

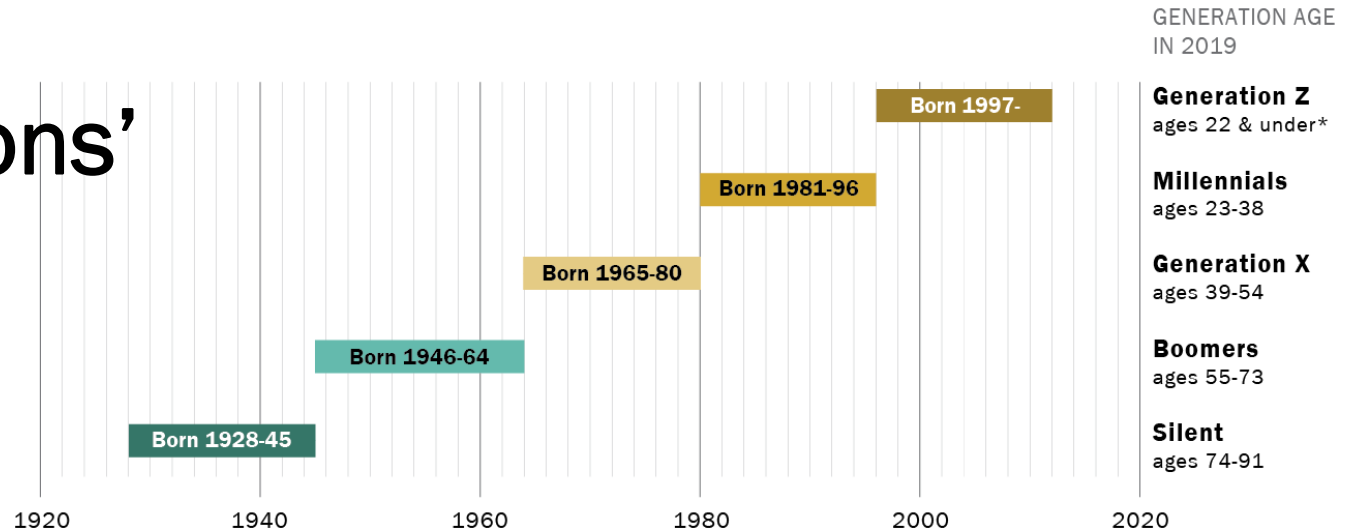
# Against the generations

Committee on the Consideration of Generational Issues in Workforce Management and Employment Practices

July 30, 2019

Philip N. Cohen  
University of Maryland  
[pnc@umd.edu](mailto:pnc@umd.edu)  
@familyunequal  
philipncohen.com

# Why 'generations' fail as science



\*No chronological endpoint has been set for this group. Generation Z age ranges vary by analysis.

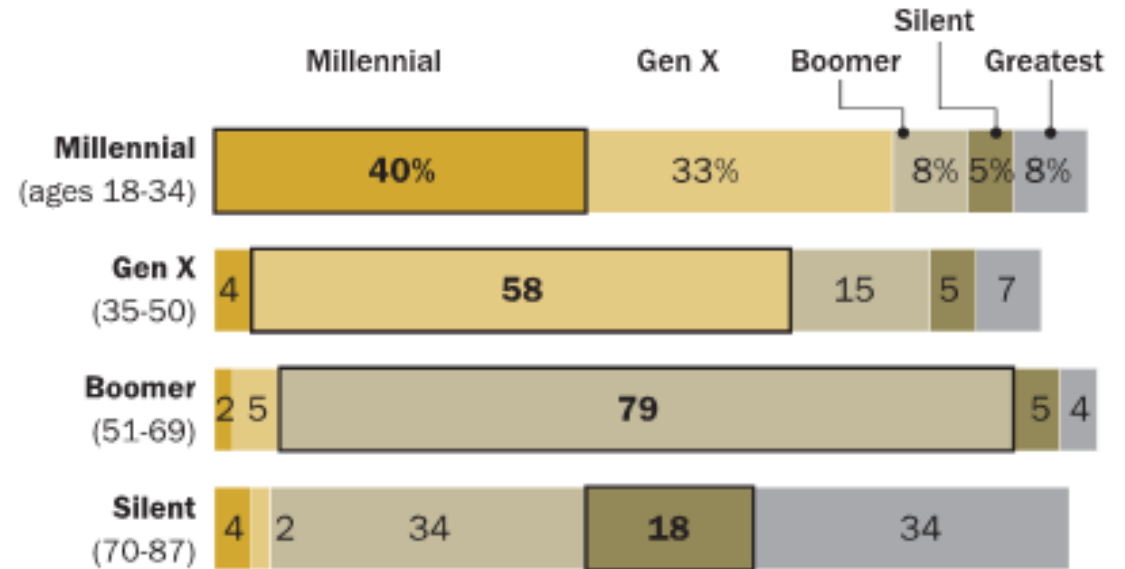
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- Irregular categories without justification
- Not generations
  - Now 15 just years – few parent/child pairs, but lots of skipped generations.
- Marketing names promote stereotyping and confirmation bias
- Sacrifice information without assessing potential benefit

This is when  
Pew should  
have stopped.

Instead they go on as if the  
generations exist.

Share of each generation that identifies as ...



Source: American Trends Panel (wave 10). Survey conducted Mar 10-Apr 6, 2015. 'Other' responses not shown. Respondents could select multiple generation labels.

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<https://www.people-press.org/2015/09/03/most-millennials-resist-the-millennial-label/>

Generational cutoff points aren't an exact science. They should be viewed primarily as tools, allowing for the kinds of analyses detailed above. **But their boundaries are not arbitrary.** Generations are often considered by their span, but again there is no agreed upon formula for how long that span should be. At 16 years (1981 to 1996), our working definition of Millennials is equivalent in age span to their preceding generation, Generation X (born between 1965 and 1980). By this definition, both are shorter than the span of the Baby Boomers (19 years) – the **only generation officially designated by the U.S. Census Bureau,** based on the famous surge in post-WWII births in 1946 and a significant decline in birthrates after 1964.

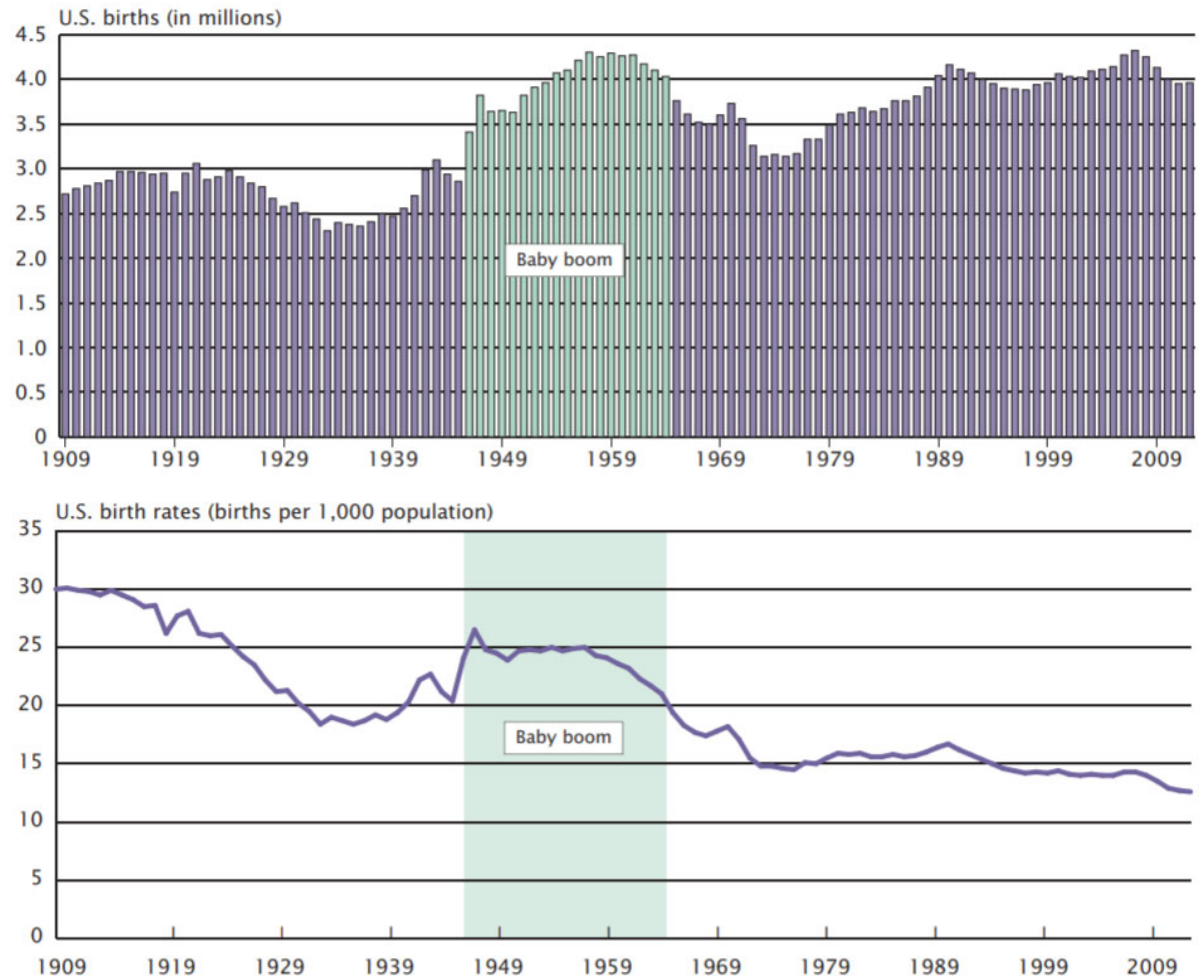
(THEY ARE)

(AS A COHORT)

<https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/01/17/where-millennials-end-and-generation-z-begins/>

The Baby Boom was a well-defined, unprecedented demographic event.

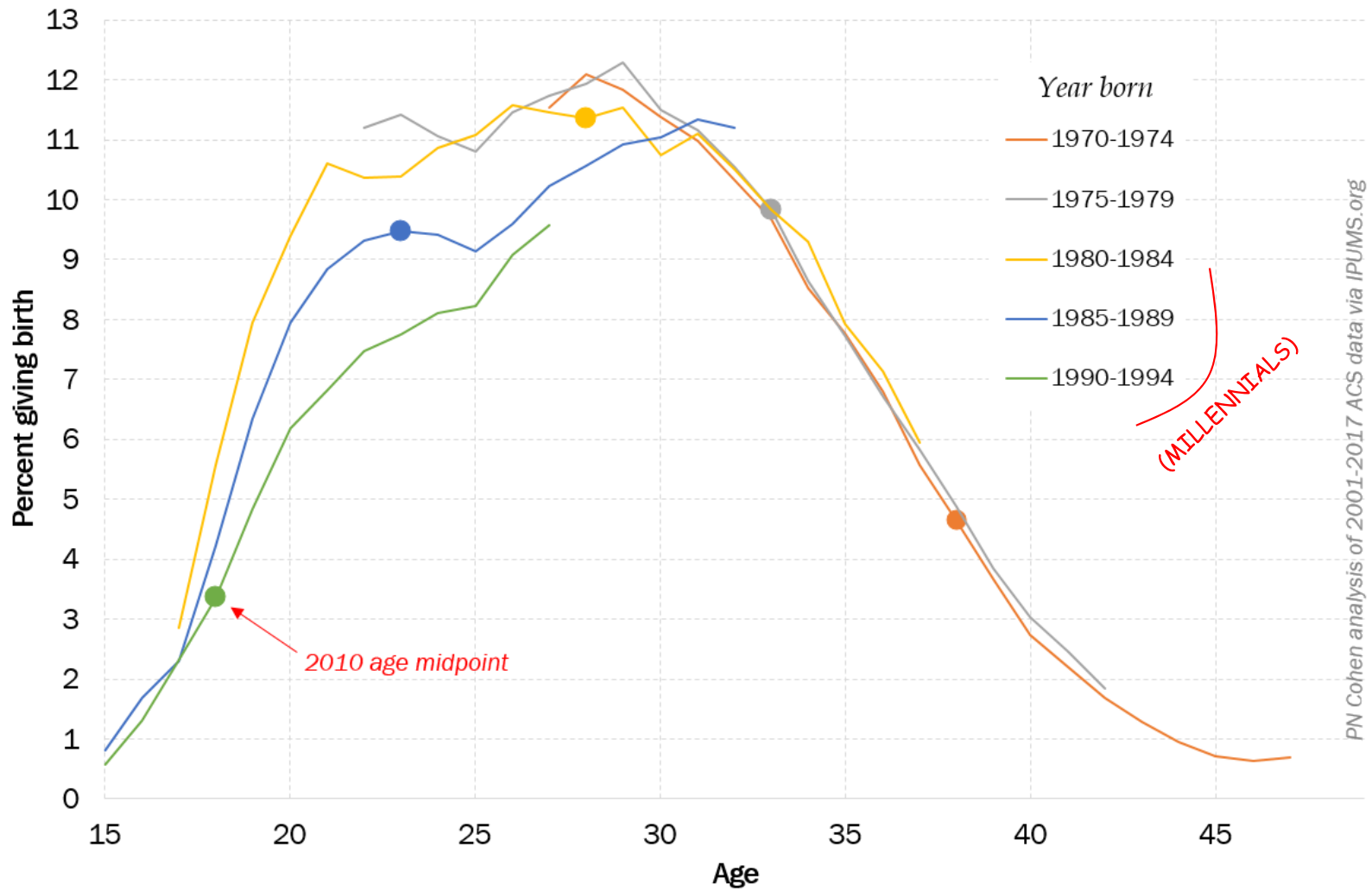
The other 'generations' are just arbitrary labels based on nothing.



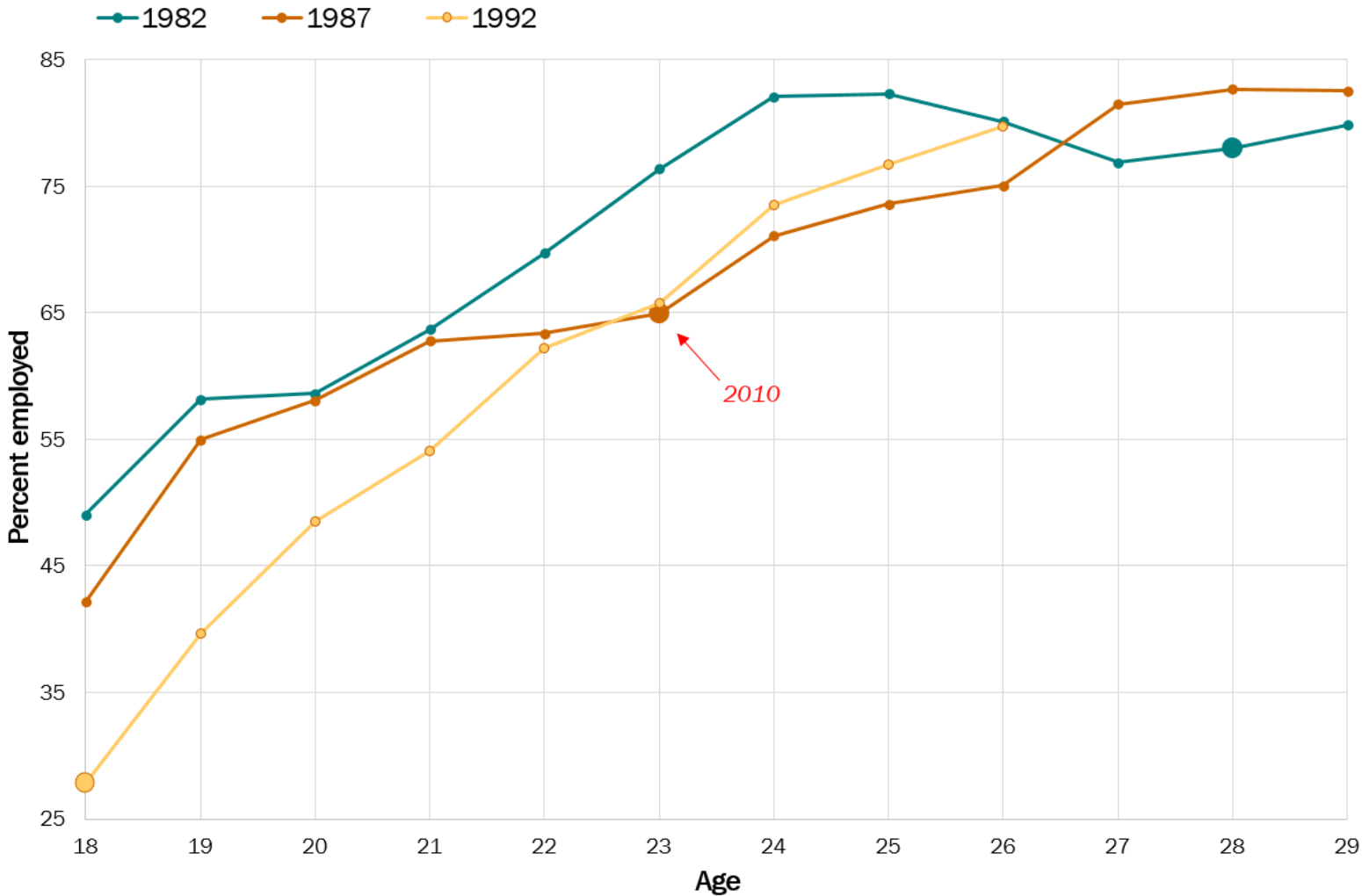
## Guide to Pew Generations

<b>Generation</b>	<b>Birth year</b>	
Silent	<u>1928</u>	<u>1945</u>
	Noam Chomsky Walter Mondale	Steve Martin Debbie Harry
Baby Boom	<u>1946</u>	<u>1964</u>
	Danny Glover Donald Trump	Easy-E Keano Reeves
Generation X	<u>1965</u>	<u>1980</u>
	Chris Rock Piers Morgan	Macaulay Culkin Venus Williams
Millennial	<u>1981</u>	<u>1996</u>
	Serena Williams Alicia Keys	Zendaya Lil Xan

Percent of women giving birth each year, by birth cohort and age

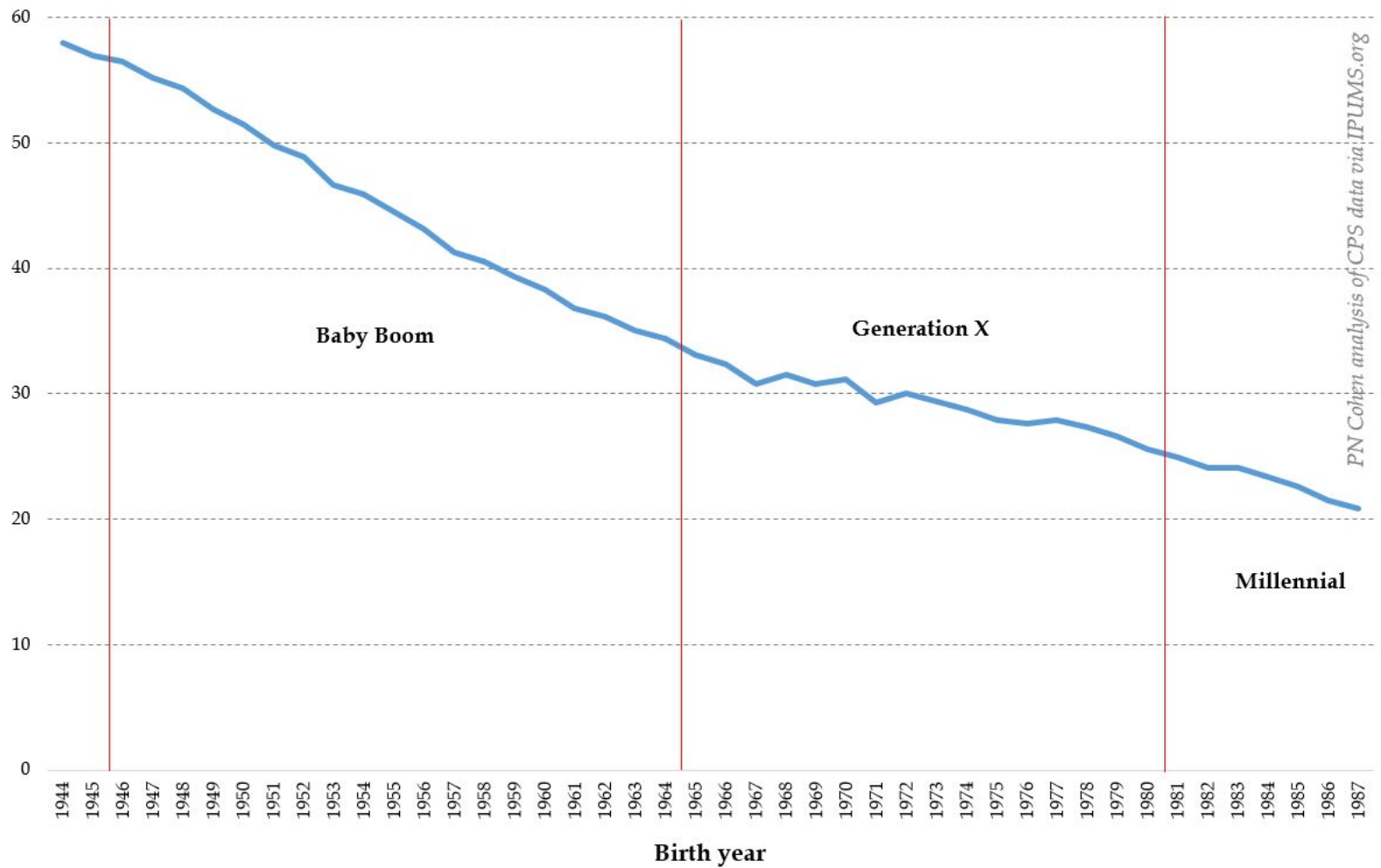


Employment rates for three birth cohorts of men, ages 18-29 (ALL MILLENNIALS)





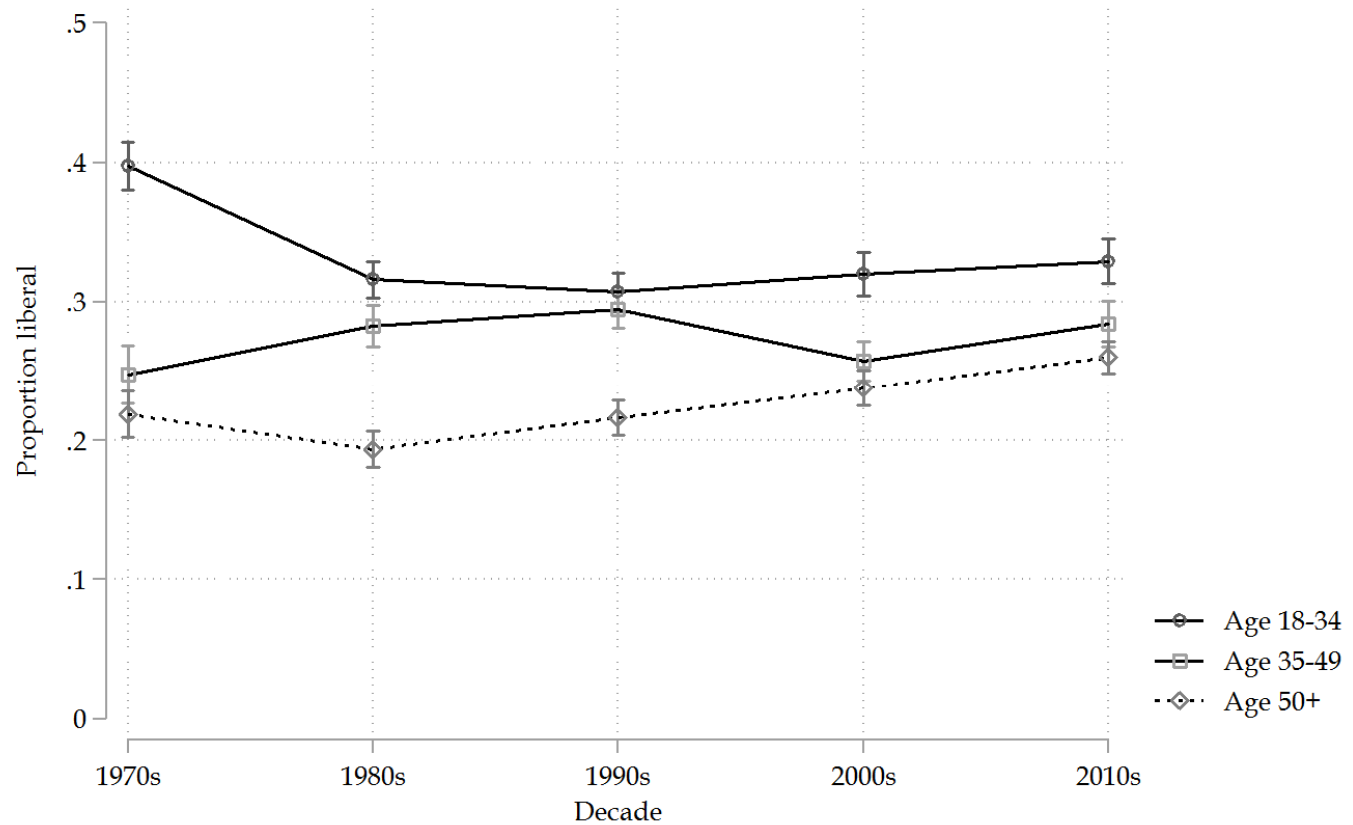
Percent married at ages 18-29, by year of birth  
(at mean of controls for sex and age)



PN Cohen analysis of CPS data via IPUMS.org

# Instead: Ask, Is this a cohort question?

Proportion identifying as liberal, by age and decade

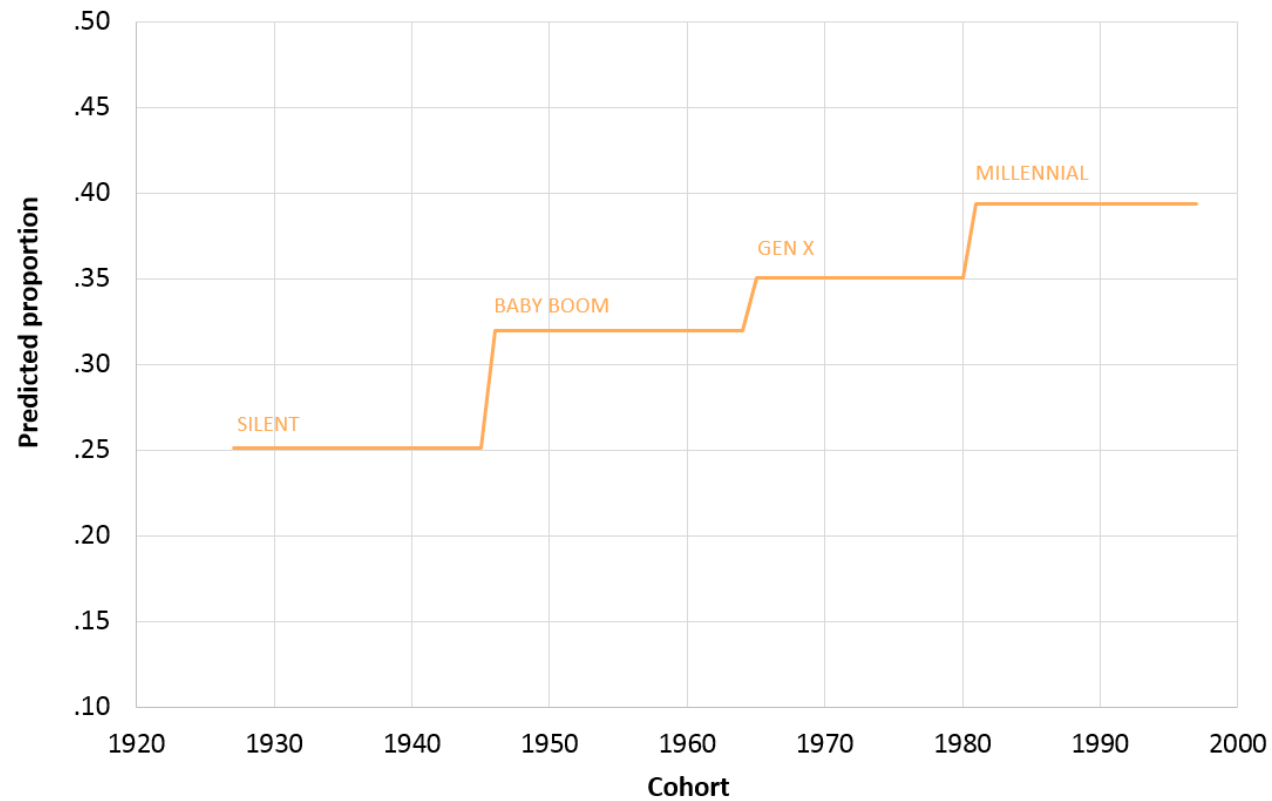


*PN Cohen analysis of General Social Survey data.*

# Instead: Try decadal cohorts first

**Cohort marginal effects on thinking divorce should be easier: Born 1920-1999**

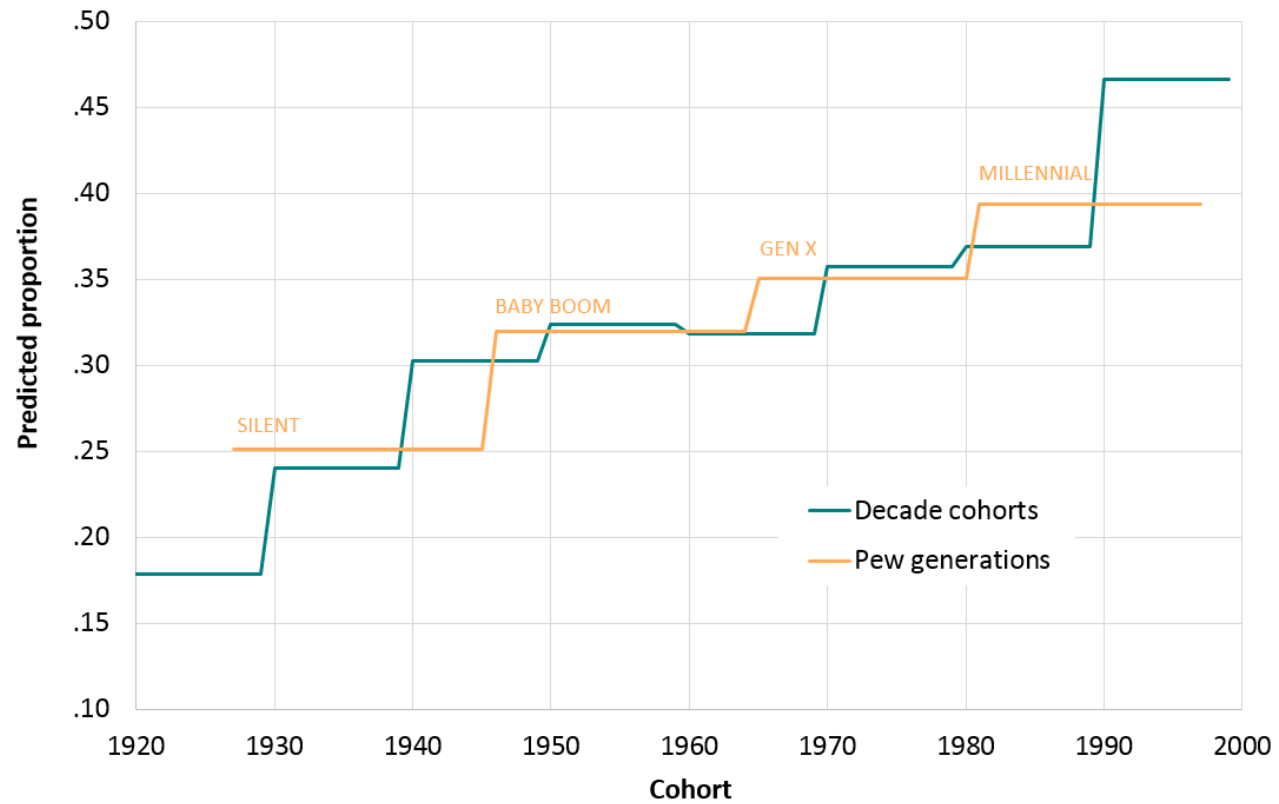
*Controlling for age, sex, and education*



# Instead: Try decadal cohorts first

Cohort marginal effects on thinking divorce should be easier: Born 1920-1999

*Controlling for age, sex, and education*



# Instead: Consider context-specific cohorts

- Children of the Great Depression
- Digital Natives
- Post-9/11 schools
- Great Recession graduates
- Parkland-era students