emerging consensus among educators, businesspeople, and accreditors on what skills students should develop, graduates have serious weaknesses in those areas (Schneider and Miller 2005). "Many seniors graduate without being able to write well enough to satisfy their employers. Many cannot reason clearly or perform competently in analyzing complex, non-technical problems, even though faculties rank critical thinking as the primary goal of a college education" (Bok 2006, 8).

Some of the reasons for this workplace unreadiness are institutional and may reflect schools' efforts to improve institutional retention, prestige, and revenue instead of working to improve graduates' skills and knowledge (Newman, Couturier, and Scurry 2004). Some argue that students change in numerous and meaningful ways during their college years (Pascarella and Terenzini 1991, 2005). Others suggests that we are underachieving in the outcomes of learning to communicate, critical thinking and problem solving, character development and moral reasoning, citizenship, appreciation of diversity, ability to understand and participate in a global society, development of broader interests, and in preparation for career, especially given the amount of time colleges have students and the resources available (Bok 2006).

Some of the reasons for this workplace unreadiness lie with students. A significant disconnect exists between the skills students need to be successful at work and what they think they need to be successful (Smith 2006). Students particularly undervalue workplace-significant capabilities in writing and editing, mathematics, public speaking, selling things or ideas, and speaking a foreign language. Many of their previously described generational traits make them a particularly poor fit with traditional academic expectations.

The developmental issues of Generation NeXt are not limited to the workplace. *Time* magazine's cover story on January 24, 2005, let America "MEET THE TWIXTERS, young adults who live off their parents, bounce from job to job, and hop from mate to mate. They're not lazy . . . THEY JUST WON'T GROW UP" [emphasis in original]. *Time* described young adults' delayed entry into adulthood and protracted adolescence. Perhaps the most chilling message is that "most colleges are seriously out of step with the real world in getting students ready to become workers in the postcollege world" (Grossman 2005, 45). This is very public criticism and blames higher education for outcomes that are surely not the sole responsibility of colleges.

Societal factors are offered as causes, and often excuses, for the workplace and transition-to-adulthood issues of Generation NeXt. Hyperinflated self-esteem and self-importance create difficulties in dealing with the realities of the consequential workplace (Twenge 2006). Economic factors like increased educational and consumer debt coupled with reduced real wages for many young workers

stack the cards against young adults (Draut 2005). This crisis in transition and establishing purpose is even being normalized as the "quarterlife crisis" (Robbins and Wilner 2001).

A Changing Workplace

It should be appreciated that students are interested in colleges' helping them improve their career readiness and their ability to make more money. For most students, money and improved vocational success is a more important outcome of higher education that the less tangible, more philosophic goals promoted by earlier cohorts and many in the academy (Astin et al. 2002). Their most significant life goals are economic (Pew 2007).

Just as their educational goals are different and more work-related, recent graduates from Generation NeXt are entering a different workplace than earlier generational cohorts. It is information based, more diverse, and less vertical (Friedman 2005). There is often a blurring of authority and expertise; people with longer tenure may have more authority, but more recently educated and trained workers may have more current skills (Dychtwald, Erickson, and Morison 2006). While technology has become central to practically all jobs and is an area in which young, wired graduates might be expected to excel, their meaningful information and communications technology skills, especially in problem solving, are extremely lacking (Prensky 2001; Weede and Bogan 2006).

A Workforce in Crisis

Evidence from many and varied sources point to a potential "perfect storm" of issues of worker availability and competitiveness in the workplace, in addition to the described issues in work readiness of Generation NeXt. There will be fewer overall workers available to employers to take the place of the massive exodus of retiring workers (Dychtwald, Erickson, and Morison 2006). Retiring workers take with them significant and meaningful institutional knowledge. Their historical memory of the business, the industry, and the culture will be difficult to replace, as will be their work-centricity and mission orientation. The last of the "live to work" employees from the traditional and baby boom generational cohorts are leaving, and the "work to live" bunch is taking over (Dychtwald, Erickson, and Morison 2006; Lancaster and Stillman 2002; Taylor 2005; Zemke 2000). Internationalization suggests that graduates will not be competing for jobs, career success, and stability in a national parochial league, but across a worldwide playing field, where the competitiveness of U.S. graduates has been severely questioned (Friedman 2005).

From College to Work

These workplace issues should come as no surprise to those in higher education who have extensive contact with Generation NeXt. While most of the issues Generation NeXt faces and problems they have entering the workforce are not specifically caused by their college experiences but by longer socialization patterns, higher education is being held increasingly accountable for outcomes. It may not be our fault, but parents, accreditors, students, employers, and the culture at large are looking to higher education to ameliorate earlier problems and ready young people to satisfactorily take on adult roles.

Generation NeXt at Work

If employers are unhappy with Generation NeXt, they can take some solace in not being alone. Workers from Generation NeXt are the unhappiest on the job (Dychtwald, Erickson, and Morison 2006). They report the lowest overall satisfaction and engagement levels. They don't think they are making enough money (Pew 2007). Many distrust large organizations and refuse to compromise workplace arrangements and workplace style. If they are unhappy, at least they are not staying long in jobs with record high rates of turnover, at great expense to employers (Dychtwald, Erickson, and Morison 2006). Half of younger workers actually report that they feel burned out, and one in four report that they are not only seeking new jobs, but are seeking new careers (Malernee 2006).

There are also significant downtrends in career ambition. Data suggest that as workers move from a work-centric to a life-centric orientation they work to live; they don't live to work. It has been estimated that at least 70 percent of promotable workers are not interested in accepting more responsibility at work, which may presage a leadership crisis (Smith 2006).

Improving the Workplace Readiness of Generation NeXt

Most colleges can greatly improve their effectiveness in getting their Generation NeXt students ready for work. The recognition of student traits and transition issues is a necessary starting place for developing and implementing plans to change students' college experiences in ways that better prepare them to successfully enter the career-oriented, usually professional, postcollege workplace.

The advantages to students, employers, and schools of improving the readiness of Generation NeXt to more successfully transition to work should be apparent. Graduates who are more successful and happier at work might view their educational experiences more positively and so may be more supportive alumni. Employers would certainly be happier with their new hires in productivity and retention, so for students, schools, and employers, improving workplace readiness is a win-win-win.

A Universal Institutional Imperative

Institutions of higher education must make workplace readiness a central imperative. Just as retention initiatives emphasize the role of every person on campus in helping students persist, workplace readiness initiatives must stress the centrality of getting students ready to work in the school's purpose, the importance of workplace readiness to students and other constituents, and the necessity of everyone on campus making a concerted, coordinated effort to move students to meaningful, functional workplace readiness. While career services professionals can assist and coordinate in these efforts, the workplace readiness issues and mission are too big for a single office. Making career services responsible for workplace readiness would be akin to making the tutoring center responsible for student learning. With support from the highest administrative levels, everyone on campus needs to personalize an institutional mission statement focusing on workplace readiness. Following are specific activities for improving workplace readiness, as well as messages for the faculty and ideas for better engaging employers.

Understanding Realistic Workplace Expectations

College and the workplace are very different. Many of these differences are necessary, given the different missions of schools and businesses, but these differences can make workplace readiness and the transition to work more difficult for young people who do not understand them and so do not anticipate the realities of the world of work. The more they know what to expect, the better prepared they can be, and the less culture shock they will experience, when they do fully enter the workplace. Colleges need to develop and offer programs to communicate these differences to students.

- College is all about you and your learning and development. Improving yourself is the goal of most college activities.

- Work is focused on your contribution to reaching a business or institutional goal, not on your personal development. You reach your goals by helping the organization reach its goals, but your personal goals are not the central focus of work.

- At college, the focus was on your earning grades.

- Work focuses on some identifiable output that you are responsible for, but that is not specifically about you.

- At college you have been the consumer of many services focused on your learning and your development. Whatever you have produced has been in the service of your personal development.

- Work is about being a producer, generally for someone else. To continue to be a consumer, you must become a successful producer.

- College often allows for negotiation in activities, assignments, and even outcomes; you decide what you want to do. College may often appear artificial; activities are created with limited obvious relation to the real world.

- Work tends to be more inflexible in times, deadlines, appearance, and outcomes. It is the real world with real impacts, responsibilities, and consequences.

- At college you have taken many different kinds of classes and have been urged to develop general interests.

- While a broad range of interests and skills is valued at work, it is your ability to make a unique contribution that makes you the most valuable. To have the most value at work, you must specialize and demonstrate specific and relevant skills others don't have. Unfortunately, these are often not the same skills that brought social or academic success in college.

- College activities were usually highly directed; someone told you very specifically what was expected and what you needed to do.

- Work requires more self-direction and problem solving in reaching the organizational goals that are your responsibility.

- At college, much of the work was content based; you were expected to learn certain fact-based material for the test, assignment, or other graded evaluation.

- Work requires complex critical thinking, which combines content skills with intellectual and observational skills.

- College, and other schools, supported and helped foster your self-esteem.

- Work is interested in production, and if you do not contribute to the production, you can expect a consequence from people who are not particularly concerned with your self-esteem.

- College often has often provided lots of praise, including high grades.

- Work rarely offers lavish praise, but instead frequent criticism.

- At college you had lots of flexibility. You could usually set your own schedule, including your class schedule.

- Work rarely allows for much flexibility in days worked, hours worked, or what you do during work hours. Schedules and activities are prescribed for you.

- At college you could mostly hang with peers of your own choosing.

- At work the groups are mixed by age, and you don't get to pick who you work with.

- College is appearance oriented and supports your looking cool and casual.

- Appearance at work is expected to be mature, and you are expected to look busy, not casual.

Faculty and staff members should anticipate defensiveness when confronting students with workplace realities. Students generally do not like hearing the realities of what work life is like and may argue that these characteristics do not apply to them or to their chosen line of work. They may accuse the messenger of being out of touch, of being negative, and of depressing them. Their concerns about applicability to them personally suggests coordinating workplace readiness awareness activities through majors so the typical career expectations can be more specifically described.

Use peers to communicate workplace expectations. Peers can have often have a more significant impact on students from Generation NeXt than can older faculty or staff members from different generational cohorts. Generation NeXters may see their peers as having more credibility than a boomer, or even an Xer, whose experiences they might view as obsolete. Peers might also help disabuse students of unrealistically high salary expectations and anticipation of rapid promotions.

There is also a powerful impact on the "evangelists" who communicate these expectations to others. Students come to better understand the workplace realities they will face by sharing with others. Class projects can involve interviewing potential employers about expectations. Recent graduates can return with testimonials. Whenever possible, workplace realities should be investigated and discovered by the students themselves or communicated by a peer they see as being like them.

Link students to the world of work. Given the high proportion of students who are working while attending college, especially at community colleges, schools must make every effort to see that these work experiences relate meaningfully to students' career exploration, career choices, and career skills and help students develop realistic expectations of what will be required of them after graduation. Unfortunately, the work of many students has minimal self-direction or problem solving, so it may actually confuse them about the nature and expectations of postcollege work. Cooperative education, internships, assistantships, job help and job matching, required contact hours, and all mechanisms for getting students into the career-oriented workplace can help students develop both clearer expectations and meaningful workplace skills.

Increase future orientation and realistic goal setting. The short event horizons, entertainment orientation, and expectation of immediate gratification of Generation NeXt all conspire to keep its members from meaningful planning and goal setting (Taylor 2005). Much of the extreme focus on their immediate personal development, especially in the core and liberal arts classes where links to the workplace are often more tangential than in major or vocational classes, encourages students to not look ahead. As has always been true for young people, but especially for Generation NeXt, goal setting is critical. Students' ability to see themselves in the future helps more of today make sense, especially the less fun parts. The conflicts students face daily to study or play, if looked at immediately, tend to favor the fun of play. Looking ahead to tests, grades, and workplace competitiveness and success is what can make study a better choice.

Realistic goal setting, planning to reach those goals, and hopefully making choices to act on those plans can have many positive effects and address some of the issues of Generation NeXt. Goal setting and planning improve critical thinking and problems solving as options and choices are explored and evaluated. They help NeXters develop the ability to delay gratification, opting for greater rewards in the future over entertainment today. They improve their self-efficacy and personal responsibility, since planning assumes that your behavior matters. Finally, goal setting and planning can improve NeXters' retention and persistence. While NeXters are adaptable, they are not especially resilient. Retention data at most schools, especially two-year schools, indicates that many students are not successful in their goal of achieving a degree in a timely manner. This suggests that when they encounter an obstacle, they are likely to abandon their course of study. While this is often due to circumstances beyond the student's control, meaningful goal setting can improve students' investment in their educational goals and so can improve persistence.

Methods and media. Many available programmatic and intervention methods, using a variety of live and virtual methods and media, should be enlisted in the efforts to communicate these messages about workplace expectations, readiness, and goal setting from orientation through first-year seminar through senor symposia. In-class projects and activities and special programs from student services, residence life, and others can all be used. Especially effective may be unexpected intrusive opportunities that don't require students to seek out the information or intervention. Counselors or peer educators available to fill in for instructors in "don't cancel that class" programs may reach students who might not otherwise seek out information. Online, Web-based, multimedia, and even gaming technology can make these messages about the realities of work and the importance and methods of goal setting available to any student at any time.

Tap into talent. Many young people have been subjected to relentless self-esteem programming leading them to believe that they can do anything and be anything and that their opinions are very important (Twenge 2006). They tend to believe they have talent, though they may overrate their own skills and aptitudes (Astin et al. 2002). In fact, while most students can succeed, their options are probably not

limitless, and there are careers and opportunities for which they are better suited than other careers and opportunities. Realistic goal setting must include meaningful career-related assessment of talent and aptitudes by appropriately credentialed career counselors so students can focus their efforts on those areas most appropriate to them as they move from developing a generalist to a specific, and workplace-effective, skill set (Levine 2005b).

Impacting the Academy

Many of the indictments of the adult-life and workplace readiness of Generation NeXt can be traced to the classroom. It has been suggested that most college courses represent a systematic failure to create a learning environment that promotes meaningful, lasting student development (Tagg 2004). This is especially true outside of the vocational areas and those majors directly linked to careers, like accounting.

As part of the institutional imperative, all faculty members must recognize the importance of developing workplace readiness, including workplace-appropriate skills, in all students. Data indicate that Generation NeXt may be the most academically disengaged cohort of students ever (Astin et al. 2002). Many students see higher education as a process of memorizing content, trading content for points on a test, and redeeming those points for a grade (Nathan 2005). Content-based instruction to passive students, still the norm in most classes on most campuses, does very little to develop the skills needed in the workplace, especially critical thinking (Gardiner 1998; Tagg 2004). Academic content and process must relate to and impact workplace readiness.

Just as students are more likely to attend college to improve their ability to earn than to develop a meaningful philosophy of life, faculty members must appreciate that the workplace has little interest in the content of most classes and is instead interested in process and skills outcomes (Astin et al. 2002; Pryor et al. 2005). In addition to technical skills appropriate to their vocation, employers want graduates to posses oral communication skills, the ability to take direction (especially oral directions), skills in technical writing and practical math, the ability to learn, and critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Employers want new hires from colleges to be able to establish priorities, manage their own time, and work independently. They also expect graduates to have the abilities to work cooperatively and collaboratively and to show ethical and cultural awareness and sensitivity. Classes and class activities that create conditions for students to learn and demonstrate these abilities will greatly improve the relevance of coursework to students and better prepare them for the world of work, far more than the content-based instruction that is sadly the norm in many classes on many campuses (Tagg 2004).

Many faculty members may not have accurate information about the world of work, especially those who have never, or at least not recently, worked outside the academy. Most professional fields are changing rapidly, so faculty members who have not maintained contact with practice in their discipline can be seriously out of touch. It is incumbent on these faculty persons to learn about the places their students are working, and aspiring to work, to better understand their work-readiness needs.

Impacting the Workplace

While career fairs, job interviews, and advisory boards in business and technical areas have long been fixtures on college campuses, connecting the campus to the world of work and potential employers, new links must be established. This is especially true for academic areas that have traditionally been removed from the workplace, like liberal arts, humanities, and core classes.

Unfortunately, there is inadequate meaningful data on the job satisfaction and performance of college graduates (Pascarella and Terenzini 2005). Schools that are not already doing so should gather data from employers, both qualitative and quantitative, on the real workplace readiness of their graduates. Beyond placement rates and salary data, feedback on how employers rate the workplace competencies of graduates and the abilities of graduates to segue into entry-level career positions can help schools adjust classes and programs to better meet students' developmental and workplace needs.

Schools need to better connect employers and their expectations to the campus. Every faculty and staff person involved in student development, and so in student workplace readiness, should have opportunities to meet with and hear from employers about what employers expect from new hires, the issues they are facing with recent graduates, and their suggestions for the college in improving workplace readiness. Employer forums for all academic and student service areas could improve the schools' understanding of and response to workplace needs. Faculty and staff members should visit workplaces to see where their students actually intend to use the skills the college is helping them develop, or needs to help them develop.

Students can also benefit from direct contact with employers about expectations long before the job fair or interview. Of course, placing students in the workplace, especially in pre-professional positions that relate to their career choices, is invaluable in helping them develop realistic understandings of the world of work. Part-time work, cooperative education, internships, and all such placements and links can also help employers gain a better understanding of our students' (their future workers') developmental needs, which might be communicated back to the faculty and staff to ultimately improve the readiness of Generation NeXt to enter the workforce.

Conclusions

Given the importance of preparing students to work for the students themselves, our schools, employers and the workplace, and society in general, and given evidence of the difficulties the young people of Generation NeXt are having in successfully entering the world of work, colleges are encouraged to examine their institutional and personal issues in preparing students to go to work. A school-wide imperative to make work readiness a core mission is recommended as are improving students' awareness of realistic workplace expectations, better linking of students to the world of work, evaluating the work-readiness impacts of instructional content and methods, and better connecting schools to employers and the workplace.

References / Resources

More information about Generation NeXt is available from the Resources/Links section at http://www.taylorprograms.org.

Astin, A.W., L. Oseguea, L., L .J. Sax, and W. S. Korn. 2002. *The American freshman: Thirty-five year trends.* Los Angeles: UCLA, Higher Education Research Institute Graduate School of Education and Studies.

Bok, D. 2006. *Our underachieving colleges.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Draut, T. 2005. *Strapped.* New York: Doubleday.

Durden, W. C. 2005. Convocation address at Dickenson College August 28. http://www.dickenson.edu/external/news/convocation/address2005.html.

Dychtwald, K., T. J. Erickson, and R. Morison. 2006. *Workforce crisis.* Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

Friedman, T. L. 2005. *The world is flat.* New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux.

Gardnier, Lion F. 1998. Why we must change; the research evidence. *The NEA Higher Education Journal*, spring; 71–88.

Grossman, L. 2005. Grow up? Not so fast/"Twixters." *Time*, January 24, 43–53.

Hersh, R. H., and J. Merrow. 2005. *Declining by degrees.* New York: Palgrave.

Howe, N., and W. Strauss. 2000. *Millennials rising.* New York: Vintage.

———. 2003. *Millennials go to college.* New York: LifeCourse.

Kearnes, G. A., and M. R. Shirley. 2006. Afterburn: Nexters impact in the workplace. In *A collection of papers on self-study and institutional improvement*, *2006*, Vol. II, ed. S. E. Van Kollenburg, 56–59. Chicago: The Higher Learning Commission.

Lancaster, L. C., and D. Stillman. 2002. *When generations collide.* New York: Harper Collins.

Levine, M. 2005a. College graduates aren't ready for the real world. *The Chronicle of Higher Education.* February 18, B11–B12.

Levine, M. 2005b. *Ready or not, here life comes.* New York: Simon and Schuster.

Malernee, J. 2006. Young workers forging new paths to satisfaction. *Arkansas Democrat Gazette*, October 20, 9A.

Marano, H. E. 2004. A nation of wimps. *Psychology Today,* November/December, 58–103.

Nathan, R. 2005. *My freshman year.* New York: Cornell University Press.

Newman, F., L. Couturier, and J. Scurry. 2004. Higher education isn't meeting public's needs. *The Chronicle of Higher Education,* October 15, B6–B8.

Pascarella, E. T., and P. T. Terenzini. 1991. *How college affects students: Findings and insights for twenty years of research*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

———. 2005. *How college affects students:* Vol. 2: *A third decade of research*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Pew Research Center. 2007. A portrait of generation next. Washington DC: Pew Research Center for the People and the Press.

Prensky, M. 2001. Digital natives, digital immigrants. *On the horizon*, NCB University Press, October.

Pryor, J. H., S. Hortado, V. B. Saenz, J. A. Lindholm, W. S. Korn, and K. M. Mahoney. 2005. *National norms for Fall 2005.* Los Angeles: UCLA Higher Education Research Institute Graduate School of Education and Studies.

Robbins, A., and A. Wilner. 2001. *Quarterlife crisis.* New York: Tarcher/ Putnam.

Sacks, P. 1996. *Generation X goes to college*. Chicago: Open Court.

Schneider, C. G., and R. Miller. 2005. *Liberal education outcomes.* Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities.

Smith, W. S. 2006. Employers and the new generation of employees. *Community College Journal*, December 2005-January 2006, 8–13.

Spellings Commission on the Future of Higher Education. Report from August 9.

Strauss, W., and N. Howe. 1991. *Generations*. New York: Quill.

Tagg, J. 2004. Why learn? What we may *really* be teaching students. *About Campus*, March-April, 2–10.

Taylor, M. 2003. Meeting generation next. In *A collection of papers on self-study and institutional improvement, 2003*, ed. S. E. Van Kollenburg, 112–126. Chicago: The Higher Learning Commission.

———. 2004a. Generation NeXt comes to college. In *A collection of papers on self-study and institutional improvement, 2004*, Vol. 2, ed. S.E. Van Kollenburg, 19–23. Chicago: The Higher Learning Commission.

———. 2004b. Unique traits of Generation NeXt require new approach from you. *Student Affairs Today.* April, 11.

———. 2005. Generation NeXt: Today's postmodern student—meeting, teaching, and serving. In *A collection of papers on self-study and institutional improvement, 2005*, Vol. 2, ed. S. E. Van Kollenburg, 99–107. Chicago: The Higher Learning Commission. Available as download at http://www.taylorprograms.org.

———. 2006a. Generation NeXt comes to college: 2006 updates and emerging issues. In *A collection of papers on self-study and institutional improvement, 2006,* Vol. 2, ed. S. E. Van Kollenburg, 48–55. Chicago: The Higher Learning Commission. Available as download at http://www.taylorprograms.org.

———. 2006b. Helicopters, snowplows, and bulldozers: Managing students' parents. *The Bulletin of the Association of College Unions International*, November/December, 12–21. Available as download at http://www.taylorprograms.org.

Twenge, J. M. 2006. *Generation me.* New York: Free Press.

Weede, J., and K. Bogan. 2006. *2006 ICT literacy assessment preliminary findings.* Educational Testing Service.

Zemke, R., C. Raines, and B. Filipczak. 2000. *Generations at work.* New York: Amacom.

Mark Taylor is Adjunct Faculty at Arkansas State University-Beebe in Beebe, Arkansas.