



Script The Daily Show: Generational Showdown

My guest tonight: Executive director of the Pew Research Center, his new book is called *The Next America: Boomers, Millennials, and the Looming Generational Showdown*. Please welcome Paul Taylor. Sir!

Taylor: It's great to be here.

Stewart: The book is called, "Boomers, Millennials, and the Looming Generational Showdown". I've got to say, I don't think it will be much of a showdown. I think the millennials are younger, their healthier, their probably stronger. I have a feeling that they are going to be very capable of kicking our asses.

Taylor: And here's the other thing; they are still living with mom and dad. So it's a little hard to mount a generational war from your childhood bedroom.

Stewart: Wow! Now that's interesting. Are they living with their parents because... purely because of economic reasons?

Taylor: Mostly. But, they also... yeah, they can't find jobs... but they also like mom and dad. It's really different.

Stewart: That is different!

Taylor: So they kind of have gone from kids to roommates. And they sort of work things out. It's a good deal. The refrigerator is stocked. They don't have to put coins in the washing machine. So it's a place to hang out if you can't find a job. And a lot of them have trouble finding jobs.

Stewart: What are you... Give me a sense of what this generation is... I know there was Generation X and then I blacked out...and then something. Who are the millennials?"

Taylor: Well they're born after 1980 so the oldest of them is actually in his or her early 30s. So, and they actually haven't crossed a lot of what we would call the traditional milestones of adulthood. For example, today, 20-somethings, only one-quarter of them are married. In their parents' generation, more than half were married. Why aren't they married? Well a lot of them, they want to get married, but they can't find jobs. And they say to themselves, "I'm not a good, I'm not a good marriage partner here. I can't support a family."

Stewart: You don't really? You don't think it's like Tinder or J-Date. You don't think it's because.... Really, they're self assessing as being poor marriage material and not thinking of themselves like, "Oh, I can just click on that profile and loddidoddi-da!"

Taylor: Yeah, it could be a little bit of both. They don't have spouses, so the typical millennial is on Facebook and she or he has 250 friends. The parents are starting to catch up and that's one of the reasons why Facebook maybe isn't the place to be anymore. But they have many more friends than their parents did.

Stewart: Their parents are also on Facebook?

Taylor: Well, yeah, that's a problem.

Stewart: Is there a generation beneath the millennials? Is there another one?

Taylor: If you can name the generation beneath the millennials, I will take you out to lunch because usually it's magazine cover writers who figure that out. I'm guessing the 13-year old....

Stewart: You just opened up a contest my friend.

Taylor: Who is a 13 or 14 year old? Typically generations last 20 years so the oldest is 33. I'm thinking the 12-year old out there is somebody different.

Stewart: Twenty years, now, seems like an incredibly broad spectrum to make any kind of larger inferences about a generation. Especially now where the speed of technology changes so quickly and mutates so quickly.

Taylor: Well yes and no. We don't know how the story of the millenials ends. And the boomers, people like me, we made a lot of noise when we were in our 20s. We've actually changed in some of our political views and gotten more conservative. But here's what we do know about the millenials so far. They are a very liberal group. They are liberal on a lot of social issues, they are liberal on a lot of political issues, they've voted now in two or three elections. They were a big part of President Obama's victories. They don't like to identify.

Stewart: Isn't that traditional for a younger generation? I always thought that a younger generation is traditionally more liberal than the older generation.

Taylor: No the Xers, the generation one-up, didn't start out that way, they were children of the Regan revolution, they were somewhat sort of cynical about government and everything else, they went their own way and they started out conservative. This generation is starting out liberal.