

# THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



## # 1470 The Connection between Gen Z and Baby Boomers

A lot is written and said about Generation Z, and there are significant question marks all over the place when it comes to this group. Gen Z reminds me a lot of another generation that had big question marks, too. I'm Jerry Roberts, and we'll talk about that next on The Extra Point.

Generation Z, people aged 11-26, are in the spotlight everywhere you go. In the workplace we focus on 18-26, and people talk about their energy and their creativity, but also their lack of focus and misplaced confidence — or, overconfidence. Let me be clear, this doesn't describe every member of this generation.

Gen Z worries just about everybody else, and that includes many Millennials, mostly because they loudly blame previous generations for the state of the world, speak loudly about making changes all across the landscape of society, but have little to no idea how that will happen.

In that, they remind me of another generation that fits the description I gave — creative, full of energy, overconfident, rebelling against all who had come before, and vowing to change the world — though they didn't have a clear idea of how to do it. That generation would be mine...the Baby Boomers.

Drawing a parallel between two generations can be a challenge, but let's look at some broad comparisons

1. Both the Boomers and Gen Z have size. That results in economic and societal impact. Manufacturers and designers have shifted away from Boomers, Gen X, and even the Millennials, and now see dollar signs all over Gen Z.

Marketers did the same several decades ago when they figured out the size of the Boomer generation, and that they had money to spend.

2. When it comes to technology, we would think that it's all in Gen Z's camp. They've grown up in a highly digitized world, with

advancements such as supercomputers, smartphones, social media, streaming entertainment, and now AI. All of this has shaped their everyday lives from an early age.

Boomers saw long distance phone calls go from expensive to cheap and usage exploded. Local TV turned into cable TV, electrical grids grew and matured, personal computing came into reality, the Internet was born, and space exploration began.

3. Both generations have seen massive cultural shifts. Boomers were influenced by the civil rights movement, the sexual revolution, anti-establishment sentiments, and America was torn apart over the Vietnam War.

Similarly, Generation Z has been influenced by social movements such as climate activism, gender and LGBTQ+ issues, as well as a focus on diversity and inclusivity.

We're obviously just scratching the surface here, and I want to make sure I mention an important difference between the two.

Baby Boomers came up in Post-war America with opportunities to get ahead during their early adulthood. Job markets were stable and home ownership was within reach of the majority of people. A college education was thought of as a gateway to higher achievement and income. It was also affordable for most.

Today, Generation Z faces a far tougher road. Political stupidity and desire for power has pushed the economy into a condition where Gen Z's grandchildren's grandchildren may still be paying for the mess they've created.

Unless they inherit a house, the thought of owning a home seems a fantasy to most. The connection of a college degree to the job market has largely evaporated. To a growing percentage of Gen Z, as well as employers who one day will put them on the payroll, a college education is overpriced and unnecessary. (Con't.)

The pressures on Gen Z are mounting because many find it difficult to see a path to a future that's as bright as other have had.

If you ever wondered why Gen Z kids spend so much time on their phones, maybe it's because the virtual world seems to give them more hope than the one you and I live in.

Hope is power. Hope gives purpose, and a strong purpose returns the favor. Hope gets me out of bed in the morning...the hope that today will be better than yesterday and that I'll get further and do better.

I get along well with Gen Z and I love to have them in my training. Much of what Boomers have is already in them, and they'll acquire more with time and experience.

They can also make strides with our help. We'll talk about that tomorrow.

That's the Extra Point. Be responsible and make something good happen today. For 93.3FM, the Ray Gibson Show, and First Hawaiian Bank, I'm Jerry Roberts.

###

For information on training and consulting services with Jerry Roberts, please click this link: [guamtraining.com](http://guamtraining.com)

