

SOCIAL VALUES AND LIFESTYLES TREND STATEMENTS

Trend Statement #1: In the past two decades in Illinois and in Will County, farms and farmland have decreased and will probably continue in the future.

Trend Statement #2: The necessity of a post-secondary education for success in the workplace will continue to become more prevalent over the next 3-5 years or longer, especially among the growing Hispanic population and other underrepresented groups.

Trend Statement #3: Growing awareness of generational differences among baby boomers, Gen X and Gen Y, and their competition in the work world will increase in the next 3-5 years.

Trend Statement #4: In the last decade, in Illinois and in the country, violent crimes among teens and young adults have increased.

Trend Statement #5: There is a major increase in interest in spirituality in the U.S. and a development of a spiritual and religious marketplace that believers engage in as they see fit.

Trend Statement #6: Family structures are changing as a result of climbing divorce rates, declining marriage rates, increased age for first marriages, increased single-parent households, and economic challenges bringing extended families into one home.

Trend Statement #7: Social media and mobile technologies greatly influence how Americans (and others) connect, communicate, develop and seek information and resources in a global society.

Trend Statement #8: As schools become more diverse, demands increase to find the most effective ways to help all students succeed academically as well as learn to get along with each other.

Trend Statement #9: As the number of students with physical challenges and serious mental illness increases, JJC can expect to see more of these students enroll in classes and on campus.

Trend Statement #10: According to some experts there is a growing decline in activities, organizations and experiences that connect Americans to one another.

Trend Statement #1: In the past two decades in Illinois and in Will County, farms and farmland have decreased and will probably continue in the future.

Rationale:

Economics Trend statement #12 demonstrated how the number of farms and farmland has decreased in the last few decades (see trend statement for rationale and data sources). What makes this trend complex are the dynamics of Illinois attitudes about the economy and the environment; what approaches policy-makers take; and large and fast growth in the county. This means that decreases in farms and farmland will *probably* decrease as the JJC region becomes more suburbanized and urbanized, but it is no guarantee.

Americans and Illinois residents are split in terms of how to approach the environment and economy. About half of Americans feel it is more important to place economic development ahead of the environment (Pew Research Center, 2009). In Illinois, the environment has also slipped in terms of importance as a policy issue. In 2008, 46% of Illinois residents supported a tax increase to help the environment. The next year, that number has fallen dramatically to 32% (NIU, 2010).

The environment, however, is clearly a top planning issue and has been at the forefront of regional planning efforts, including the Will County Center for Economic Development and Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning.

Finally, the reality of Will County is substantial population growth. Between 2000 and 2009, Will County grew by 40%, from about 500,000 to about 700,000 residents (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). By 2030, the county is projected to be the second largest county in Illinois behind Cook, more than doubling in population in just 30 years (DCEO, 2010). Between 2010 and 2030, Will County is projected to grow by 55%, to about 1.1 million residents (DCEO, 2010). Population growth presents significant challenges in preserving agricultural and natural area space, particularly when there is little political will or effort in preservation.

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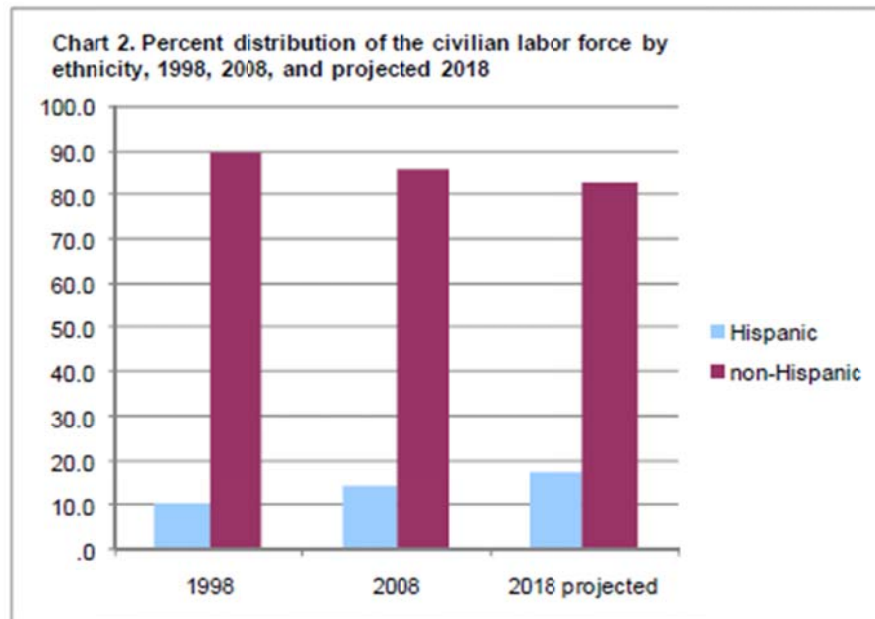
Pew Research Center. (2009). *Trends in Political Values and Core Attitudes: 1987-2009*. Online: <http://people-press.org/report/517/political-values-and-core-attitudes>

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Trend Statement #2: The necessity of a post-secondary education for success in the workplace will continue to become more prevalent over the next 3-5 years or longer, especially among the growing Hispanic population and other underrepresented groups.

Rationale:

Evidence shows that underrepresented and especially Latino populations will increase in the U.S. and in Illinois in particular (DCEO, 2010). Additionally, Latinos will make up an increasingly large portion of the workforce in the next several decades (see Labor Market Trend statement #7 for rationale and data sources), as the following chart from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2009) demonstrates:



Still, underrepresented groups are less likely to be successful or achieve a credential in postsecondary education, although progress is being made. For instance, 42% of white Americans over 25 years old hold at least an associate's degree, compared to 29% of African-American adults, 19% of Latino adults, and 59% of Asian adults. Between 1999 and 2008, the number of African-Americans receiving associate degrees increased by about 84%, Latinos by about 105%, and white by about 20%. About 60% of all new bachelors degrees and 50% of all new master's degrees in the same time period were awarded to students from minority populations (U.S. Dept. of Ed., 2009). Students from underrepresented groups are also more likely to earn less than 30 credits and exhibit characteristics that are correlated with withdrawal from college – a large number of course withdrawals, late registration, non-continuous enrollment, holding a campus job, and no movement past Algebra I in high school (Adelman, 2005).

The rationale, then, is one based on human capital, or the skills, knowledge, and other qualities workers possess. Research clearly shows that these qualities have a direct impact on innovation, productivity, efficiency, and quality in the economy (see Schultz, 1962; Schultz, 1963 for the seminal research and McMahan, 2002; McMahan, 2009 for contemporary updates). The Bureau of Labor Statistics (2010) projections show that “occupations that usually require a postsecondary degree or award are expected to account for nearly half of all new jobs from 2008 to 2018 and one-third of total job openings. Among the education and training categories, the fastest growth will occur in occupations requiring an associate degree. Short- and moderate-term on-the-job training are the most significant sources of postsecondary

education or training for 17 of the 30 detailed occupations projected to have the largest employment growth. However, in terms of percent growth, 14 of the 30 fastest growing detailed occupations have a bachelor's degree or higher as the most significant source of postsecondary education or training” (BLS, 2010). Labor Market Trend statement #10 has more data and information. This issue will be particularly relevant for postsecondary institutions – and particularly community colleges, with enroll a disproportionate share of Latino students (Adelman, 2005). (In fact, Latinos are the only racial/ethnic group more likely to start at a 2-year institution instead of a four-year institution; Adelman, 2005).

Sources:

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Schultz, T. (1962). *Investment in Human Beings*. Chicago: University of Chicago.

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U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2009). *Digest of Education Statistics*. Online: <http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/>

Trend Statement #3: Growing awareness of generational differences among baby boomers, Gen X and Gen Y, and their competition in the work world will increase in the next 3-5 years.

Rationale:

The aging population of the U.S. will create two dynamics, one in social policy and the other in the workplace.

First, evidence shows that individuals in the “boomer” generation are much more likely to support lower taxes and cuts in taxes, but are much less likely to support cuts in social and government programs (NIU, 2010). For instance, Illinois residents over age 45 are more likely to support tax increases for Medicaid and less for higher education (although they do support increases for K-12 education at similar levels to people under 65 years) (NIU, 2010). Research also shows that people over 50 generally support spending cuts and tax cuts, but have little appetite for spending cuts and even tax increases that directly impact them (Pew Research Center, 2009). According to an article from *The Economist*, “retiring boomers will squeeze the economy from two directions. The number of people enrolled in Medicare (federally funded health care, available from the age of 65) will grow from 47m in 2010 to 80m in two decades’ time. Enrolment in Social Security (federally funded pensions, available from the age of 62-67, depending on your birth year) will grow from 44m to 73m. The cost of the two programmes will grow from 8.4% of GDP in 2010 to 11.2% by 2030. Meanwhile, as boomers retire, the workforce will grow more slowly, as will the taxes to finance their benefits. The pensioner-worker imbalance and health-care inflation, which is driving up the bill for Medicare and Medicaid, the federal health benefit for the poor, will send the budget deficit into the stratosphere” (*The Economist*, 2010).

The second dynamic will play out in the workplace. The workforce of the future will likely be comprised of more baby boomers and people over 50 years old (see Labor Market Trend statement #10 for data and rationale). This presents an opportunity in that the wisdom and experience of previous generations can be handed down to newer entrants in the workforce. Additionally, different generations have much in common. In terms of social attitudes (with the exception of openness to gay marriage), baby boomers and generation X and Y have a lot in common (Cohn & Taylor, 2010). There is also evidence that the technological gap between generations and differences in terms of how generations interact with them is dwindling – older Americans are much more adept and competent with technology than many perceive (Zickuhr, 2010). Research shows that the generation gap is “a much more subdued affair” than previous ones and relatively fewer Americans of any age see it as a source of conflict (Taylor and Morin, 2009). Another Pew Research Center survey indicated that only 26% of Americans view generational differences as a source of conflict, much lower than immigration, race, or income (Morin, 2009).

Regardless, there could be workplace challenges. The workplace will be more diverse than ever in U.S. history. Erikson (2009) has identified four areas where generations are currently and will be challenged:

- Choosing where and when to work.
- Communicating among team members and getting together.
- Finding information or learning new things.

In a study of academic environments by Matross (2010), noted several areas that currently and could lead to conflict in the future in regard to generational differences were noted, including:

- A high level of informality among colleagues and students among younger workers, with a higher premium placed on distance and “professionalism” by older workers.

- A more positive attitude and outlook of millennial and generation Y by generation X, and a less positive outlook of those groups by older employees.
- A desire among generation X employees to stay and be loyal, in contrast to baby boomer employees, who perceive that generation X employees are “constantly looking.”
- Freedom, autonomy, and a variety of work activities are highly valued by younger employees through generation X; baby boomers place more value on salary, title, and extrinsic rewards of work.
- Generation X workers place a higher value on quality and efficiency over quantity in work.
- Generation X workers are much more likely to view co-workers as colleagues and co-workers, while baby boomers are much more likely to view co-workers as competitors.
- Generation X workers value work-personal life balances and expect institutions to accommodate and understand the need for this balance.
- Generation X workers communicate a lack of community and long to have it.

Generational conflict may result from varying assumptions about how people learn and their impact on how leadership is viewed (see Education Trend statement #10 for more information). For instance, instructors and leaders have historically been viewed as the sage or expert and where wisdom resided. New assumptions about learning and leadership, however, place more emphasis on the collective wisdom of the group or team.

Sources:

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The Economist. (2010, December 29). *As Boomers Wrinkle: The Most Troublesome Age Group Ever Still Has Some Last Fireworks Up Its Sleeve*.

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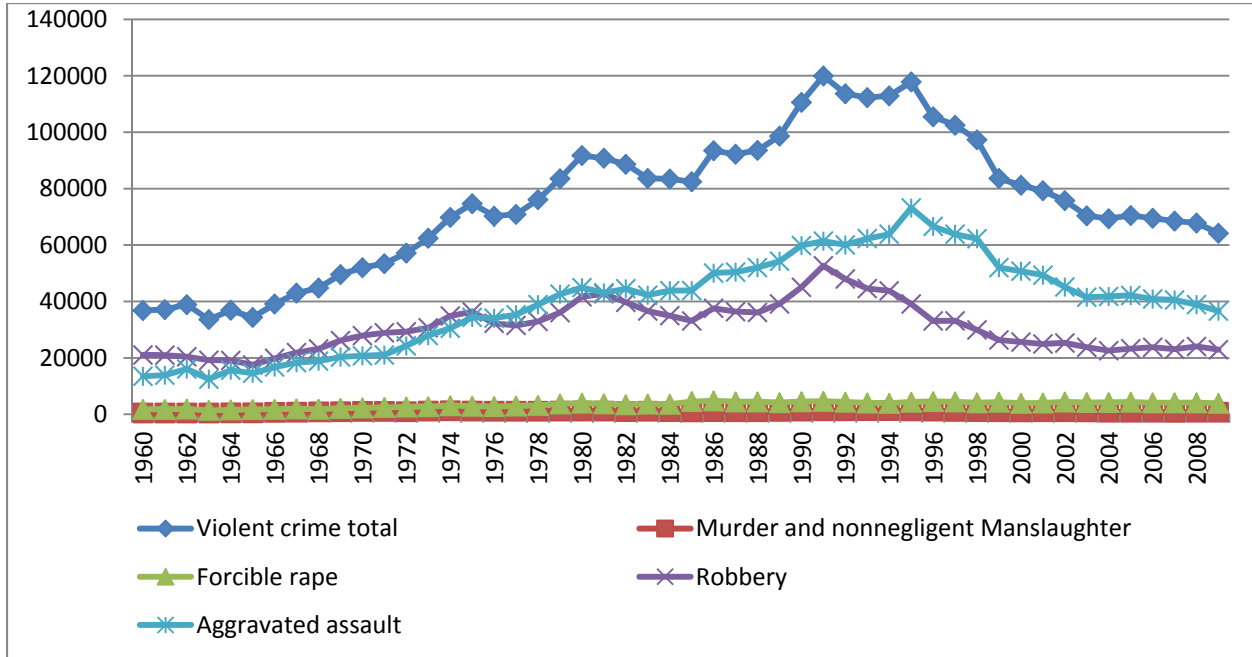
Zickuhr, K. (2010, December). *Generations 2010. Pew Internet and American Life Project*. Online: <http://pewinternet.org/Reports/2010/Generations-2010.aspx>

Trend Statement #4: In the last decade, in Illinois and in the country, violent crimes among teens and young adults have decreased.

Rationale:

Overall, violent crime in Illinois and the U.S. has decreased over the last 15-20 years. The number has also decreased even as population grew or stabilized, as the chart below shows for Illinois (U.S. Department of Justice, 2010a):

Number of Violent Crimes in Illinois, 1960-2009



Note. Murder and forcible rape numbers are too small to fit on the graphic with other crime statistics. However, they follow similar trends in terms of number of reported offenses.

Statistics also show that violent crime among youth has decreased in the last five years (U.S. Department of Justice, 2010b).

Sources:

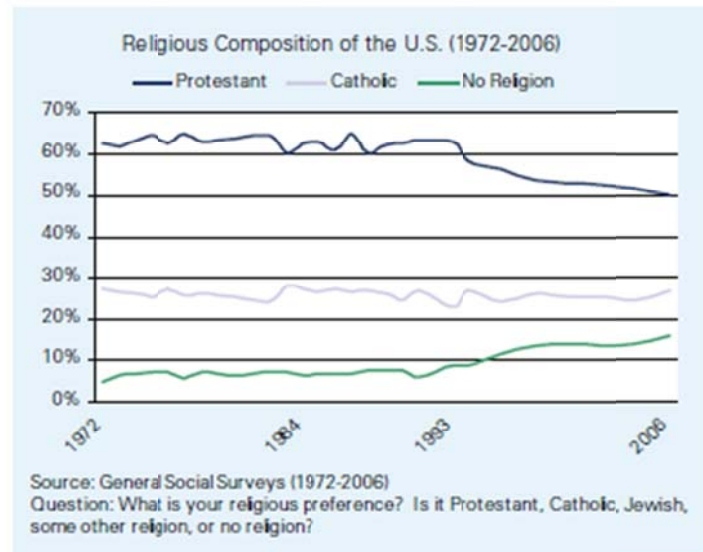
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Trend Statement #5: There is a major increase in interest in spirituality in the U.S. and a development of a spiritual and religious marketplace that believers engage in as they see fit.

Rationale:

The U.S. remains a highly religious nation and most Americans profess to belong to a religious faith (Pew Research Center, 2009). No matter which direction the trend points, it is important to keep in mind that a vast majority of Americans believe in god and claim that prayer is an important part of their everyday life, while only 15% of Americans profess being atheist, agnostic, or nothing in particular (Pew Research Center, 2009). While religion remains a strong part of the social fabric, the number of Americans who affiliate with a specific religion has decreased, as demonstrated by the following chart from the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, 2008 (p. 18):



When looking at the differences between Americans' childhood and adult religious status, there are some major differences. Nearly all Christian religions decreased in terms of specific affiliation, while Christians who claim no denomination increased by 3% (Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, 2008). Catholic affiliation had the largest decrease (-9%), followed by Christian Protestant (-2.6%), Jewish (-0.2%), and Mormon (-0.1%) (Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, 2008). The "unaffiliated" group saw a 9% increase, which includes some religious/spiritual respondents (replying nothing in particular), agnostics, and atheists (Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, 2008).

Dynamics that are changing the nature of religion in the U.S. include increasing inter-faith marriages and relationships, the increasing diversity of the U.S. population, a desire to switch affiliation, and the notion of being religious but not affiliated with a specific denomination (Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, 2008).

Sources:

Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life. (2008). *U.S. Religious Landscape Survey: Diverse and Dynamic*. Online: <http://religions.pewforum.org/pdf/report-religious-landscape-study-full.pdf>

Pew Research Center. (2009). *Trends in Political Values and Core Attitudes: 1987-2009*. Online: <http://people-press.org/report/517/political-values-and-core-attitudes>

Trend Statement #6: Family structures are changing as a result of climbing divorce rates, declining marriage rates, increased age for first marriages, increased single-parent households, and economic challenges bringing extended families into one home.

Rationale:

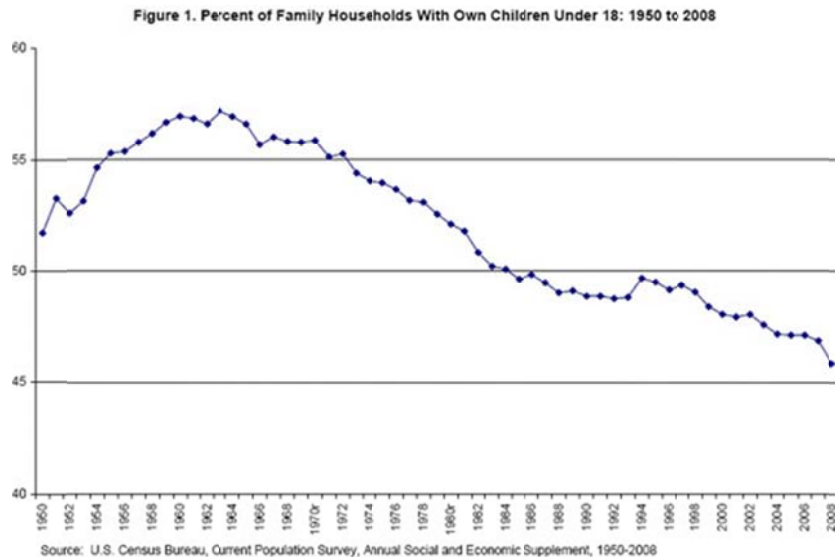
Two types of data sources underscore this trend. First, U.S. census data demonstrates the changing nature of families. Second, Americans are holding dramatically different opinions about the nature of families.

As the table below demonstrates, the number of people over 15 years old who report being married has dropped in Will County, Illinois, and the U.S., while the percent of people never married has increased. People in Will County are much more likely to report being married (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010a).

Marital Status of People Over 15 Years Old, 2000 and 2009 (2009 based on estimates)

Marital Status	2000			2009			2009-2000 Change		
	Will County	Illinois	U.S.	Will County	Illinois	U.S.	Will County	Illinois	U.S.
Married	62.3%	53.6%	54.4%	57.0%	49.5%	50.3%	-5.3%	-4.1%	-4.1%
Never Married	24.0%	28.9%	27.1%	28.6%	33.0%	30.8%	4.6%	4.1%	3.7%
Divorced/Separated	8.8%	10.7%	11.9%	9.6%	11.1%	12.6%	0.8%	0.4%	0.7%

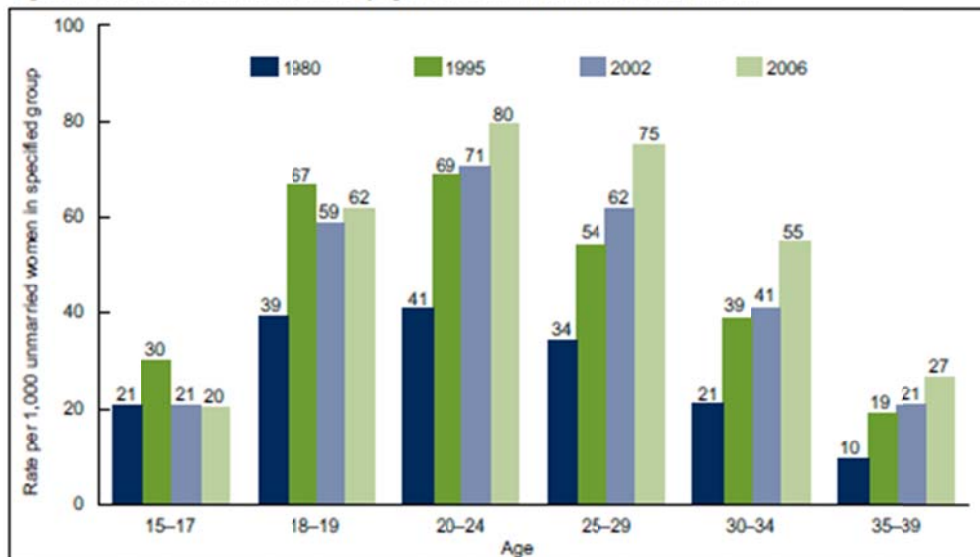
Interestingly, even though marriage rates decreased in Will County between 2000 and 2009, average household size and family size both increased between 2000 and 2009, from 2.94 to 3.09 for households and 3.36 to 3.56 for families (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010a). It is also interesting, because the number of households with their own children living at home has decreased significantly over the last 50 years (Randell, 2009), as demonstrated by the chart below:



Sociologist Stephanie Coontz (2005) has explored the history and contemporary concept of marriage. What the author discovered is that traditional notions of marriage were never based on love or relationships, but rather political, social, or economic arrangements (in fact, the Anglo-Saxon root of the word “wife” is peace-maker due to the fact that most marriages were arranged to cement political or economic alliances with other families). The idea of people having freedom to marry who they choose generally did not occur until the late 19th century and is still primarily a western concept. Today, almost all people in the U.S. are still free to marry who they choose, but more and more people are choosing to cement their relationships outside of the traditionally-defined construct of marriage (Coontz, 2005).

This plays out in the statistics about children, family, and marriage. Nearly 40% of all children born in the U.S. are born to unmarried parents and will likely eclipse 50% in the near future (Ventura, 2009). Historically thought to be isolated among teenagers, birth rates for unmarried parents increased for all ages, as demonstrated by the chart below (Ventura, 2009, p. 2).

Figure 2: Birth rates for unmarried women by age: United States, 1980, 1995, 2002, and 2006



SOURCE: CDC/NCHS, National Vital Statistics System.

In fact, birth rates for unmarried females under 19 years have remained stable over the last 30 years; the largest increases have occurred among people over 20 years and the rate for people 30 years and over has nearly tripled. The U.S. is not unique; this trend is an international phenomenon (Ventura, 2009). Changing definitions of the family are not the only cause. Harris (2009) notes that, historically, pregnancy out of wedlock almost always led to marriage. In terms of the future, the U.S. Census Bureau predicts that marriage rates will continue to decrease in the future, including the number of people who will never be married (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010b).

It is clear, then, that lower numbers of Americans are not choosing the traditional family structure (at least as defined by marriage). This is largely driven by changing attitudes and assumptions about what defines a family. Nearly 40% of Americans in 2008 believe marriage is “obsolete,” up from 28% in 1978 (Pew Research Center, 2010). A third of Americans think the rise of new definitions for families is a good thing, a third are neutral, and about 30% think it is a bad trend (Pew Research Center, 2010). 80% of Americans defined two unmarried people with children as a family and 63% defined two same-sex people

with children as a family (Pew Research Center, 2010). This is certainly not to suggest that Americans do not place value in marriage or view it as negative – there is no evidence to support that claim. Rather, growing numbers of Americans are embracing a different definition of what constitutes a family and a significant number are ambivalent about the topic. For instance, a majority of cohabitating adults with children expected at some point in their life to be married, but for whatever reason never did it (Pew Research Center, 2010).

The underlying causes of the statistics and attitudes underlying these trends are varied and include:

- Falling fertility rates (Rampell, 2009).
- People having lower numbers of children (Rampell, 2009).
- The idea that an out-of-wedlock pregnancy does not automatically lead to marriage (Harris, 2009).
- A higher acceptance of sex outside of wedlock (60% of Americans feel it is okay, compared to only 20% in 1969) (Pew Research Center, 2010).
- Less acceptance of, but mostly ambivalence to, traditional notions of marriage (Coontz, 2005).
- Changing spousal roles, with increasing number of females in the labor market and increasing numbers of males contributing to household duties (Pew Research Center, 2010).
- Rising levels of cohabitation among couples (Pew Research Center, 2010).

Sources:

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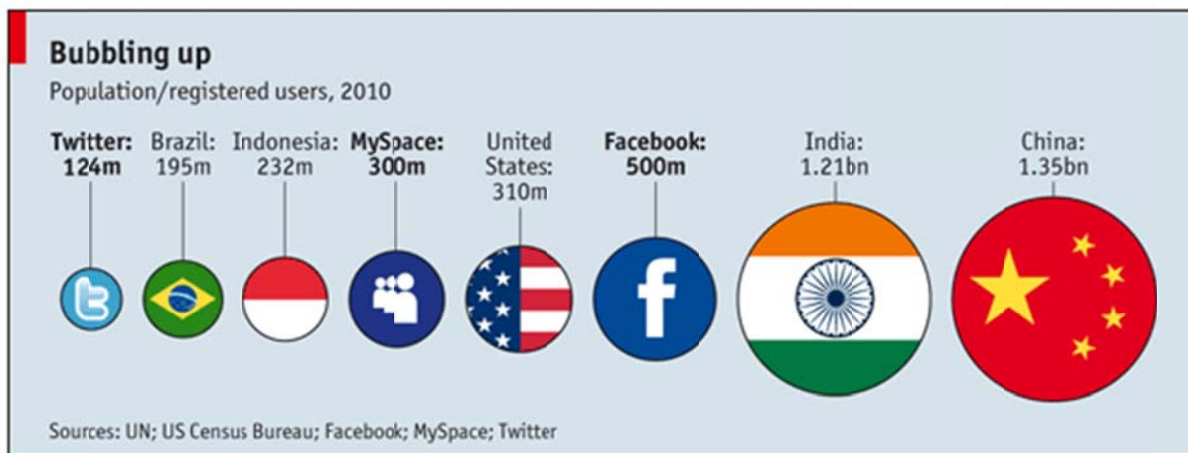
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Ventura, S. (2009, May). *Changing Patterns of Nonmarital Childbearing in the United States*. Center for Disease Control and Prevention. Online: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/databriefs/db18.htm>

Trend Statement #7: Social media and mobile technologies greatly influence how Americans (and others) connect, communicate, develop and seek information and resources in a global society.

Rationale:

New or social media is a major trend and having a substantial impact on the social and economic dynamics of U.S. society. In 2010, The Economist noted that if Facebook were an independent nation, it would be the third most populous nation in the world (The Economist, 2010). If MySpace is included, two of the top five most populous nations in the world would be social networking sites, as demonstrated by the following graphic from the Economist (2010):



The Harvard Business Review (HBR) blog referred to social networking as the “most significant business development of 2010, topping the resurgence of the U.S. automobile industry. During the year, social networking morphed from a personal communications tool for young people into a new vehicle that business leaders are using to transform communications with their employees and customers, as it shifts from one-way transmission of information to two-way interaction” (George, 2010).

The HBR also noted that “a year ago, many people poked fun at Facebook as a place where kids shared their latest party news. Today more than 600 million users worldwide are active on the site. The most rapidly growing demographic is people over forty. More than 300 million people spend at least one hour a day on Facebook. Approximately two hundred million people are active on Twitter in spite of — or because of — its 140-character limitation. Another 100 million use LinkedIn. None of these social networks even existed at the beginning of the decade. Consumer marketing companies are lining up to use these networks to reach their tailored demographics with highly personalized messages. Already they are revolutionizing marketing by shifting dollars from purchased media advertisements to building their own outlets and content.”

Businesses are leveraging social networking not only through marketing. Social networking is also changing the underlying structure of how businesses operate and commerce is conducted. Burton (2008) notes the ways in which social networking and new media are changing the structure, organizational culture, and communications patterns of businesses (p. 7):

- Acquisition, development, and retention of critical skills and competencies.

- Enabling teams of workers to self-organize, align tasks, and direct work activities.
- Breeding new generations of leaders and aiding succession planning efforts.
- Enhancing advocacy.
- Enriching an employee's work experiences and deferring interest in human capital transfer to other activities, entities, organizations, or competitors.
- Augmenting information and productivity.
- Acting as a catalyst in efforts to improve communications, information sharing, collaboration, and community building.

In terms of higher education, social networking and new media sites are changing the way students create knowledge, usually outside the confines of traditional learning structures. This phenomenon was explored by Anya Kamenetz (2009) in *DIY U: Edupunks, Edupreneures, and the Coming Transformation of Higher Education*. Rather than relying solely on the learning structure created by an institution or program or relying on the expertise of the instructor, contemporary students are augmenting their learning with complementary learning experiences; in essence, creating their own learning environment, with the institution or program playing only a complementary role. This dynamic is new and challenging, but also acknowledges the ways in which people really learn and in which learning is most effective – deferring to the wisdom of the group instead of an leader or expert; constructing knowledge over time instead of accessing it at some distant point; or allowing learning to grow organically or even through serendipity (see Education Trend statement #10 for more information). Social networks obviously play a critical role in this changing dynamic.

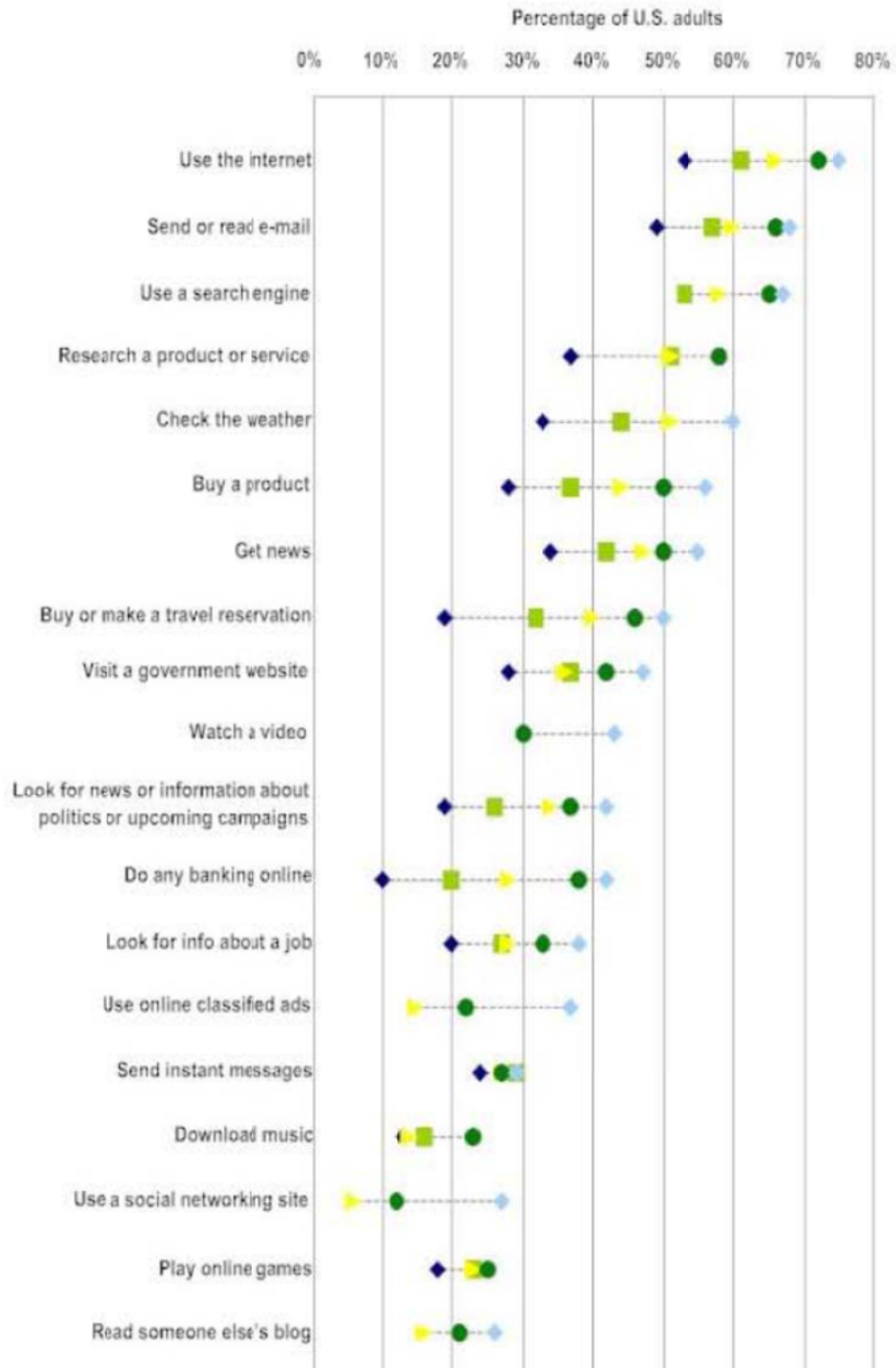
Social networking use is prevalent among a vast majority of Americans and the digital divide based on age, income, or race is narrowing and in some cases non-existent. For instance, low-income people may be more likely to use Twitter than high-income people due to the lack of a financial barrier, using the free micro-blogging site as a replacement for text messaging (Lenhart, 2009). While young people are more likely to use social networking sites, growth in use by older Americans is growing at a much faster rate. In a 2010 report, the Pew Research Internet and American Life Project notes that (Madden, 2010):

- Between April 2009 and May 2010, social networking use among internet users ages 50-64 grew by 88%--from 25% to 47%.
- During the same period, use among those ages 65 and older grew 100%--from 13% to 26%.
- By comparison, social networking use among users ages 18-29 grew by 13%—from 76% to 86%.
- One in five (20%) online adults ages 50-64 say they use social networking sites on a typical day, up from 10% one year ago.
- Among adults ages 65 and older, 13% log on to social networking sites on a typical day, compared with just 4% who did so in 2009.

The rate in which all adult Americans interact with the internet and technology has changed dramatically in the last decade, as demonstrated by the following graphic from the Pew Research Internet and American Life Project (2010):

Online Activities, 2000-2009

The percentage of all American adults (including both internet users and non-users) who have done the following activities.



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The Economist. (2010, July 22). *Facebook Has Become the Third Largest Nation*.

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Pew Research Internet and American Life Project. (2010). *Data tables*. Online: <http://www.pewinternet.org/Static-Pages/Trend-Data.aspx>

Trend Statement #8: As schools become more diverse, demands increase to find the most effective ways to help all students succeed academically as well as learn to get along with each other.

Rationale:

Dealing with academic success and career and college readiness was addressed in Education Trend statement #6. The increasing diversity of Illinois and U.S. schools is covered in Education Trend statement #2.

In a seminal report on this topic, Carnevale and Desrochers (2002) note that:

“While no one can predict the future, today’s economic and demographic realities suggest the opportunities and challenges that will face America in the years to come. The U.S. economy has already undergone dramatic changes in the latter part of the twentieth century. The extension of product and labor markets has expanded global competition, and the infusion of technology has been widespread across all sectors of the economy. Both of these forces have affected the structure of jobs and the way we work, fueling increases in educational attainment and the demand for skill. The kind of education and skill demanded has also changed. General reasoning, problem-solving, and behavioral skills as well as a positive cognitive style are increasingly needed to supplement the narrow cognitive and occupational skills sought in a more directed work environment. Access to good jobs and earnings in the American system are driven by the complementarities between these soft skills, general education beyond high school, occupational preparation, and the resultant access to learning and technology on the job” (p. 1).

The authors further note (Carnevale and Desrochers, 2002):

“The new business, education, health care, and office service jobs require higher levels of interpersonal and problem-solving skills because the work entails higher levels of human interaction and personalized responses to people's wants and needs. These same behavioral skills are required in high-technology and manufacturing jobs as well, because the technology itself takes on more of the rote, manual processing tasks, allowing employees to spend more time interacting with each other in order to exploit the new flexible technologies capable of providing higher quality, variety, and speed of operation. In both manufacturing and services, these new problem-solving and behavioral skills are also required in order to create new kinds of value added. Unlike the old manufacturing-based economy where simple productivity—high volume at low cost—was paramount, the new economy demands new kinds of value, measured by a more complex set of performance standards and workers with the broad skills to meet them. These new kinds of value include quality, variety, customization, customer focus, speed of innovation, and the ability to add novelty and entertainment to products and services” (p. 15).

The evidence is mixed in terms of whether “character education” leads to the development of soft skills referenced above and academic achievement. A comprehensive, 650-page report by the U.S. Department of Education (2010) discovered no differences in students’ social and emotional competence, behaviors, academic performance, or perceptions of school climate between schools that used character development programs and those that did not. Another comprehensive study, however, from the Rutgers University Center for Applied Psychology (2005) found the opposite conclusions.

Sources:

Carnevale, A.P., & Desrochers, D.M. (2002, April). *The Missing Middle: Aligning Education and the Knowledge Economy*. Washington, DC: Educational Testing Service.

Rutgers University Center for Applied Psychology. (2005). Smart and Good High Schools: Integrating Excellence and Ethics for Success in School, Work, and Beyond. Online:

<http://www.secdsdfpartners.com/launch/launchrucharakter.html>

U.S. Department of Education. (2010, October). *Efficacy of Schoolwide Programs to Promote Social and Character Development and Reduce Problem Behavior in Elementary School Children*. Social and Character Development Research Consortium. Online:

<http://ies.ed.gov/ncsr/pubs/20112001/pdf/20112001.pdf>

Trend Statement #9: As the number of students with physical challenges and serious mental illness increases, JJC can expect to see more of these students enroll in classes and on campus.

Rationale:

10% of people in Illinois between the ages of 16 and 64 report a disability and about 40% of them are employed (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). Students reporting disabilities have also increased dramatically at JJC and at Illinois community colleges (ICCB, 2008).

Sources:

Illinois Community College Board. (2008). Underrepresented Groups in Higher Education Report. Online: <http://www.iccb.org/pdf/reports/underrepy08.pdf>

U.S. Census Bureau. (2010). *American Fact Finder data tables*. Online: http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?_lang=en

Trend Statement #10: According to some experts there is a growing decline in activities, organizations and experiences that connect Americans to one another.

Rationale:

In *Bowling Alone*, author Robert Putman (2000) notes there are less things in society in which people can connect or in which shared experiences exist. Several of the trends the author notes include:

- Declining political participation, as measured by voting rates and participation in local and regional political activities (boards, commissions, serving on political clubs, etc.).
- Declining civic participation, as measured by declining membership in charterbased associations, PTA, and community clubs and organizations.
- Declining church membership and attendance.
- Declining connections in the workplace, as measured by declining union membership, declining membership in professional associations, and workforce volunteering.
- Declining informal social connections as measured by entertaining in the home, having friends over for dinner, drinks, or games, playing cards in the home, eating in formal restaurant settings (with increases in fast food), membership in bowling leagues and other informal sporting activities (couples with rises in spectator sport attendance and viewing), and decreases in informal socializing.
- Declines in philanthropy, participation in specific community projects, and charitable giving (although volunteering in the community has gone up).
- Declines in the perception that people are honest and trustworthy.
- There have been increases in participation in small groups that focus on narrow, very specific issues like the environment, statewide ballot issues, or other wedge political issues.

In *The Paradox of Choice*, author Barry Schwartz (2005) notes that today's society is so overwhelmed with choices that shared experiences do not even exist, noting that even television does not bind people together like it once did or that undergraduate students no longer have the shared experience of going through one standard curriculum, but instead take a cafeteria approach to choosing colleges.

This sentiment is echoed by Gregg Easterbook (2003), who in the *Progress Paradox* notes that when people become overwhelmed by choice, they suffer from anxiety because they realize that many other, and perhaps better, choices exist, leading to a cycle of never being satisfied.

More recent research by Bishop (2009) and Chinni (2010) confirms that this phenomenon is accelerating in their books *The Big Sort: Why the Clustering of Like-Minded America is Tearing Us Apart* and *Our Patchwork Nation: The Surprising Truth about Real America*. Richard Florida (2003, 2009) also discussed on these trends from an economic perspective in two books, *The Rise of the Creative Class* and *How the Creative Economy Is Making Where to Live the Most Important Decision of Your Life*, while Jane Jacobs' (1970) foresaw the trend of Americans sorting and its implications over 40 years ago in *The Economy of Cities*.

Sources:

Bishop, B. (2009). *The Big Sort: Why the Clustering of Like-Minded America is Tearing Us Apart*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

Chinni, D. (2010). *Our Patchwork Nation: The Surprising Truth about Real America*. New York: Gotham.

Easterbrook, G. (2003). *The Progress Paradox: How Life Gets Better While People Feel Worse*. New York: Random House.

Florida, R. (2003). *The Rise of the Creative Class: How It's Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life*. New York: Basic Books.

Florida, R. (2009). *Who's Your City?: How the Creative Economy Is Making Where to Live the Most Important Decision of Your Life*. New York: Basic Books.

Jacobs, J. (1970). *The Economy of Cities*. New York: Vintage.

Putnam, R. D. (2000). *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Schwartz, B. (2005). *The Paradox of Choice: Why More is Less*. New York: Harper.