

The New

Adulthood

*Xennials: the in-between generation redefining
growing up.*



INNOVATION
GROUP

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The New Adulthood

The youngest members of generation X are just over 40, but don't call them middle-aged—midlife crisis is the last thing on their minds. Older millennials are more than 30, and adults in every sense—so why are marketers still lumping them in with 18-year-olds just out of high school?

A new generational cohort is emerging, and it's one to which marketers need to pay attention. Today's 30-45-year-olds encompass a startlingly wide range of life stages and accomplishments, and yet very similar forces and values have shaped their lives.

They grew up with technology, but aren't necessarily digital natives. They were disillusioned, but not completely shattered, by the recession. They redefined family life, were the first to backpack the world after graduation, and popularized so much of today's hipster culture—from fashion, to television, to the workplace.

As this generation of 30-45-year-olds turns its particular lens towards adulthood, it'll redefine everything about this stage in its life: from purchasing habits, to media and financial products, to family structure. Gen X has more spending power than any other generation, earning 31% of US income, but comprising only 25% of the adult population, according to Shullman Research Center. By 2020, millennials will control around \$1.4 trillion in spending in the United States, Accenture reports.

It's time to view these two groups as one cohort, and to recognize their unique characteristics. It's time to define the New Adulthood.





What's In a Name?

The rootless twenty-something millennial, shaped equally by the financial crisis and the rise of mobile technology, has been endlessly scrutinized. But when the curtain came down on the final season of *Girls* this spring, it was time to admit the obvious: the group that originally defined the concept of millennials is now in its 30s, grown up and tired of being indulged.

“Don’t Call Me a Millennial—I’m an Old Millennial” is the title of an article by Jesse Singal, published in *New York* magazine in April 2017. “It doesn’t benefit anyone to act like a 33-year-old and a 23-year-old came up in the same general climate, or with access to the same types of world-altering technology,” gripes Singal.

“No: These are profound differences. For the good of both us Old Millennials and our Young Millennial siblings and friends, let’s stop acting like we’re all in the same boat.”

A third of millennials—predominantly the older ones—feel so alienated from their own media portrayal that they now identify more with generation X, says a 2015 survey from the Pew Research Center. The youngest gen X members are equally confused about where they stand. Anarchistic, skeptical, cynical: those words hardly describe the generation that makes up more than half of all startup founders and which has a liberal slant that rivals that of their younger counterparts.



“We weren’t suburb ready and still wanted a vibrant city full of food, arts and energy. Portland came up and we hopped on a plane to check it out, we fell in love and moved a year later.”

Lindsay Meyer-Harley, owner, Darling Clementine.

“When you look at the trends that shaped millennials, a lot of the same trends had an impact on gen Xers as well,” explains Jean Twenge, professor of psychology at San Diego State University and the author of *Generation Me*, published in 2006, and *iGen*, published recently. “Individualism, positive self-views, higher expectations...a lot of that got its start with gen X. That was the gen X story that millennials took to the next level.”

The generation that spans older millennials to younger gen X feels unmoored. Naming it has also proved elusive. Senior BuzzFeed writer Doree Shafrir suggests the demographic be renamed Generation Catalano, after the protagonist on cult hit *My So-Called Life*, while social media strategist Anna Garvey suggests the Oregon Trail generation. In the United Kingdom, the term midult is taking off. And most recently, Australian professor Dan Woodman popularized the term Xennial in a widely shared social media post.



Emerging Adults

No matter what you call it, this cohort has clearly been misunderstood by everyone from generational researchers to the general public.

“The conversations we were having with our friends and our colleagues in our age group just weren’t chiming with what was aimed at us in the media,” says Emilie McMeekan, co-founder of The Midult, a media venture launched in 2016 for women aged 35-55. “We realized that the cultural underestimation of this generation, and this demographic, had left a huge space.” What’s going on with today’s 30-45-year-olds? They’re young, but old enough to prefer not to be seen that way; hip, but entering traditionally less exciting life stages.

Though cohesive in psychographics terms, they represent incredible demographic diversity. Age is rarely an accurate predictor of lifestyle: Older generation Xers are still enjoying the creative and unattached city life, while young millennial parents are relocating to less hectic second cities.

However you slice it, adulthood looks very different today than it did in previous generations. The percentage of under-35s who are married with children has fallen steadily since 1970, hitting just 20% in 2015. Singledom is an increasingly attractive choice, particularly as unattached women experience more financial and sexual freedom. (For more, see our case study, “The Xennial Single,” page 98.) In 2012, one in five adults (21%) had never been married, compared to just 9% of adults in 1960, according to US Census analysis. However, about a quarter (24%) of those never-married millennials live with a partner.

“The Martha Stewart lifestyle, Gap as the uniform of success, and the traditional family with a 4x4 in the drive is just not reality anymore in determining success,” says Claire Hobson, a 43-year-old brand consultant based in New York. “There’s too much diversity. I do feel that some part of adulthood was about putting yourself on the map. Achieving something noteworthy. Before, this was about the accumulation of...a husband, kids, and a mortgage. But my commitments are more fluid.”

While some Xennials are opting out of adulthood milestones altogether, others are just postponing them. The average age of first marriage is now 27 for women and 29 for men, up from 20 and 23 in 1960. The median age of a first-time homebuyer today is 32, according to the National Association of Realtors, about three years older than a generation ago. And while young urban millennials are less likely to move to the suburbs than they were two decades ago, today’s 30-44-year-olds are transplanting at a significantly faster rate than in the 1990s.

It's not just millennials who experience adulthood differently. Younger gen Xers are approaching prime midlife crisis years and finding that their current situation looks nothing like that of their boomer predecessors. Their expectations of midlife are driven by an economic model that has vanished. According to this model, after a few decades dutifully climbing the career ladder, young adults often reached a breaking point at which they longed to shake up their lives.

Today's emerging adults are just the opposite: They began their careers in a climate of rapid change, in which they have been forced to adapt, retrain and switch jobs from day one. As this group reaches an age of inarguable adulthood, they're not looking for disruption, but stability.



Adulthood—or Adulting?

In the 2000s, Jeffrey Arnett, research professor of psychology at Clark University in Worcester, coined the concept of emerging adulthood—a new life phase in one’s 20s, variously called transition age youth, delayed adulthood, extended adolescence, youthhood, adulescence, and the twixter years.

Whatever the name, millennials have become the poster children for this period of life, postponing traditional milestones until well into their 30s.

“Millennials get married later and have kids later,” says Mark Potts, head of insights at Mindshare North America. “They don’t have to take on the full responsibility of being an adult in their 20s.

So they have the time—and, in many cases, the disposable income—to carry on their extended adolescence further and further.”

Today, emerging adulthood is more than just a passing stage—it’s a defining attitude for a generation. The rise of adulting, a slang term for carrying out mundane but necessary adult responsibilities, shows how adulthood has become a constant process rather than a fixed stage. Memes such as “I can’t adult today” and “I drink coffee because adulting is hard” have taken off online, while resources have sprung up to help adulting-challenged millennials. In the spring of 2017, Adulting Collective launched with workshops and webinars covering personal finance, career development, and even basic home repair.

Rachel Weinstein, psychotherapist and co-founder of Adulting Collective, says that nowadays “there’s a lot more emphasis on doing what you love and finding your passion, and living a life that suits the individual.”

She adds: “It can be a little disorienting... and the comparative nature of social media can expose people to a lot of different ways of living, but also create a comparison where people can have a sense of insecurity like, ‘Am I doing this right?’ This is the first generation that has grown up as kids with internet and social media. It increases the visibility of the challenges and the awesomeness of that period of time.”

Brands are adopting the adulting aesthetic to connect to young adults at a fraught time. In March 2017, Mercedes-Benz launched Grow Up, an ambitious campaign that redefines traditional adult milestones for a new generation.

In one advertisement, a young family takes a fast, freewheeling drive through the desert as a voiceover prescribes the following advice: “Move to the suburbs. Be a strict parent. Settle down.”

More than ever before, gen Xers and millennials carry a youthful mindset into their perceived real adulthood. In 2016, Mindshare identified the “Peter Pan Market” of millennials and gen Xers retreating into youthful activities. In the same year that young adults reported above-average stress levels, adult coloring books sold more than 1.5 million copies.

Seeking a playful release from responsibility, young adults are turning to childhood nostalgia in droves. Couples are opting to leave their children behind for Disney-themed cruises, which frequently offer adult-only sections. LeVar Burton, host of the popular 1990s TV show *Reading Rainbow*, now hosts a podcast in which he reads to adults. And in 2016, Kellogg’s opened a café in Times Square that sold breakfast cereal for \$7.50 per bowl. Kellogg’s closed the café in August to make way for a “significantly larger” space in downtown New York.



Technology: Not Quite Natives

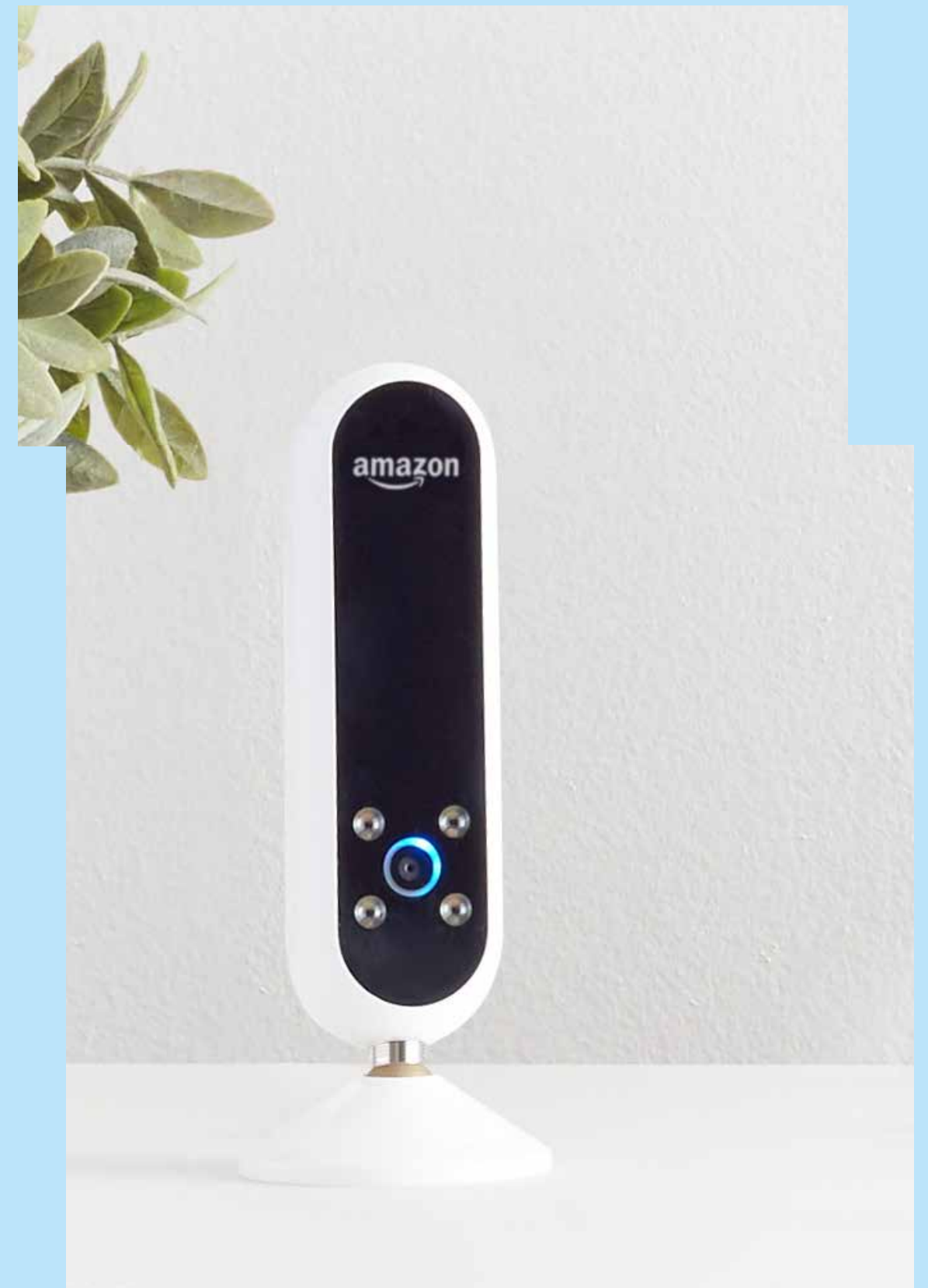
Whereas millennials were born with cellphones in their hands, generation X enjoyed a mostly tech-less childhood, developing the independent streak for which they're now famous. But what about those in between?

“We were the first group of kids who grew up with household computers, but they were still novel enough to elicit confusion and wonder,” wrote social media strategist Anna Garvey in an article for Social Media Week, basing her definition of the age group on whether they grew up playing Oregon Trail, a popular computer game. “Gen X individuals were already fully-formed teens or young adults when computers became mainstream, and millennials can’t even remember a time before computers.

But, when we first placed our sticky little fingers on a primitive Mac, we were elementary school kids whose brains were curious sponges.”

The Oregon Trail generation has a unique relationship to technology. Introduced to mass internet availability at a young age, they're extremely fluent with technology. According to SONAR™ data, 64% of US and 55% of UK 30-45-years-olds consider themselves digital natives. They are often early adopters—according to eMarketer, “older millennials are the core users of virtual assistants.” At the same time, they're still able to view technology through a critical lens—and may even be able to unplug.

Perhaps it's this unique relationship to technology that accounts for the high numbers of entrepreneurs in this age group using technology to disrupt the status quo. Thirty-eight-year-old Michael Dubin disrupted the global razor industry with the online-only Dollar Shave Club in 2012. Jon Stein, 37, founded Betterment, which uses algorithms to manage investment portfolios at a fraction of the usual cost. Airbnb, WeWork, Rent the



Runway and Kickstarter all have founders in their mid to late 30s.

Though the popular image of a Silicon Valley founder is a whiz-kid in their 20s, a 2015 report from Sage found that 30-50-year-olds overwhelmingly led the startup field, founding more than half of all new businesses in the United States and Canada. Although there are obvious exceptions, such as Elon Musk, who founded PayPal in his late 20s, and Mark Zuckerberg, who started Facebook as a 19-year-old Harvard student, as in other sectors, the millennial stereotype must soon give way to something more adult.

This generation is also driving nostalgia-fueled relaunches of classic technology. Sales of the rebooted Nintendo Entertainment System were enormously successful, with gamers in their 40s scrambling to get their hands on it. Gaming companies aren't the only ones tapping the retro trend. Launched in 2016, Maison Pixel is a line of swimsuits and underwear that take aesthetic inspiration from 8-bit processors, in colors such as Gameboy grey and Classic Pong white.

Social Adulthood

30-45-year-olds are more, or equally as, likely to be connected during the day.

Which of the following social media networks do you use at work?

Age	20-29	30-45	46-55
Facebook	69%	69%	55%
Twitter	32%	30%	17%
Pinterest	28%	25%	15%
LinkedIn	16%	24%	18%

Source: SONAR™ survey of 1755 US adults

Politically Engaged

As we pass the 10th anniversary of the global financial crisis, it's easy to forget that the opportunities missed by millennials and gen Xers during the depths of the subsequent recession have had lasting effects.

Many emerging adults are realizing that student debt and precarious work arrangements aren't temporary difficulties, but structural issues that need to be addressed. No wonder this group is pushing back, politically, against a status quo that seems to be stacked against them.

At 42 years of age, the comedian, activist and author Russell Brand, who once bragged about his partying and never voting, launched *Under the Skin*, a podcast in which he discusses topics such

as “the political shock tactics being used to force through destructive policies, and how resistance and imagination can lead to radical change.” Brand also has a YouTube channel, *The Trews*, an abbreviation of true news, where he provides opinion on political issues for his 1.3 million subscribers.

Like Brand, today's New Adults may have taken an unusual path to political activism. As they enter adulthood, they are voicing their concerns through various unconventional media and through political leaders who look radically different to the boomers who have dominated politics.

As the first generation with political views entirely shaped by technology, they value transparency and honesty in their politicians. Jonathan Pie is a YouTube news reporter who prides himself on his “brutally honest” behind-the-scenes rants that often criticize right-wing policy. Created by 39-year-old UK satirist Tom Walker, the character struck a nerve with its target demographic: Pie amassed more than a million Facebook followers in less than a year.



The next generation of political leaders will come from very different backgrounds. For a generation that grew up watching Silicon Valley tackle complex problems, politics may be a logical extension. Tech founders such as Peter Thiel and Elon Musk have become key political advisors, while Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg, 33, is rumored to be considering a run for the US presidency.

Entrepreneur and talent manager Scooter Braun, 36, has recently pivoted from pop culture and managing Justin Bieber to politics, reportedly considering running for California governor. Other emerging political leaders, such as the Hispanic Castro twins, Joaquín and Julián, 42, reflect growing racial diversity across the United States and the United Kingdom.

Today's New Adults will form the core of tomorrow's voters, carrying significant influence over national issues. In the 2016 US election, millennial and gen X voters outnumbered boomers for the first time, according to the Pew Research Center. In the United Kingdom, their impact is already visible.

Although Labour's surprising gain in the share of seats in the 2017 general election was credited mostly to younger voters, an *Evening Standard* poll revealed significant shifts to Labour among 35-54-year-olds.

What do emerging adults value? The generation caught between millennials and gen X leans towards liberal values, but is not quite as liberal as the world's youth, according to Pew. The *Evening Standard* called them the "pinched generation," because they are "juggling caring for ageing parents and their own children," leading many to focus on the provision of social care for the young and old. As they take their place on the adult stage, this is not a group for social media-based slacktivism, performed lazily via the internet in support of social and political causes. Instead, expect them to vote with their growing household purchasing power.



Good Trouble, a magazine launched in November 2016, shows how to blend real-life political activism with a hip and youthful design. Founded by former *Dazed & Confused* editor Rod Stanley, who took its name from a quote by civil rights leader John Lewis, the magazine shows a strong appetite for stories around protest and politics, with information on specific actions for various issues. Brands that want to appeal to this demographic should scrutinize their own political values for authenticity, maturity, and impact.



The Generation

Game



TueNight event for Gen X women

The shifting generations— how they're defined, by whom and when

As our report shows, the gap between the younger members of generation X and the older millennial cohort is narrowing rapidly—if, indeed, it ever really existed. In fact, the divides between the generations have never been clear cut.

Below, we navigate the shifting sands.

Generation X (early/mid '60s to early '80s)

Generation X entered popular parlance after the 1991 publication of Douglas Coupland's novel of the same name. Coupland defined gen X as starting in 1961, but many researchers insisted on 1965, when the postwar baby boom sharply declined.

Midults (1961-1981)

This term was coined by the founders of TheMidult.com, who defined it in 2016 as women aged 35-55 at the time.

Generation Catalano (1977-1981)

A reference to Jordan Catalano, a character from 1990s teen drama *My So-Called Life*, describing the generation on the cusp of gen X and millennials. Writer Doree Shafrir popularized the term in a 2011 article for Slate.

Oregon Trail generation (late '70s-early '80s)

Marketer Anna Garvey defined the Oregon Trail generation in a 2015 Social Media Week article as those who can “distinctly recall the excitement of walking into your weekly computer lab session and seeing a room full of Apple 2Es displaying the start screen of Oregon Trail.”

Xennials (1977-1983)

In 2014, *Good* magazine published an article that described Xennials as “a micro-generation that serves as a bridge between the disaffection of gen X and the blithe optimism of millennials.” In June 2017, a post that went viral on Facebook defined Xennials as born “between 1977-1983 (or when the original *Star Wars* trilogy was released).”

Millennials (early '80s to 2001-2004)

A term coined in 1987 by influential demographers William Strauss and Neil Howe, and popularized in their 1991 book *Generations*. Most demographers and researchers agree that the generation starts in the first years of the 1980s. Its end is variously defined as the mid-1990s to the mid-2000s, with even Strauss and Howe describing their choice of 2004 as “tentative.”

Generation Y (see millennials)

Millennials by another name, generation Y was coined in 1993 by *Advertising Age*. Eventually, the magazine conceded millennials was a better name and, in 2014, a former director described Gen Y as “a placeholder until we found out more about them.”

Generation Z (1995-?)

Generation Z was born any time from the mid-1990s to mid-2000s, depending on the definition. Its end date is yet to be set, but its name is believed to have been coined in a 2007 article for *Brand Strategy* magazine.

Centennials (1997-?)

Like i-generation, post-millennials, the pluralist generation, the Founders and the internet generation, centennials is essentially another name for generation Z. It was first mentioned by Kantar Futures in 2016.

Beauty &



Wellness



Beauty & Wellness

Is it a gym? Or a nightclub? In Shanghai, the latest output of Chinese gym chain Physical turned heads when it opened in 2017. Designed by Hong Kong-based design studio Panorama, the gym features bright neon lines and trendy colored glass to separate areas for dance, spinning and relaxation. Custom video projections are synchronized to the internal sound system to symbolize heartbeats.

Physical is not the only fitness-meets-nightlife option to hit the market recently. Describing itself as a “next generation social club,” New York’s Wellvyl has a community-driven mission, with events to hone the body and mind. And in 18 northern hemisphere cities, Daybreaker’s raves offer a chance to let loose in a corporate-approved environment at its early-morning dance parties, which feature yoga, community, and absolutely no alcohol.

“It’s a global professional community who are tired of going to bars and clubs and want a new solution,” Radha Agrawal, the 38-year-old founder of Daybreaker, told Oxygen. “We often live routine lives. It’s a wink to your day... It’s a place where you can get loose and let your freak flag fly.”

Today’s New Adults are increasingly conscious of their health, a trait common to every aging generation. But rather than carving out time for wellbeing in an always-on schedule, they are finding ways to incorporate it into other areas of their life, ranging from diet to skincare, and even to nightlife. Wellness today reflects on the whole person—inside and out.





Holistic Health

There is no denying that wellness has become a buzzword that echoes far beyond health. According to the Global Wellness Institute, a US non-profit organization, the global wellness industry grew by 10.6% in the 2013-2015 period, reaching a total value of \$3.7 trillion.

Today's consumers take a holistic approach to health, incorporating not just the doctor's office, but diet, exercise, mental wellbeing and overall happiness into their definition of wellness.

Although on-trend millennials are thought to have popularized holistic health, the New Adults are blazing the trail. Among those trailblazers are: Gwyneth Paltrow, 44, who founded wellness site Goop; Jasmine Hemsley, 37, one of the two sisters behind clean eating purveyors Hemsley and Hemsley; and Amanda Chantal Bacon, 34, the founder of West Coast juice and supplement emporium Moon Juice.

George MacPherson, founder of communications consultancy GWM Consulting, is a 35-year-old amateur fitness buff. He says: "In our generation, we've learned a lot of lessons from a post-war Britain, and post-war Western culture, that there's previously been maybe a poor diet and quite sedentary lifestyle, and that really affected us.



We've watched our parents and their parents deal with how the world grew so quickly and became a lot more convenient, without really looking at the impact on our bodies and our minds. On top of that, it fits in really closely with social media."

Xennials are staying single longer and starting families later, if at all, leaving them with more time and disposable income for health and wellness. Whereas previous generations were more likely to focus on anti-aging solutions, this generation sees wellness as the new path to internal and external beauty.

"For so long we've looked at beauty as one dimensional, as what you put on your skin," says Carla Oates, the 44-year-old author of *The Beauty Chef* recipe book, telling the Business of Fashion that "with this wellness revolution, people have noticed that when they look after their body in a more holistic way, their skin benefits."



The Natural Look

In October of 2016, Racked ran an article titled “The Beauty Industry Has A Gen X Problem.” The beauty industry’s focus on millennials, the article claimed, was potentially alienating to older consumers—not just generation X, but emerging adults as well.

“I do think that companies can try to appeal more to middle-of-the-road customers like me,” says a 42-year-old woman interviewed for the Racked article. “For makeup and skincare, they’re either trying to reach a super-young audience, or a seemingly older audience that I’m really hoping I don’t fit into just yet!”

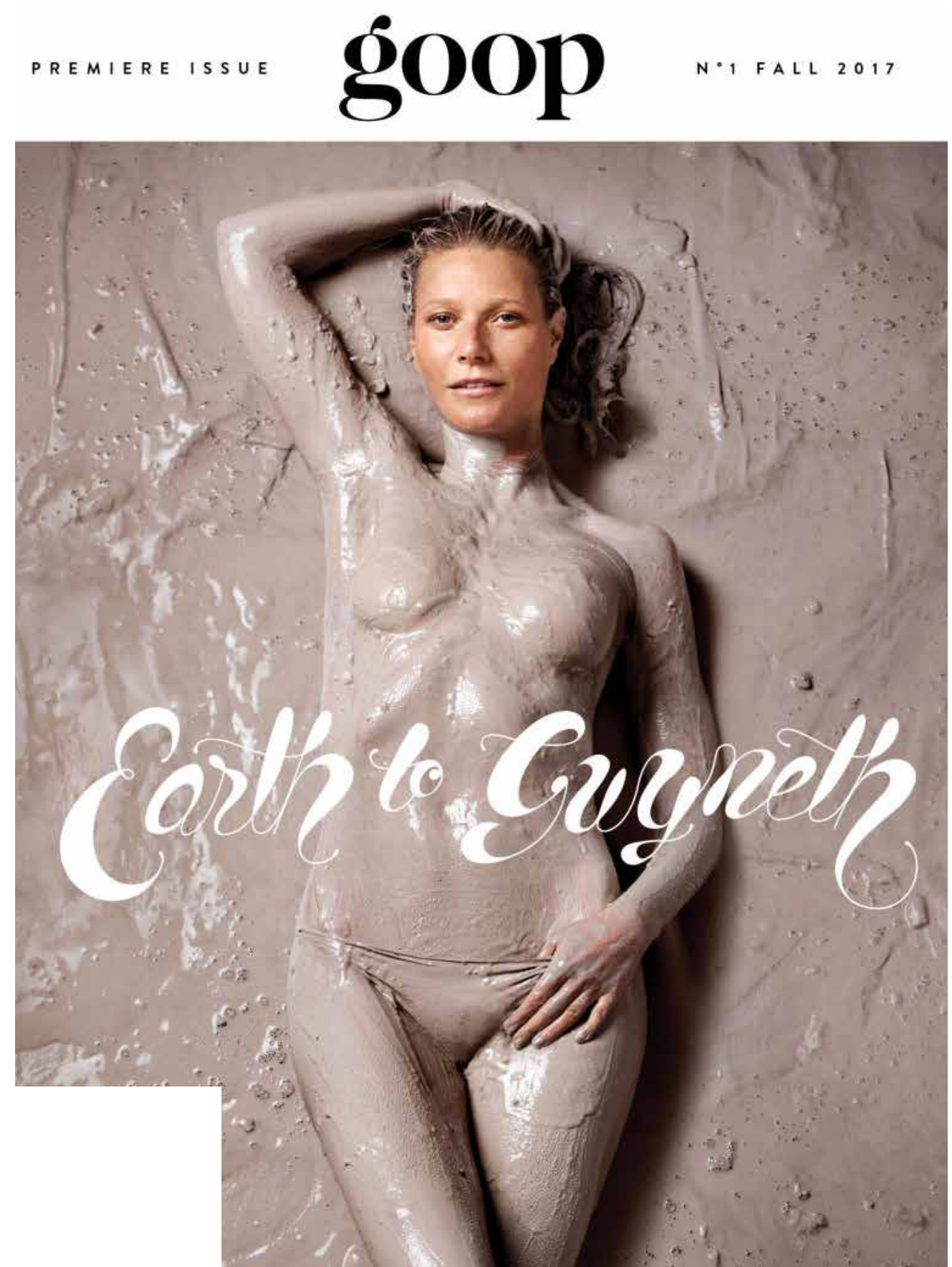
What do New Adults look for in beauty products? They’re old enough to have an established routine, but young enough to experiment still with new brands. While young millennials are focused on self-expression, Xennials are more likely to read the label, tending to prefer what they perceive to be “natural” beauty products (18% versus 14% of younger millennials, according to market research firm Mintel). According to a November 2016 analysis by Facebook, they’re “comfortable” in their own skin, more interested in how cosmetics and skincare will make them “feel” versus how they “will look.”

Brands are launching new offerings for these adults in the middle. The products have refined packaging and a wellness focus that doesn’t scream “anti-aging.”

Philosophy, which describes itself as “a wellbeing beauty brand,” made a transparent push for a more adult audience in 2016 with its

“Welcome to the Age of Cool” campaign, which poked fun at the beauty industry’s portrayal of middle age. Starring Ellen Pompeo, the campaign ended with the tagline, “Act your age, in all the right ways.” Also in 2016, plant-based beauty company Clarins launched a 2016 digital campaign called “Worth the Wrinkle,” which sought to reframe wrinkles as a badge of honor, rather than a flaw.

Beyond cosmetics, innovative startups are seeing the potential for wellness-themed branding in all types of personal care markets. Lola, a tampon subscription service launched in 2015, has been gaining attention with its guarantee of “100% organic cotton,” and chic, minimalistic packaging. Maude, a new online shop for sex essentials, offers similarly refined packaging, with a focus on wellness and education.



Left Image: Ellen Pompeo in Philosophy's Age of Cool campaign
Right Image: Gwyneth Paltrow for Goop magazine

Multifaceted Motherhood

Women who become mothers don't suddenly cease to be their old selves—a fact to which marketers are now waking up.

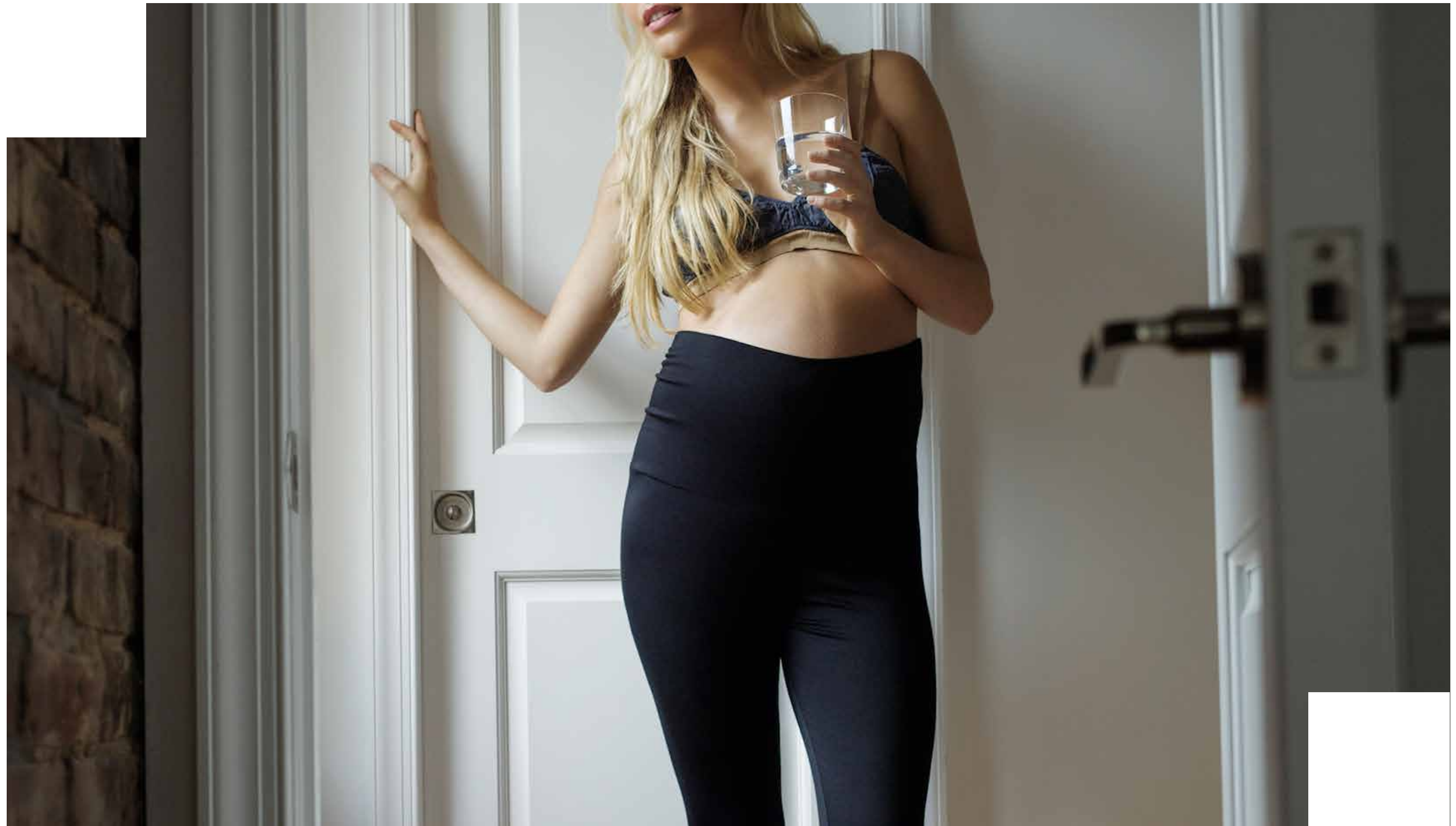


“We’re having kids at a completely new life stage, where we have established identities and are looking for practical solutions,” says Courtney Klein, the founder of online motherhood retailer Storq. She told Ok Real that “having your first baby at 20 is a lot different than having your first baby at 30. When I’d discuss this with pregnant women they would say, ‘I just want to feel like myself. I’m already doing this crazy thing, and to hold onto who I am as I make this huge life change would be really empowering.’”

Perhaps as a result, expectant women and new mothers are attempting to make motherhood more natural. A small but significant minority of women opts for midwives over obstetricians; a figure of just 3% in 1989 had doubled to 7.7% in 2002, according to research published in 2012 in the *Journal of Midwifery & Women’s Health*, and the latest figures from the American College of Nurse-Midwives cite 8.3% in 2014. In April 2017, cult-favorite fashion blog *Man Repeller* published two doula-related articles about boosting fertility naturally and why being a doula is “the best job in the world.”

Also, there is an abundance of Instagrammers and online communities dedicated to the idea that women can be mothers and wellness gurus simultaneously.

RUMI X, a Hong Kong-based activewear label, already checks many of the boxes for modern eco-brands. Its trendy patterned leggings are made partially from recycled trash, including plastic water bottles and coffee grounds. The brand offers maternity leggings, and in an August 2017 promotion for World Breastfeeding Week, it featured shots of mothers and pregnant women that showed how motherhood and wellness can overlap in a chic, natural way. “To the world, you are a mother,” says the brand on Instagram. “But to your family, you are the World.”



Wellness Meets Tech

In July 2017, for the first time a mobile app was approved as a birth control method by the European Union. Launched in 2014, Natural Cycles relies on a woman's recorded daily body temperature to chart when the risk of pregnancy is high. "It feels incredibly exciting that there is now an approved alternative to conventional pregnancy prevention methods, and that it's possible to replace medication with technology," cofounder Elina Berglund told Business Insider Nordic.

For a generation so shaped by technology, it makes sense that tech would play a key role in wellness.

Information that was previously shared only with a medical professional can now be easily tracked by apps that record diet, exercise and sleep patterns. Smart breast pumps allow women to express milk automatically while getting on with their day, while startups such as NextGen Jane use menstrual blood to track key indicators of women's health. Beauty and wellness brands would do well to stay on the cutting edge of technology for a generation that expects it at every turn.



Key takeaways

Today's emerging adults are spearheading the wellness movement, redefining holistic health with chic branding and 21st century sensibilities.

HOLISTIC ADULTHOOD

Young adults have more time and disposable income to focus on wellness throughout their adulthood—and they're incorporating wellbeing into all aspects of life.

IN-BETWEEN ADULTS

Anti-aging doesn't sell for this demographic. Neither does hyper-trendy millennial marketing. New Adults deserve their own focus from beauty brands.

THE NEW MOTHERHOOD

Motherhood today is increasingly viewed through a "natural" lens—an extension of the wellness ideology that will affect purchasing decisions.

NATURAL BEAUTY

For emerging adults, beauty is more than skin deep. Beauty brands should look to natural products that affect overall wellbeing for the industry's future.

NEXT-GEN TECH

The generation raised on technology believes anything can be tracked via an app—even health. Beauty and wellness brands would do well to keep new technology on their radar.





Finance



Finance

In May 2017, a viral clip from Australia's 60 Minutes illuminated the tense debate around New Adult finances.

"When I was trying to buy my first home, I wasn't buying smashed avocado for \$19 and four coffees at \$4 each," said Tim Gurner, a 35-year-old Australian real estate mogul. "The expectations of younger people are very, very high... The people that own homes today worked very hard for it, saved every dollar, did everything they could to get up the property investment ladder."

Are millennials a generation of "snowflakes," too entitled to save for retirement? Or are they victims of a post-recessional economic climate? The backlash online was swift. Millennials chimed in with stories of financial responsibility, while many pointed out that Gurner chose to ignore the perfect storm of factors that helped create "Generation Rent": Rising home prices, a cratered post-recession stock market, massive student loan debt.

"Alright, I did the math," tweeted MTV writer Kaleb Horton. "If I stopped eating avocado toast every day, I would be able to afford a bad house in Los Angeles in 624 years."

Shattering Stereotypes

It's true that New Adults inherited a raw financial deal. Millennials entered the job market at the height of the Great Recession and faced economic uncertainty and unemployment. According to the Pew Research Center, the average hourly wage has barely moved in real terms since the 1970s. And according to the 2016 Wells Fargo Millennial Study, one third of all millennials are saddled with student loan debt. The median balance is \$19,978.

The youngest members of generation X overlap with the millennial mindset. These gen Xers suffered the effects of the recession at a critical age, when many expected to be building a nest egg or buying a house. In the United Kingdom, 36% of 30-45-year-olds say their career was negatively affected by the great recession of 2007-2009, versus 31% of younger millennials and 28% of those aged 45 and over, according to a study by SONAR™, J. Walter Thompson's proprietary research tool.

Today, this generation is shattering financial stereotypes around their finances, pushing back against the tenets of "Generation Rent." With the oldest millennials well into their 30s, today's emerging adults are budding investors and likely to be active retirement savers. They may be homeowners themselves, or planning to finance a family. And they're looking for guidance—which, thus far, brands have been slow to provide.

"I get aggravated by a lot of the rhetoric that is out there about millennials," says Erin Lowry, author of *Broke Millennial*, a book based on her personal finance site of the same name. "What I see are millennials that are heads of major companies, entrepreneurs, or solving global problems. My peers are self-sufficient, they're earning a decent income, and they've taking care of their debt. So I don't see those stereotypes as being largely true any more. We have grown up."

The Cusp of Wealth

Xennials are not just cleaning up their own financial house; they're also set to be on the receiving end of one of the greatest wealth transfers in recent history. As well as coming into their own as career professionals, they also stand to inherit the assets of America's biggest generation, the baby boomers. Over the next 30 to 40 years, \$30 trillion in assets is expected to pass from boomers to their heirs, reports Accenture.

“Millennials, already seen as a segment with quirky tendencies and limitless potential, will affirm their status as the new drivers of consumption going forward,” says a 2015 report from Deloitte. According to Deloitte, millennials will experience the fastest growth in wealth over the next 10 years, with global net worth set to more than double. Millennials are also setting expectations that reflect the generation directly above them as well. A study from financial services technology provider FIS found that senior millennials (aged 26-36) and gen Xers (aged 37-51) share a majority of the same preferences and digital behaviors.

New Adults are approaching adulthood from a unique set of financial circumstances. They bring a unique set of financial needs and wants, as well as rapidly changing life stages that beg for guidance and new solutions. Are the financial services industries ready for the shift?



New Consumer Landscapes

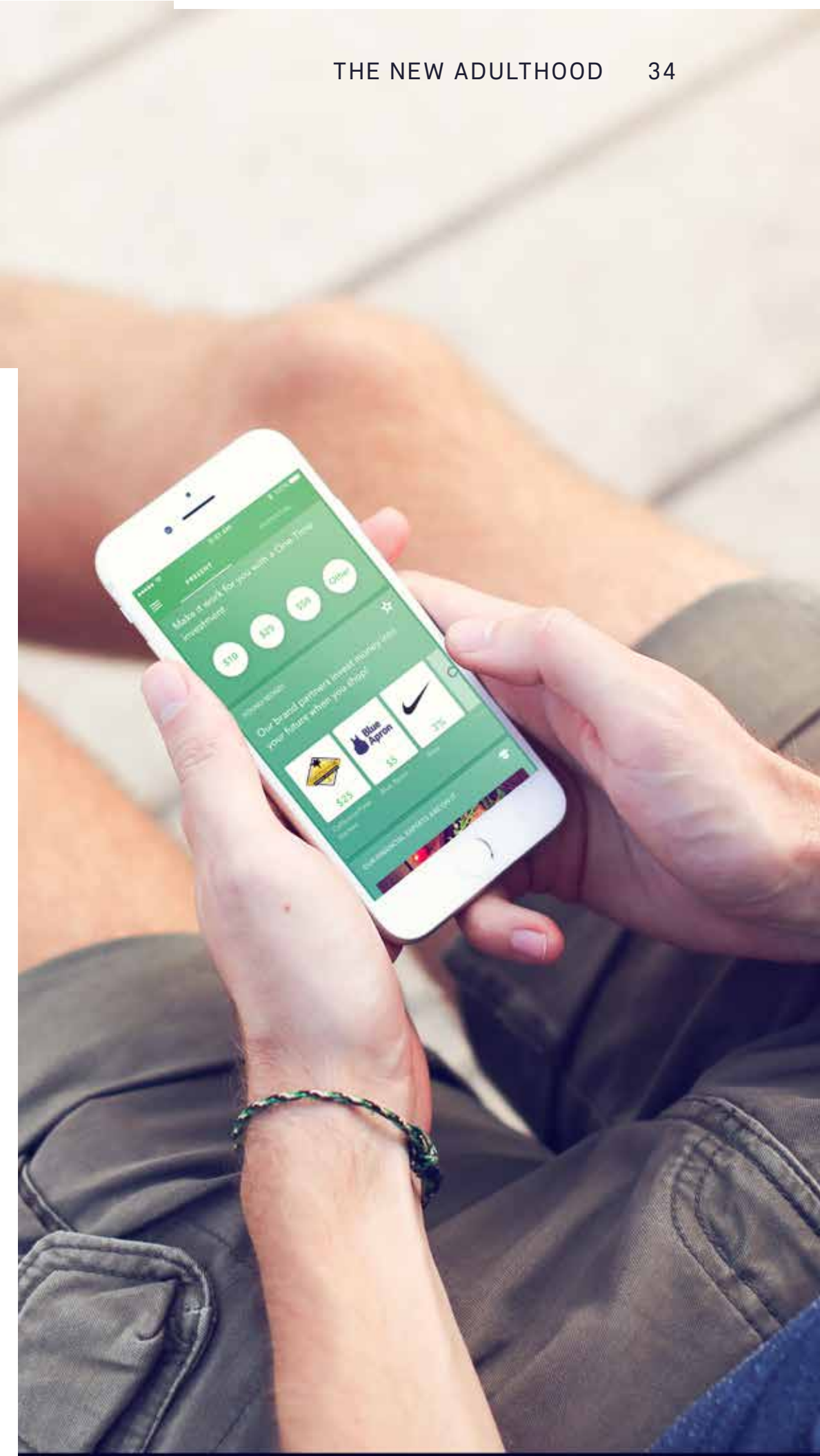
A digitally-raised generation stands to reshape the investment landscape with new priorities. The rise of fintech allows individuals to invest in the stock market directly from their smartphones. Innovative apps, such as Robinhood, offer sleek no-fee robo-advising for portfolio management or stock trading based on algorithms. Acorns offers micro-investing, where users can invest amounts as low as \$5—a compelling offer for young adults.

Beyond an affinity for algorithm-based solutions, the adults rapidly entering the financial markets demand seamless user experiences. Mobile banking is regarded as so essential that 44% are prepared to pay for it, if necessary, according to research from S&P Global

Market Intelligence. Millennials and their generation X counterparts also bring a DIY spirit to money management, born from a general suspicion of the financial establishment. Banks will have to prove their value to Generation DIY: 68% of US 30-45-year-olds and 59% in the United Kingdom believe they can plan for retirement on their own, according to SONAR™.

“What resonates with millennials looks and feels vastly different than what resonates with their parents,” Doria Lavagnino told venture news site AlleyWatch in June. Lavagnino, a former journalist, is the founder of CentSai, a personal finance platform that teaches finance through storytelling. “Financial brands also contend with distrust on the part of millennials, many of whom witnessed their parents struggle with the effects of the financial crisis. This left a lasting impact.”

As technology disrupts the traditional financial landscape, traditional banking giants are finding that bold upstarts can quickly become serious competition. As legacy firms struggle to compete, the race for this rising demographic heats up.



Challenger Brands

Big banks are in trouble. The top four banks ranked among the 10 brands least loved by millennials in 2015, according to a three-year study from Viacom Media. One in three respondents were open to switching banks in the next 90 days, while the same proportion (33%) believes it won't need a bank at all in the all-digital future.

Chime Bank is an experiment in designing a bank that young adults might actually like. Launched in 2014, the all-digital bank offers automated savings and a well-designed app for contacting customer service at any time. Chime has no balance requirements or monthly fees, and offers an automatic savings plan with rewards.

“We feel like being a good bank is low-hanging fruit because so many people are unhappy with Chase, Wells Fargo and Bank of America,” Chris Britt, co-founder of the company, told *Fortune*. Chime calls itself “a bank account built for your best interest,” and aims to be a bank that members view as an ally, not an adversary.

Digital-only banks have in general found success with this generation. London-based Monzo is a bank for the smartphone generation. Although users receive a MasterCard, Monzo has neither physical branches nor international fees. Another company, Simple Bank, focuses heavily on design and built-in budgeting tools. Ally Financial, an online-only bank recently declared the best for millennials by *Kiplinger's Personal Finance* magazine, is running a “Seriously Anything” campaign, a humorous series of spots that emphasizes the lengths Ally staff will go to help customers save money.

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THING
TO DO.

At Ally, we don't just care about your finances. We care about you. And nothing stops us from doing right by both. See? We told you it wasn't creepy.

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Other banks are building their reputation by addressing social impact. According to a survey from US Trust, 80% of millennial investors want their investments to have a positive impact. Robo-advisor Wealthsimple offers an automated socially responsible investment portfolio, and online bank Aspiration recently launched the Aspiration Impact Measurement (AIM), which scores businesses on social and environmental factors to calculate the impact of a user's spending habits. Major investment firms have now begun to offer sustainable investment options, including Fidelity, which launched two sustainable low-cost index funds in May.



Millennial Money Media

Erin Lowry founded her *Broke Millennial* website in January of 2013 to share stories around personal finance and money management from a unique point of view: her own. She has now written a book with the same title.

“Few books out there were specific to millennial pain points when it comes to finance,” she says. “Not many books were talking about student loans. They weren’t addressing the fact that a lot of millennials were cohabiting before getting married. It’s not just the traditional mindset of getting married, buying a house, having kids. We’re not that patterned any more.”

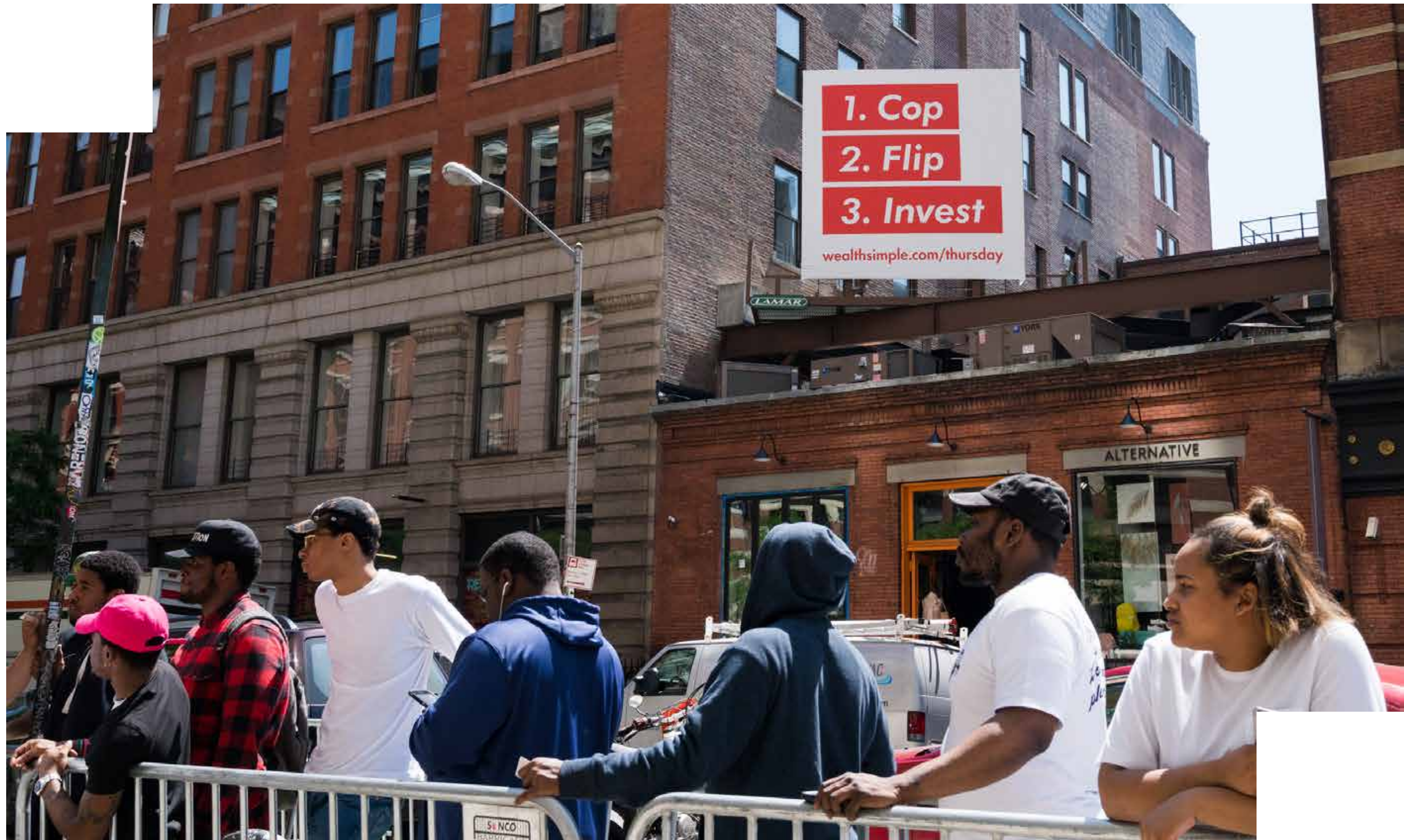
Lowry tapped into a discrepancy in the financial landscape: Financial products and services don’t speak the same language as the New Adults rapidly entering the marketplace. A wave of innovative titles has sprung up to address the gap.

In March 2017, the Dow Jones Media Group launched lifestyle website *Moneyish*. Speaking to *Digiday* UK, senior content development editor Raakhee Mirchandani said *Moneyish* was about “the conversations and feelings that surround money,” a home for “pieces that were a little more irreverent, a little more expressly aimed at its social media audience” than other Dow Jones brands.

Time Inc. now has *Coinage*, a video-focused brand that launched in February 2017. Even traditional stock investing juggernaut *Barron’s* has got in on the act; *Barron’s Next*, launched in 2016, is aimed at the next generation of investors.

Millennial media behemoths are also filling out their personal finance content. *Vice Media* created *Vice Money* in October 2016, while *Uproxx Media*, the company behind *BroBible*, launched Facebook-based *Stackin* in May 2017. Youth juggernaut *Mic* launched *The Payoff* in January 2017, while digital news company *NowThis News* rolled out *NowThis Money* in July.

“As this generation grows up, begins to start families of their own, buys homes and saves for the future, finance is a sector that is of growing importance to millennials,” Cory Haik, *Mic*’s chief strategy officer, told *Adweek*. Savvy brands are following the money. *The Payoff* is sponsored by *Discover*, while *NowThis Money* is an equal partnership with *JP Morgan Chase*.



WealthSimple's retirement plan ad across from the Supreme NYC flagship

Millennial Mortgages

Financial services are growing up alongside the New Adults. According to digital real estate marketplace Zillow, millennials now make up 56% of first-time homebuyers. Zillow offers a tool for millennials that makes it easy to compare home budgeting to monthly rent. In a nod towards millennial multiculturalism, the website is also available in Mandarin and Spanish.

In May 2017, Chase Bank introduced a mortgage rewards program for Chase Sapphire cardholders, half of whom are millennials. Customers approved for a mortgage through Chase earned 100,000 rewards points. The UK's Atom Bank now offers digital-only mortgages. And during July 2017, millennial finance company SoFi gave anyone who took out a mortgage a free month of avocado toast.

Some financial brands are eyeing millennial retirement planning. Bucking another stereotype, millennials tend to save more for their retirement than Generation X. According to the Transamerica Center for Retirement Studies, millennials started saving at a median age of 22, while Gen X waited until a median age of 30. A majority of both age groups say they don't know as much as they should about reaching their retirement goals, creating a huge opportunity for financial brands to provide education and guidance.

“We see helping our customers, and the millennial generation in particular, plan for the future as an opportunity to transform the banking industry from a simple means to save money to a trusted resource in helping them reach their financial goals,” said Diane Morais, CEO and president of Ally Bank, in a press release. In December 2016, Ally added new tools to guide users through different life stages, including planning for retirement. “It's important to offer a suite of competitive products,” said Morais, “but equally as critical that our customers understand which product is best suited for their particular life stage and needs at a point in time.”

Key takeaways

Today's New Adults face a financial services industry that is woefully behind at adapting to their demands.

THE WEALTH TRANSFER

Expect Xennials to make a huge impact on the financial services sector moving forward—they're set to inherit \$30 trillion in assets from the boomer generation.

POST-GENERATION RENT

Don't believe the stereotypes. Emerging adults are budding investors, active retirement savers, and the next generation of homeowners.

A FRACTURED LANDSCAPE

Traditional industry players have been slow to respond to the needs of today's young adults. Innovative brands can find pockets of opportunity nearly everywhere that the adult lifestyle has changed.

MEDIA MATTERS

Today's New Adults seek guidance as they navigate financial adulthood. According to SONAR™, 75% of US 30-45-year-olds believe expert advice is necessary to plan for retirement, versus 64% of those aged over 45. Brands who can provide sharp, authentic content will find a hungry—and growing—audience.

BANK BRANDING

The generation that came of age in the Great Recession carries a natural distrust for banks. Financial players should focus on consumer trust above all.

Media



Media

Born at the height of alternative culture, today's New Adults grew up with media playing a central role in their identity. They navigated both generation X and millennial subcultures, straddling trends from the '80s and '90s: grunge, AOL, Nintendo, Fresh Prince of Bel-Air, cult hits like My So-Called Life, The O.C., The Oregon Trail. Does today's media offer the same options?

“This generation is the first generation to grow old without checking out,” says Emilie McMeekan, founder of new media venture The Midult, a digital community for women aged 35 to 55. “So there has to be a shift. Traditional media hasn't caught up with that.”

We've grown up digitally literate and hyper-connected, and the messages that brands are sending us don't ring true. They're not uniquely focused on us, or targeted at us.”

While media spends much of its efforts on the young, buzzy millennial market, the BuzzFeed approach to news doesn't work for everyone. Older millennials, as well as generation X, are too quickly left out of the narrative, or shunted into traditional middle-aged channels: investment news, stilted sitcoms, mommy blogs.

Today's emerging adults still very much see themselves as looped into the conversation, and they expect their content to respond accordingly. Defying past expectations of adulthood, they want to take on adult responsibilities without the clichés. Brands can engage today's new adult consumers with content that is true to their life stages, without losing its sense of humor or edge.

New Adult Programming

Networks are watching the Xennial demographic closely, particularly as America's largest adult demographic comes of age in the era of cord-cutting. Will the heads of household in the next generation extend the upheaval in the cable industry?

Younger, a TV Land show that centers on a 40-something woman's attempts to pass for 26, epitomizes the New Adult mindset: aging, but by no means ready to be ignored. Debuting in 2015, *Younger* was the keystone of TV Land's attempt to retool its programming for an audience of "vibrant, working adults who grew up on MTV and edgier shows," executive vice-president of marketing and creative Kim Rosen told *Adweek*.

"They demand and deserve a brand that is more connected to where they are today."

"I worked at Random House for three years," says Liza Miller, a character in *Younger*'s pilot episode. "I quit to raise my child... I know I've been out of play for a while, but I am a much smarter, more capable person today than I was 15 years ago. I'm ready to pick up where I left off." *Younger* clearly found its stride among viewers: In its first season, ratings jumped 73% among adults aged 25-54 and 118% among women aged 25-54, according to *Adweek*.

Today's emerging adults are a complex, yet covetable, demographic. The children of baby boomers but the parents of generation Z, millennial and generation X parents wield considerable influence on either side of the generational divide. And with a projected \$1.4 trillion in spending by 2020, according to an Accenture study, they make a compelling demographic for advertisers as well.

In recent years, a slew of programming has launched that redefines adulthood. *Friends From College*, a Netflix sitcom that debuted in July 2017, shows a group of friends 20 years after college. At 40, the characters are still struggling to navigate career and family, a refreshing departure from family-centered programming. Shows such as *Divorce* (2016), *This Is Us* (2016), and *Big Little Lies* (2017) feature protagonists in their 30s or 40s navigating complex issues and subverting the clichés of adulthood.

Older millennials are particularly valuable media consumers because they are entering adulthood at a fraught time for the media industry, amid a massive shift away from traditional broadband cable towards a range of alternatives. In the United Kingdom, 52% of 30-45-year-olds have a cable TV subscription, compared to 48% of 20-29-year-olds and 40% of 46-55-year-olds, according to a SONAR™ survey.



As millennials move into adulthood and start having children, they not only watch more television, but watch more live programming than their counterparts who live in someone else's home or in their own home without children.

"Millennials who are starting a family have greater multichannel penetration than the 'On Their Own' group (79% vs. 72%) and otherwise are more likely to have a working antenna (14% vs. 12%)," says Nielsen's "Total Audience" report for Q4 2015. "They also spend the most time at home of the three life stage groups. These factors mean that the 'Starting a Family' group watches the most live TV (three hours and 16 minutes per day) and makes the greatest total use of TV screen (four hours and 40 minutes)."

When *Stranger Things* debuted in the summer of 2016, it rocketed its way up to the third most watched Netflix releases, netting 14.4 million views in its first 35 days, according to Business Insider.

The show combined '80s nostalgia with cutting-edge pop culture references, making it an easy sell to mid-generation adults. "*Stranger Things*, it could be argued, sits in a sweet spot that commingles younger gen Xers and older members of gen Y," wrote *Variety* critic Oriana Schwindt. *Landline*, a 2017 movie starring Jenny Slate, plays on a similar nostalgia. Set in 1995, the movie's cross-generational cast holds appeal for viewers who experienced the decade at various ages.



New Adult Media

How does a publisher go about targeting content to today's New Adults? Those that have tried have found them a particularly diverse group. Some are embracing parenthood, while others emphatically are not.

The same applies to marriage. Some are mid-career professionals, while others are just beginning to crack the job market.

“Time Inc. does not look at millennials as monolithic,” Deborah Marquardt, general manager of Time Inc.’s Style Network, told Digiday in February 2017. “There’s a difference between under 24 and over 24.” Due to its non-monolithic strategy, Time Inc. now owns a series of Xennial platforms that range from Zooey Deschanel’s HelloGiggles, a “positive community for women,” to Motto, a self-help site oriented around the news and divided into sections titled Work, Play and Live.

Amid the fractured media landscape, one common emerging thread is that members of this demographic don’t want to be defined solely by their life stage. They might be entering adulthood, but they still have high standards for content and entertainment. New publications are finding success with edge, a blend of pop culture and service, and an irreverence for anything associated with boomers, or regarded as staid.



“Any Marketer’s Obsession”

In 2016, Emilie McMeekan and fellow former journalist Annabel Rivkin noticed a blind spot in the media. Women 35 and older were still very attuned to culture, but were ignored by new websites that focused on millennials. Meanwhile, traditional women’s media limited their scope to mothers, working women, or other tropes. The result was The Midult, launched in 2016 to cover news, travel, family, sex and relationships, and everything in between.

“We are just as likely to be talking about the latest Justin Bieber single as we are to be talking about whether we’d like to buy a new sofa,” says McMeekan. “We grew up with hip hop and the internet.

I think there’s no limit to the conversations that you can have with women these days, and I think the media is slow to catch up. The idea that there’s just one women to market to—the ‘busy working woman,’ the ‘busy working mother’—that just isn’t true any more.”

These days, The Midult is in good company. Covey Club, from former *More* magazine editor-in-chief Lesley Jane Seymour, is a membership-only platform launched in 2017 for women who “feel they are just beginning of the best phase of their lives.” TueNight, billed as “grown-up lady storytelling,” is a website that’s redefining middle age for a generation that “doesn’t have a roadmap, but is looking to invent their own.” And publications such as Lenny Letter or The Gentlewoman blend savvy takes on news with elegant branding for millennial platforms that feel refreshingly mature.

The advertising industry is also waking up to the power of this demographic. In January 2017, Gary Vaynerchuk’s VaynerMedia bought PureWow, a lifestyle site for women in their late 20s to early 40s.

“PureWow owns the sweet spot when it comes to the American consumer market,” Vaynerchuk wrote in *Inc.* “Where I think a lot of other media properties skew younger or older, PureWow has an audience with the classic 28-55-year-old woman. This ‘upper millennial mom’ is always going to be an unbelievably important decision-maker on how things are purchased and consumed. It should be any marketer’s obsession and something I’ll be interested in until the day I die.” According to Vaynerchuk, the site had \$100 million in revenue in 2016.

Some publications are also homing in on masculinity, eschewing boomer-era stereotypes to reach a new generation of adult men. MEL Magazine, a site backed by Dollar Shave Club, launched in 2015 with a combination of how-to, relationship advice, pop culture analysis and more. “MEL is for men who measure themselves by something other than (or at the very least, in addition to) their interests in sports cars, barrel-aged Scotch and designer socks,” wrote editor-in-chief Josh Schollmeyer in the publication’s debut.

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the address bar displaying 'themidult.com/life/'. The page header features the title 'THE MIDULT™' and the subtitle 'WELCOME TO MIDULthood'. A navigation bar includes links for 'NEWS', 'LIFE', 'TALK', and a search function. The main content area is a grid of four article thumbnails, each with a 'LIFE' category tag and a title. To the right, there is a newsletter sign-up form with a 'HURRAH!' button, and a 'TALK' section with a 'LOG IN' button. Below the 'TALK' section, there is a snippet of an article titled 'LOOK WHO'S TALKING...'.


Life with The Midult x
themidult.com/life/

THE MIDULT™


WELCOME TO MIDULthood

LOG IN / R

NEWS LIFE TALK SEARCH... Q



LIFE
10 THINGS THESE MOVIE SOUNDTRACKS MIGHT REMIND YOU OF



LIFE
IT'S THE AGE OF THE SOLO MOTHER

WANT THE MIDULT TO COME TO YOU?
SIGN UP FOR NEWSLETTERS

- DAILY NEWSLETTER
- WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

Email address

HURRAH!

TALK

Is there something you want to say?

LOG IN

LOOK WHO'S TALKING...

HAVE YOU EVER FELT THE SNAP?
SORRY, SORRY, SORRY. AND THEN SUDDENLY, NOT SORRY.

Not Your Parent's Parenting Blog

Many Xennials are squaring up to perhaps the most daunting “adulting” task of all: parenting. And while parents of all generations face similar challenges, today's emerging adults are redefining parenthood from the bottom up.

“Every new birth today is to a millennial,” says Simon Isaacs, co-founder and chief content officer of parenting site Fatherly. “This is a generation of people who think very differently about gender norms. It's a generation of people who have equal interest in parenting, as well as at work.”

Isaacs saw an opportunity to create a parenting site that reflected the voices of millennial fathers.

Today's fathers are overwhelmingly shouldering more parenting responsibilities than in previous generations. According to the Pew Research Center, the average time fathers spend on childcare has tripled since 1965. Yet much of today's parenting content remains mommy-centric.

Beyond simply addressing fatherhood, there is an audience of fathers hungry for content beyond just parenting. In the United Kingdom, *Father's Quarterly* is a stylish take on the men's magazine that offers lifestyle and entertainment news alongside parenting tips. The print magazine features rich fashion spreads and dad-centric photography from around the world.

“Our guys still want to maintain their identity,” Isaacs says. “They're still watching great shows. They're still interested in going to cool places. Rather than going to that family-friendly resort, they want to go to the cool place, and they want to bring their kids with them. They want to go to the beer garden, but they want that beer garden to have a kid's area with a playset in it.”

Fatherly has clearly struck a nerve with its demographic. In 2015, the website had 1.9 billion views on its Facebook videos alone. Brand partners have also seen a lift. An advertisement for the construction-themed amusement park Diggerland USA, using Fatherly's “Win Parenting” tagline, currently has more than 100 million views on Facebook.

While today's fathers are shouldering a higher involvement, today's millennial mothers are also pushing back against stereotypes. Millennial moms similarly seek content that is in touch with both their age and their life stage: informative yet on-the-go, authentic but with a touch of irreverence.

Beth Bentley, founder of Young Gums, an online community centered around clean eating for babies, says that “sometimes the general vibe of the writing” of parenting blogs “is just a little bit lacking in realness, or feels a bit patronizing. I set out to fill the void with an honest and trustworthy platform that’s built for real, connected, creative modern parents.

That extends from the freshness and modernity of the recipes themselves, through to the visual look, tone of voice, and sense of humor.”

Young Gums’ tongue-in-cheek branding advertises “Baby Food with Attitude,” with recipe copy that reads “WTF Do I Do?”—modern in tone and in its acknowledgement that mothers are still very much individuals beyond motherhood. Today, websites such as Scary Mommy embrace the idea that moms don’t have to be perfect, with movies and TV like *Bad Moms* (2016), *Catastrophe* (2015) and Bravo’s *Odd Mom Out* (2015) challenging the housewife trope of parenting.





Generation DIY

According to research from Google, 86% of millennial dads use YouTube for guidance on parenting topics, such as preparing a meal or assembling a product. Three in four millennials are open to brand content when seeking video guidance on parenting topics, which 72% say they use to inform their purchases. In 2016, Amex became the first brand to sponsor BuzzFeed's Nifty channel, a DIY channel in the same vein as Tasty.

“We’re aiming at an older millennial target, and BuzzFeed is just a wonderful fit for that audience,” Joe Bihlmier, vice president of global media for American Express, told *Adweek*. “One of the reasons we’re looking to work with them is that we know from our targeting work that millennials look for utility and experience and simplicity, and I think what’s great about this partnership is that we’re delivering on that.”

Key takeaways

Today's New Adults are the most plugged-in, media literate generation ever to hit adulthood. How can the media keep up?

CORD CUTTERS?

In the age of streaming, emerging adults are a valuable demographic for networks. New programming that resonates authentically can help to retain them.

THE NEW "ADULT"

Avoid outdated ideas of adulthood. Today's emerging adults want to take on the responsibilities of adulthood, without the clichés of the past.

GROWING UP—NOT CHECKING OUT

Today's adults stay looped-in to pop culture well after their youth. Brands can respond with content that retains relevance and edge.

GENERATION DIY

Brands can capitalize on this generation's do-it-yourself ethos with practical, how-to guides relevant to new adult milestones.

PARENT BLOGS

Millennial and generation X parents are focused on good parenting, while still wanting to break gendered stereotypes and to maintain their own passion and identity. Brands can capitalize on their mindset by creating content that is refreshing and authentic, with a tone that reads as real to themselves and their kids.



Travel



Travel

Think all festivals are a millennial paradise? Think again. In 2015, the median age of Burning Man attendees was 33 to 34, according to the festival's own internal census. Today, it's more common than ever to see parents with young children at Glastonbury, Coachella, or any number of massive festivals.

“Putting big earphones on kids and taking them to music festivals, all that is the current generation continuing the lifestyle that they had in their 20s into their 30s and 40s,” says Mark Potts, head of insights at Mindshare North America. “Because they can. Because they’re used to it.”

The generation that popularized the gap year is bringing its wanderlust into adulthood. Rather than settle down into cruise lines and kid-friendly resorts, many still view travel as a central part of their identity, one that provides enrichment and personal development. As adults, their approach to travel represents a total departure from what the industry has previously known.

Jack Ezon, president of luxury travel agency Ovation Vacations, says millennials “take their downtime really seriously. They’re working to live, not living to work. So this is their ‘live.’ That’s more important than anything. They want to do it right.”

The gap-year generation is also the generation that fuels the experience economy. Three in four millennials would rather spend money on desirable experiences than objects, according to Eventbrite—a statistic that may explain why, according to the United Nations World Tourism Organization, global tourism revenue generated by millennials has increased by 30% since 2007. Millennials travel 32% and 44% more than the average gen Xer and boomer, according to the “How America Travels” survey by the American Society of Travel Agents. Late millennials are pushing back on milestones such as mortgages and children, leaving more flexibility to travel the globe at all ages.

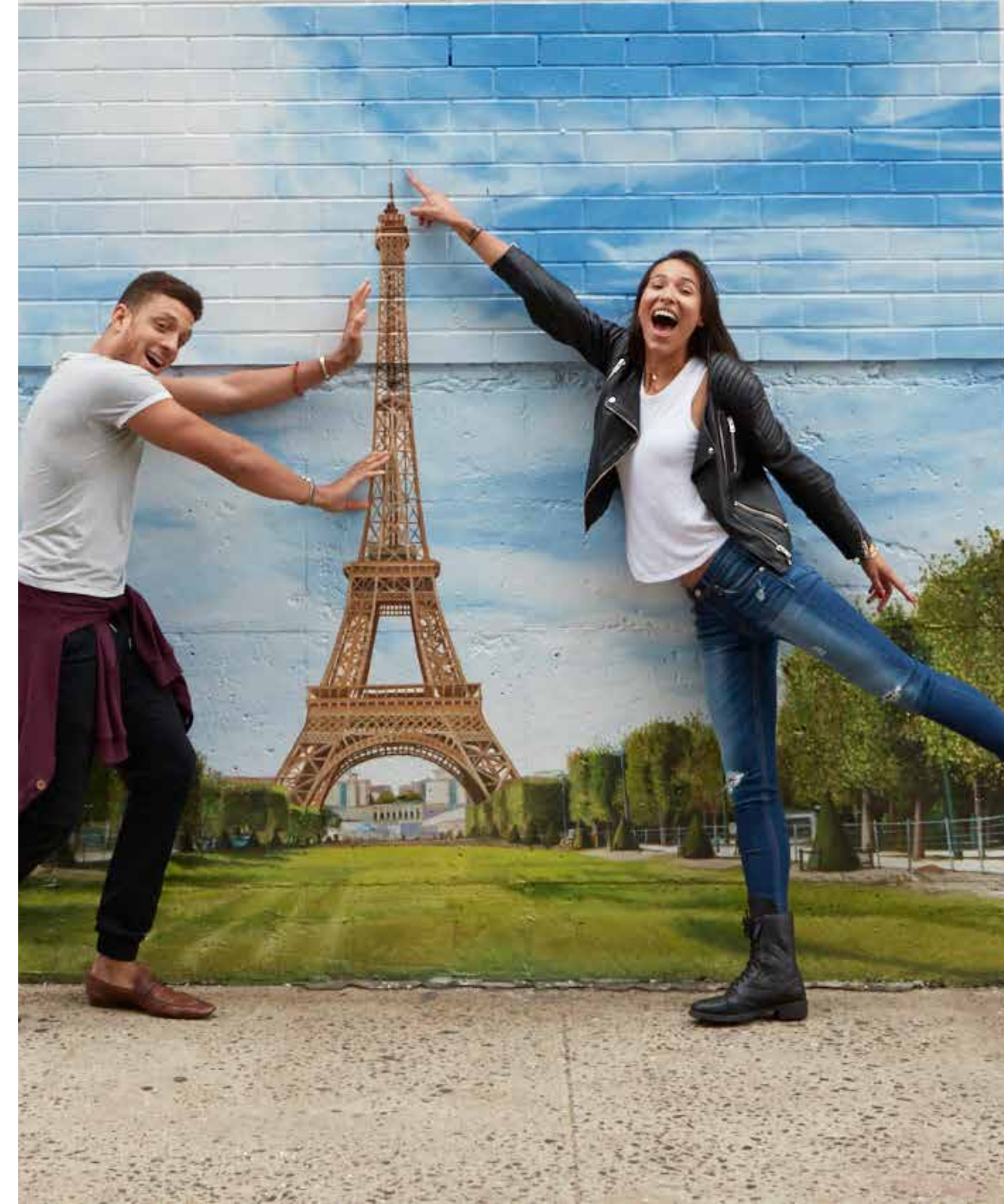
“At some point we need to travel because we want to see something else,” says travel consultant and blogger Aurélie Krau. “We just want to hit reboot and to go away to find ourselves in a different environment.”

Frequent Fliers

According to SONAR™, J. Walter Thompson's proprietary consumer research tool, US 30-45-year-olds are the most likely to be frequent fliers, with 18% averaging five or more trips per year. Around one in ten (11%) travel for business more than five times a year, versus just 6% of 20-29-year-olds and 1% of those aged 45-plus. In the United Kingdom, 30-45-year-olds are the most likely to travel regularly, with 35% traveling at least one or two times per year, versus 34% of 20-29-year-olds and 17% of people older than 45.

Travel is so important to today's young adults that world travelers are significantly more likely to be swiped right on dating apps, claims Delta Air Lines, which launched the #DeltaDatingWall in Brooklyn in June 2017, in partnership with Tinder. The wall features paintings of international locations, which viewers can use to snap a photo for their dating profiles. According to Delta, one in three singles rank travel as a top priority for 2017.

“Our research shows that airline loyalty begins early in one's career, so we want to meet millennials' needs and expectations and deliver an exceptional customer experience early on,” says Amy Harry, general manager of brand communications at Delta. In June, Delta also created the Delta Launchpad event series in partnership with Vice Media. It featured workshops, musical performances and movie screenings for millennial entrepreneurs. “Our partnership with Vice Media is a part of our ongoing strategy to engage the next generation of travelers, while also delivering on our brand promise of enabling the pursuit of opportunity,” Harris adds.



“Understanding that millennial—and other—travelers are looking for more out of their relationships with brands, we not only want to deliver an exceptional experience in travel, but also want to empower this group to pursue their passions by connecting them with relevant, educational tools.”

Delta scored with this demographic. According to SONAR™, 28% of 30-45-year-olds who are members of a frequent flier program choose Delta, the highest percentage of any airline. It shows how brands can position themselves to take advantage of the rising waves of millennial business travelers, who will rapidly replace boomers in the workplace over the next decade. By 2020, millennials are expected to account for nearly 50% of total spending on business flights, according to Boston Consulting Group. Boomers, by contrast, will see a sharp decline by 2025.



Millennial Goes Upscale

Though millennials have a reputation as budget-conscious travelers, this generation is rapidly shedding its gap-year lifestyle. The next generation of adults will soon command serious disposable income: \$1.4 trillion in annual spending in the US alone by 2020, according to Accenture. Millennials' tastes are expected to evolve beyond hostel hopping and budget flights. The question is: can the travel industry grow up with them?

Some brands are beginning to combine millennial aesthetics with upscale offerings. In Europe, U by Uniworld will launch in 2018 as the “first line geared towards millennial cruisers.”

At \$250 per day, the Instagram-worthy experience is certainly not a discount line. The ships will feature nightclubs, rooftop lounges, yoga studios and bars offering craft coffees—exclusively for travelers under the age of 45.

Soon, millennials will even have their own upscale airline. Joon by Air France, launching in 2018, is designed as a “lifestyle brand,” insisting in a statement that “Joon will not be a low-cost airline.” Focused on design and digital technology, Joon will have flight attendants in hip, chic attire. The goal is to offer an “offbeat experience to those who believe travel extends beyond the aircraft.”

Hotels are also upgrading their millennial-specific offerings. Hyatt debuted Hyatt Centric in 2015, an upscale lifestyle brand designed for millennial travelers. Hyatt Centric rooms feature unique artworks and furniture that reflects their location. The brand intends to double its portfolio by 2019.



Airbnb Grows Up

No platform has been more pioneering in using technology to disrupt the travel experience than Airbnb. Yet today, even the millennials' favorite travel app is attempting to reposition as a more professional, buttoned-up travel service.

Airbnb is planning to go after business travelers with BTR, its Business Travel Ready tool, according to Bloomberg. To qualify, listings need to offer certain standardized amenities, such as wifi and a check-in desk. "As millennials advance in the workforce, we're seeing incredible growth," David Holyoke, head of Airbnb's business travel division, told Bloomberg. "These young businesspeople want to feel at home on the road."

Airbnb is also positioning itself as a thought leadership platform, evolving beyond a travel site to a professional network. Since 2016, the company has hosted the Airbnb Open, a gathering for hosts it refers to as "a community-powered festival of travel and hospitality." The event features keynote speeches from luminaries that include Ashton Kutcher, as well as senior staff members. Attendees can also participate in workshops with titles such as "Expand your Business" or "Business Travel Roundtable."

At November 2016's Airbnb Open in Los Angeles, the company launched the next phase of its empire: Airbnb Trips, which allow hosts to offer experiences, instead of properties. "You no longer have to follow the maps, wait in the lines, and take photos of all the same sights," says the Airbnb Trips website. "Now, you can access unique experiences, incredible homes, and local favorites—all from one app."

With its latest pivots, Airbnb appears to have its finger on the pulse of a zeitgeist that may have started with millennials, but now extends through culture.

"It doesn't matter if you're 20 or you're 50," says Ezon. "You're on your phone all day, looking things up. You want instant gratification. Everybody's looking for experiential travel now, not just kids in their mid-20s. People in their 50s, or even their 60s, want more adventure and more immersion. They don't want to feel like a tourist."

High-Tech Travel

Xennials demand a plugged-in existence, even on the road. Millennials book more travel on mobile than any other age group, according to research from travel industry site Skift, which says 30% of 25-34-year-olds used an app to book in the last year. Emerging brands are showing that there are plenty of opportunities for the travel industry to brush up on its tech credentials, creating products that disrupt the travel experience along the journey.

Josh Udashkin, a 33-year-old former lawyer and Aldo executive, sought a better travel experience for his frequent business travel. In 2016, he launched smart luggage company Raden, which he calls “the next brand of the future for people of my generation.” Raden suitcases can charge phones, weigh themselves, and sync to a Raden app for geolocation. The suitcases sell for \$295 for a carry-on, or \$395 for the full size. Today, Raden has competition including Bluesmart and Away.



Family Planning

Family travel for New Adults also presents huge opportunity for travel brands. Young parents are likely to include their children in planning travel. In MMGY's 2017 "Portrait of the American Traveler" survey, 85% of millennial parents say children influence the daily activities of their vacation, and two thirds say children help decide which hotel the family books.

Today's adults are unwilling to press "pause" on their travel habits when they start a family. "I think that idea of 'just because you have kids doesn't mean life has to be over' goes hand-in-hand with the fact that you've got a lot of people having kids later in life," says Caroline Keylock, a 40-year-old strategic consultant who also runs the global freelancing blog Masters of Many. "They've already been quite independent, probably have a decent amount of money, already love travel, so the idea that all of that is just going out the window when you have a child is being questioned."

Like other sectors of travel, the trend is increasingly towards unique experiences. According to SONAR™, US 30-45-year-olds are the most likely to want a family-friendly trip that lets them see lesser-known destinations (84% versus 80% of 20-29-year-olds and 73% of over-45s). "The family trip that used to be going to a beach in the Bahamas is now trekking through New Zealand," says Ezon. "Or doing a philanthropic experience in Africa. People want to give that eye-opening touch to their kids."

Key takeaways

Experience-driven, unencumbered and always ready for novelty: the world's youngest adults are perfectly positioned to send ripples through the travel industry.

ADULT WANDERLUST

The gap year generation is carrying its wanderlust into adulthood. Travel still represents a key to identity and development—not just an escape.

THE NEW BUSINESS TRAVEL

Experience is everything. Today, even business travelers crave a unique or authentic stay on the road. In fact, for some, travel is the business.

FAMILY MATTERS

Don't overlook young parents—who prefer to include their children in the types of experience they value, versus sticking to a supposedly kid-friendly resort.

TRAVEL TECH

There is plenty of room in the travel sector to provide a more plugged-in experience. Airbnb shows how smart travel tech can pivot to adapt to new trends.

MILLENNIAL EQUALS UPSCALE

Millennials will soon command serious adult income. Travel brands should ensure that their upscale offerings are millennial-friendly as well.



Brand

Futures



Brand Futures

Toupee and hipster are two words that don't typically go together, but Quiff & Co. aims to change that. Launched in 2015, its website proudly proclaims that "Hair is Back" over an image of a young, stylish man with tattoos and a full beard. The company's branding is clean and neutral, with an aesthetic that would not look out of place among trendy Instagrammers.

A hip, trendy hair-loss brand? It's just another indicator of how different adulthood looks today, compared to previous generations. Xennial consumers are entering new life stages. As they do, they're bringing new attitudes that will reshape nearly all consumer sectors.



DID YOU KNOW?
40%
OF MEN
AGED 16-28
SUFFER WITH
**HAIR
LOSS**
Quiff™

New Adult Values

Our case studies find that today's New Adults have sustainability in mind as they reject the consumerism of previous generations. "I am definitely averse to ostentatious and visible luxury and consumerism," one 35-year-old entrepreneur tells us. "It's about experience." Another 32-year-old says: "I like brands with a point of view—brands that have noticed something about what consumers need or want, and brands with principles, ethics and a way of doing things that make the world a better place."

Industries such as luxury and retail, which rely heavily on overt consumerism, are changing their messaging to adapt to this new mindset. In New York, Vetements launched an art installation in its Fifth Avenue storefront. It comprises a window full of clothes—donations from employees, as well as out-of-stock merchandise—that visually portrays excess consumption. Consignment is also having a moment, with luxury resale site Vestiaire Collective expanding its offerings to include a vintage selection in May 2017, featuring gen X icon Chloe Sevigny.

Wellness is another core zeitgeist value shaping retail and luxury. In May 2017, Saks Fifth Avenue unveiled the Wellery, a chic retail destination that married the millennial fixation on wellness with Saks' high-end sensibility. The concept shop, open through October, includes trendy apparel brands like Alala and Beyond Yoga, alongside edgy fitness pop-ups, such as ConBody, a boot camp that benefits prison reform.

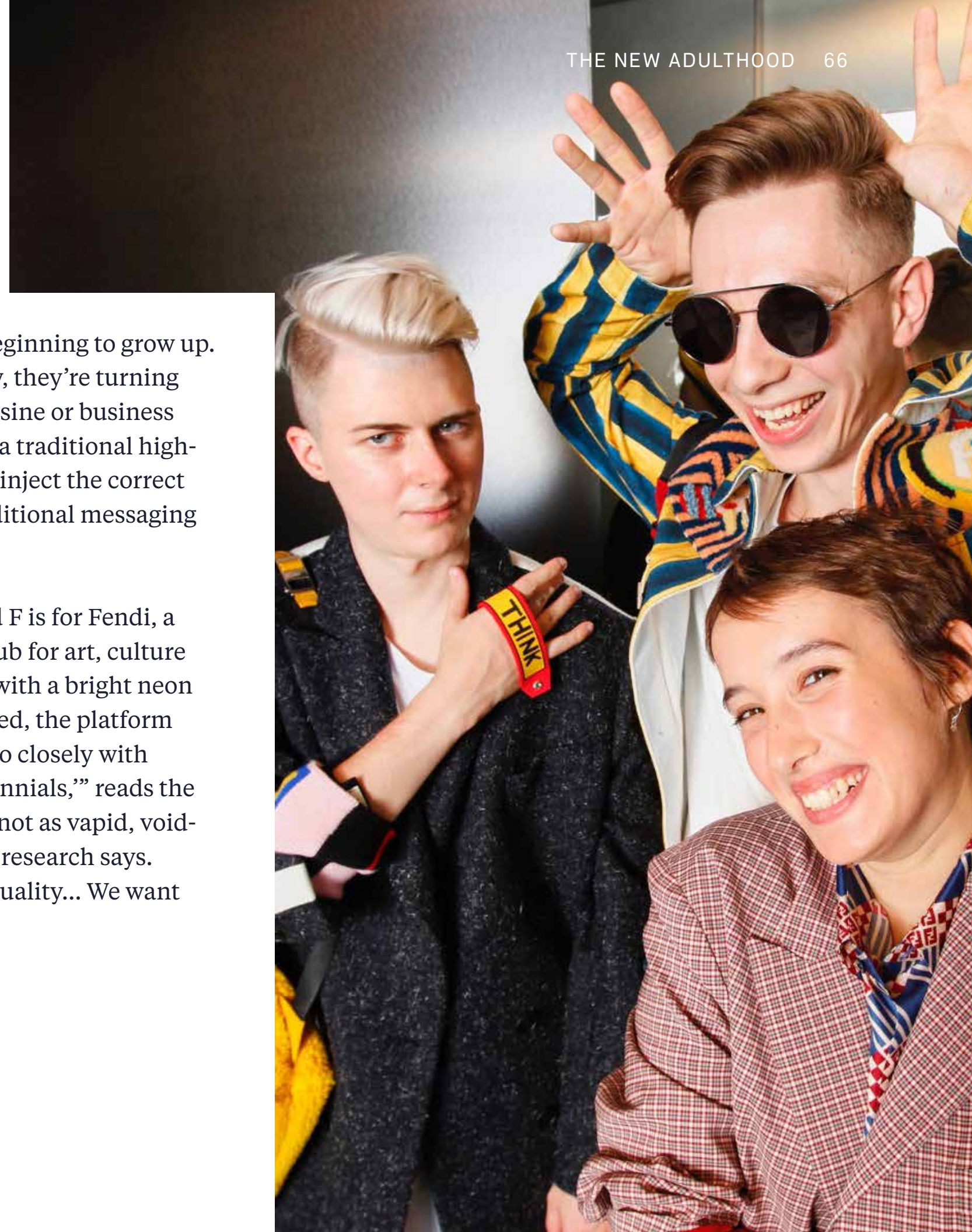
New Adult values are just one example of the changes underway in major consumer sectors. While some existing brands are refining their messaging for an audience that's grown more mature, others are pivoting to address older millennials and younger gen X consumers for the first time, meeting the New Adults head-on. Both are necessary to reach a demographic that is likely to control \$1.4 trillion in spending by 2020, according to Accenture.

Luxury Redefined

In 2017, the founder of Soho House opened The Ned, an ambitious five-star hotel set in London's former Midland Bank headquarters building, in partnership with Andrew Zoller of The Sydell Group. Though the club features some classic hipster trappings—a speakeasy-style bar, buzzy cuisine—it has a decidedly more buttoned-up feel. The property is rooted in traditional luxury, with a clientele that's equally suit-and-tie and creative. "I've done all my art-house movies," Nick Jones, founder of Soho House, told City AM. "This is my chance to do a blockbuster."

Like Soho House, millennials are beginning to grow up. As they reach professional maturity, they're turning a hipster lens on sectors such as cuisine or business travel, but still seeking elements of a traditional high-end experience. Can luxury brands inject the correct dose of millennial attitude into traditional messaging and products?

In February of 2017, Fendi launched F is for Fendi, a new digital platform and content hub for art, culture and influencers. Though designed with a bright neon aesthetic and an Instagram-style feed, the platform was careful not to associate itself too closely with youth. "Please stop calling us 'millennials,'" reads the platform's manifesto. "We're really not as vapid, void-filled and devoid of meaning as the research says. We deserve authenticity. We want quality... We want something that's ours."





As millennials shed their unfavorable stereotypes, it's time for the luxury industry to recognize them as the New Adults they are. A 2016 report from the Shullman Research Center found stark differences between younger millennials (aged 18-24) and older millennials (aged 30-34). Older millennials, who are more likely to be luxury consumers, typically have more in common with their gen X counterparts. They have higher personal incomes, and more likely to be concerned about family and personal health.

“One would think that gen X is a luxury marketer’s dream: affluent, willing to spend on travel for pleasure and on luxury products, loyal to their brands, health-conscious, highly educated, consumers of both traditional media and the internet,” writes strategist Ana Andjelic in *Luxury Daily*. While younger millennials might be the future of luxury, “gen X is its present, and this demographic group is the easy, if not obvious, answer to the luxury brands’ challenge of closing the gap between their maturing luxury demographic and the younger one.”



For evidence of how the luxury industry is incorporating Xennial values, look no further than the world's fashion weeks. The emerging luxury consumer grew up in an on-demand world, which explains why designers such as Rebecca Minkoff are using new technology to make these exclusive events more accessible. Recently, Minkoff live-streamed her collections in 360-degree virtual reality, in partnership with Zeekit, an augmented reality app that enables virtual try-ons, and enlisted Instagram influencers to advertise her latest drop.

“I’m, I guess, the eldest of the millennials, so I feel like I grew up in that time and I know what she’s thinking and I am thinking,” Minkoff told CNBC. “It’s the girl that’s going to grow with me but it’s also me going: what was I like when I was 20? What did I aspire to own but couldn’t afford?”



Millennial Retail Evolves

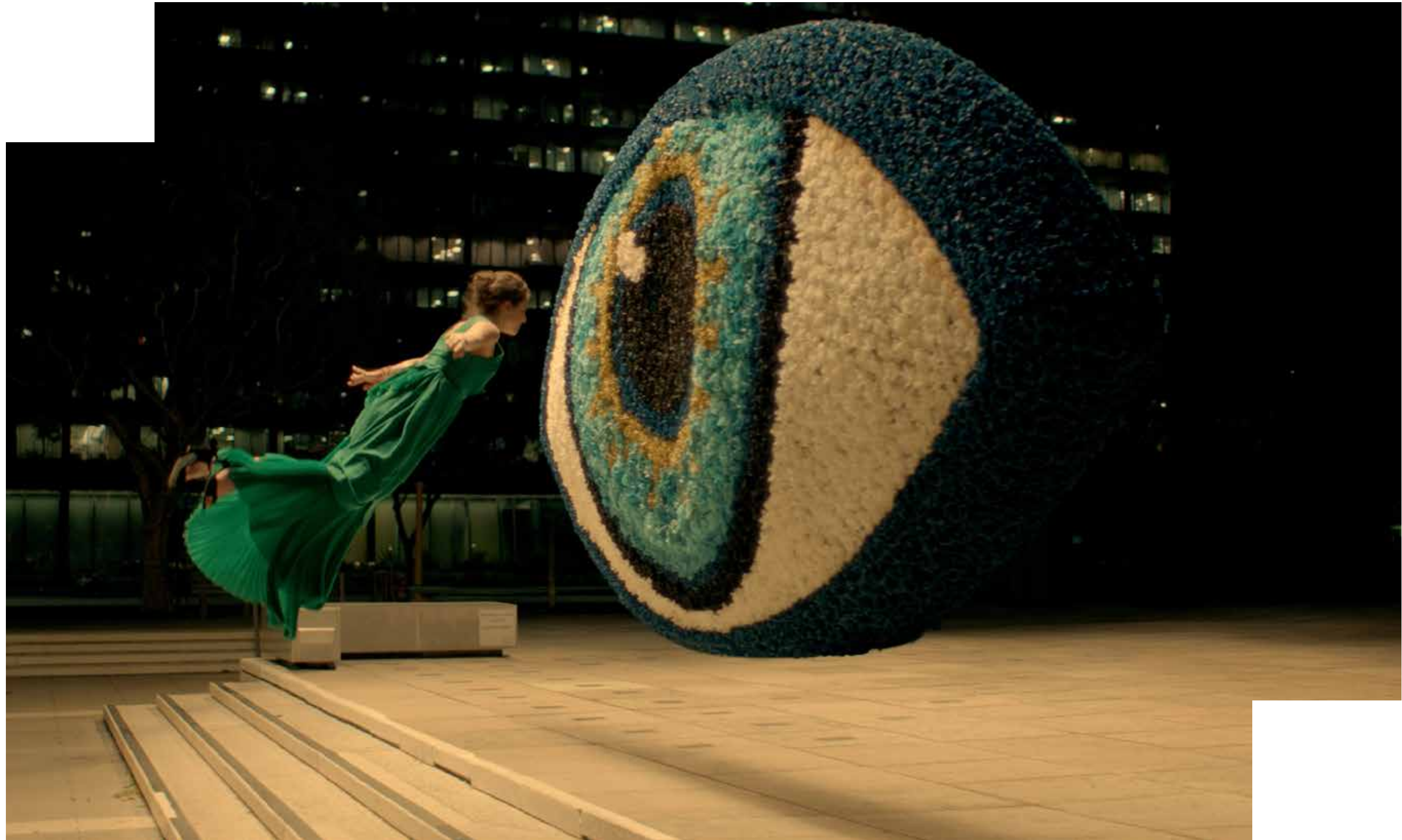
In many ways, Claire is the typical millennial shopper. She uses her smartphone fanatically for both inspiration and for shopping, if it's more convenient. More importantly, she sees fashion as an extension of her identity, and isn't afraid to experiment—even if it means sacrificing the contents of her wallet.

The catch? Claire is closer to 40 than 30 and might traditionally have been defined as middle-aged. She's also a fictional creation, a shorthand created by UK retailer Debenhams to signify its new core audience. "Claire has retained her love for fashion despite what life has thrown at her," Debenhams' marketing director Richard Cristofoli told Campaign. "But she feels the fashion industry is obsessed with youth." In a massive shift for retail, the generation that redefined fashion is now more likely to be found at the office than at the mall. As their core audiences age, formerly millennial brands must also grow up.

Since 2015, Forever 21 has been actively eschewing the 21 in its name through higher-quality materials, pricier brands, and well-placed celebrity representation, including 48-year-old Jennifer Lopez and Charlize Theron, 42. Online vintage retailer ModCloth has undergone a similar rebrand, with a new muted color palate and blog posts such as *From 9 to 5, Our Community Makes It Work*.

In new campaigns, brands are finding other ways to reflect a more mature audience. Under Armour debuted "Unlike Any" in July, featuring an elegant, pared-down aesthetic with a voiceover celebrating "passion and dedication." And a 2016 ad from French fragrance brand Kenzo, directed by Spike Jonze, went viral for its disruptive portrait of a strong, wild female protagonist—an evolved portrayal of its female shoppers that resonates with new Xennial ideas of gender roles.

From millennials through generation X, shoppers today are reluctant to limit their choice of style, retailer, or self-expression based on their age, says Cristofoli. "The democratization of social media means that information is everywhere and, for our consumers, this means they are no longer saying: 'I'm no longer of an age where I should be engaging with certain content.' In the past, they would pigeonhole themselves—but that is no longer the case."



Baby Brands

Parenting brands are also feeling the pressure to adapt. The generation raised by over-involved helicopter parents is rejecting cosseting in favor of a more collaborative approach to family life—one in which they hope to share in many of their interests with their children.

Brands are responding by infusing formerly kid-centric products with adult design sensibilities. Nourish Baby, a high-end New York subscription service for clean baby food, created branding that would appeal equally to children and their design-conscious parents. “The vibrant colors are meant to attract a child’s eye, and the shapes,” explains Nourish founder Marissa Lippert. “But it also attracts the parent, because it is so simple in the design. It harkens back to Matisse, or the 1930s Bauhaus design.”

In July, streetwear platform Hypebeast launched Hypekids, a new site and Instagram account dedicated to showcasing children’s fashion from edgy brands, with the latest trends in footwear, toys and more. Hypekids reflects millennials’ desire to explore their interests alongside their children, rather than carving out separate “kids’ fashion.” In a statement, Hypebeast CEO Kevin Ma says, “our Hypebeast readers, who have become parents, have expressed a desire to share and spread their passion for fashion and youth culture to the next generation.”

After independent research for Kraft Heinz found 74% of moms have sworn in front of their kids, Kraft Macaroni & Cheese created an advertisement for Mother’s Day 2017 that offered kid-friendly alternatives to popular curses. The spot appealed to kids and parents by admitting that millennial moms still retain some of the habits of their youth. Kraft partnered with Melissa Mohr, a historian of swearing, to send the message that “no parent is perfect.”

Although today’s new parents are not uniform, it’s important for brands to recognize some of the trends that cut across them. Children are a larger factor in purchasing decisions than ever before. According to fall 2016 data from Google, three in four millennial parents involve their children in household decisions. And eight in ten millennial parents agree that their child is one of their best friends.



Food and Drink

As millennials take their place on the adult stage, the entire consumer packaged goods industry is rethinking how it might reframe its products for a New Adult audience. Food and drink brands are setting the standards for combining the traditionally hipster aesthetics of millennials with sophisticated new offerings.

Take Big Boss Palm, a UK beverage billed as “the world’s first coconut water soda.” The all-natural, no-sugar-added beverage comes with irreverent branding, like a retro 8-bit aesthetic, and the slogan “Tasty AF.” The brand says “it’s like a deliciously grown-up, clean version of a cream soda. And while it tastes like a naughty soft drink, it really isn’t.”

Traditional products favored by millennials are seeing an evolution in packaging design that speaks to a more refined clientele. In London, Sano’s healthy meals for people on the move are packaged in sleek, colorful grids that represent nutritional data visually. Speaking to Design Week, the studio behind the brand’s identity says it purposely avoided the “bland” branding associated with the healthy food category, such as “greens, browns, pastels and hand-drawn illustration and typography.” Even rosé wine has received the grown-up treatment. Australian studio Band’s work for Jeanneret wines features a minimalist layout inspired by Swiss-Modernist design.



From Athens, the Greek capital, comes Teaphoria, a new kombucha-style drink in sleek, black packaging. Challenging the hippie stereotypes of the past, this kombucha tea is designed as a post-workout pick-me-up, and will be available at selected gyms. Atlas Coffee Club, a coffee subscription that launched in the United States in mid-2015, takes members on a “coffee world tour” with a package of different beans from around the world each month. The idea appeals to the well-traveled millennial, while the \$14 per bag subscription cost signals an adult domestic life.

Though older millennials and younger gen Xers may retain their youthful spirits, their priorities are changing. Young adults are increasingly turning away from alcohol. They’re more concerned with work and children, or they’re simply more conscious of their health. However, they’re not quite old enough to turn their backs on the bar completely.

Enter Seedlip, a non-alcoholic “spirit” distilled from herbs. While the beverage is decidedly teetotal, its flavor profile calls to mind a liquor, while its artistic branding elevates the mocktail experience beyond a typical soda water. “You’ve got a good, long, grapefruit citrus finish,” founder Ben Branson told The Challenger Project. “This is something to sip. It’s not something to gulp down. There’s an adult aspect to this.”





Key takeaways

Retail, luxury, baby, food and drink: How should consumer brands respond as the next generation of buyers comes of age?

VALUES MATTER

New Adults are bringing millennial values into all product categories. They demand sustainability, authenticity, transparency, and increasingly, social impact.

MILLENNIAL, EVOLVED

Brands need to adjust their “millennial lens” to view the demographic as it is today: focused, buttoned-up, mature.

LUXE EXPERIENCES

While co-working still appeals to members of this generation, they’re looking for a more professional take on the concept today—a lesson that can apply to any classically “millennial” experience.

INCLUSIVE PARENTING

Today’s young parents want to extend their own values and interests to their children. Four out of five millennial parents say their child is one of their best friends.

GROWN-UP PACKAGING

Standout examples from the food and drink sector show how brands can repackage traditionally hipster offerings into sophisticated new products.

The New Adulthood:

Case Studies

The New Adulthood: Case Studies

It seems that millennials aren't as homogenous a group as previously suggested. The cohort spans people born from the early 1980s to the early 2000s, so the older clutch of millennials is now well into its thirties, and many have more in common with the youngest members of generation X that came before them than they do with the digital-native teens of generation Z.

As this group becomes bona fide adults, we look at how some prominent members are redefining what maturity means today. Many of our case studies are benchmarking adulthood using a vastly different set of markers to those of previous generations. From family to career to financial standing, today's 30-45-year-olds are reinventing what it means to succeed as an adult.

In many major world cities, buying a house is an unrealistic financial goal. Besides, members of this group don't want to be tied down when they could be tapping into a growing digital economy and living a "location-agnostic" lifestyle.

"I think my generation aspires to have a life that is very free," says Angelina Aucello, a 30-year-old travel blogger. "In my parents' generation, the American dream was getting a great job at a bank on Wall Street...I think my generation is shifting to the dream being freedom."

For some, there's a bigger purpose. "We've been conditioned to think that our own personal lives are the things that are going to bring us success and make us happy," says communications consultant George MacPherson. He believes there has been a fundamental change in that we are now "seeing other people's happiness as a marker of our own success."

We present an in-depth insight into the motivations and values of the New Adults.

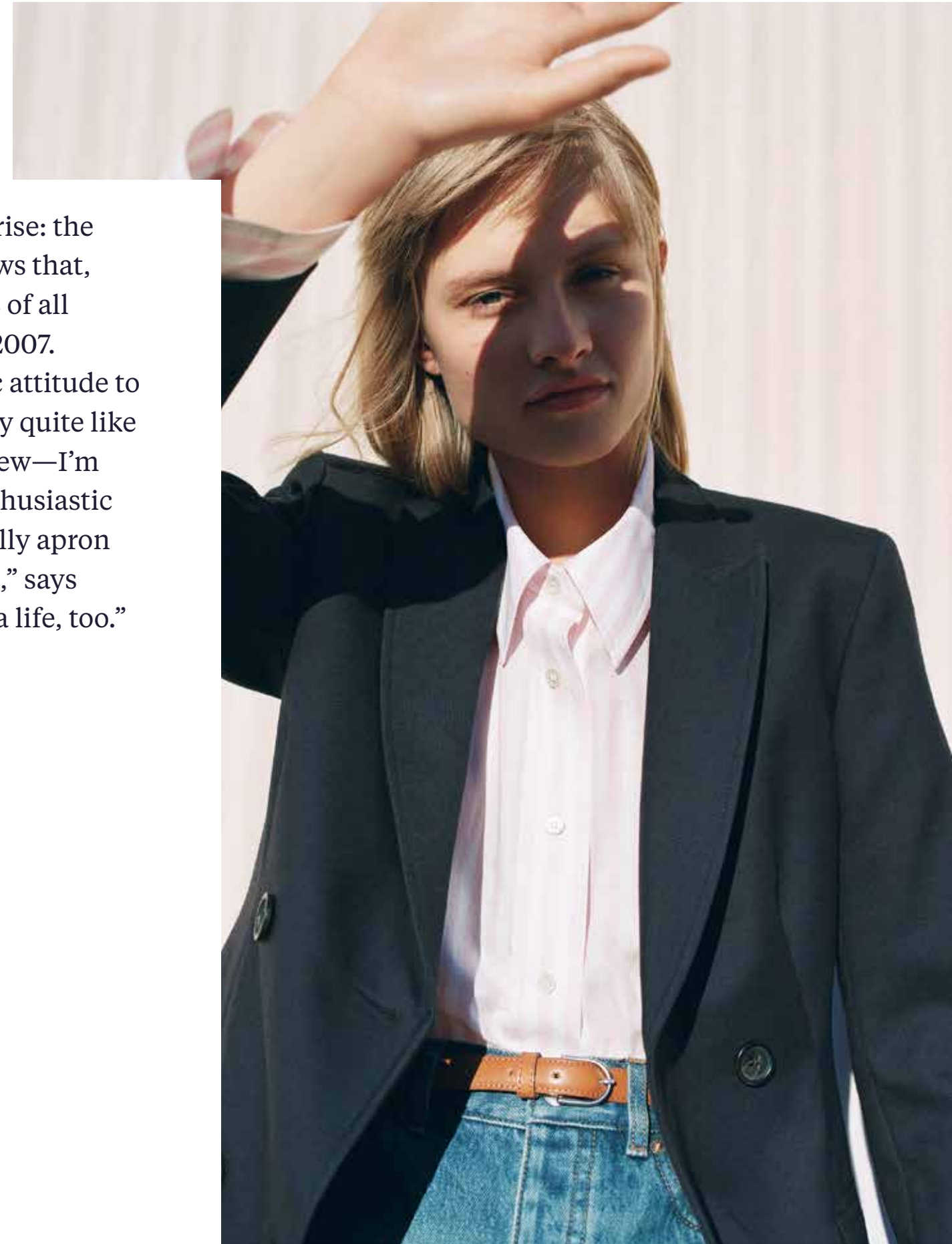
New Life Stages

Today's emerging adults are reshaping their approach to traditional adult milestones. Below are six new life stages that look vastly different from their predecessors.

The Mumpreneur

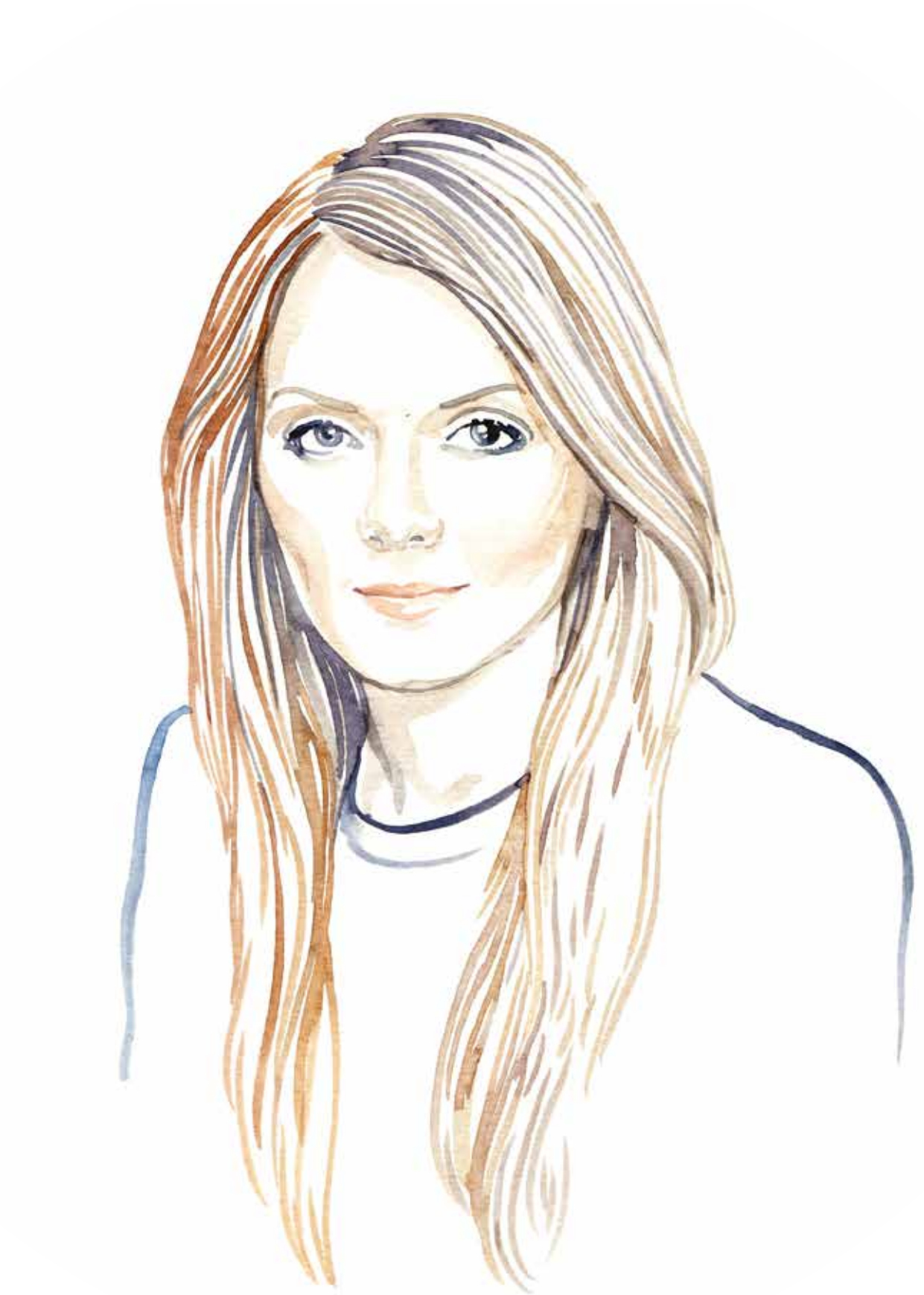
This generation of parents has come of age in a digital world. So when it comes to dealing with the challenges of parenthood, naturally they draw on the “wisdom of the [online] crowd,” as Beth Bentley, founder of children’s healthy food website Young Gums, says. This group also has a digital answer to the difficulties of combining corporate life with children. Many of them are leaving the rat race and setting up their own businesses, embracing the tech platforms that enable entrepreneurship.

Female entrepreneurship is on the rise: the latest available US Census data shows that, in 2012, women owned close to 36% of all businesses—a jump of 26.8% from 2007. They’re also taking a frank, realistic attitude to parenthood. “I think my community quite like my honesty and real-life point of view—I’m positive about motherhood and enthusiastic about cooking, but I’m not... in a frilly apron with nothing better to do than cook,” says Bentley. “I have a full-time job and a life, too.”



Beth Bentley, 32

Beth Bentley is the founder of Young Gums, a website that shares her healthy, home-made recipes for weaning babies. A former creative brand strategist, she will publish a cookbook in spring 2018 with Penguin's Ebury Press. She lives with her husband and daughter in London.



I set up Young Gums as a response to my own experience as a first-time mother trying to navigate the modern, Western baby-feeding landscape. I felt very let down by the baby-weaning advice I received from official sources. It was confused, sketchy, sometimes conflicting and lacking in rigor—I was given advice by people I trusted that was at odds with what the World Health Organization has been advising over and over again for the past 15 years. And as a consumer I felt very disappointed in the nutritional standards I saw in much of the mass-produced commercial baby-food products that lined the shelves of my local supermarkets.

I've always been interested in nutrition, wellness, and cooking. Having worked with brands in the food, fitness, wellness, and parenting sectors for the past decade as a brand strategist, I've seen a lot of market data, consumer insight, product R&D, and sales results, so I already had an understanding of the cultural landscape around food.

I was on maternity leave from my job when I set up the blog, so I had plenty of opportunity to experiment in the kitchen. I think my followers respond to the fact that I make cooking for your family feel like the most creative thing you'll do all day—not a chore or a stress. And I think my community quite like my honesty and real-life point of view—I'm positive about motherhood, but I'm not a simpering mummy in a frilly apron with nothing better to do than cook. I have a full-time job and a life too.

On healthy food for children

Regarding the food our children eat, it's hard not to be skeptical of a food industry that has such seemingly low nutritional standards. Much modern commercial baby food is laden with hidden sugars and cheap carbs, and tends to be based on quite a narrow range of ingredients and flavors, when the truth is that babies can safely eat an incredibly wide selection of tastes.



The barrier is that many parents feel that shop-bought food is better—safer, tastier, more appropriate, and more nutritious. I’m trying to inspire and empower mums and dads that they can do better themselves.

My blog and book’s mission is to inspire and empower new parents to find the time, energy and confidence to cook for their babies and little kids—and have fun in the process. My food is quick, cheap, nutritious, creative, and tastes so good you’ll want to eat it yourself.

On millennial entrepreneurialism

I think we millennials have an in-built entrepreneurial spirit, plus a sense of hope that it is possible to work hard and have fun at the same time. Becoming a parent opened my eyes to a whole new world view and I developed confidence I didn’t know I had. It was a hard decision to step away from the stability (and I’ll

admit, the sense of identity) my hard-won career provided.

I’ve been lucky enough to find a circle of incredibly smart and tenacious parents who are also running their own businesses, and their support helps me greatly. I’m working on issues I’m so passionate about that it gives me a lot of pleasure.

On millennial parenthood

I think current parents really want to put their faith in traditional and mainstream sources of parenting advice, but we can’t help being a bit skeptical. We’re known to be a generation that’s wary of trusting institutions in general—little wonder, when we’ve come of age among so many erosions of public trust, for example in the media, financial institutions, big business and politics: bank collapses, house price crashes, [political] expenses scandals, and the distasteful

defaming of our childhood celebrities. There are scandals in our food system, and a media agenda focused on things like postcode lotteries in our health and education systems. It’s not surprising we have learned to look objectively at things and make our own judgments about how we feel on key issues.

We have so many more sources of information than any previous generation. There’s always been a sense that “it takes a village to raise a child” and now there are so many more ways to build that support system around you and tap into the wisdom of the crowd. When you can access multiple opinions on any parenting query, night or day, at the tap of a thumb, you get used to drawing on a range of sources to form your opinion.



On brands

I have always liked brands with ethics, and since I became a parent, that motivates me even more. I choose sustainable, ethical brands wherever I can. I prioritize spending on good food; simple, ethical cosmetics, beauty products and cleaning products; travel; and entertainment. We have all the Netflixes and Spotifys, a decent indoor-outdoor Sonos system, iPads, big iPhones, a MacBook each, a projector screen and a proper camera. We spend so much time at home (and take so many pictures) that I think it's worth investing in reliable equipment that really works. I also sometimes use Uber-style apps for a naptime manicure or a postnatal yoga class in the garden with another mum friend.

I like brands with a point of view—brands that have noticed something about what consumers need or want, and brands with principles, ethics and a way of doing things that makes the world a better place. I have worked with all sorts of brands throughout my career (as well as running Young Gums and writing the books, I am a brand strategy consultant) and my most interesting and rewarding projects were always with brands with a business ethos around doing well by doing good—prioritizing being good corporate citizens as well as offering a brilliant customer experience.

In the UK, I love what Leon Restaurants and the Detox Kitchen are doing to move the needle on healthy fast food—it's intelligent and unapologetic. I love the respect Waitrose has for its farmers and suppliers. Cos and its new sister brand Arket work hard in a quiet way to democratize intelligent, thoughtful clothing design that I appreciate even more now I'm a working parent.



The best shopping experience in London is at Liberty. It's architecturally beautiful and the fashion, home, beauty and children's collections are thoughtful and beautiful. For travel, i-escape and Mr & Mrs Smith have entire sub-brands focused on traveling stylishly with kids, and Airbnb is a parent's best friend. Self-catering's almost always better when you have kids.



On media

I get most of my news and views from social channels. In the mornings I check what's trending on Twitter and look at top Google news stories. BBC Shorts on Instagram packages [stories] up well, and the *Guardian* does a great job of condensing news stories and blasting them out. We listen to BBC Radio 4 in the mornings—the Sonos app on our phones controls it.

I very rarely watch the TV in real time. I can't remember the last time I checked the TV schedules and tuned in for something purposely—maybe last Christmas.

 [younggums.com](https://www.younggums.com)

 [young_gums](https://www.instagram.com/young_gums)

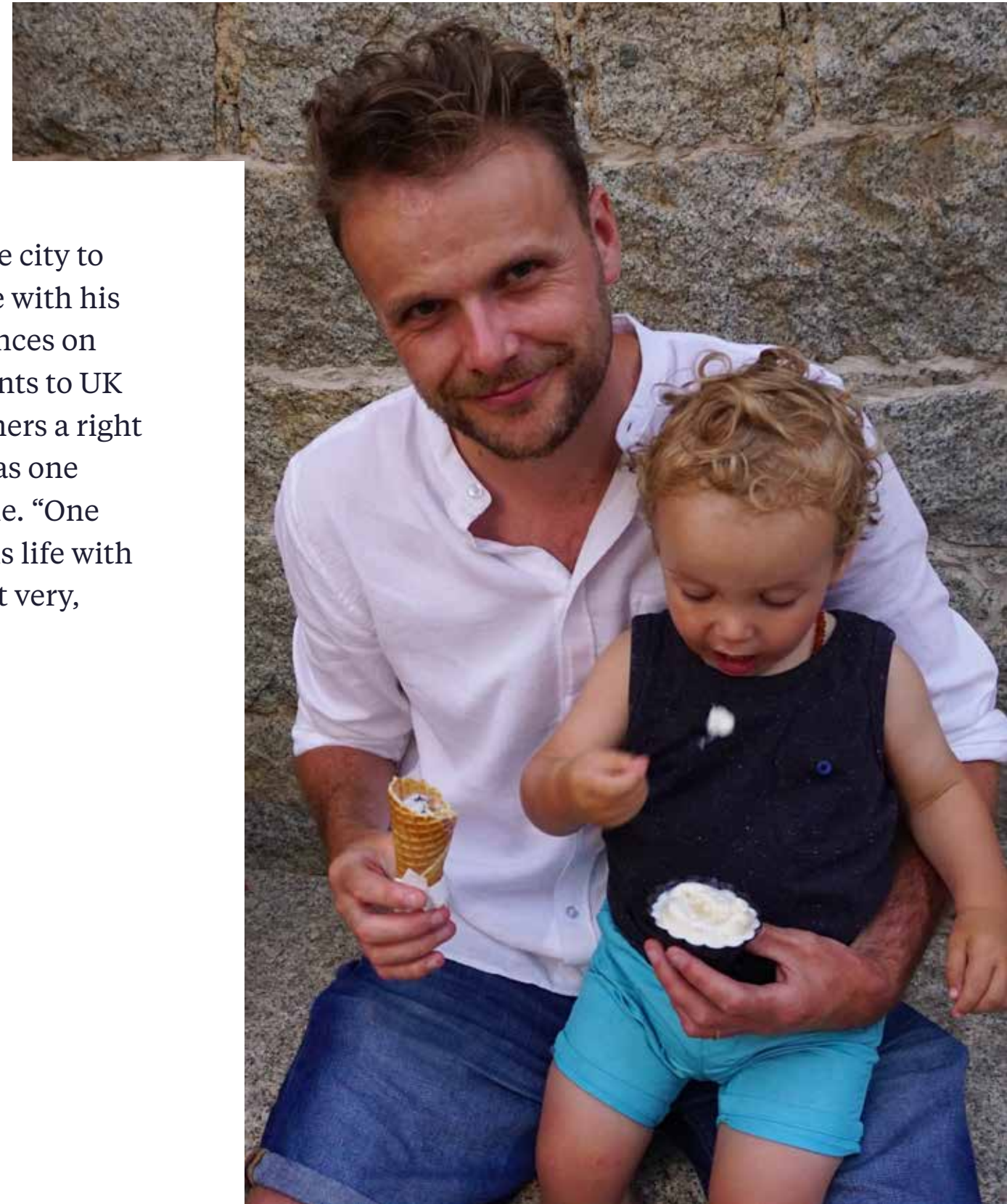
“I think current parents really want to put their faith in traditional and mainstream sources of parenting advice, but we can't help being a bit skeptical. We're known to be a generation that's wary of trusting institutions in general.”

Beth Bentley, founder, Young Gums website

The Dad First

As some women are reluctant to abandon the careers they've built up before having children, fathers are taking on an increased childcare load. While the number of stay-at-home fathers is still low compared to stay-at-home mothers—according to the IPUMS Current Population Survey, about 4% of US married fathers stay at home with a child under 18, compared to 28% of married mothers—the number of fathers taking on a greater share of childcare duties is rising, even if that's not on a full-time basis.

Jamie Day shifted from working in the city to a job in education to spend more time with his children, and blogs about his experiences on his site *A Day In The Life Dad*. He points to UK government legislation that gives fathers a right to share parental leave with mothers as one factor that's helping to shift the needle. “One friend who did that had the time of his life with his sons,” says Day. “It is changing but very, very slowly.”



Jamie Day, 36

Jamie Day works in education, alongside writing the blog *A Day In The Life Dad*, and he is also the editor of the fathers' blogging network *Father Inc.* He lives in Berkshire, England, with his wife and two children.



I used to work in the city for an investment bank. It was very, very dull and I secretly used to like to sit at my desk writing. I'd write for music blogs and I even wrote for some sports magazines. When I had kids I continued my love of writing. My wife was into the whole social media thing way before me and she noticed that there were so many mum bloggers out there, making second careers out of it. But there this massive hole—there were no dads doing it. So she said, “Why don't you start a dad blog?” and I did.

Most of my followers, I would say 80%, are mums. Dads are definitely less inclined to get involved and share and support each other. But it's slowly increasing. There's a small core of dads on social media and in blogging who chat to each other online, who you can rely on for support.

On fathers and childcare

If you look online it looks as if fathers' share of childcare is increasing. The rules on paternity leave [in the UK] have changed, so dads can share the leave now, which is obviously a great thing. I have one friend who did that, and he had the time of his life with his sons. It is changing but very, very slowly. I think it's definitely still the norm to see the dad going to work—those stereotypes do still exist. But those changes to paternity leave only came in quite recently, so in 10 years' time it might be completely different.



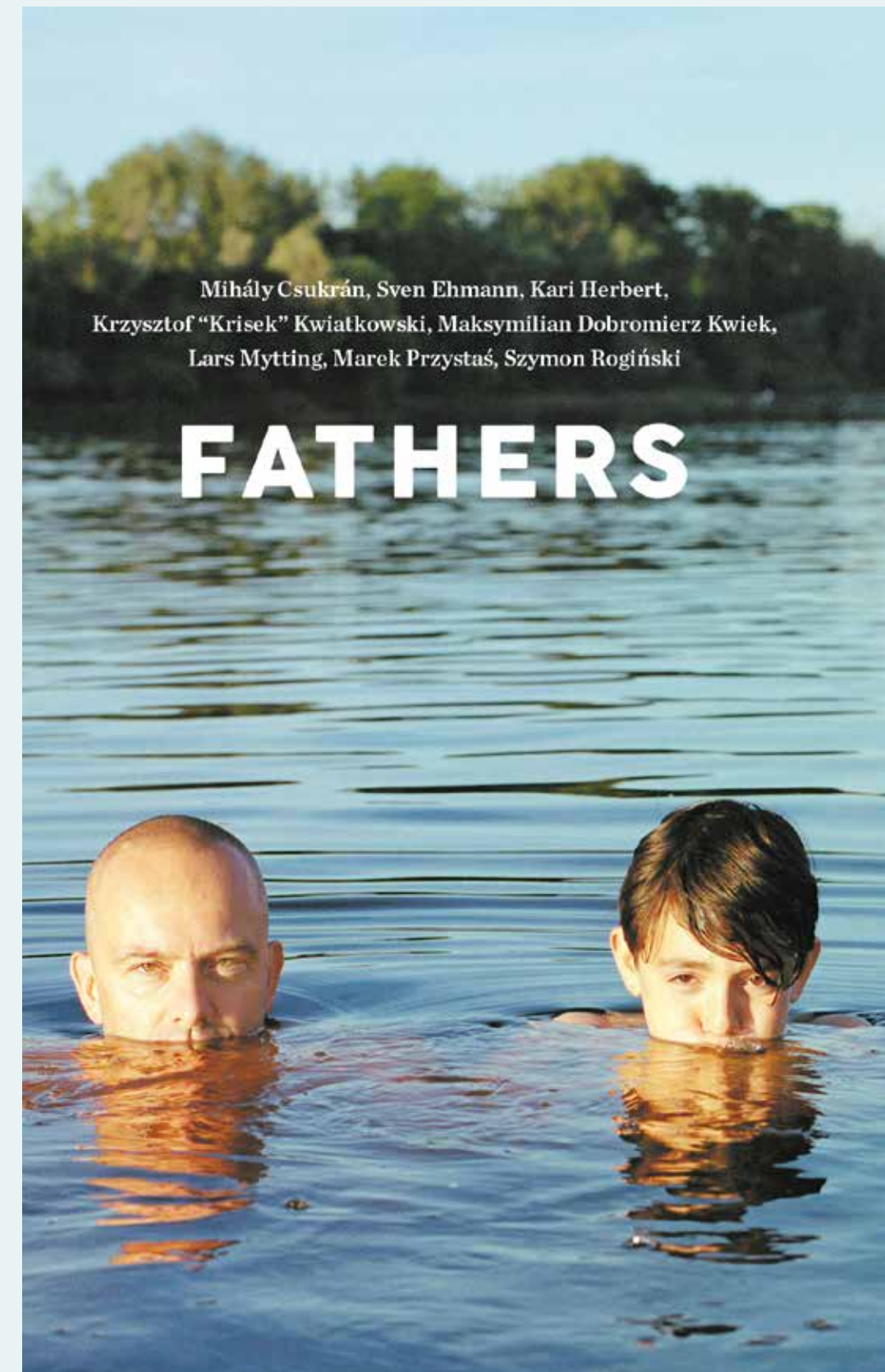
If I'm out and about with my children, a person in their 30s or 40s wouldn't look at me twice—it's the norm. But someone of, say, my mother's generation, in their 60s—a good example happened only a couple of weeks ago. I was in the supermarket and the lady behind the checkout said, "Oh, you're babysitting the kids today, are you?" I was like, "No, no, they're my kids—I'm not babysitting my kids." It's all these kinds of lines you get, like "Oh, you're giving mum a day off, are you?" No, this is me on a day-to-day basis!

On social media's shaping of expectations

There's this sense, looking at social media of, "Right, I'm 35 years old, I need to have a house, I need to have two kids, I need to have this car and need to go on this holiday."

Whereas before, we had an environment where we just got on with it—you'd only know what your close friends were up to. But now we know what literally the rest of the world is doing with their kids. We're forever comparing ourselves to people we don't even know. That's defining what milestones we should have reached by certain points, what milestones our children should have reached by certain points. To base our lives on that seems pretty scary.

As much as I'm into it and love Instagram, and it provides me with a second income, I know there's not much realism to a lot of it. I can take it with a pinch of salt and know that life is not as perfect as it looks. I am guilty of it myself—my children might look like angels online and my life might look like it's great, but there are days where you're just pulling your hair out. One day both my children had come from a kids' party, running around the house high on sugar, but people don't see that. They'll see my child on a swing looking like butter wouldn't melt.



On small businesses versus big brands

I think there's huge support for small businesses online. I think if you can buy a kids' pair of leggings from a local business, rather than a huge worldwide corporation, looking at communities online, the thought is: We'll definitely go towards the small business that produces ethically. The bigger brands have the money and the power to take advantage of the sudden surge in online influencers, but I think people will become wiser to big brands using influencers to advertise in the next couple of years. I find if I post a picture of my kids just playing in the garden it will get really good engagement, but if I post them in the garden and I'm advertising a pair of trainers, and people realize it's an advert, it gets a lot less interaction.

On judging brands' values

You can normally trace the owner of an online brand and you can tell if they've got a personality that matches yours—you can get to know company owners from their online profile. I wouldn't necessarily go to someone who has beliefs hugely different to mine. If their political beliefs are completely different to mine I'd probably avoid them.



adayinthelifedad.com



adayinthelifedad

“If I’m out and about with my children, a person in their 30s or 40s wouldn’t look at me twice—it’s the norm. But someone of, say, my mother’s generation, in their 60s... It’s all these kinds of lines you get, like ‘Oh, you’re giving mum a day off, are you?’ No, this is me on a day-to-day basis!”

Jamie Day, founder, A Day In The Life Dad blog

The Second City Family

This generation isn't wedded to the major urban centers of New York and London. Significant numbers are seeking out cities where there's still a vibrant cultural scene, but where the cost of living isn't as high. According to data published in March by the US Census Bureau and cited by the Atlantic, net domestic migration to the New York City metropolitan area fell by 900,000 in 2010.

Our subject Lindsay Meyer-Harley moved to Portland from New York in 2015. "My husband and I miss the frenetic energy New York City gave us, but we don't miss the stress it fueled," says Meyer-Harley.

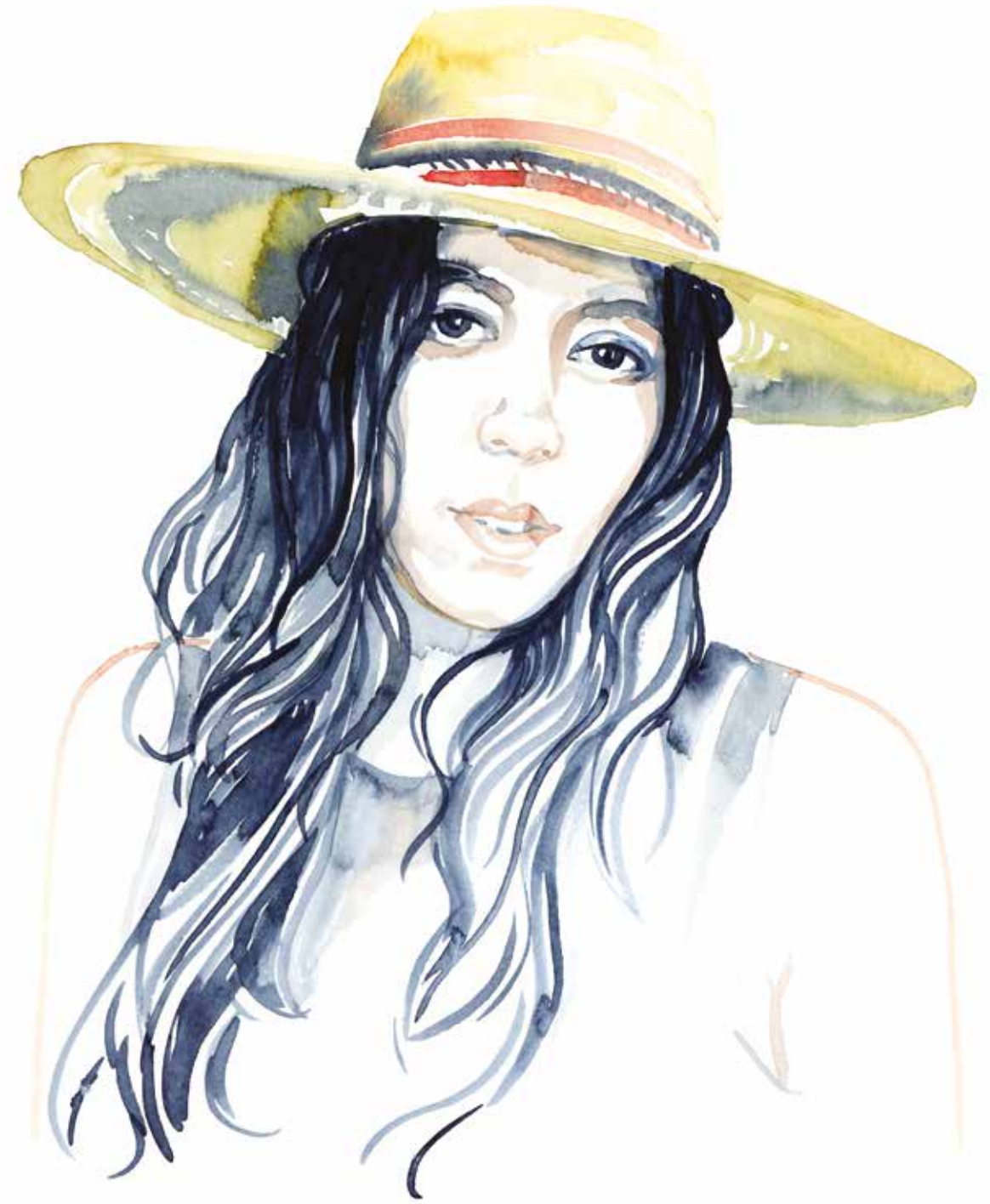
"Portland is small and has everything you need, without traffic, lines everywhere, and two-hour waits for dinner, and has much more nature to explore." The trend is also on the rise in the United Kingdom.

According to the Financial Times, in the five years to 2016, London lost a net 305,000 inhabitants to other parts of the UK, including cities such as Bristol, Manchester, and Birmingham.



Lindsay Meyer-Harley, 35

Lindsay Meyer-Harley owns the online children's boutique Darling Clementine. She moved to Portland, Oregon, from New York in 2015, with her husband and two children.



I had spent most of my life in New York and loved it with my whole heart, but there was a nagging inside that I couldn't shake, a feeling that life could be better for my entire family out of the city, despite the heartbreak that feeling gave us. We weren't suburb-ready and still wanted a vibrant city full of food, arts and energy. Portland came up and we hopped on a plane to check it out, we fell in love and moved a year later.

On living in Portland

It's much calmer here—in both a good and a bad way. My husband and I miss the frenetic energy New York City gave us, but we don't miss the stress it fueled. Portland is small and has everything you need, without traffic, lines everywhere and two-hour waits for dinner, and has much more nature to explore.

On life and work

My oldest was born in 2009 and that changed my priorities more than anything. I view work as a part of my life, not something I loathe or feel obligated to do. I love my job. I want my kids to see you can love what you do. Family, friends and work are my priorities. I'd love to include travel in there too, actually—we're just now realizing how long it's been since we went somewhere we couldn't drive to. It's time to explore again!

It's easier to work from home in Portland, with more space than we had in New York, but New York had more business connections for me, more brand events and trade shows. Luckily it's only a plane ride away. Portland hasn't really changed my business's focus—I ship worldwide and keep that in mind when stocking the shop. And it's given me great photo-shoot locations!





On adulthood

I'd define adulthood as putting yourself last most of the time! Kids put themselves first, as a survival mechanism, but then you grow up and realize caring for others often comes first. This isn't to say selfcare isn't important—it is, believe me. Being in a relationship should allow you that time. Your partner should push you to take that time for yourself, to recharge.

Compared to previous generations there are just more moles to whack today—with technology and social media we're all constantly checking things off our to-do list. Imagine leaving the house without any phones or tablets, hitting the beach with just a towel and your children—sounds amazing, but also stressful!

On consumerism

Over the past few years I've pared down my buying drastically—less cheap, throw-away clothing, more well-made brands that will last. They might cost more upfront but knowing I'm investing in forever pieces keeps my eye on the prize.

I love supporting women-owned brands, and brands that give back to the community in some way. This could be using deadstock fabrics or organic materials, or donating to good causes or speaking up in this political climate. I love the women behind Ace & Jig—Cary [Vaughan] and Jenna [Wilson]. They create gorgeous slow fashion, pieces women all over the world wear with pride. They're politically active with their brand, give back to amazing organizations and understand we must all raise each other up while we succeed. I shop primarily online, and, when I can, at small curated boutiques in Portland.

On politics and activism



During and after the election I knew it was my responsibility as a citizen of this country, a woman, and a mother to be involved in politics, involved in resisting and speaking truth to power. It's been eye-opening, to say the least—there's so much work to be done and it can be overwhelming.

I decided in early spring to hold an auction supporting the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), after [President Trump's] Muslim ban [in early 2017] was announced. When I saw the ACLU spring into action fighting for people's rights, I knew I wanted to support them. As individuals, we might feel powerless—we're busy, we need to live our lives—but there are organizations that are focused on fighting for healthcare, civil rights and human rights, and supporting those organizations can make a difference.

I held the Still We Rise auction on Instagram and recruited about 80 shops, brands, artists and creatives to donate their time, work, and shop credits. Everyone said yes—it was heart-warming. The first auction raised \$16,000. I organized another one this summer, supporting both the Natural Resources Defense Council and Planned Parenthood, and raised \$28,000. I'm going to be holding another this fall and I can't wait. It's such a beautiful thing seeing the community come together.

On media

I watch a lot of MSNBC and wish I had the time to read the *New York Times* in its entirety each day. I listen to NPR as well, and try to stick to those three.

 darlingclementineshop.com
 [lindsaymeyerharley](https://www.instagram.com/lindsaymeyerharley)

“It’s easier to work from home in Portland, with more space than we had in New York, but New York had more business connections for me ... Luckily it’s only a plane ride away. Portland hasn’t really changed my business’s focus—I ship worldwide and keep that in mind when stocking the shop. And it’s given me great photo-shoot locations!”

Lindsay Meyer-Harley, owner, Darling Clementine online children's boutique



The Xennial Single

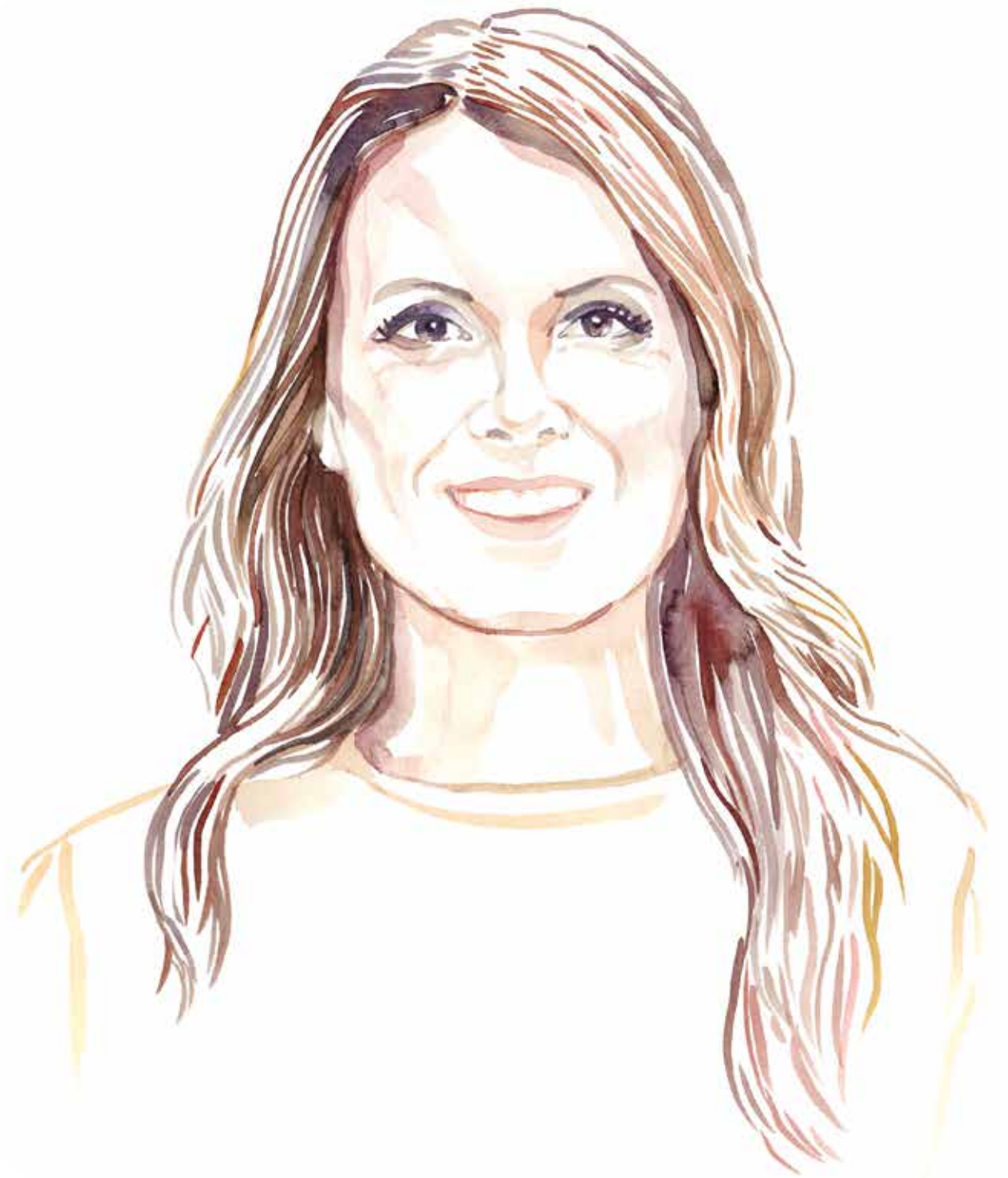
For this group, adulthood doesn't mean 2.4 kids and a house with a picket fence, says our subject Claire Hobson. But this isn't about eternal adolescence, either. Instead, it's a full adult life filled with travel, work, and friends—and disposable income to spend. This group takes on plenty of the responsibilities of adulthood, but might not embrace its traditional markers.

“I see the responsibilities of a more experienced person being to nurture other people, just as a parent would,” says Hobson. “I’m just not doing it as a parent. I think when you pull apart the activities which you would traditionally assign to a mother, I use the same instincts to ‘mother’ people. I’m very caring, loving and supportive. I’m just doing it on a much broader scale.” According to 2015 data from Gallup, 64% of the US 18-29-year-olds it surveyed were single in 2014, while the US Census Bureau reported that the proportion of American women who were married dropped below 50% in 2009.



Claire Hobson, 43

Claire Hobson is a brand and business consultant. After spending periods of time in Shanghai, Hong Kong, Sydney and London, she now lives in New York.



I've never had a traditional outlook. I didn't set out saying "I'm going to be different," but I was certainly presented with opportunities along the way that allowed me to take an unexpected path.

My father worked for the same company for 47 years, he bought into that company along the way and became an owner. My parents grew up on really hard work, but with very limited opportunities. It was a different time back then.

My opportunities took me a long way from the nest. I ventured to Hong Kong first, then I did Shanghai back in 2003 before it was cool. I enjoy photography so I got a bicycle and I rode my bike around China taking photos and learning Chinese. I ended up in Sydney after that. It was here I really started to build a career. I was in Sydney for eight years. It's the longest I've ever lived anywhere.

I bought a house, sold a house, got married, got divorced, a lot of stuff happened during that time! For the past six years I've been living in New York, with a year in London before coming back here.

I don't think I'm a renegade, but things that were expected of me just weren't in my DNA. I've gone with the options that presented themselves to me, rather than what I'm supposed to be doing because I'm at a certain age. "Believe in the universe" is one of my life mantras. It's what my tattoo says—a recent addition.

On travel

Your perspective is altered by travel—you meet people from different cultures. I like the fact that when you're foreign and you travel—even when you're camped in a place you call home—you're still ignorant of some of the expectations or societal norms.

You're not keeping up with the neighbor next door, because your neighbor next door is a playwright, a tech entrepreneur or a multicultural family with four kids—it's just so different from where I started out.

If you're not conditioned to keep up with the Joneses then you're not propelled to actually try and follow those markers. I believe travel allows you to just keep that one step away from feeling peer pressure, family pressure, and the general expectations of the society you're in. Because travel sees you or accepts you as a foreigner, it allows you to set your own parameters.

On society's expectations

My parents are fully supportive of my choices. I'm absolutely sure that I couldn't have lived this life as fully as I have without their encouragement.



But other people who look at me, outside of our small circle—and this really pisses me off—define my life by their limited parameters of what they are doing in their own.

Am I living the 22-year-old life? Sure, maybe on Tuesdays and Fridays—going to the gym for a couple of hours, visiting a museum during the day or drinking too many martinis in the evening. But on the other hand, I don't like a big crowd or loud music, so I really straddle two different mindsets. I have my own business, so I can set my own hours and my own agenda.

I'm really happy in that space, because I have the luxury of being fun and doing spontaneous things without having to worry too much. I've structured it that way because it suits my personality and it allows me to be true to what matters to me and how I connect with the people in my life.

On adulthood

I own a consultancy where I work for large brands but also consult for other businesses, mainly entrepreneur-owned. I really enjoy helping other people to craft their livelihoods. I don't take that lightly—I think that is an interesting responsibility of adulthood, caring for other people. You can ask any of my team who have ever worked for me, I really give a shit about them. I see the responsibilities of a more mature, or experienced person, being to nurture other people, just as a parent would. I'm *just not doing it as a parent*. I think when you pull apart the activities which you would traditionally assign to a mother, I use the same instincts to “mother” people. I'm very caring, loving and supportive. I'm just doing it on a much broader scale.

I think labeling people is so antiquated. I'm a 43-year-old divorcee who really can't be bothered dating a lot, who lives in a great apartment, who travels the world, who loves her family, her friends, can drink champagne at lunch if she wants to, can walk the West Side Highway five times a week, and can work hard and play hard. So what would you call me? Am I a spinster? Am I a divorcee? Am I just between husbands? In a media world, where do I belong? And I think that's the biggest question I have about the new world order.

The system doesn't cater for people like me outside of the lines. It's definitely mindset rather than demographic, but I am still questioning what box I should check.

What is adulthood today? I don't have a conventional view on that. I was never going to have 2.4 kids and live in a house with a picket fence. I would say that living in the US right now, looking at societal norms, we are in complete flux. The Martha Stewart lifestyle, Gap as the uniform of success, and the traditional family with a 4x4 in the drive, is just not reality anymore in determining success. There's too much diversity. I do feel that some part of adulthood is about putting yourself on the map—achieving something noteworthy. Before, this was about the accumulation of a husband, kids, and a mortgage. But my commitments are more fluid. Less baggage. I think that's the biggest difference.

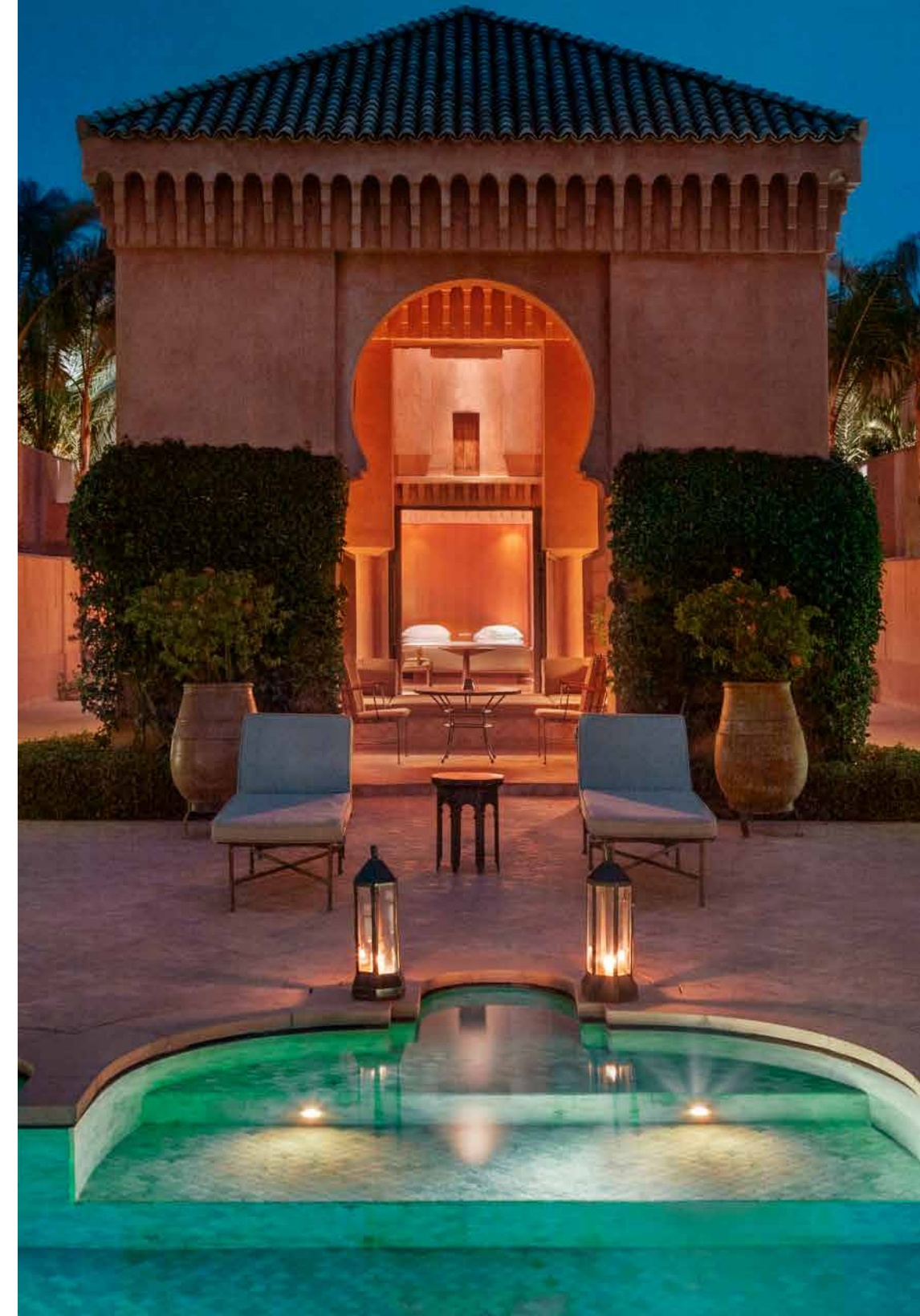
On career

The future of work and looking at how people now create a living for themselves is one of the most exciting things for me right now, because I

am literally living life perfected. Last week I was in St Barth's in the French West Indies, this week I'm in the UK, I go back to St Maarten next and then I'm in Portofino with friends. But this isn't "vacation leave." I am working though during this time as well, I am consulting for my clients, I'm doing my work remotely.

This will become the norm for the younger generation, because they will get salaries from multiple places. They're not going to look to one single source of salary. They are going to be doing freelance stuff, they're going to be selling online.

Mindset is ultimately what's changing. What matters to people is different. People are not wanting as much stuff or they're not competing as much, which takes a load off, because you're not fighting for the next promotion or the corner office. This change isn't about kicking off the flip-flops and joining a hippie commune or living in a kibbutz.



This is about success redefined for 21st-century living. I think the mindset is that stuff and more things and more gadgets are really not the answer, and now people realize that that doesn't make them happy. As a consequence, the smart employers will reward with more leave (in the US you only get 10 days) or reward with some kind of outlet for creativity.

On consumerism

I'm definitely over "stuff," mainly because I've traveled and moved so much—I've had 17 addresses in 20 years. It all came to a head when I started to take my foot off the gas about 18 months ago. I just remember that one day I emptied my closet and I found three pairs of the exact same pants—I didn't even realize I'd bought them. It was sheer consumption overload.

My purchasing patterns have changed too. They're much more diverse. I might buy my V-neck white linen T-shirts from H&M or Zara (surprisingly excellent quality!), but my purse from Saint Laurent. I'm not being cheap and I'm not being expensive: that is the best purchase because those white T-shirts are probably going to travel to three countries in the next three months, so they can't crease. Price isn't the driver as much as practicality. Brands are just starting to think about people like me who are urban and have money to spend, but are constantly moving. I'm not traveling as much as I used to, but I used to be on a plane every week and that makes you re-evaluate a lot of things.

 clairehobsonconsulting.com

“I have the luxury of being fun and doing spontaneous things without having to worry too much. I’ve structured it that way because it suits my personality and it allows me to be true to what matters to me and how I connect with the people in my life.”

Claire Hobson, brand and business consultant

The Xennial Entrepreneur

This group makes the most of having a foot in two camps: their childhood was free of screen-based devices, but they quickly adapted to the myriad advances in technology and made those platforms their own. Take our subject Éva Goicochea—she’s the founder of Maude, a stylish line of sex essentials, and a co-founder of Tinker Watches. While both businesses are based on digital platforms, Goicochea says—regarding Tinker in particular—that she and her co-founders are “so precious about thinking analog.” “We are trying to build a real brand that people care about,” she says.

Entrepreneurialism is a quality that’s on the rise among this group. According to data from the 2016 “BNP Paribas Global Entrepreneur Report,” cited by *Fortune*, millennials are starting businesses earlier than their boomer predecessors, at around the age of 27, while boomer business starters tended to be around 35. “The trend we have noticed is that you can succeed earlier,” Remi Frank, global head of the key client group at BNP Paribas, told *Fortune*. “Before, you needed to be 40 or 50. Then it was 30 to 40. Now it’s 20 to 30. This is a trend which is obvious everywhere. Of course it’s linked to the new technologies, but it’s also a change in the world, which [now] accepts that you can be the CEO of a big company or own your own company at a young age.”



Éva Goicochea, 35

Creative strategist Éva Goicochea is the founder of Maude, a line of simple sex essentials, and a co-founder of Tinker Watches. She lives in New York with her husband.



My mom said to me when I was young, “You will one day have a job that hasn’t been invented yet.” I came to New York when I was 19 to study advertising, and it was 2001, so it was right at the beginning of digital. We did classes and it was still VHS stuff. Then I ended up going back to California and I became a legislative aide in the healthcare world. It was really business-minded and very bureaucratic and hierarchal. Then I went to Los Angeles and ended up in social media. I really rode the wave of social media becoming a job and becoming a really important piece of everyone’s business.

On entrepreneurialism

While I sometimes enjoyed being in a very structured environment, the idea of knowing what your career path was going to be in five, 10, 20 years actually was scarier to me than the unknown.

I think the backdrop of the 2007 recession has made me more entrepreneurial. But I think there was always a part of me that was entrepreneurial. I started working when I was 14 because I wanted to. My parents said, “What are you doing?” and I said, “I’m going to go work in a coffee shop!”

Maybe our grandparents’ generation was entrepreneurial but they didn’t even know they were being entrepreneurial. They started businesses and they worked very hard to give our parents opportunity, and wanted them to be on a very straight line.

I call the generation 10 years younger than me the generation of impatience. I understand that we live in a digital world where everyone’s life seems perfect and filtered, but I do think there is something to be said for enjoying your 20s and working hard and figuring out what you want to do.

I think the interesting thing for me is watching people in their early 20s now come out of school and say, “I want to make all of this money and I want to be Instagram-famous,” thinking you can cut corners and just jump in there.

On business

At Tinker our archetype is a young Michael Caine, who is clever, well-dressed and doesn’t take himself too seriously. We are so precious about thinking analog that, in some ways, it’s made our growth step-by-step as opposed to exponential. We are trying to build a real brand that people care about. We get caught somewhere between knowing how to do it all online and really executing it well offline, so it’s been a learning curve in both places. I do chalk that up to my age, because I feel like I know a little bit about both.

The reason Maude came to be was looking at a space that needs help, that needs clarity, where there is a giant disconnect. I think sexual health is something that affects everybody over the age of 18, but existing companies haven't had to change. Maude came from that. Everyone said, "What's your mission?" Through this political situation, our mission has really solidified—it's about being inclusive and it's about all people. Not to say that we're aligning with one organization or another, which will come later. But now it's about inclusivity and language and tone, and what kind of messaging you're putting out. I look to other brands to show that too. If they are ignoring it, I am a little turned off.

On brands

I want to know what I am investing in and why, and I am definitely averse to ostentatious and visible luxury and consumerism. It is about experience. I could fly [low-cost airline] Norwegian to London, and I won't have the seat assignment and I won't eat anything, but I'll still get there and I'll still have the experience. Why would I pay more? I look for value. That's how I approach things.

I do like Everlane. I have a soft spot for how they've gone about doing business and how communicative they are. I also think a lot about Method soaps and Patagonia when I think about where I want Maude to be. They're older companies but they really set out to disrupt how things were done. Neither is necessarily hip all the time, but there is a timelessness about them and they do what they do well, and they know who they are.





Tinker shares an office with three brands, all women-founded, and I admire them greatly. One is Industry Standard denim and T-shirts; another is Peet Rivko unisex skincare without any toxic ingredients; and the third is Hobes shoes.

I shop online for everyday household things, and I go online and look everywhere before I go to the store. I try to cut out the time spent in the store. I love shopping, I just don't want to be aimless.

On buying a home

I found this house and I was, “This house is great and inexpensive, let's buy it!” I will say on the flip side, it's not all it's cracked up to be when you get there. Because when you own a house you also own everything that goes wrong with it—the insurance, the leaky roof ...

On politics

I think the silver lining to what's happening now is that people are becoming more educated and engaged. If we can get anything done now, under these circumstances, it's going to be OK. This is the most challenging time that we have experienced in our lifetime and I think for me, it's a good opportunity to gauge if something is worth investing in or if something is worthwhile, if it can survive and if it works in this time. I am more politically involved and I've become more active in giving back and volunteering. In terms of business, I think it's an opportunity to see how to exist in a climate that is really challenging.



evagoicochea.com



getmaude.com



tinkerwatches.com



evagoicochea

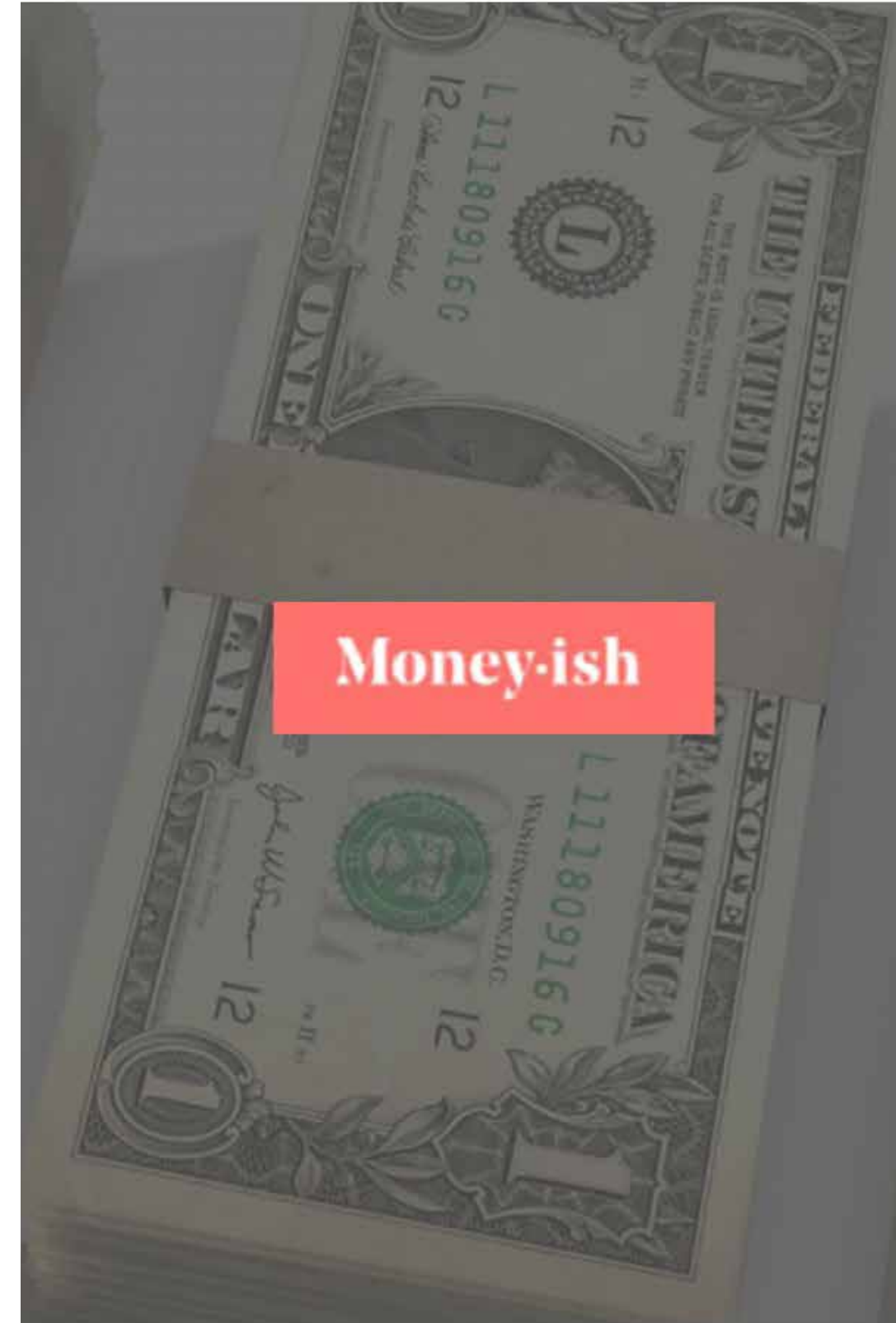
“This is the most challenging time that we have experienced in our lifetime and I think for me, it's a good opportunity to gauge if something is worth investing in or if something is worthwhile... In terms of business, I think it's an opportunity to see how to exist in a climate that is really challenging.”

Éva Goicochea, creative strategist

The New Millennial Adult

Bucking the flighty millennial stereotypes, this group takes planning for the future seriously. There's a more considered thought process to this generation not owning a home than not having saved enough money. Indeed, TD Bank's 2016 Consumer Spending Index found that millennials spend less money on discretionary items than generation X or the boomers.

This group also takes social responsibility seriously. David Yi, the founder of Very Good Light, a beauty and grooming blog aimed at generation Z men, says a political opinion is essential to his site. "I feel like we'd be so remiss if we weren't politically charged," says Yi. "I think it's so important, now more than ever, to take a stance in the right direction, but in a loving and caring way—not in a militant way, not in an aggressive manner, but in having open conversations."



David Yi, 30

Journalist and editor David Yi is the founder of Very Good Light, a men's beauty and grooming site that aims to "redefine masculinity and men's beauty standards." He lives in New York.



I was an editor for about eight years in New York City, writing for publications from *Elle* to *GQ* to *Esquire* and the *Wall Street Journal*. I felt there was this blue ocean of opportunities and a lack of voices on the internet for a generation Z audience, especially male.

Growing up, I felt like my sister had so many tools for empowerment from magazines like *Seventeen* or *YM* or *Teen Vogue*. But as a guy, I didn't feel there was any resource for me. *GQ* was too old, Instagram or social media weren't around then, and I just felt very lost. What if I could have a resource about hair tips or skincare tips or dating tips? What would my life have been? Would I have gotten to know myself sooner or better at a younger age? So we launched Very Good Light in October of 2016 because I really felt that young people wanted that guide. Young men needed a guide to beauty and to grooming.

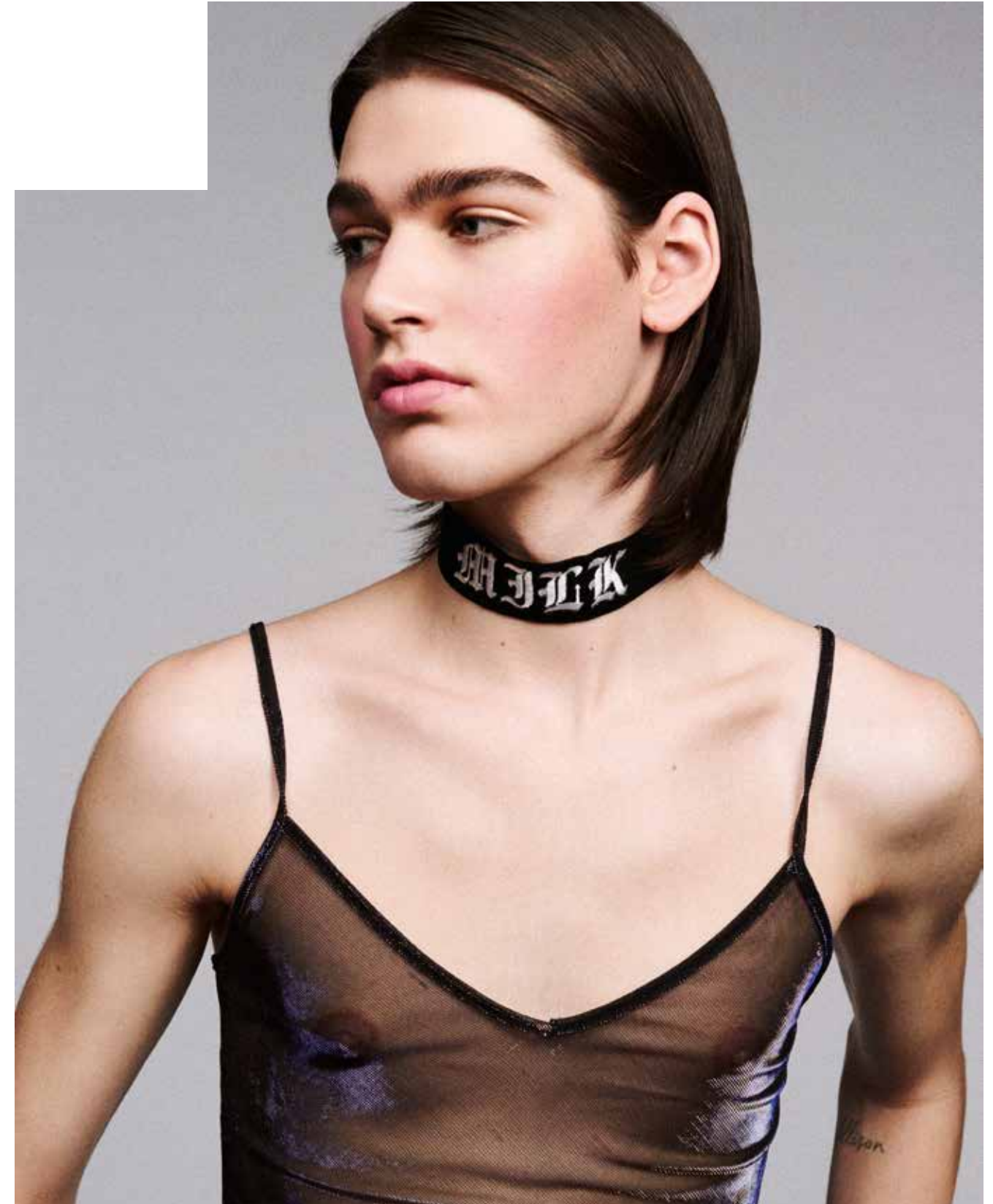
More than a beauty and grooming site, we are a movement. We want to create this inclusive space, so all types of gen Z guys can come and learn from different men what it really means to be an empowered guy in 2017. That's on the spectrum of whether you are super-gay, femme, drag queen, or maybe a super-macho soccer player. We can all come together, and we can really look at our differences, read about our differences, celebrate diversity and inclusivity, and be much more loving, empowered, woke individuals.

On taking a political stance

I feel like we'd be so remiss if we weren't politically charged. I think it's so important, now more than ever, to take a stance in the right direction, but in a loving and caring way—not in a militant way, not in an aggressive manner, but in having open conversations. Especially with young people—gen Z is probably the most

politically active of any generation and I feel like they're just so aware. That audience really wants this content, the audience needs this content. I knew Very Good Light wasn't just going to be a beauty site. It was going to be a very woke gen Z site where we talk openly about struggles of being from a certain demographic, or what it's really like to be a young person under the Trump administration when you're a Muslim American. What's it really like to be a young black man who doesn't identify with either gender—what's that like in your culture?

I grew up in Colorado Springs, Colorado, which is a very right wing, very white city. I felt very much that I was different from everyone else. I was very politically active as a teenager, which wasn't very popular then. I was always about leading the charge in the right direction, and making sure that people understood that life isn't just about white America—that there are a lot of different sexualities, gender identities, ethnic identities out there.



On entrepreneurialism

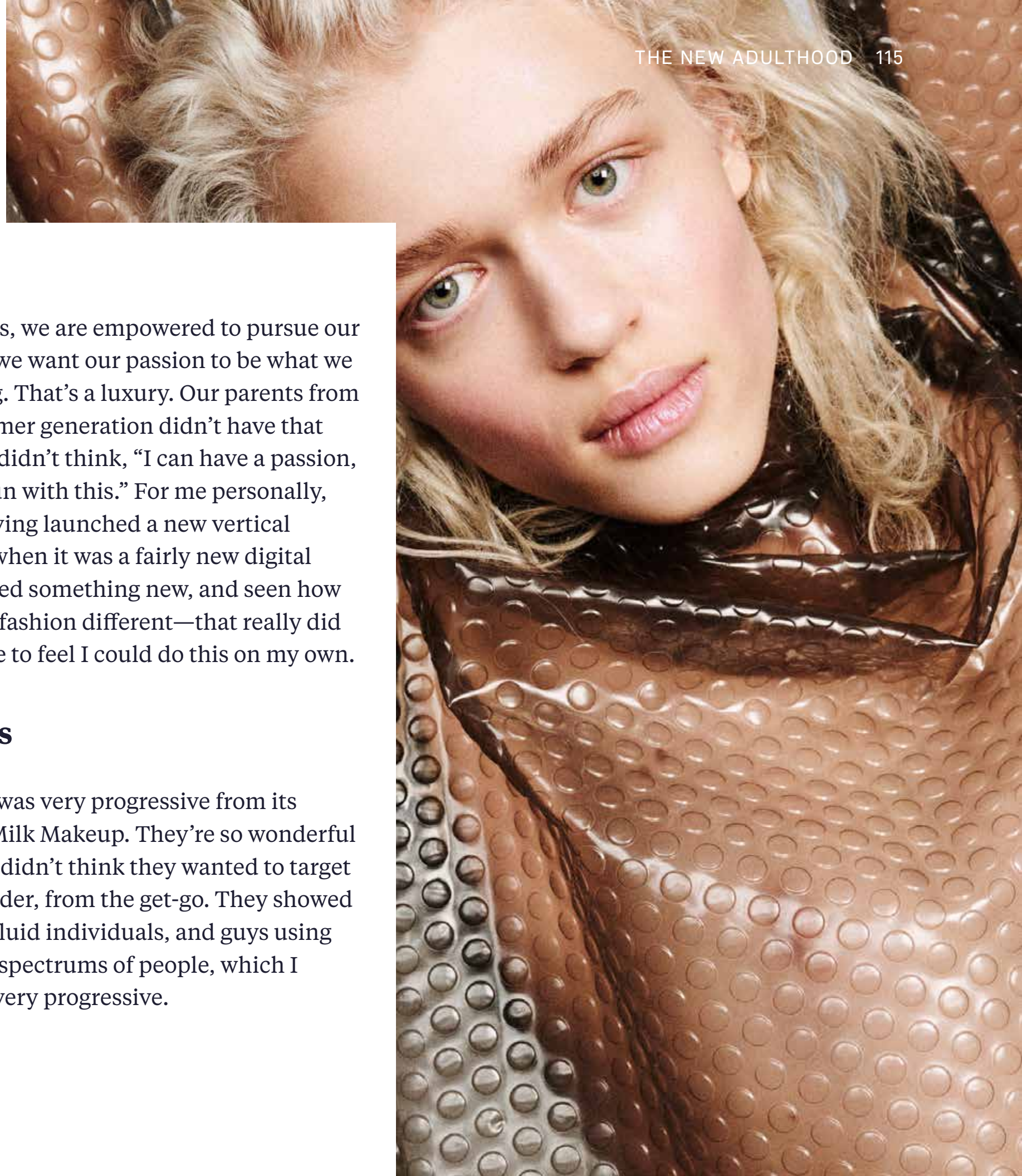
One, I just didn't feel that corporate America was for me. And two, I've done everything that I want to do, and I've written for every publication that I wanted to. I was a stylist, I was on camera. I said, "OK, what's next? I guess I could go back into a publication, but I would know exactly what my life would turn out to be. Or I could be entrepreneurial just like my immigrant parents from Korea, really take their lead and delve into that."

I knew I wanted that real-world experience. I needed that foundation. I wanted to become the best writer. I wanted to really own SEO. I really wanted to know this industry through and through, and so I think I needed about a decade to become a legitimate, respected journalist. I think if I'd launched Very Good Light without being in this industry, no one would have cared.

As millennials, we are empowered to pursue our dreams, and we want our passion to be what we do for a living. That's a luxury. Our parents from the baby boomer generation didn't have that choice. They didn't think, "I can have a passion, I can really run with this." For me personally, I felt that, having launched a new vertical at Mashable when it was a fairly new digital website, started something new, and seen how we can make fashion different—that really did encourage me to feel I could do this on my own.

On brands

A brand that was very progressive from its inception is Milk Makeup. They're so wonderful because they didn't think they wanted to target a specific gender, from the get-go. They showed very gender-fluid individuals, and guys using makeup—all spectrums of people, which I thought was very progressive.



I feel that more brands should take a stand, more brands should be more inclusive. We're seeing CoverGirl using boys for the first time. But for CoverGirl, it's a more difficult message to get across than for a brand that started new and had that mantra from the beginning.

By 2018, I think makeup for men will be more normalized. I equate the grooming movement now to where fashion was for men in 2012, where guys were, "Can we like fashion? Is it okay? Does it make us gay? Does it make us effeminate?" Then the NBA players started being present at the front rows of fashion week, hip-hop stars started rapping about fashion. Today we don't even bat an eyelid. In 2017, men are saying, "It's okay for me to like fragrance."

On media

I still read everything. I try not to be bogged down with politics because it really bums me out.

It's important as a journalist, as an editor, to know the general landscape of what is big in pop culture. I think I have a good scope of what's happening on Twitter, what's trending.

As millennials, we want a better world and a brighter, sustainable future. But I do feel that gen Z is even more that way.



verygoodlight.com



seoulcialite

"As millennials, we are empowered to pursue our dreams, and we want our passion to be what we do for a living. That's a luxury. Our parents from the baby boomer generation didn't have that choice."

David Yi, founder, Very Good Light website

New Lifestyles

For the New Adult generation, life stage is not the only predictor of lifestyle in a world full of choice. Below are six psychographic profiles that transcend age, gender, and other demographic markers.

The Holistic Healer

Health and wellness take on a chic new guise, thanks to this group reimagining selfcare for a new generation. From ingestible, adaptogenic herbs courtesy of hip Los Angeles company Moon Juice to sound baths and group meditations, this group is embracing taking care of body and mind. But they haven't totally abandoned the hectic pace of modern life, either.

Sometimes that quest for health might mean relocating to achieve a more humane pace of life. Ibi Meier-Oruitemeka, founder of plant-based skin and hair line The Afro Hair & Skin Co, says that her family's move to the British coast "was a very deliberate decision to be closer to nature, slow down our lifestyles, and start connecting a little bit more with each other and with the environment. I felt like that was the right place and the only place I could launch this type of business."



Ibi Meier-Oruitemeka, 36

Ibi Meier-Oruitemeka is the founder of The Afro Hair and Skin Co., which specializes in plant-based afro hair and skincare products. She lives in Sussex, England, with her husband and son.

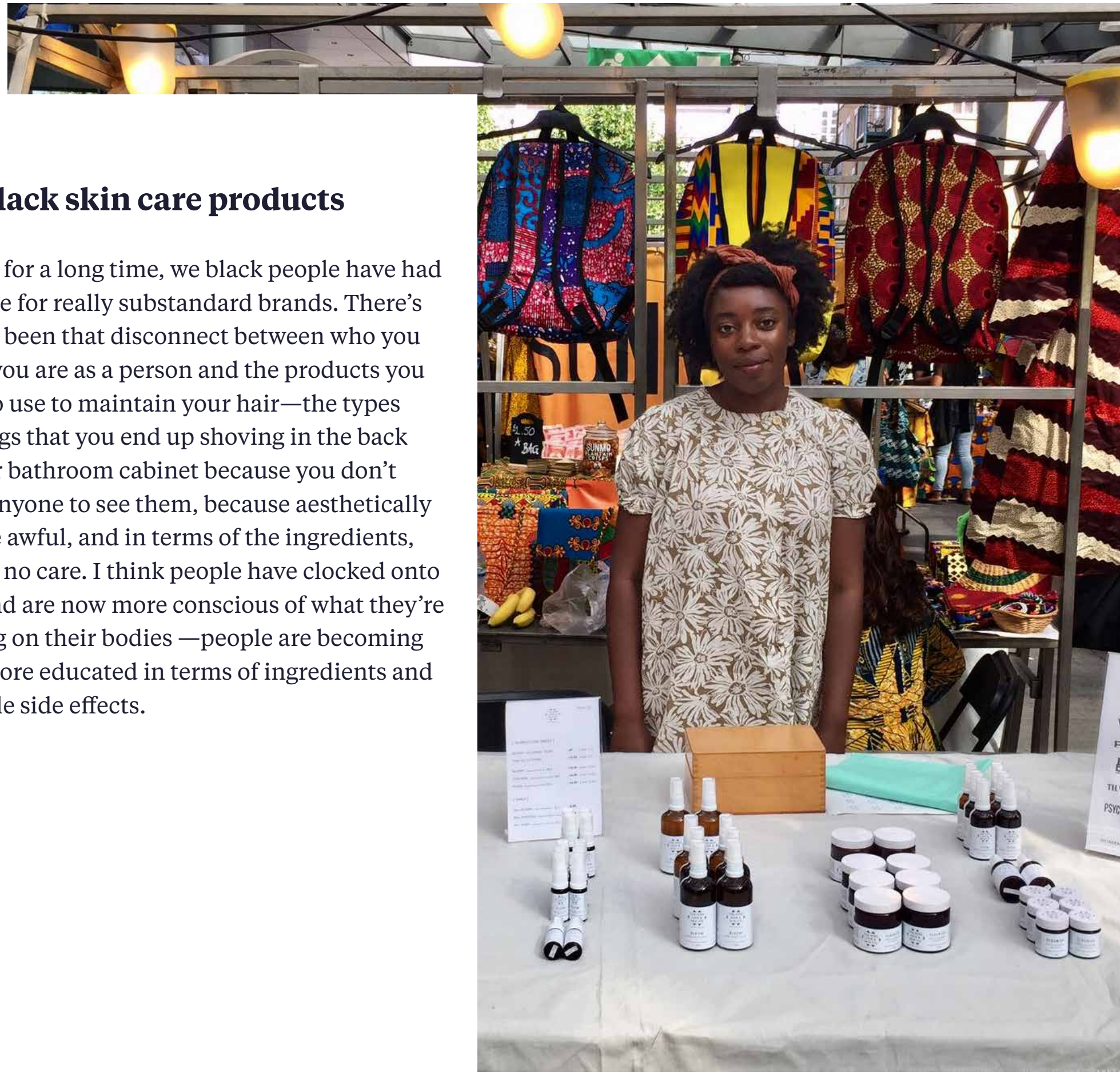


Starting my business stems from moving to Sweden in 2005. During that time, I couldn't find any products for my hair. There weren't many black hair shops and there's a very specific way to take care of afro hair. That led to me digging around online. I discovered people suggesting natural ingredients for afro hair, so I went out buying oil, bits and bobs that had been recommended, and trying them out. That was the beginnings of taking a more natural approach to my hair care, because prior to that, I hadn't really thought about it.

I probably did have more tendency to lean towards what I thought was a more natural product. The big products, they'll tell you these are made with avocado or olive—but the more I looked into it, the more I saw that it pretty much contained none of what it was advertising. So that led me on the path of discovery, and I really got into fitting my lifestyle towards more natural ingredients. Also Sweden is a very eco-conscious country.

On black skin care products

I think for a long time, we black people have had to settle for really substandard brands. There's always been that disconnect between who you think you are as a person and the products you have to use to maintain your hair—the types of things that you end up shoving in the back of your bathroom cabinet because you don't want anyone to see them, because aesthetically they're awful, and in terms of the ingredients, there's no care. I think people have clocked onto that and are now more conscious of what they're putting on their bodies —people are becoming a lot more educated in terms of ingredients and possible side effects.



On natural ingredients

I wanted to focus on ingredients that are being produced in England because I think they've been underutilized. I played around with ingredients for a few years and tested whether they actually worked for our hair. They're really great ingredients. It's great to be able to actually speak to the people who are producing them, and find out how they're producing them, what they're doing sustainably, so you feel confident in your choice and the message you're sending out. We've got farms in Sussex, since I'm based in Sussex—there are lavender farms, you get rosemary and essential oils and things like that.

On coastal living

We moved from London to Hastings in 2014, and that was a very deliberate decision to be closer to nature, slow down our lifestyles, and start connecting a little bit more with each

other and with the environment. I felt like that was the right place and the only place I could launch this type of business, because it does incorporate my personal values. I don't think I could have done this authentically in London. My husband is Swiss, so he's very into nature, and he really missed that. I grew up in Hackney, I'm very much a city girl. I think spending four years in Sweden really shifted my perspective. Coming back to London, I found it relentless, it felt really claustrophobic. I was in the rat race, I guess. That began to affect me emotionally and spiritually. So I think we made the right move and it definitely aligns better with my business now.

On entrepreneurialism

My parents are Nigerian. Culturally it's an entrepreneurial place, because people have to make their own way. Not everybody is desperately poor, but there's always this

industriousness in the culture. Growing up, I was always encouraged to look at being self-employed. It's never been a thing that "you can't do" or is "too risky."

I've been always quite creative, and always wanted to indulge that creative side. To me, it's not so much about entrepreneurialism—I never thought of myself as an entrepreneur. It was more about doing something I wanted to do—making that happen. You think it would be safer in a more stable job, but I think in this climate, that's not guaranteed, so you may as well try for what you want.

On the recession

In 2007, I was still living in Sweden, and I didn't move back to London until 2009. I think before then, you took it for granted that you could pick up jobs and think, "I don't want to do that, I'm going to do something else."



Coming back with that attitude, I was in for a big shock. I didn't find work for a year after moving back. For me, that was a big shift. I had to move back home with my mum and navigate that new landscape. Before, I would drop a CV here or there, and get a response. Now I was sending hundreds of CVs and not getting any response or any feedback. That was quite a dramatic change. I think it does force you to think about what your options are in terms of what you can do for yourself. It pushes you towards that creative role if you're inclined to be creative. It definitely shifted my attitude towards work.

I still have to do heaps of work now, but I get to choose the time of day I work for the most part. I'm probably more productive in the evenings, so I tend to do a lot of my work then. It's never perfect, but I try to work when I'm in the frame of mind for being the most productive, rather than forcing myself to work for the sake of ticking off the fact that I've worked.

On politics

I've always been politically aware. I don't know about engaged, but aware. You're aware of the climate you're in, whether it's environment, whether it's race, whether it's sexism, all these things. In this climate, in terms of my brand, I wanted to create something that aligned to my values. That also includes creating something that has a genuinely positive impact on people. I think that's a big aspect of wellness. Of course, it's about ingredients and selfcare and things like that, but it's political in that it's making that choice to serve yourself above what you're being told that you must do as a woman or as a member of society. So there is community there, there is that wanting to connect with a greater purpose.

I think a lot of brands are promoting this more holistic viewpoint. It's very hard with the political climate that exists around us—we have to make our lives the best we can, because you

can either absorb it all and be really weighed down and depressed by it, or you can think, “OK, what can we do on a micro scale to improve local community lives and our own lives?”

On consumerism

I'm not a big shopper, to be honest, but when I do shop, I try to be conscientious about it and support small makers from Etsy or through Instagram and things like that. I would love to be a minimalist but I'm not. However, I do feel weighed down if I have things I'm not using or I don't need. I really need to know that purchases are going to bring value to me. So I think travel or gigs, things like that, they mean more to me. To share an experience with people or going on holiday, something like that, is more precious to me than to consume things in general.



On media

There are sites I regularly visit, but I'm not sure if I trust 100%. I read the *Guardian* quite a lot for general daily news, but I try to distance myself from taking in too much general news, because there's not much I can do about a lot of the things I'm reading about. It's that balance between feeling selfish, like you're ignoring world issues, but at the same time feeling powerless because there isn't much you can do in this present moment—other than try to make the best of what you've got, which will hopefully have a knock-on impact on everything else.

I read Gal-dem—they're a collective of people of color, a women's collective, a feminist collective, and they give a more person-of-color perspective on certain issues, whether those are transgender issues or work-related or race-related.

I think they're trying to give people of color more of a say in world discourse on topics other than just race. A lot of the time, black people in media tend to be called upon to write only about race issues, and don't have that freedom to write about culture, arts or whatever. Gal-dem is a space for that.



theafrohairandskincompany.co.uk

[afrohairandskinco](https://www.instagram.com/afrohairandskinco)

“It’s great to be able to actually speak to the people who are producing your ingredients, and find out how they’re producing them, what they’re doing sustainably, so you feel confident in your choice and the message you’re sending out.”

Ibi Meier-Oruitemeka, founder,
The Afro Hair and Skin Co.

The Super Human

For this type, just achieving in the workplace isn't enough—their bodies have to be optimized, too. Embracing fitness is about “making myself into a better human being,” says our subject George MacPherson. “I see working out as something that’s approaching meditative quality, that’s just for me, to clear up my thoughts.”

He's not alone. The Goldman Sachs “Millennials Coming of Age” report and Aetna’s 2013 “What’s Your Healthy?” study found that millennials are by far the most likely to consider factors such as eating right and exercising as a part of their overall definition of “healthy.” They’re also turning to diagnostic and blood tests to measure their fitness levels.



George MacPherson, 35

British-born George MacPherson is a communications consultant. His company GWM Consulting represents brands including Maggie Marilyn, Arjé and JCRT. He moved to New York from London in 2013.



On fitness

As kids, we were really active and my dad particularly would be giving us the opportunity to experience the outdoors. He was a really big hiker and mountaineer. We'd go rock climbing in Scotland and the Lake District and up all those big mountains, like Snowdon in Wales and Ben Nevis in Scotland. It gave me an understanding of challenges, I suppose. But through school and as a young adult, I really didn't have that interest at all.

In 2008, I went to Sydney. I saw a lifestyle that I really wanted. And obviously there it's different, the weather's always amazing and people grow up in a much more health-conscious environment. I saw people running and swimming and generally being active in a way that I hadn't experienced before. I came back feeling motivated.

I incorporated running and swimming and weight training and the gym, and got a trainer at one of the gyms in London. Then I got into surfing and began to get better at that, and to inhabit that lifestyle, too. I wanted to have that extra part of me that wasn't just about work—challenging myself, and making myself into, in some ways, a better human being. Barry's Bootcamp opened in London and that was a major turning point, because it was really fun and really challenging. It was at that point that I became quite conscious of the whole idea of a fitness community, which definitely in London felt like a very new concept.

I got really hyper into cardio for a while, and it showed me what I could do. That then led to a greater sense of strength and capacity in my own body, and I went into more gym and weight training. I do some cardio still, and occasionally Barry's Bootcamp, and Rumble, a boxing workout class, some yoga and surfing when I can, and swimming.

I used to be really competitive—particularly with swimming or running. It matched what I needed in my life at that time. That's the beauty of exercise and fitness in general. It's a movable pastime or hobby or skill that can be easily adapted to needs and requirements. I've done half and full marathons—the New York marathon was incredible. Again, it was that reflection of what my body could do. Now I see working out as something that's approaching meditative quality, just for me, to clear up my thoughts.

On the career impact of fitness

To go deeper into it, I was at a point where I felt I was changing from a young person into a man, and in order to really inhabit what that meant I had to become more fit and more confident. The gym and fitness really allowed me to do that. I think that's what it does for a lot of men.

I wanted to look and feel and act a certain way that would make me feel more confident. I'm in a position now where I know that what I'm doing helps to give me the motivation I need, the energy I need, and I think it does create more of an entrepreneurial spirit, in that you push yourself. Having one level of success allows you to meet other challenges much more easily.

On the rise of fitness

In our generation, we've learned a lot of lessons from a post-war Britain and post-war Western culture. There's previously been maybe a poor diet and quite sedentary lifestyle and that really affected us. We've watched our parents and their parents deal with how the world changed so quickly and became a lot more convenient, without really looking at the impact on our bodies and our minds, and how we continue to evolve as people.



On top of that, it fits in really closely with social media. As we eat and drink healthy things and work out in interesting places, or with interesting and attractive people, and wear great and expensive things while doing it, obviously Instagram is largely responsible for this generation's adoption of a lifestyle. We are a generation that is happy to share those experiences.

On brands

Kelly Slater's brand Outerknown is a great one. There's an activewear brand that was set up in the US recently called Outdoor Voices, which does great stuff too. I'm a big supporter of a surf brand called Matusse, which uses trademarked geoprene technology. The likes of Matusse and Patagonia are definitely brands that I build into my every day.

Then I look at brands that are enhancing the world. Green Box became well-known in America through socially conscious messaging T-shirts that they created. They made a T-shirt that had this script on it asking why be racist, sexist, homophobic? Frank Ocean wore it at a concert and it literally blew up overnight. They're creating lifestyle brands based on social sentiment, which I think is really important.

On media

I know that the way I filter information is so different to where I was three or four years ago. I'm not looking necessarily to always read an article that might take me 10 minutes to read. There's part of my brain which just literally wants to lift off some of the facts, then move onto the next thing. Sometimes I find myself just wanting just the latest, just the updates, as opposed to thinking "I'm going to go explore that thing I haven't really read about before."

That's a strange way an iPhone works. If you have the News app, you'll get bulletins sent to you from whichever titles you want to follow. I don't know how it's affecting us as human beings to only be working through bite-sized information, but we're becoming really adept at filtering through huge amounts of facts and we're not ever looking for the larger story behind. Which is a danger, I think.

On adulthood

Previous generations grew up with notions of success based on personal success, personal wealth and general good standing: a house, children and all of those things. As a moderately successful, white, gay man, there is that desire to have children, but then there's nothing to say that whether that has to happen now or in 10 years' time.



We're not necessarily desperate to have a house, because maybe there aren't houses available for us at a price that we want to pay. So where does that marker leave us, too? Then, we've been conditioned to think that our own personal lives are the things that are going to bring us success and make us happy. But I think there's a change in that we are now seeing other people's happiness as a marker of our own success.

On politics

The current state of politics implies that we've all absolved ourselves of a responsibility for making the world a better place. I think that how we get better as people who want to live for as long as possible, in peace as much as possible, is starting to look at how we impact other people's lives, in order to be truly happy. I really believe that.

I don't think I do enough about it personally, but I think that where I see success coming and real ownership of our lives is to look at how we can contribute to other people's own happiness rather than just our own.

We all put our faith in governments and local authority. We stopped looking at how we all can help each other and also better ourselves. That's a really big part of it: how we better ourselves, how we become better human beings, how we become actual adults. We have to keep on learning and have to keep on knowing more. The idea of adulthood doesn't necessarily have the same age limit as it possibly did once. I think saying we've reached adulthood sometimes means that people stop and just remain static, and I don't think that should be the case anymore.

 georgewmacpr

“As we eat and drink healthy things and work out in interesting places, or with interesting and attractive people, and wear great and expensive things while doing it, obviously Instagram is largely responsible for this generation's adoption of a lifestyle. We are a generation that is happy to share those experiences.”

George MacPherson, communications consultant

The Innovator

This group is relentlessly pushing forward. “The overarching vision of what I want to do is to build a more inclusive society,” says our subject Carl Martin, who’s launching a new professional social network as part of his company Wurqs. “I’d say 10, 15 years ago you were chasing the money, and five to seven years ago, you probably just wanted to work for the big-name company. And in the past couple years, people have connected to solving the hardest problems and the most important problems.

I think that’s a sea change to a generation of people who are more mindful about what they want to do and how they want to use their time and the impact they want to have in the world.” This innovational mood has translated into the broader work place, too. Daniel Dworkin, a partner at Schaffer Consulting, told Entrepreneur.com that “increasingly, millennials and the generations that follow are looking for companies that they can really connect with on more than just a transactional basis.”



Carl Martin, 30

Carl Martin is the founder of technology company Wurqs. He lives in London.



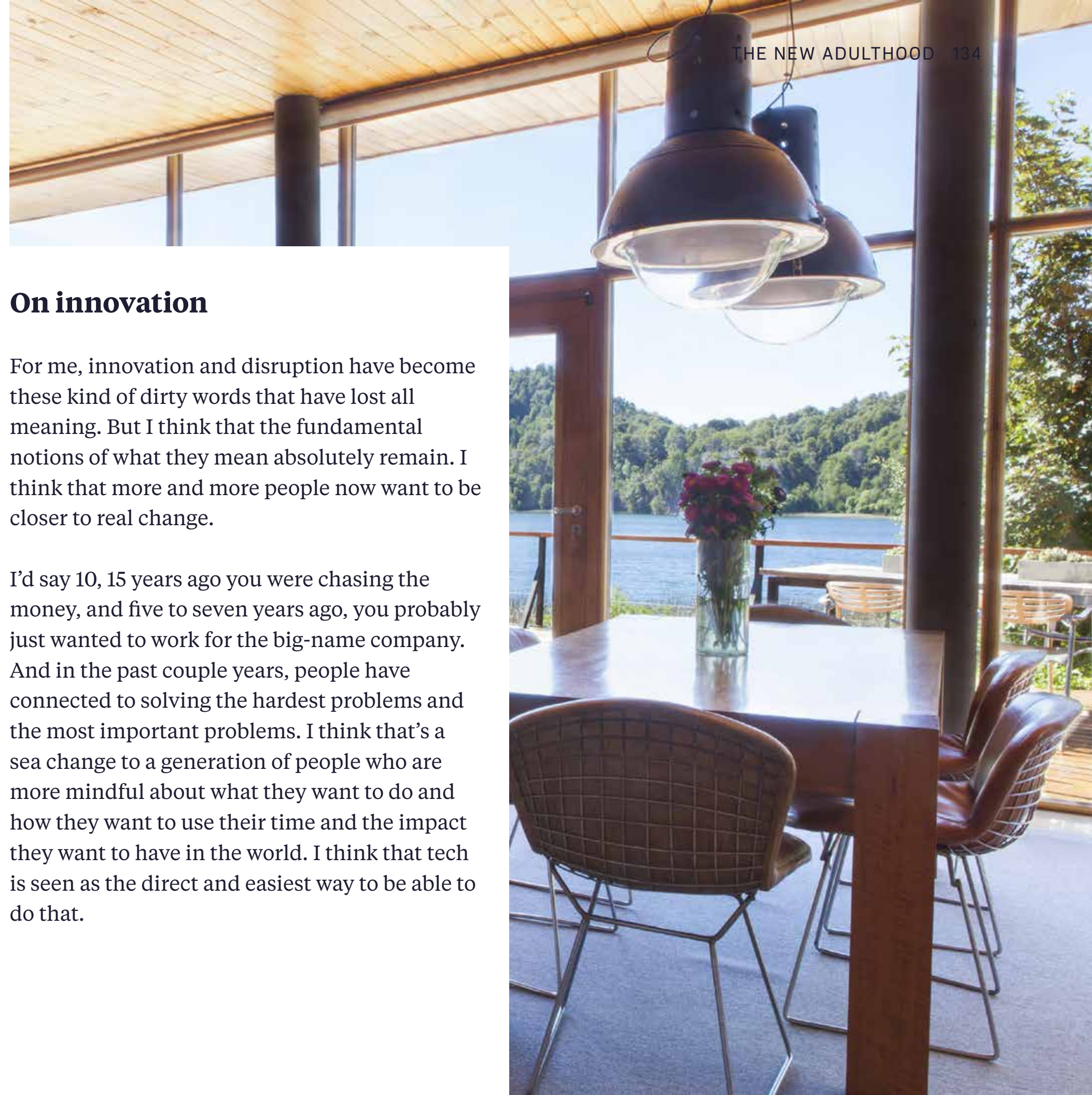
For me, the products that we build will fundamentally be designed to help people build better relationships, and so that's why the first product that we built, which is called Ping, is like a personal CRM—it's like your relationship manager in your pocket.

It's designed to help you share your information and connect with new people wherever and whenever. But then we can start to use the data that is around that connection to make sure you don't forget anyone. We have a functionality called reminders. We'll remind you a week, a month, three months or a year after you met someone. This isn't about becoming a new chat app—this is about collecting all of this data and serving it up to people in useful ways, so that in the rat race and hustle of doing what they do as a day job, they make sure they don't forget any people who they think or believe might be important to them in the future.

On innovation

For me, innovation and disruption have become these kind of dirty words that have lost all meaning. But I think that the fundamental notions of what they mean absolutely remain. I think that more and more people now want to be closer to real change.

I'd say 10, 15 years ago you were chasing the money, and five to seven years ago, you probably just wanted to work for the big-name company. And in the past couple years, people have connected to solving the hardest problems and the most important problems. I think that's a sea change to a generation of people who are more mindful about what they want to do and how they want to use their time and the impact they want to have in the world. I think that tech is seen as the direct and easiest way to be able to do that.



If the overarching vision of what I want to do is to build a more inclusive society, I'm sure there are plenty of ways to try and do that without tech. But in light of the career that I've built in the past 10 years, this feels like the best place for me to start. I could be working for a nonprofit, or be working with an organization directly supporting a marginalized group of people, but for me, what I'm doing is the best place to start. The attitude is that technology and the idea of disruptive or innovative solutions is the quickest route and a way to do that at scale, in many ways.

On ethics

I believe passionately in designing more responsible products—ones that aren't competing for attention and ones that create value when they need to create value. At the same time, there's a generation of people now who have all this technology available to them, but are still drawn to real-world experiences

with real people. My company has core values and one of them is that humanity is greater than technology.

It's a pledge to people who engage with us that we'll be responsible about how we compete for their attention. With everything we do, we believe that the best way to build relationships with someone is to spend time with them in person. So we'll do everything we can to drive people to a point where they interact with someone or connect with someone in person.

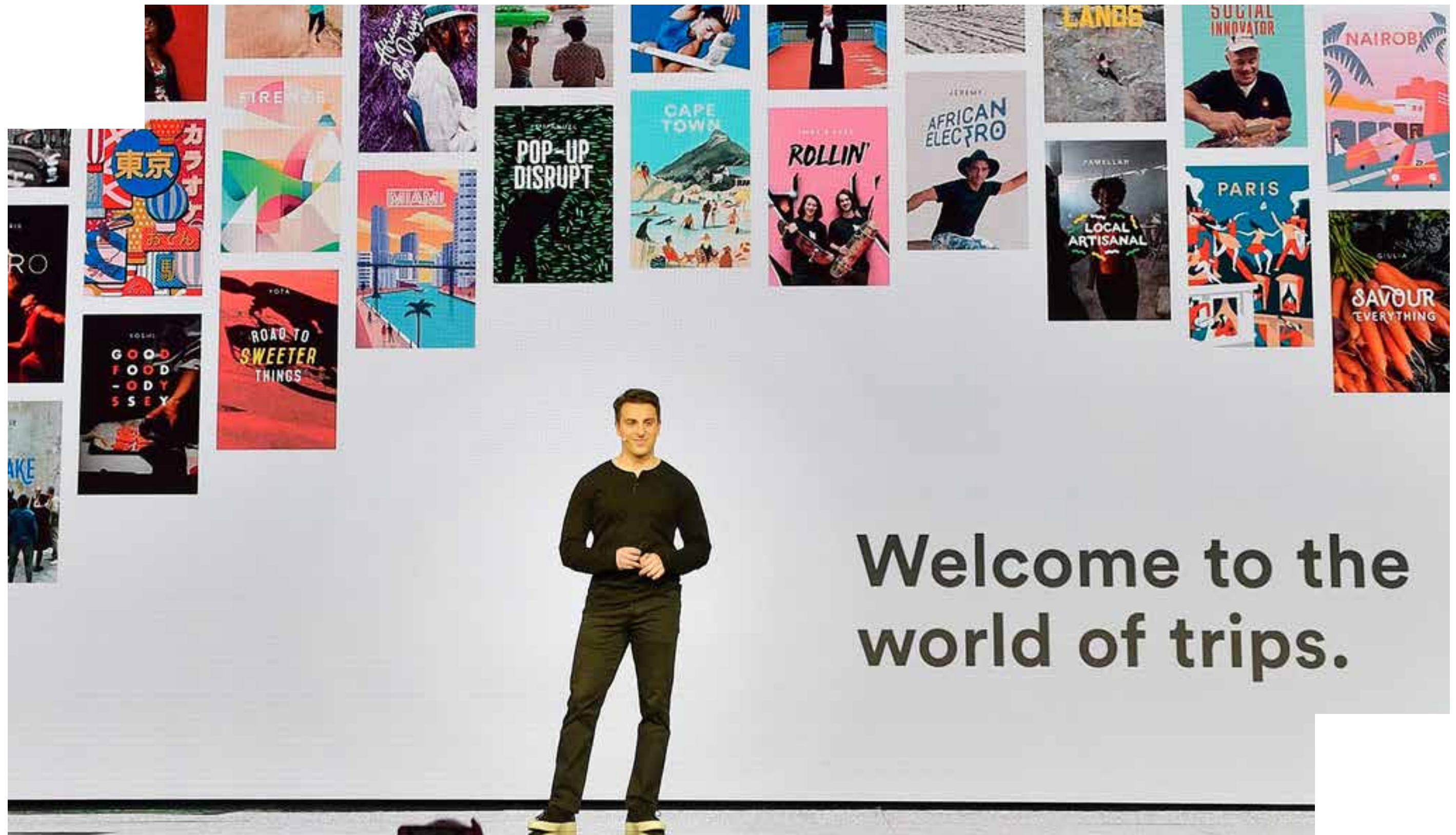
I fundamentally believe that digital addiction will be the next major health crisis in the developed world. Even though I don't think it's on a mass scale yet, I think there's going to be a huge fundamental attitude shift and mindset shift, and people are going to become a lot more mindful about their use of technology. I think there will start to be legislation about the use of technology to compete for attention.

I'm trying to build a company that's conscious of how people use tech and I care about the way people use tech.

On entrepreneurialism

My dad is an entrepreneur, he runs his own company and so I've been exposed to that world from a really early age. But I can definitely see where the recession has influenced people to pick up tools to try and make and build things themselves. It also sent more people traveling—people went out there and saw the world and opened their eyes, which also contributed to a change in attitude.

Entrepreneurship isn't for everyone. Not everyone is built to do this. I'm still trying to work out if I am. I've only been doing this a year. All these years I believed that I wanted to be one, but I don't know whether I'm resilient enough. I'm absolutely knackered.



Welcome to the world of trips.



Whether I can last another nine years of this or not, I don't know! I wanted to try, I wanted the learning experiences, but I think there is societal pressure for people to feel like they have to go out there and do something.

It's now becoming easier and easier to access capital and cash, even though it isn't always the smartest money. Everyone wants to be an angel investor. Because there's societal pressure to start and do stuff, and there's more money flooding the market, we're seeing more of that stuff pop up. But already the failure rate in building companies is so high. It's like, one in 10 is a success. Don't get me wrong, this isn't to knock people who try stuff. If investors are prepared to take the risk and that creates opportunities that weren't there, then happy days. But if people fail, how are they perceived in society and worry about their place in society is fueling anxiety and depression.

On politics

I think millennials and gen Z especially are wanting to take action or be part of making change, and I think that's a huge part of the political climate, for sure.

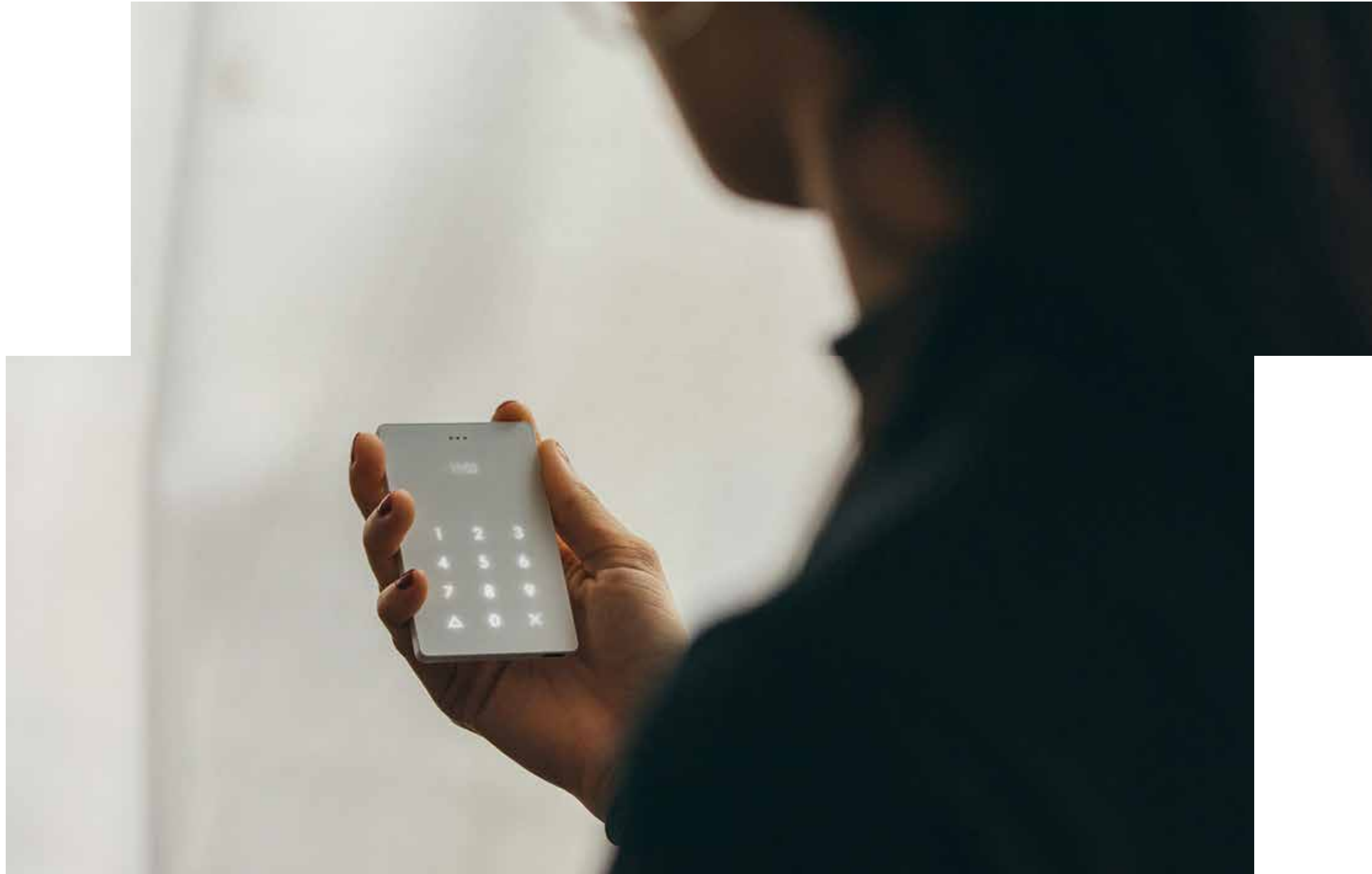
Thanks to the internet, the voices of marginalized people, that have either been unheard or ignored for many years, are now louder than ever, right? I think that it's hard to avoid, especially when we spend so much time on the internet. It's hard not to engage in some way with the plight, or issues, or needs of marginalized people.

And then you've got major societal events like Brexit and Trump, and I think those are connecting people with this plight in a more deep and meaningful way.

On the future of work

I think it's a generation of people who bring their whole selves to work. Their work is an increasing source of their social life, and their ability to go out there and experience the world. The notion of culture has become the number one reason for selecting a company for this generation.

They want to be somewhere where they feel like they can make friends and build real relationships with people. With my business I want to break down the notion that there's a professional self and personal life. You can share your failures and weaknesses. And you can put forward your personality and your passions and interests, and all those things that really make up and define who you are, versus just the skills on paper that have previously defined who you are at work.



The Light Phone, a digital detox product with fewer features designed to help users log off

On brands

Airbnb is probably my number one. They're just a great design company. As someone who worked in design most of my career, I love what they do. And you feel their values in everything they do, whether it's products, whether it's communications, whether it's statements and actions, whatever it might be—this notion of belonging anywhere and believing anyone can belong anywhere. It just emanates from everything. The work that they're doing around housing refugees, for example—I think it's part of a plan to house 100,000 refugees. And whenever there's a terrorist attack, or a crisis, or a natural disaster, they do so well to mobilize homeowners in and around those affected areas to make sure that people are safe and connected. It's not an afterthought, it's fundamental to how they operate.

On media

I don't believe it's easy to spot stuff that's not true nowadays. I try not to burden myself with too many challenges, but with all the amazing things technology can do, surely we can start using technology in ways to validate truth?

Any tweet, any comment online, any news article, you need to be able to hit a button and that tells you whether it's real or not. Or every piece of content has to be published with some sort of score to indicate its authenticity or relevance or reality. But I think there's no money there, so why would a company do it?



On adulthood

I feel like now there's a lot of pressure on people to feel like they have to go out and build something themselves. I feel like there has suddenly become this expectation:

“Oh shit, all these people are building companies or starting things—if I'm not them am I falling behind or am I a failure?”

But on the flip side, one thing I think is good in how adulthood has changed is that more and more people now are really valuing experiences, which is huge. The nomadic lifestyle, for example, is becoming more prevalent. That's a wonderful thing—it's encouraging more people not to think about the physical limitations of where they are and what they're doing. The very definition of what it means to work and build a career is warping, slowly but surely. Whether it's all positive, I'm not so sure.

But, for me, if anything starts to create more freedom, whether that's for people who want to try and build things off their own back or people who want to be able to travel the world, I think that freedom is the key motivator for people nowadays.

 carlmartin

“For me, innovation and disruption have become these kind of dirty words that have lost all meaning. But I think that the fundamental notions of what they mean absolutely remain. I think that more and more people now want to be closer to real change.”

Carl Martin, founder, Wurqs

The Corporate Warrior

This type might thrive on experiences, but they also want a good deal when they're taking off around the world. These millennials "highly value loyalty programs that reward customers with enhanced customer service and special status," says the author of Forrester's "What Millennials Need From Your Loyalty Program" report in an accompanying blog. "Millennials cherish this sense of validation and exclusivity."

However, millennials want different rewards from loyalty programs. "While customers of every generation want discounts, millennials *also* expect loyalty programs to offer a premium customer experience," says the report's author. "Younger consumers want the flexibility of applying loyalty points to a variety of benefits—from travel upgrades to digital media content to charitable donations—while their older counterparts are happy using their points to get cash back."

Indeed, points can open up a whole new world of luxury travel for this group, as our subject Angelina Aucello says. "If I fly Singapore First Class Suites, I enjoy that flight just as much as I enjoy my destination, because the whole experience is exciting for me—the lounge, the dining in-flight, the pajamas," says Aucello. "That's a luxury that I could never attain—I would never spend the money, but because I'm getting it at such a great deal with the miles, it almost feels like I earned it, and it's a conquest for me."



Angelina Aucello, 30

Travel blogger Angelina Aucello writes under the banner Angelina Travels, charting her luxury travels using points and miles. She lives in New Jersey with her husband and two children.



I've been smart-luxury traveling for a long time with my family. My dad is from Italy so we spent a lot of time going to Europe and traveling a lot as a family when I was younger. My dad is very frugal, so he would naturally always find the best deal, and then we discovered credit card rewards and miles and points, all of the loyalty programs, and we really studied how to truly maximize the value and go for the best redemptions we could get. It became a family hobby.

I started the blog to show people that it's not that hard to do the same thing. It's nice to treat yourself to things that you normally would not pay for—like, I wouldn't spend \$15,000 on a first-class ticket to Asia, when I can use the miles and pay a small fee and the taxes associated with the ticket.

On travel

I really did start the blog as my own documentation of my own hobby, just to share with my friends and family, but I realized people were actually reading it. I also realized the miles and points space is very male-dominated, and I was a young, peppy girl in my twenties sharing my travel stories. It became a very real approach to people in my generation—somebody their own age actually doing this. I was taking spontaneous trips, saying, "Oh my friends and I are flying to Tokyo for the weekend." I went to Seoul one time just on a whim, because it was a good deal. My husband had a business opportunity in the Philippines, so a few years ago we lived there, and of course I used that as an opportunity to explore Southeast Asia on my own.

If I fly Singapore First Class Suite, I enjoy that flight just as much as I enjoy my destination, because the whole experience is exciting for me—the lounge, the dining in-flight, the pajamas. That's a luxury that I could never attain—I would never spend the money, but because I'm getting it at such a great deal with the miles, it almost feels like I earned it, and it's a conquest for me.

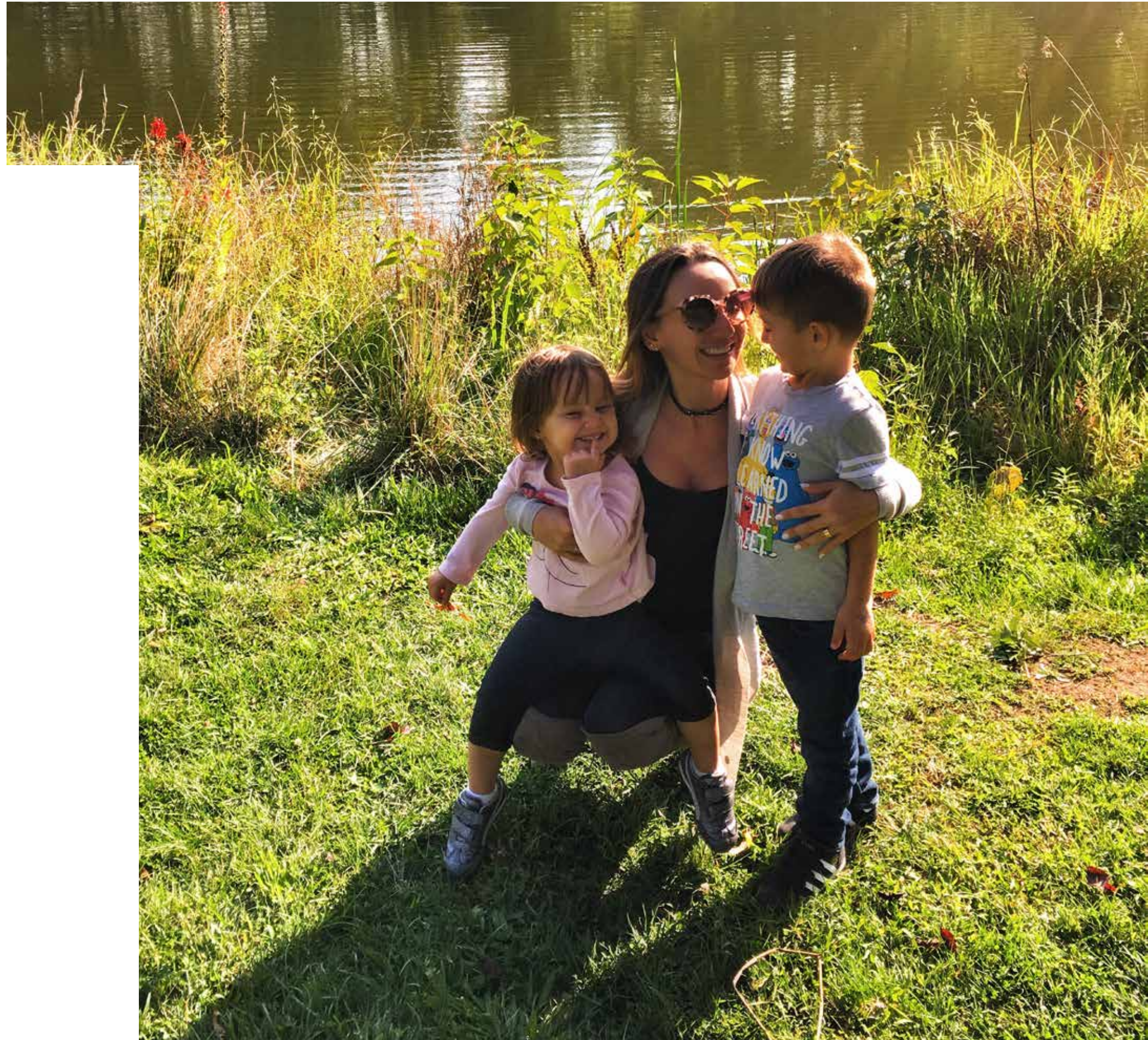
On career

It's still a lot of work to run a blog, but it's not like I have to wake up to report to anybody, or get dressed to commute to work, and it's really nice to have that freedom. My generation aspires to have a life that is very free. In my parents' generation, the American dream was getting a great job at a bank on Wall Street—and then you've made it in life.

My generation is shifting to the dream being freedom—having the ability to work wherever there is wifi, to go to another country and connect and create content, to be totally mobile and remote.

I went to a great college and graduated with honors, but I never had a traditional job afterwards. In the beginning, my dad was kind of disappointed. But now he's realized times have changed, people make money online, and that's the new American Dream.

I'm also seeing a shift in the workplace. My brother was born in 1990, so he's a typical millennial. It's funny—we're only three years apart, but our mindsets are slightly different. He enjoys having a job, but his workspace has a ping-pong table, Fridays off—so it's pretty relaxed, not so structured. I feel it used to be so uptight and rigid—people had to go in suits and be very formal.



On spending priorities

I don't own a home because I'm afraid of having commitment to one place. That scares me because I like being on the go. I wouldn't spend my time gardening, or fixing electrical problems, or doing things around the home. It's easier to rent, where I can have the freedom to just pick up and go when I need to go.

I don't like collecting stuff. I don't have knick-knacks or stuff cluttering my space. I live very minimally. Even with two children now, everything is just compact. We travel lightly, we don't like having things to hold us down.

On the media

I trust what I see with my own eyes. A lot of the time, the American media's news is fear-driven. I went to Israel, we rented a car and we drove to Palestine, and I imagined in my head—because

of what the news portrays—bombs and guns everywhere. It was such a shock to me because the people were very friendly. There was no hostility; it was perfectly fine.

I'm taking my children to Paris and some people in my circle who are not well-traveled are saying: "Isn't that very dangerous?" They'll bring in political stuff—"Paris is letting in refugees and attracting terrorism"—and I'm thinking to myself: these people are so closed-minded because of what they are being fed in the media. When you travel, you open your eyes and your whole perspective changes. So, I'll watch foreign news, I'll watch European news. I don't limit myself to just what Fox 5 or CNN puts out at me.



angelinatravels.boardingarea.com



[angelinatravels](https://www.instagram.com/angelinatravels)

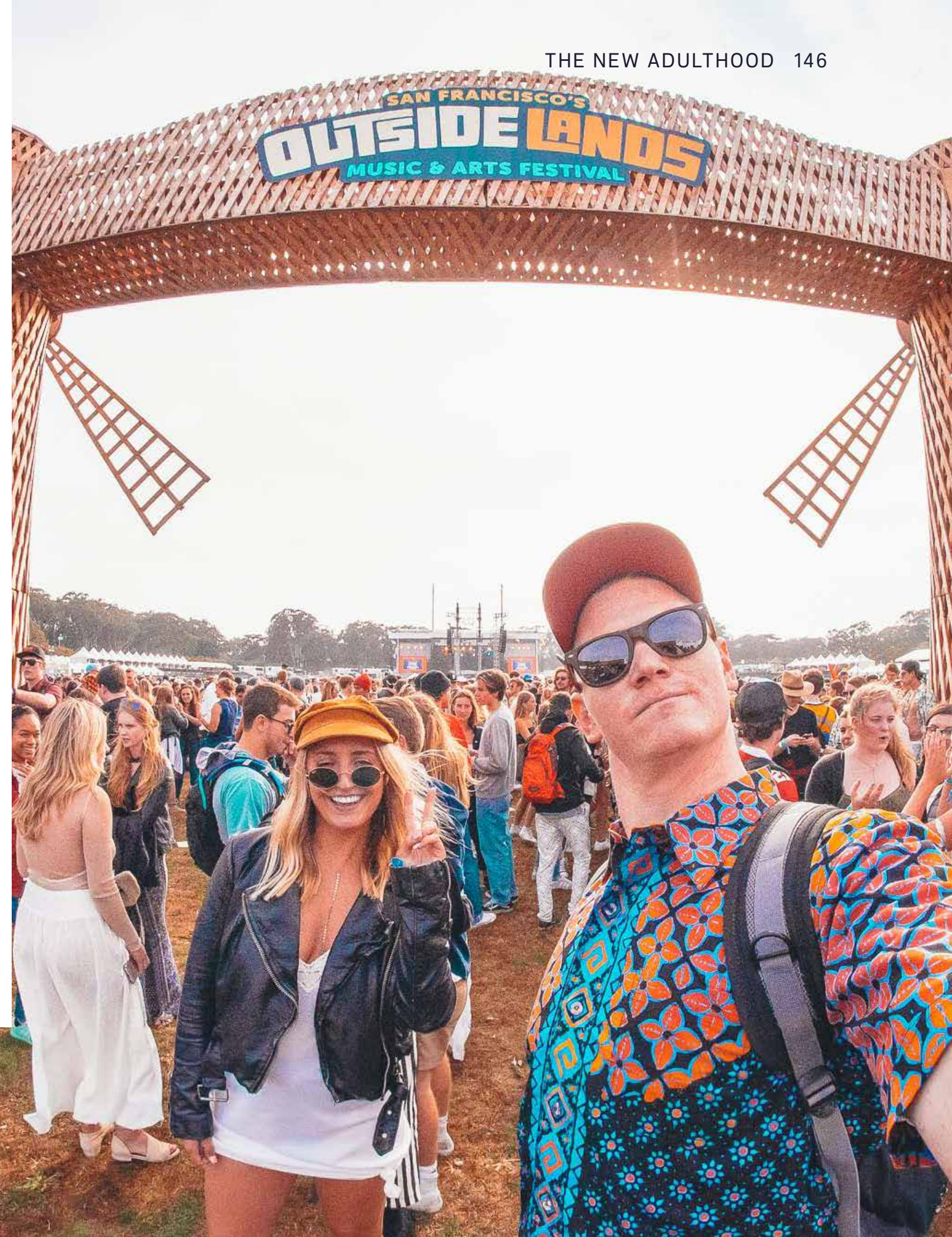
“I’ve been smart-luxury traveling for a long time with my family... we discovered credit card rewards and miles and points, all of the loyalty programs, and we really studied how to truly maximize the value and go for the best redemptions we could get. It became a family hobby.”

Angelina Aucello, founder, Angelina Travels

The New Adult Festivalgoer

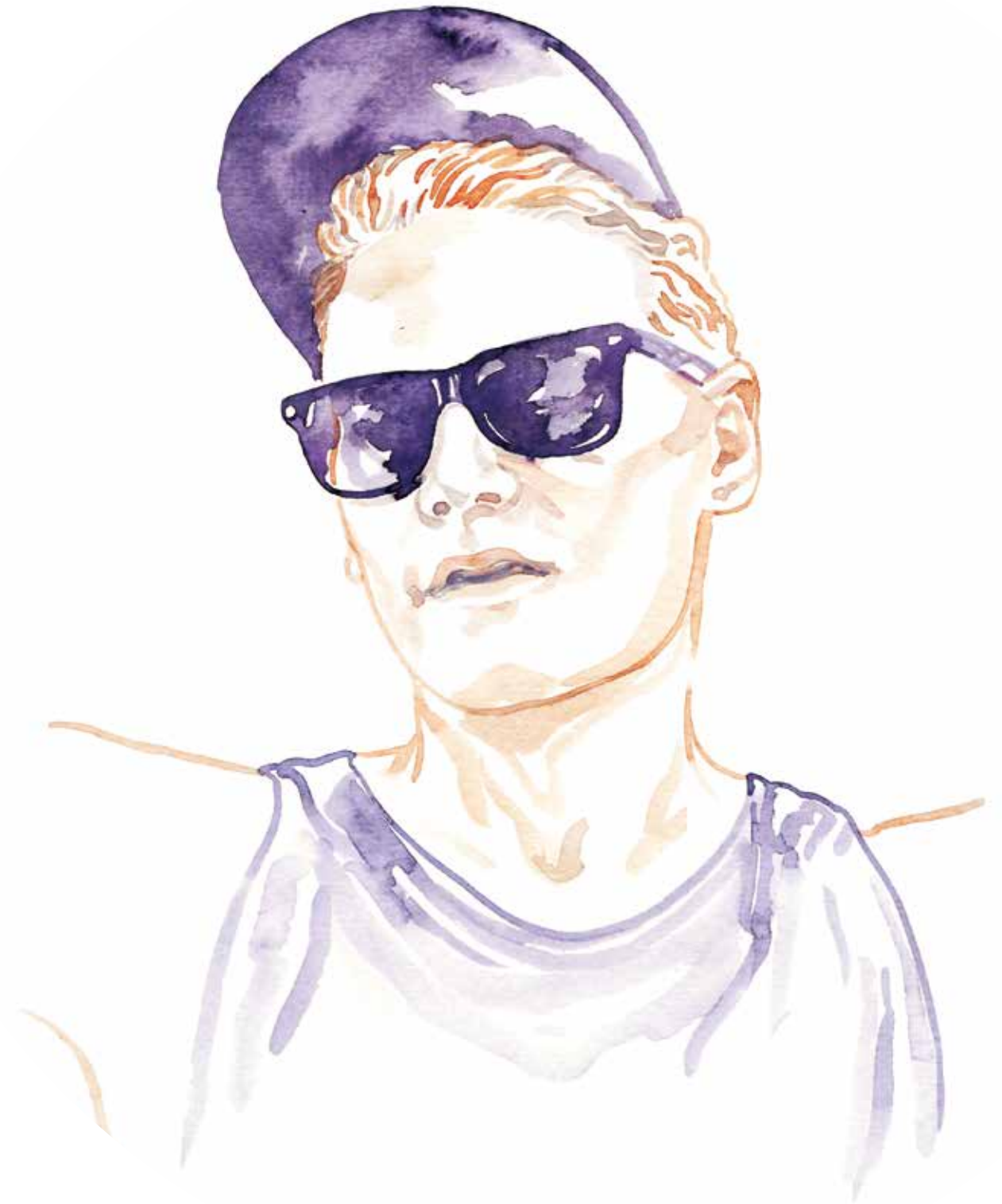
A festival is “the best way to spend a weekend, or the best place to party,” according to Dave Anderson, a blogger who visits dozens of festivals around the world. “It’s really cool to be able to meet people from all over the world,” he says. “It’s unlike any other vibe that you can create.”

From Burning Man and Glastonbury to Coachella and Wilderness, festivals are among those much-talked-about experiences on which millennials choose to spend their time and money. “Our generation, we’re getting married a lot older, and we’re putting focus on different things,” says Anderson. “We are putting a big emphasis on travel, and spending money on experiences and not things. It’s hard to speak for an entire generation because everyone’s different, but today—and with social media—we want to do cool things.”



Dave Anderson, 28

Dave Anderson writes the travel and festival blog Jones Around The World. He's currently based in California.



I was traveling, going to a lot of festivals, and the blog just happened really naturally. I get to do what I love—travel and go to music festivals—and I’m getting paid to do it. It’s a fun time to be alive.

On festivals

A festival is the best way to spend a weekend, or the best place to party. I don’t really like going to bars or clubs that much. Everyone’s really standoffish. But the atmosphere that’s created at festivals is really something special. That’s what I love about them. Hearing live music and dancing is one thing, but one of the best parts about festivals is getting to meet people from all over the world. At festivals, everyone is so open to meeting new people. It’s unlike any other vibe that you can create.

There’s one called Groove Cruise on a cruise ship. It was one of the most fun experiences of my entire life. Everyone is the nicest version of themselves, and there’s zero negative vibe. I went on my first less than a year ago, back in October 2016, and I had so much fun. I even met a couple that asked me to be their wedding photographer. They were: “we love you, we love your energy, we want you to be a part of our special day.”

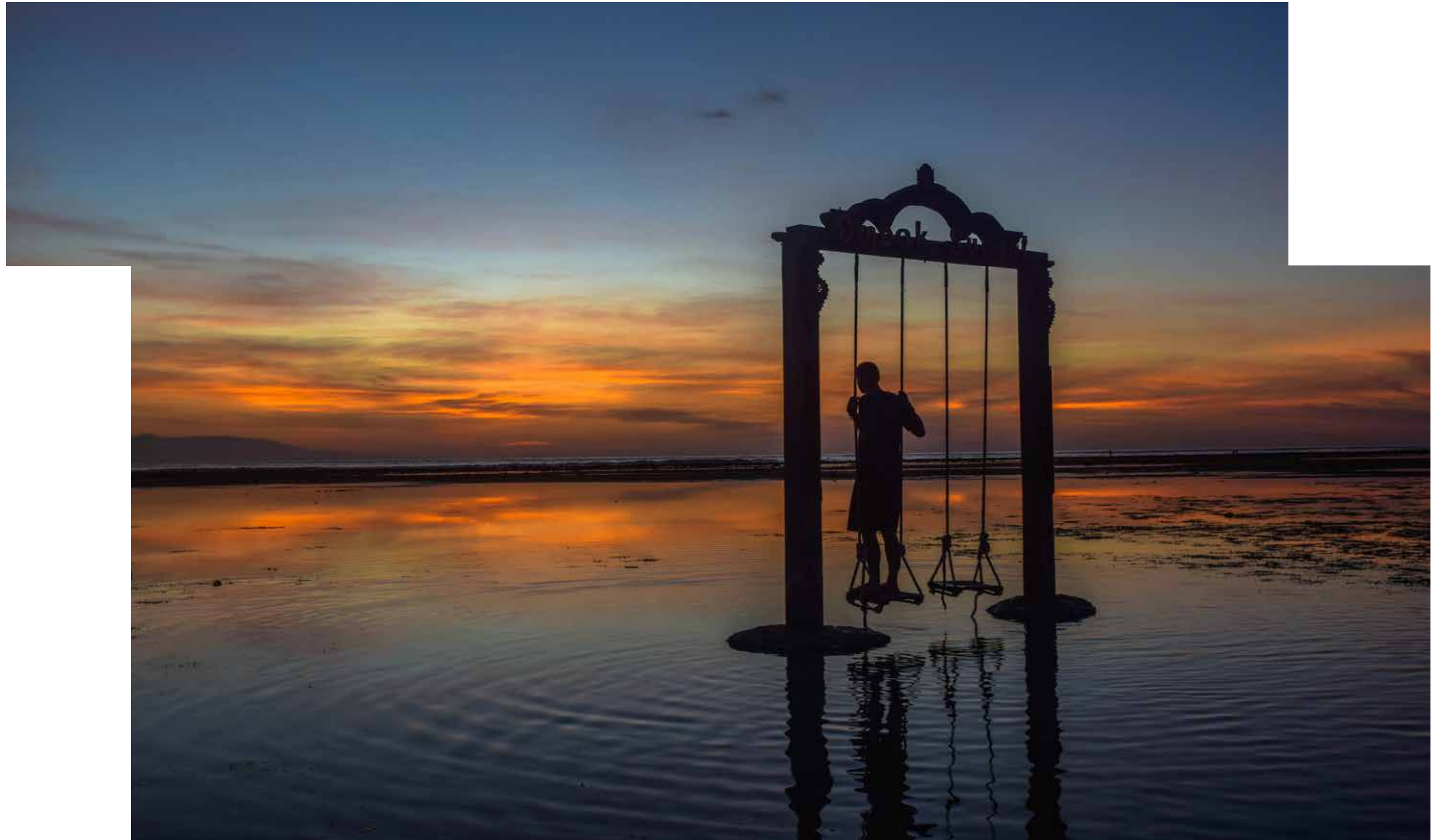
On creating his blog

When I started the website it was strictly for hobby purposes. I was writing about things that I loved, and I wasn’t a photographer before my blog. One of the reasons I got into photography was the website. I was going to places, I was writing about them, and I had terrible pictures with a small point-and-shoot. Maybe two years ago, I was: this is something that I want to do, and I want to take better pictures to have in my

blog, so I started teaching myself the basics of photography.

Before a travel blog, I had a music blog, which was my introduction to blogging. I didn’t make any money from that site. I had no idea how to monetize it, how to get web traffic. I almost quit my travel blog so many times because I wasn’t seeing any benefit. But I kept going with it, and then I got more opportunities. You start to network a bit more and get to know people in the industry, and they teach you things. It’s exciting because now I make an income from it, and I get to travel a lot because of it. I can say I built this from the ground up. It’s turned into this really cool job that I didn’t know existed.

What I like about being a blogger is that people can take it from a real person’s point of view. My blogs are successful because people like having a personal touch to their information.



On the freedom of travel

Next year, I want to move to Bali to focus a lot more on Asia and Australia. After that, I'm not really sure. I've got a few years in me of full-time travel, while I'm still young, I still have energy. But over time I know those energy levels are going to fall and I'll want to have a better base. But, right now, I'm going with the flow. I'm a full-time traveler. I love it. So if I get a really cool opportunity somewhere, or something in the States, I'm open to altering those plans.

For me, it was never about the recession. I got a job working as a tour guide in Italy after I finished my bachelor's degree. I thought I would go travel and work abroad for a year, maybe two, then come back to LA and get a job at a movie studio. But once I went, I realized that I really enjoyed living abroad, being an ex-pat and

traveling a lot. I kept going with it.

On the generational shift in priorities

Our generation, we're getting married a lot older, and we're putting focus on different things. I have very few friends who are married and have kids at 28, when 20 years ago, almost everyone was married already at that age. For the most part, we are putting a big emphasis on travel, and spending money on experiences and not things. It's hard to speak for an entire generation because everyone's different, but today—and with social media—we want to do cool things. We've pushed everything back a little bit. We want a little bit more time before we lock down any serious commitment.

I have a few friends who are very traditional, and they want different things. They look at me, and they think I'm crazy because I'm just traveling.

Some people don't understand it, and some people do.

On brands

I've been a big fan of STA Travel because I would book all my flights through them, and I like that they had student discounts. Any company that focuses on giving young people those experiences, I like that a lot. STA have done a good job of being a leader in student travel.



[jonesaroundtheworld.com](https://www.jonesaroundtheworld.com)



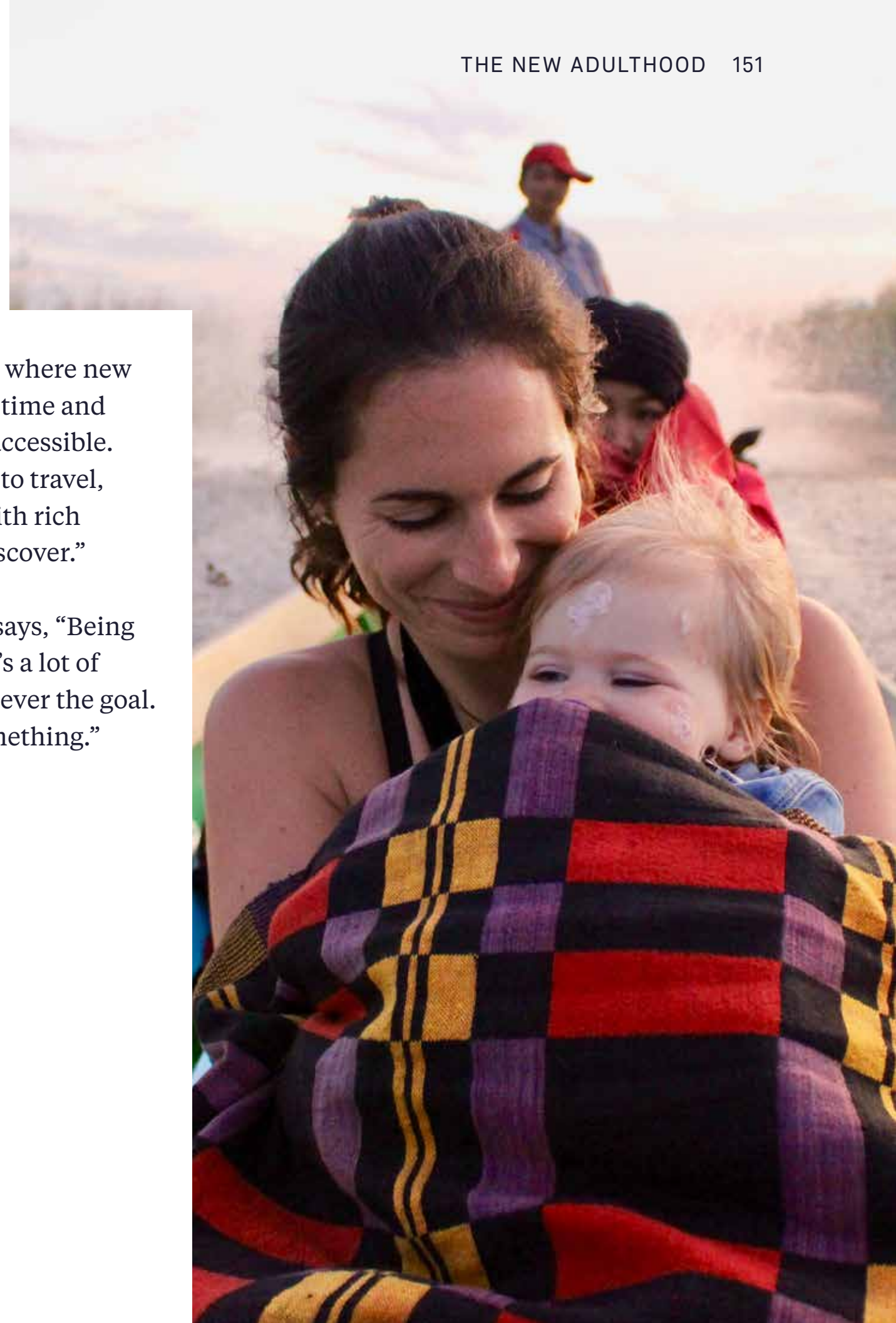
[jonesaroundtheworld](https://www.instagram.com/jonesaroundtheworld)

The New Adult Backpackers

Adventurous travel with kids? No problem for this group, which makes toting a baby up mountains in Japan or through Middle Eastern markets look effortless. This trend isn't limited to Instagram and the blogosphere. According to a 2016 survey from British Airways, there's a rise in "intrepid" travel among families, with destinations such as Cambodia, Iceland, Sweden, and Peru becoming popular among Brits traveling with their children. "The face of family travel has changed dramatically in recent years," Claire Bentley, managing director of British Airways Holidays, told the Scotsman.

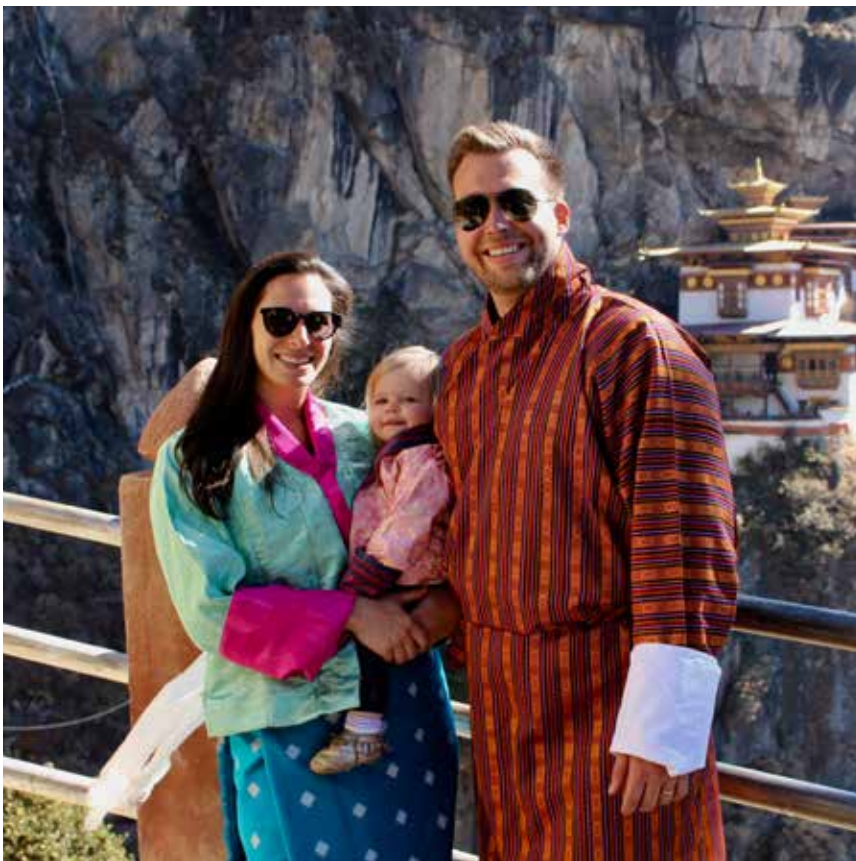
"We now live in a connected world, where new destinations are opening up all the time and the web has made the world more accessible. Children are not seen as restrictive to travel, but essential travel companions, with rich experiences and new cultures to discover."

As our subject Erica Levine Weber says, "Being a traveler and being a parent, there's a lot of similarities and that perfection is never the goal. You're just trying to experience something."



Erica Levine Weber, 32

Erica Levine Weber is an American travel blogger, writing as The Worldwide Webers. She currently travels from London, where she is based with her husband and two children.



We travel using our expat base. In the UK, we're traveling to a lot of European places. While we were in South Africa, before and after having our first child, we traveled mostly around Africa. And Singapore, pre-baby, was most of Southeast Asia.

We never really thought that we wouldn't continue living our life the way we wanted to live it. It wasn't an active decision to make sure that our daughter sees the world. It was more like: we love to travel, we love our baby, we live as expats, and travel is just part of our lives.

Maybe it's the selfishness of our generation, but I am selfish enough to want both to have a family and have my own personal interests continue to flourish. I don't want to progress in only one direction.

On traveling as a parent

Nobody can ever really prepare you to be a parent. It's harder and easier than you ever expected. It's unbelievably exhausting, but unbelievably satisfying at the same time. I'm very motivated to put people in a space where they believe they can travel with their kids. There's no difference between a little weekend trip and flying halfway across the world. You still bring the snacks, and the diapers, and you're still up against time and naps. If you can accomplish the everyday with a kid, you can accomplish the travel.

On starting her blog

I've always been somebody that people come to for tips, because we've traveled a lot and we have a lot of information to give.

I was constantly writing up lists in emails, like “here are some great places to eat in Hong Kong,” or “here’s a great itinerary we did in Malaysia.” Finally, my husband and my mom were: “This is so silly. You need to put everything online in a platform that people can access.”

I want to entertain people. I want them to feel confident that they can do it, and it doesn’t have to be perfect to be a parent or to travel with your kids. Being a traveler and being a parent, there’s a lot of similarities, and perfection is never the goal. You’re just trying to experience something. Sometimes those experiences are awesome and sometimes they’re not. Sometimes your kid has a total meltdown and you didn’t expect it and it wasn’t the greatest experience. Do you look back and say: “Well, we had a great 15 minutes at that market?” Or do you say: “Wow, that was an epic fail, let’s never do it again?” Either way, it was an experience.

The world is smaller than it used to be for our parents. I’ve lived abroad for over four years now and my family is all in the US. We talk to them through FaceTime or Skype or Instagram Stories. They see my daughter every day. It doesn’t feel like you’re so far away anymore.

On travel’s benefits

I come from a really traditional family. We ate dinner together. We all had our sports teams. We were really embedded in our community. We had a lot of family around us. That value is still very strong with me, but my husband and I are also interested in not just our local community, but also our global community. What world is our child growing up in? Can we expose her to that world? Can we expose ourselves to that world? Today’s kids are growing up with access to information, and access to see what other places look like that we never saw. I never dreamed of Cambodia when I was a kid, and kids today do.



We're not fully nomadic by any means. I know a bunch of nomadic families that are world schooling. They home school their kids on the go. They truly have no base. There's that side of the pendulum, and then there's the full-on traditional growing up, which I did. There's something to be said for both, and I always hope to find a middle ground, where you raise a kid in a larger community than just your local neighborhood. I'm always going to be looking for that balance.

As parents, we want to be really open-minded and conscious of what's going on in the world and what other cultures do—that really affects our parenting and the lifestyle we are leading currently, or dream of leading in the future. By bettering ourselves and opening our eyes, even if we're not on a trip, we always have that in the home. I collect cookbooks from around the world, and I'm constantly cooking various things that we ate in Southeast Asia or in Eastern Europe.

I believe in routine and structure for my daughter, but I also believe in making sure she's adaptable to real life—and sleeping in different cots, or sleeping on the go, or trying new foods, or being around new smells, or new environments. That means her not being scared in a marketplace, and us not being scared as parents to take her there—to Morocco or Oman. It means us having confidence as parents that we can protect our kid in a variety of situations, and not making the world a scary place—for all of us.

On career

I come from an entrepreneurial family and went to school for entrepreneurship. Doing your own thing is always going to be more satisfying than working for somebody else. That's very ingrained in our generation. You don't have to just follow. You can lead at any age. Being unconventional is now almost conventional.

I graduated from university in 2007, and I joined a global company because I wanted to go abroad again at some point in my life. I had studied abroad a little bit, but I knew I wanted to see the world on somebody else's dime. I was with them for eight years, and I lived around the world, but it was a really hard job. You really dove in and it was blood, sweat, and tears, very hard work and long hours. The recession made me work even harder because I had a good job with a great company. It wasn't something that I was flippant about or willing to give up quickly. Now that things are better with the economy, kids sometimes don't realize that hard work is how you get anywhere, whether that's along conventional paths or unconventional.

That work ethic still drives me outside of my work, outside of that conventional life now. I don't take that for granted.



On experiences versus things

My husband and I are not of the mindset of buying a home. We would rather put our money towards experiences and a journey that doesn't have a long-term address, necessarily. Obviously, owning a home versus renting has financial differences, but it's more about having the flexibility to go and do what we want to do without having our finances tied up. It's about being more fluid in all aspects of our life. We can move countries, continents, houses, jobs and that's definitely an "our generation" mentality.

On brands

My generation is more skeptical about the world, and we don't trust brands—especially the big brands. When we see smaller brands working with people that we almost feel like we know, because we watched their Instagram stories, and we watch their posts, there's a tie to real life. There's a real perspective coming through. It's not an advertisement that they spent millions of dollars on in a magazine or on the TV.

On media

Media playing has just become just as mobile and versatile as my generation wants in their life. We bring it with us now. We don't need to own the house with a TV on the wall to watch the show at 8 o'clock on Friday night. You can be in a hotel room, pretty much anywhere in the world and watch your favorite show, then go out and explore the next day.

My dad still reads the paper every day. He watches the local nightly news every night. That's very traditional. Me and my generation? I'm watching everything from the CNN or the BBC pop-ups on my Facebook feed to Trevor Noah on The Daily Show. As a generation, we get our news from Jon Stewart and Trevor Noah, Samantha Bee. It's because they're entertaining, they're thoughtful. John Oliver is giving us more information than we ever would have read through in the *Economist*.

BBC, CNN and these news sources, they're not unbiased. When you travel and you see places in the world that you may have only seen in pictures and videos on the news, you realize that the reality of the situation may not be the same as the news covers. Traveling has really shown me what the real life looks like, versus the media life of a country—there are two different worlds.

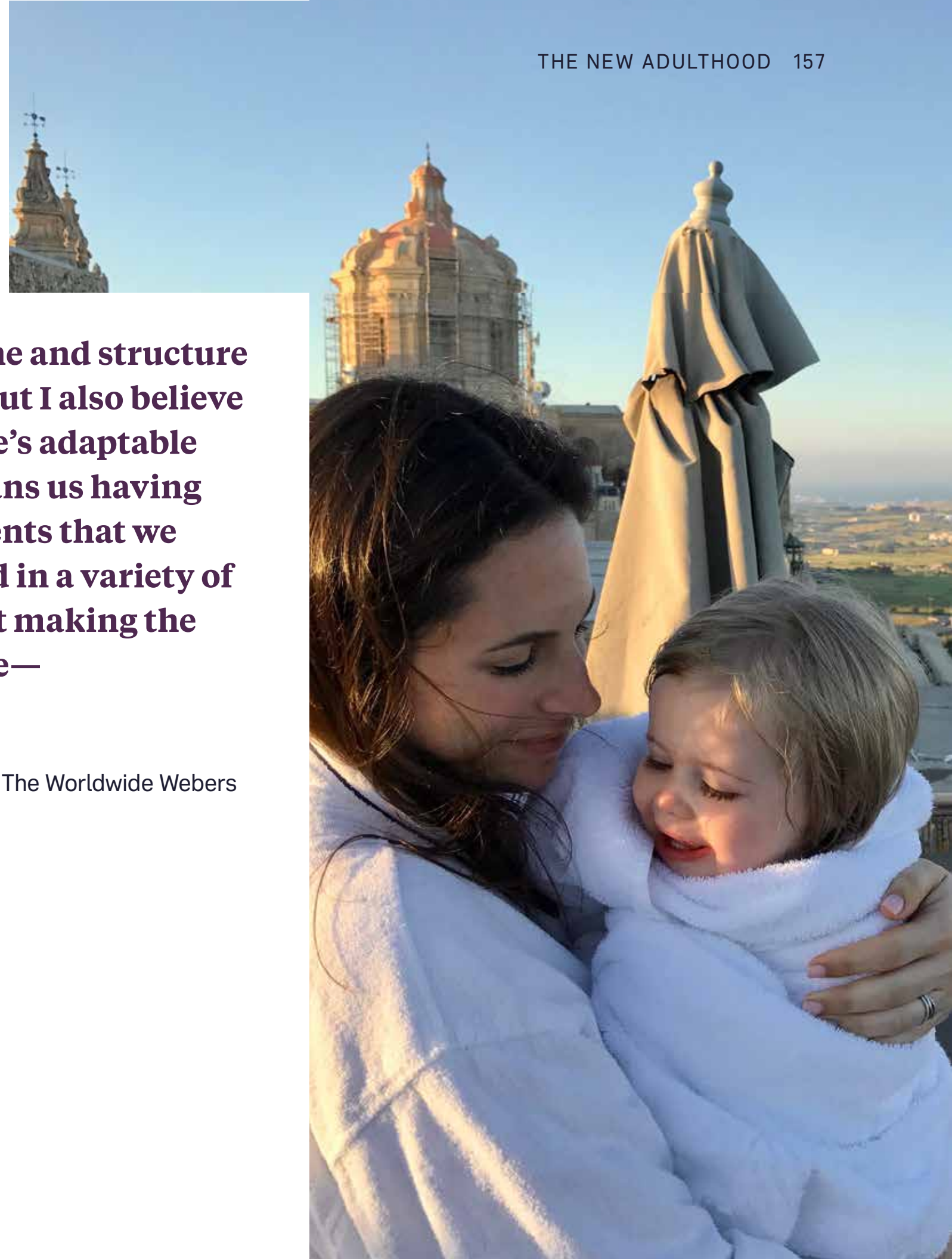
A lot of people looked at us like we have three heads when we took our daughter to the marketplaces of Morocco. We get a lot of weird “why would you go there?” moments from people, because we don’t choose conventional places to go. It’s because India and the whole Middle East is grouped as this place where people wouldn’t think to bring a kid. People were: “I can’t believe you brought your toddler to India. Aren’t you afraid she’s going to get so sick?” I’m, like: “No.” You take certain precautions and everything is fine. It’s hard. What you see on TV about India and hear about India versus the type of trip you can have and the type of experience—these are very different things.

 theworldwidewebers.com

 [theworldwidewebers](https://www.instagram.com/theworldwidewebers)

“I believe in routine and structure for my daughter, but I also believe in making sure she’s adaptable to real life... It means us having confidence as parents that we can protect our kid in a variety of situations, and not making the world a scary place—for all of us.”

Erica Levine Weber, founder, The Worldwide Webers



Ten Things to Think About:

- 1.**
New Adults are skeptical of the motivations and values of established companies—from big brands to the media. They appreciate transparency.
- 2.**
They value the flexibility of not having their money tied up in large investments, such as owning a home. Renting is often a conscious decision on their part.
- 3.**
Travel is a priority. Whether they're a single traveler visiting luxury resorts, or backpacking with their family around Asia, the experience is what counts.
- 4.**
They're not afraid to buck the norms of previous generations to solve the work-life balance, whether that's a father taking on the majority of childcare or a mother starting a child-focused company online.
- 5.**
They want their work to have a sense of social purpose.
- 6.**
Innovation is important to them, whether that's within a company or setting up a business of their own.

Ten Things to Think About:

7.

Wellness and fitness are not just about honing the optimal body, although that doesn't hurt. This generation wants to nourish the spirit, too, while living a modern, connected life.

8.

They're starting to breathe new cultural life into second cities, as they migrate to more affordable urban centers outside of New York or London, and bring their creative businesses with them.

9.

They straddle the analog and digital worlds, starting businesses that fuse those two spheres, thereby making themselves approachable to both older and younger generations.

10.

They take a frank, realistic approach to talking about life's challenges, whether that's parenthood or financial struggles—and they expect brands to do the same.

The New Adulthood:

By Numbers

By Numbers

As part of our research into New Adult attitudes towards life stages and lifestyles, between July and August 2017 we conducted a survey of US and UK consumers using SONAR™, J. Walter Thompson's proprietary research tool.

The survey is representative of the general population, with an emphasis on the New Adults. We surveyed 1,755 US consumers, including 473 20-29-year-olds, 783 30-45-year-olds, and 499 46-55-year-olds. In the United Kingdom, the survey included 480 20-29-year-olds, 787 30-45-year-olds, and 501 46-55-year-olds, a total of 1,768 consumers.

Defining Generations

Defining Generations

Stereotypes Need Not Apply

Most respondents are comfortable identifying generations, and are particularly accurate about the ages of millennial and generation X individuals. Generation Z, the newest and least familiar term, posed more of a challenge. Younger respondents are less accurate in matching age to generation across the board.

When it came to identifying their own generation, consumers had much more difficulty. In the United States, 65% of respondents agree that there isn't a name that reflects their generation. In the United Kingdom, the proportion rose to 72%. When forced to choose, 15% of 30-45-year-olds and 18% of 46-55-year-olds in the United States didn't agree with any of the options, and the same was true of 44% and 52% respectively in the United Kingdom. Older—not younger—generations are more likely to feel adrift.

What explains this response? Clearly, it's not unfamiliarity with the generational terms. Rather, consumers experience a disconnect between the stereotypical descriptions of generations and their own views of themselves.

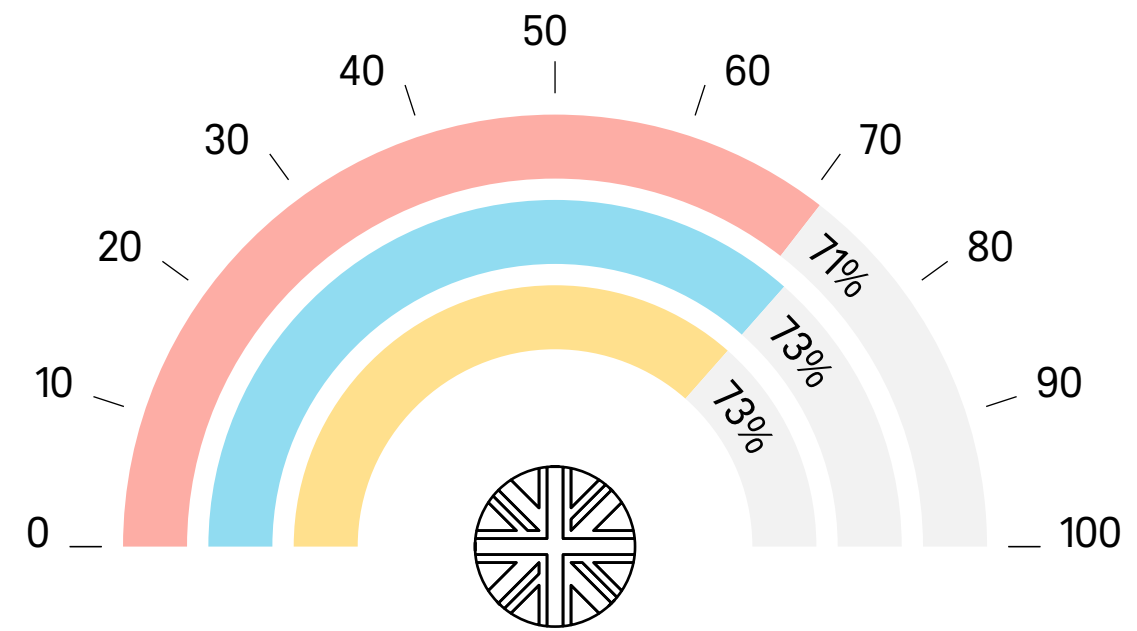
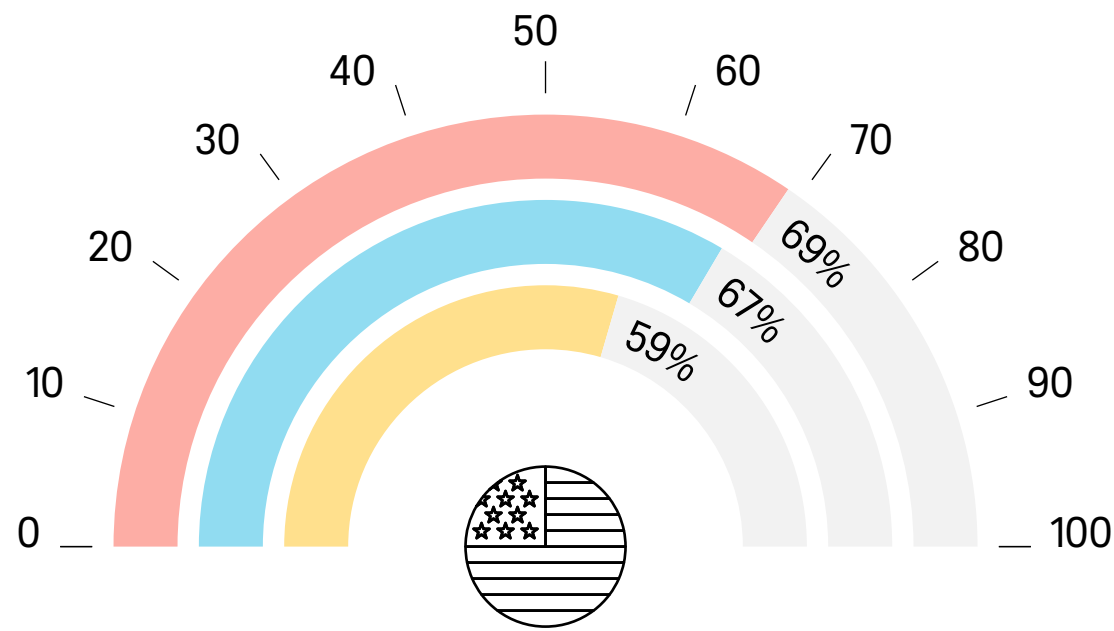
Tech Attitudes

Xennials are a plugged-in, digital generation. Accessing technology later in their childhood does not seem to have hindered their ease with it. Their views on technology align more closely with those of younger millennials (20-29-year-olds) than with those of the older members of generation X (46-55-year-olds)—particularly with regard to Silicon Valley and entrepreneurship.

BELONGING TO A GENERATION

Strongly/Somewhat Agree

I feel like there isn't a name that reflects the generation I belong to.



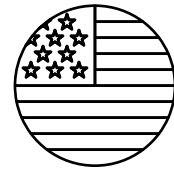
20-29

30-35

46-55

YOUNG PEOPLE ATTITUDES

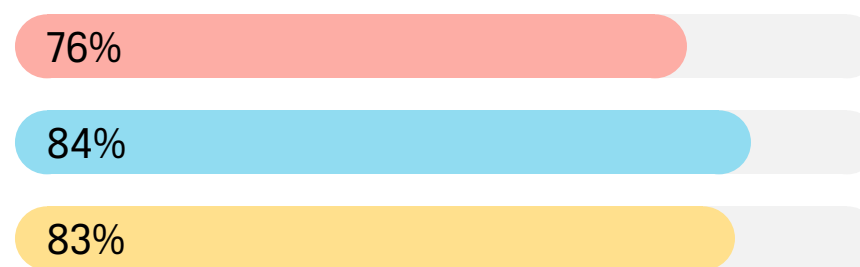
Strongly/Somewhat Agree



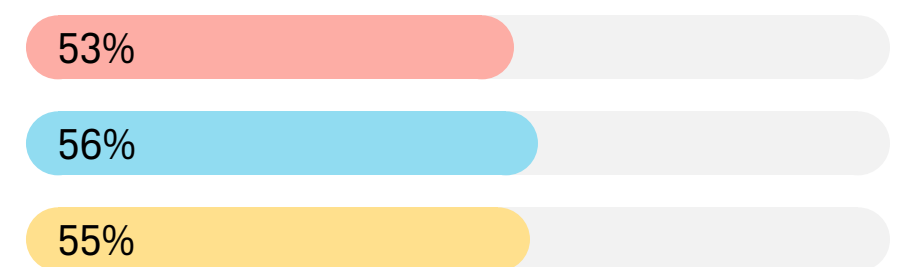
Today's young people don't take enough responsibility for their actions.



Today's young people complain too much.



Today's young people have it easier than previous generations.



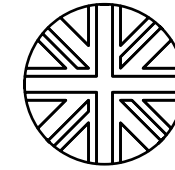
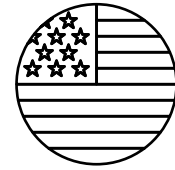
20-29

30-35

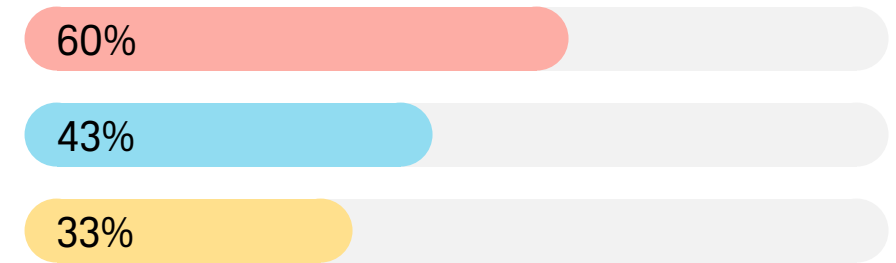
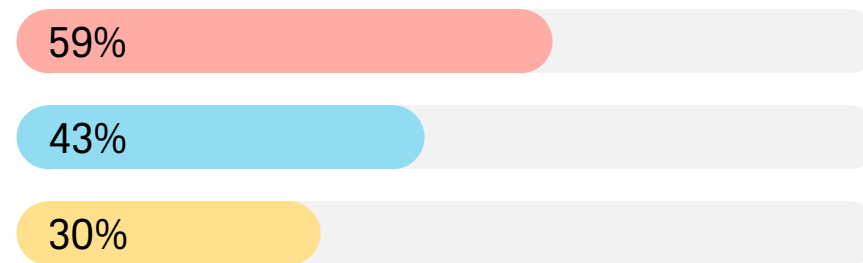
46-55

YOUNG PEOPLE ATTITUDES

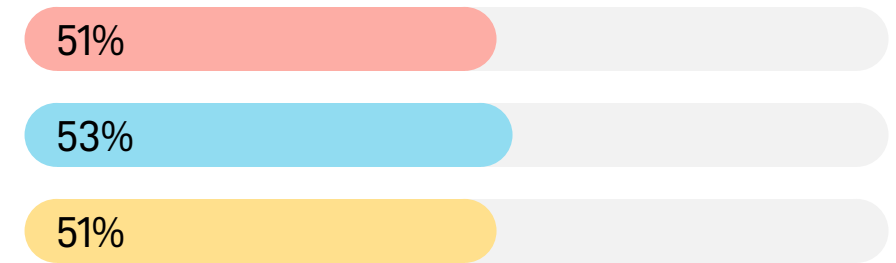
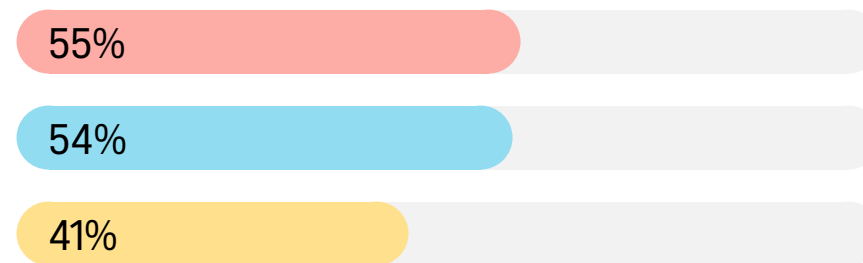
Strongly/Somewhat Agree



Today's young people were dealt a bad hand in life.



Today's young people are not so different from young people at any other time.



The stereotypical way people talk about my generation doesn't reflect me.



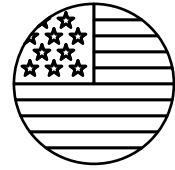
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DIGITAL ATTITUDES

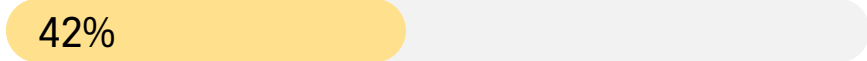
Strongly/Somewhat Agree



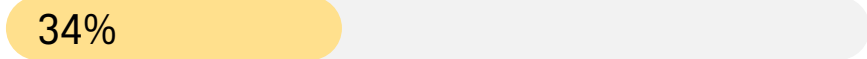
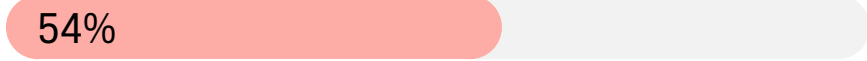
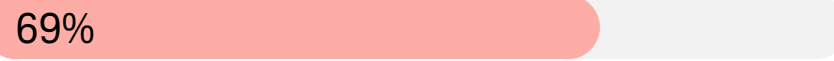
I feel confident that I will be able to master important tech skills in the future.



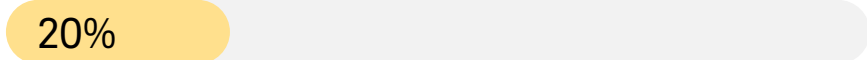
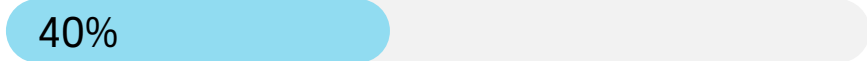
I consider myself a digital native.



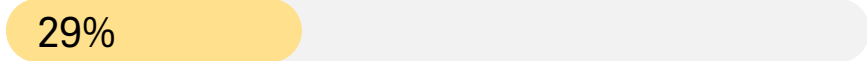
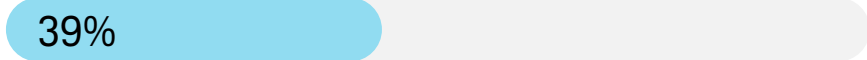
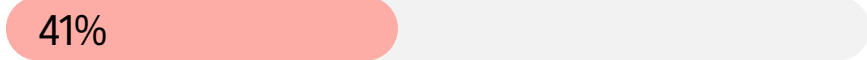
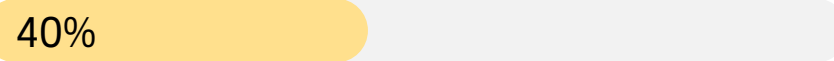
I have considered a career in technology at some point in my life.



I aspire to be an entrepreneur.



I can think of a couple of Silicon Valley/tech entrepreneurs that I admire.



20-29

30-35

46-55

Defining Adulthood

Defining Adulthood

What Does "Adulthood" Mean?

Millennials have redefined all the life stages once linked to “adulthood.” Marriage, career, mortgages: each milestone happens later, if at all.

As traditional markers erode, we polled consumers about what defines “adult” today. Markers like “Financially independent” or “Responsible for major purchases” scored high, while more traditional markers such as “Married” or “Have a plan for retirement” scored low. Age seems unconnected to maturity, with just 6% of US and 9% of UK respondents selecting it as a key indicator of adulthood.

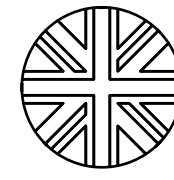
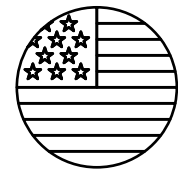
We also asked respondents to select what age they feel—mentally, physically and emotionally. Though New Adults (30-45-year-olds) are starting to feel their age physically, they are young in every other way. Emotionally and mentally, they feel closer to a millennial 35 years old. And nearly half (47%) agree that “people never truly become adults.”

Keeping Up With the Joneses

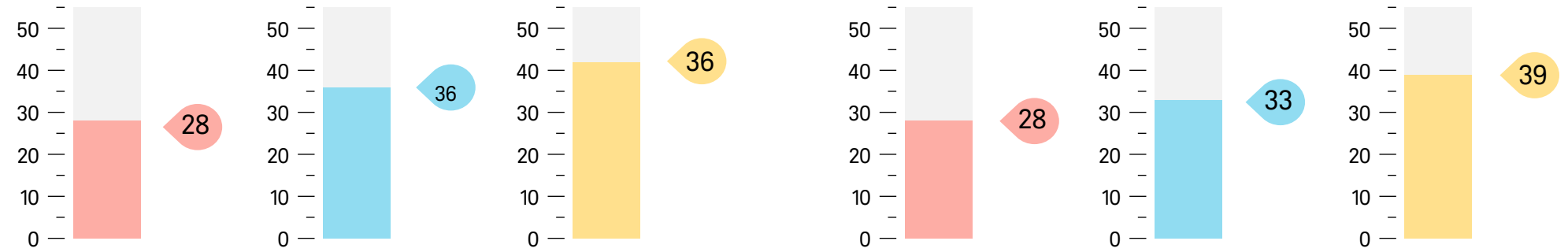
Young millennials (aged 20-29) take a more optimistic view of their own success, relative to their peers. New Adults have more anxieties around finances and career—though many feel on track when it comes to their families.

Overall, consumers tend to feel behind the curve in terms of marriage, kids, and paying off their loans. Despite that, today’s 30-45-year-olds still comfortably view themselves as adults: 94% of New Adults in the United States and 92% in the United Kingdom agree that their peer group generally considers themselves adults—nearly as many as the 96% of boomers.

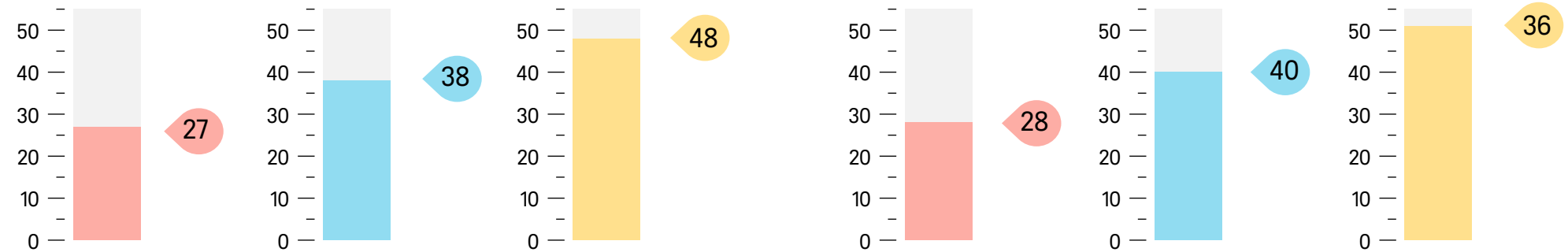
AGE



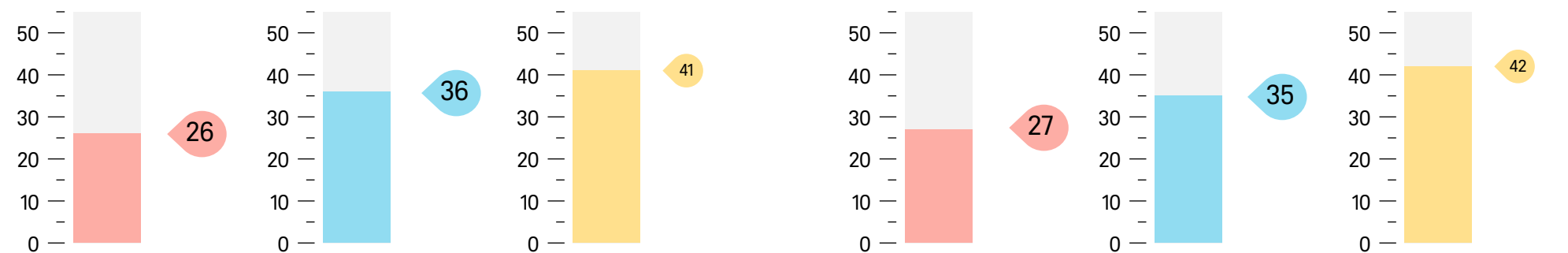
Mentally



Physically



Emotionally

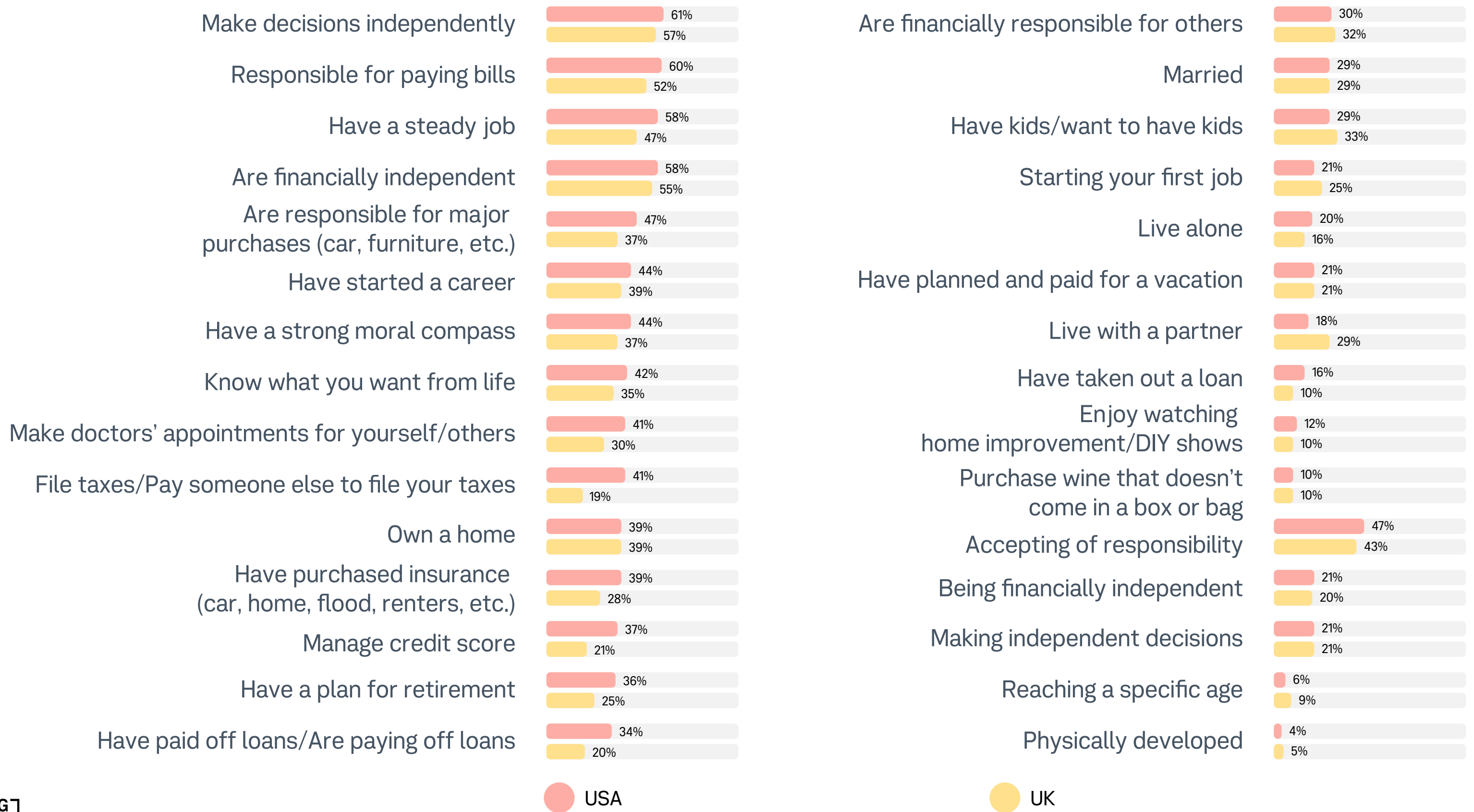


20-29

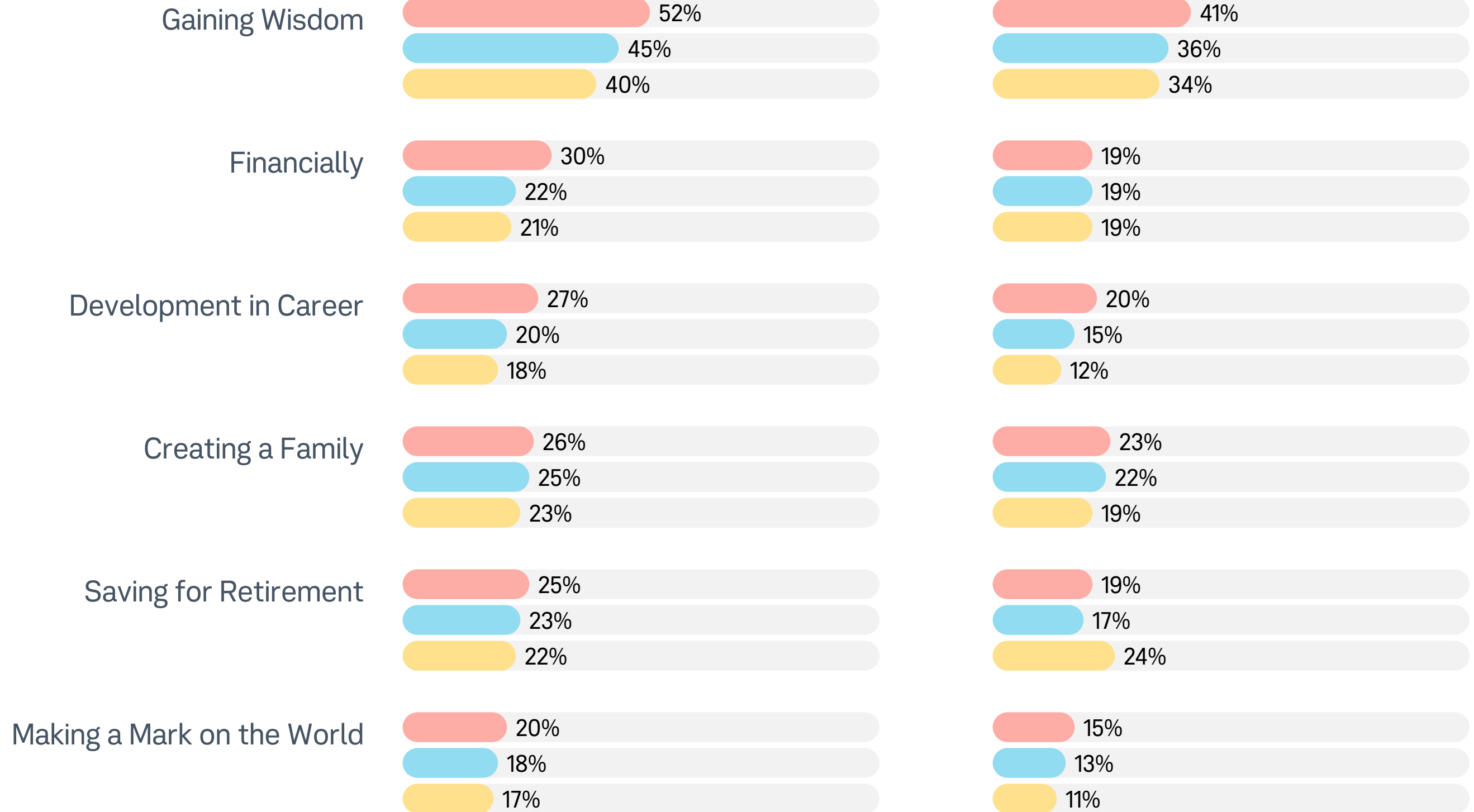
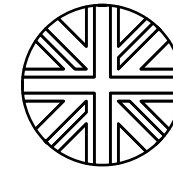
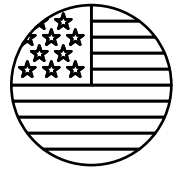
30-35

46-55

INDICATORS OF ADULTHOOD



KEEPING UP WITH THE JONES' Ahead Of My Peers



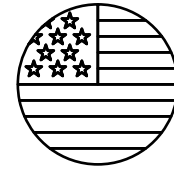
20-29

30-35

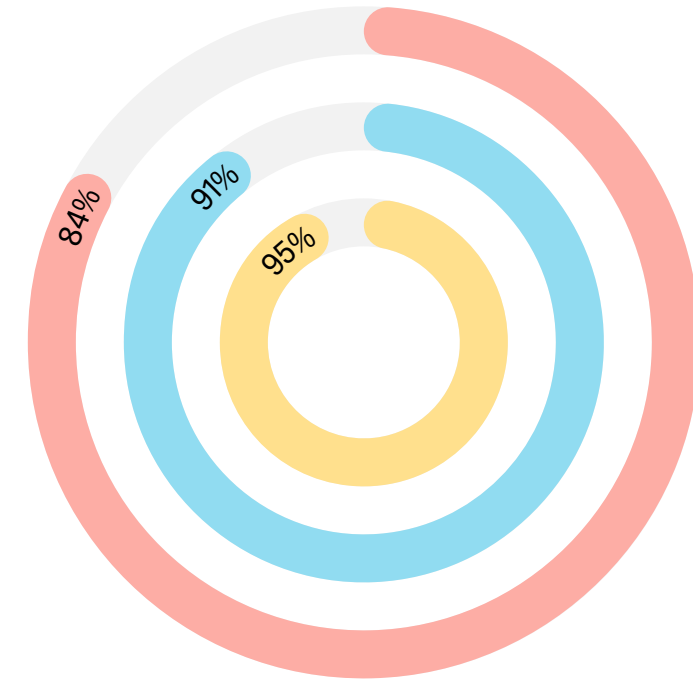
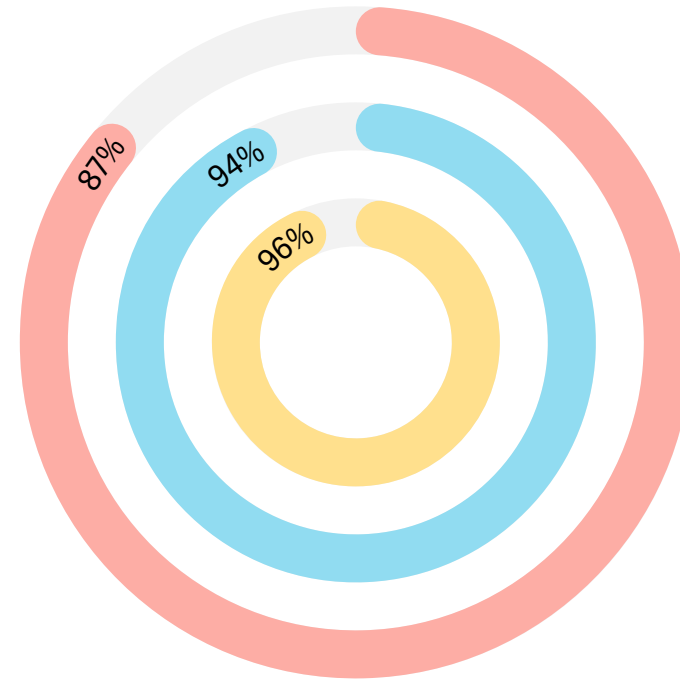
46-55

ARE WE ADULTS?

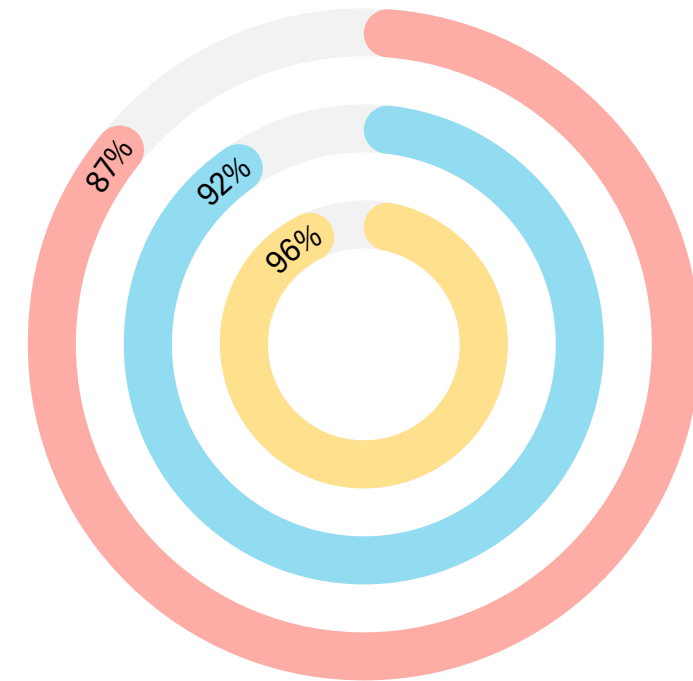
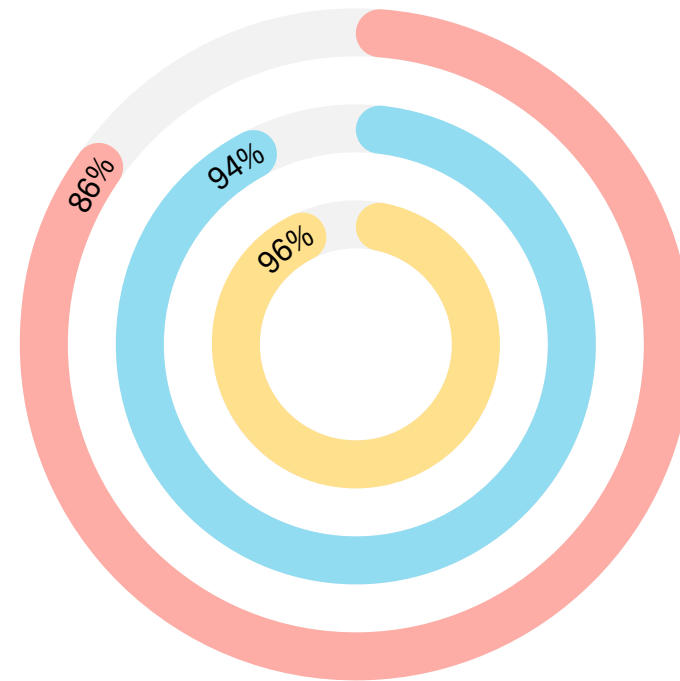
Strongly/Somewhat Agree



My friends consider themselves to be adults



People my age generally consider themselves to be adults



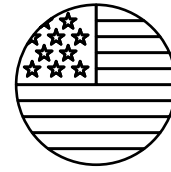
20-29

30-35

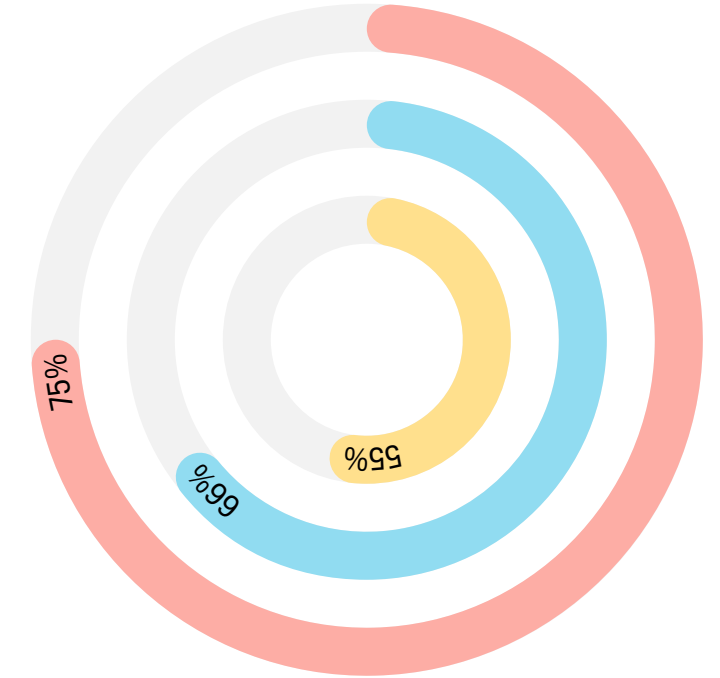
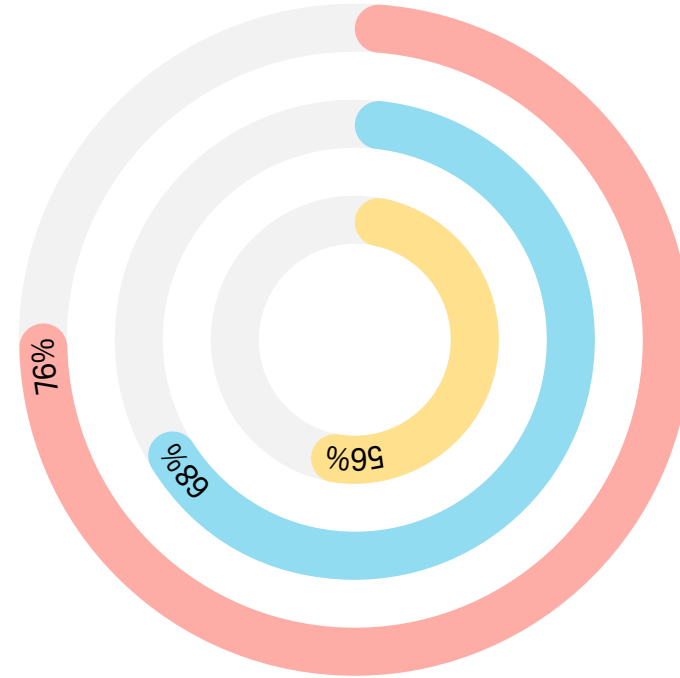
46-55

ARE WE ADULTS?

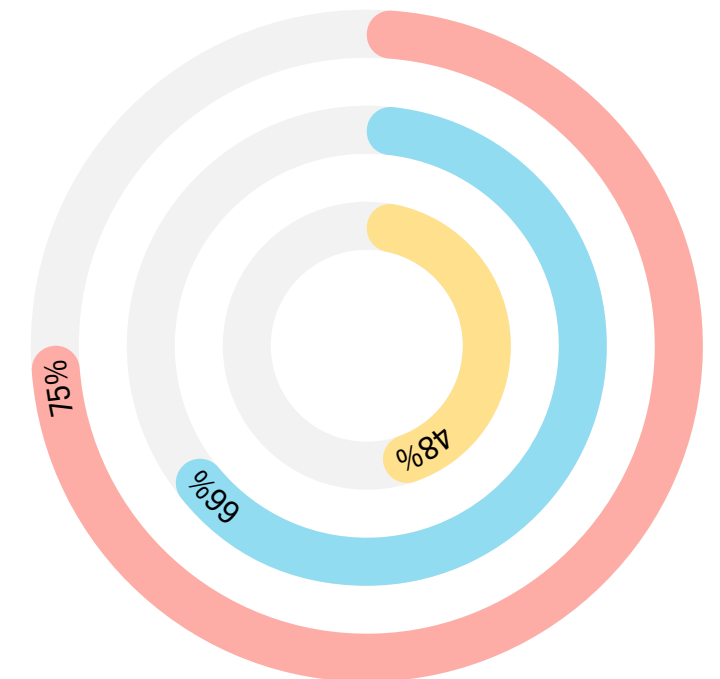
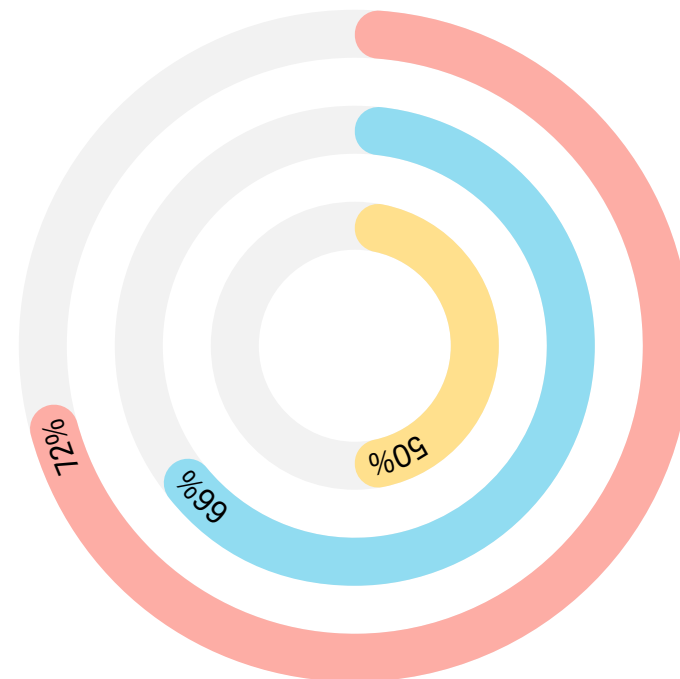
Strongly/Somewhat Agree



People my age are less likely to act like adults compared to my grandparent's generation



People my age are less likely to act like adults compared to my parent's generation



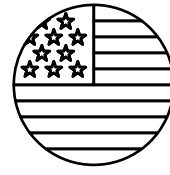
20-29

30-35

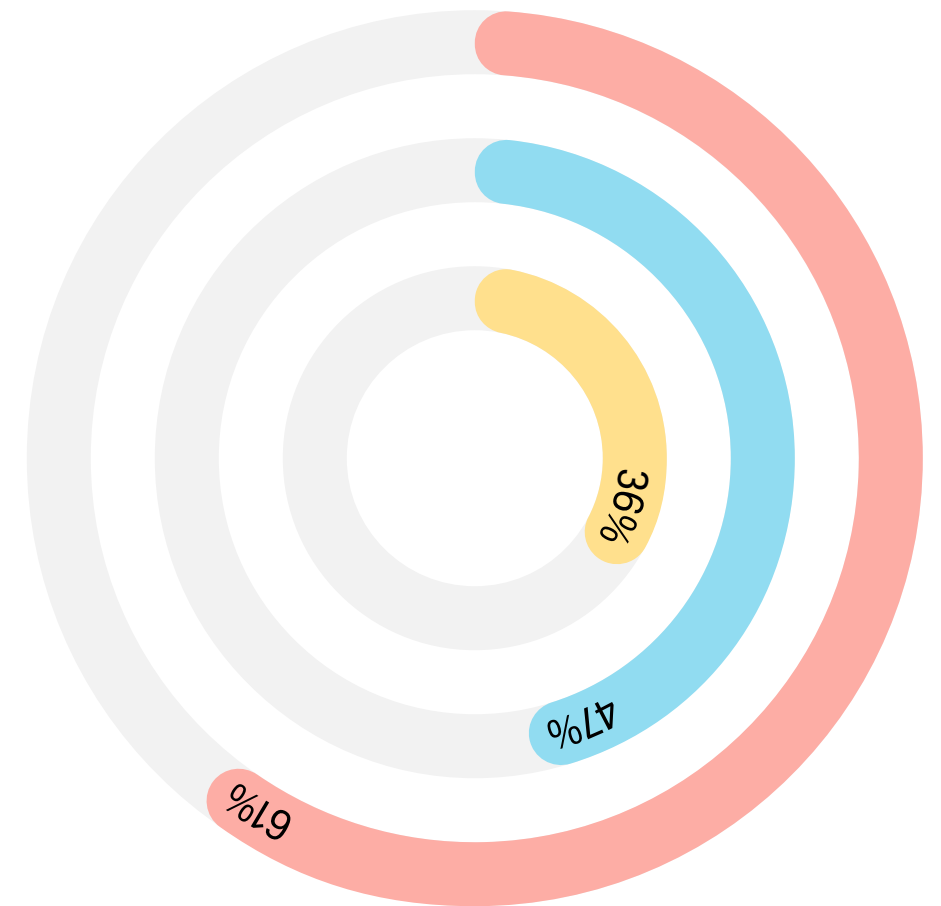
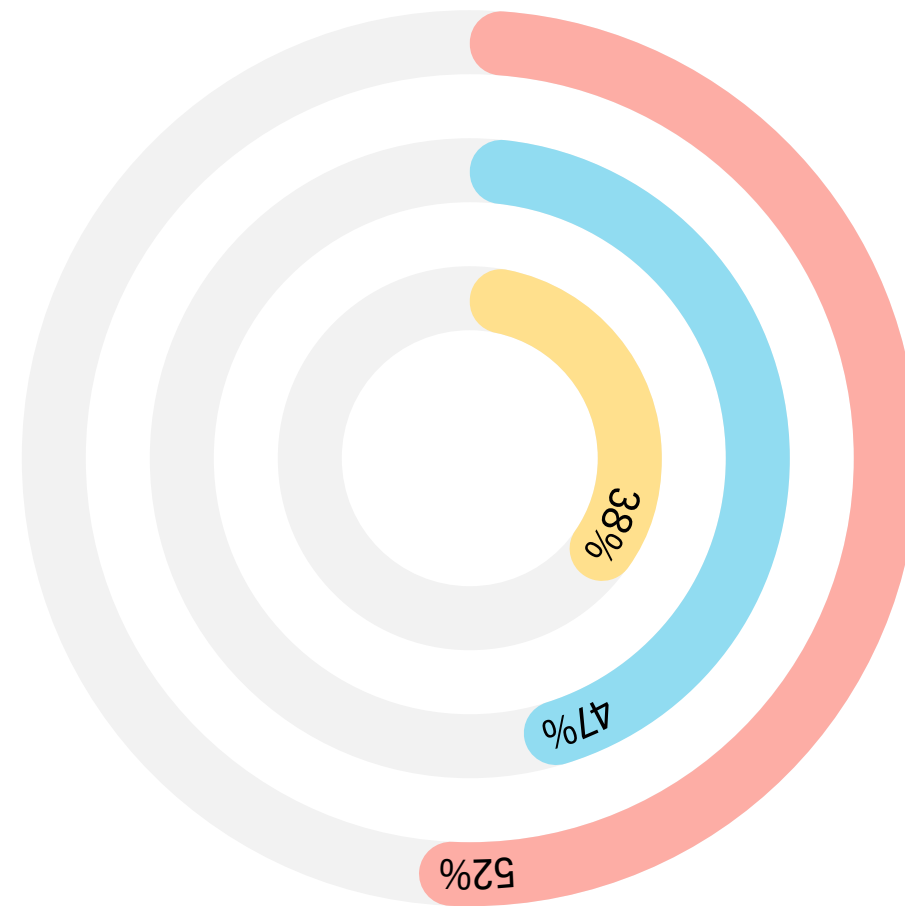
46-55

ARE WE ADULTS?

Strongly/Somewhat Agree



People never truly become adults



20-29

30-35

46-55

Middle Age

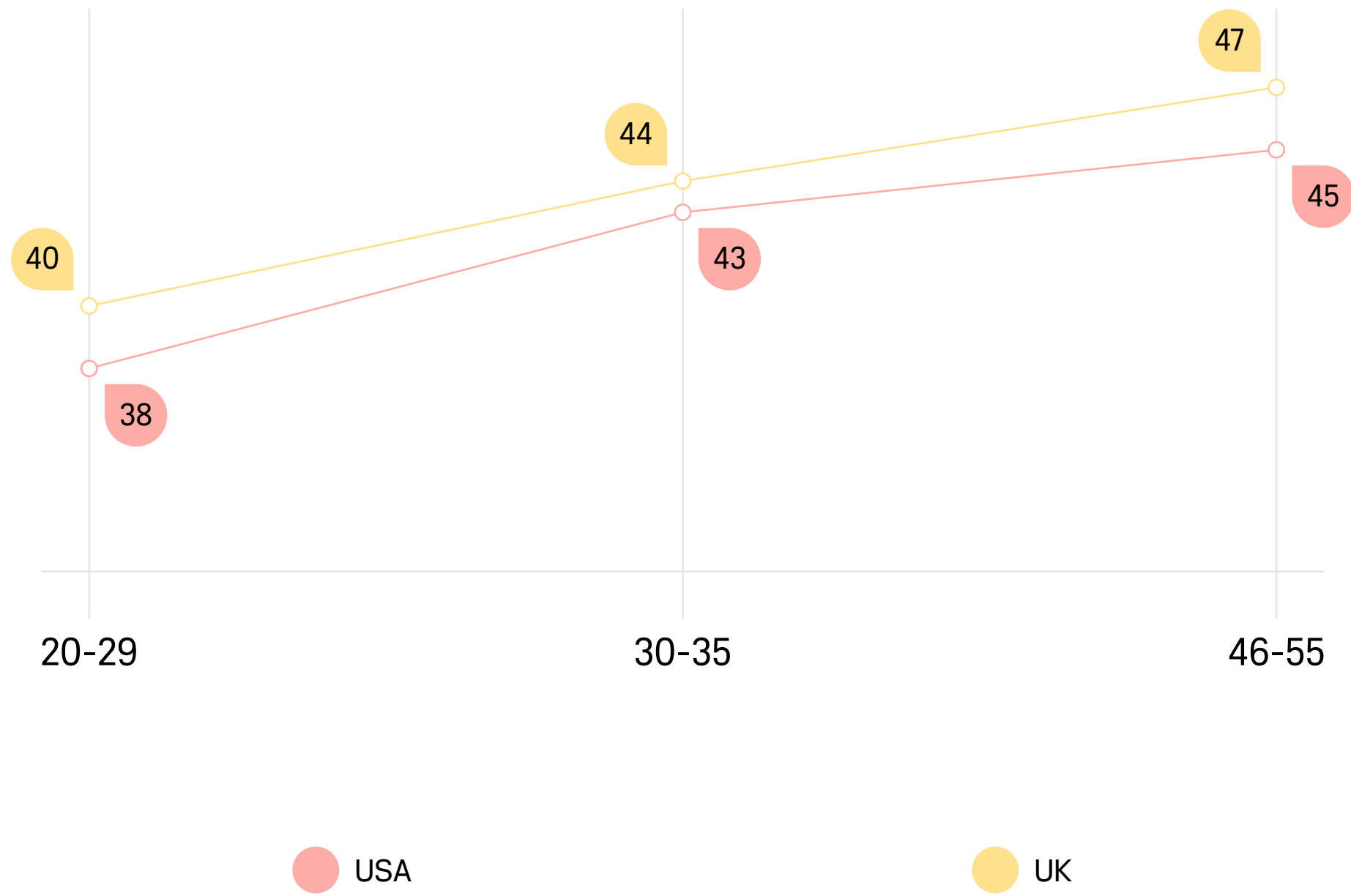
Middle Age

Defining "Middle Age"

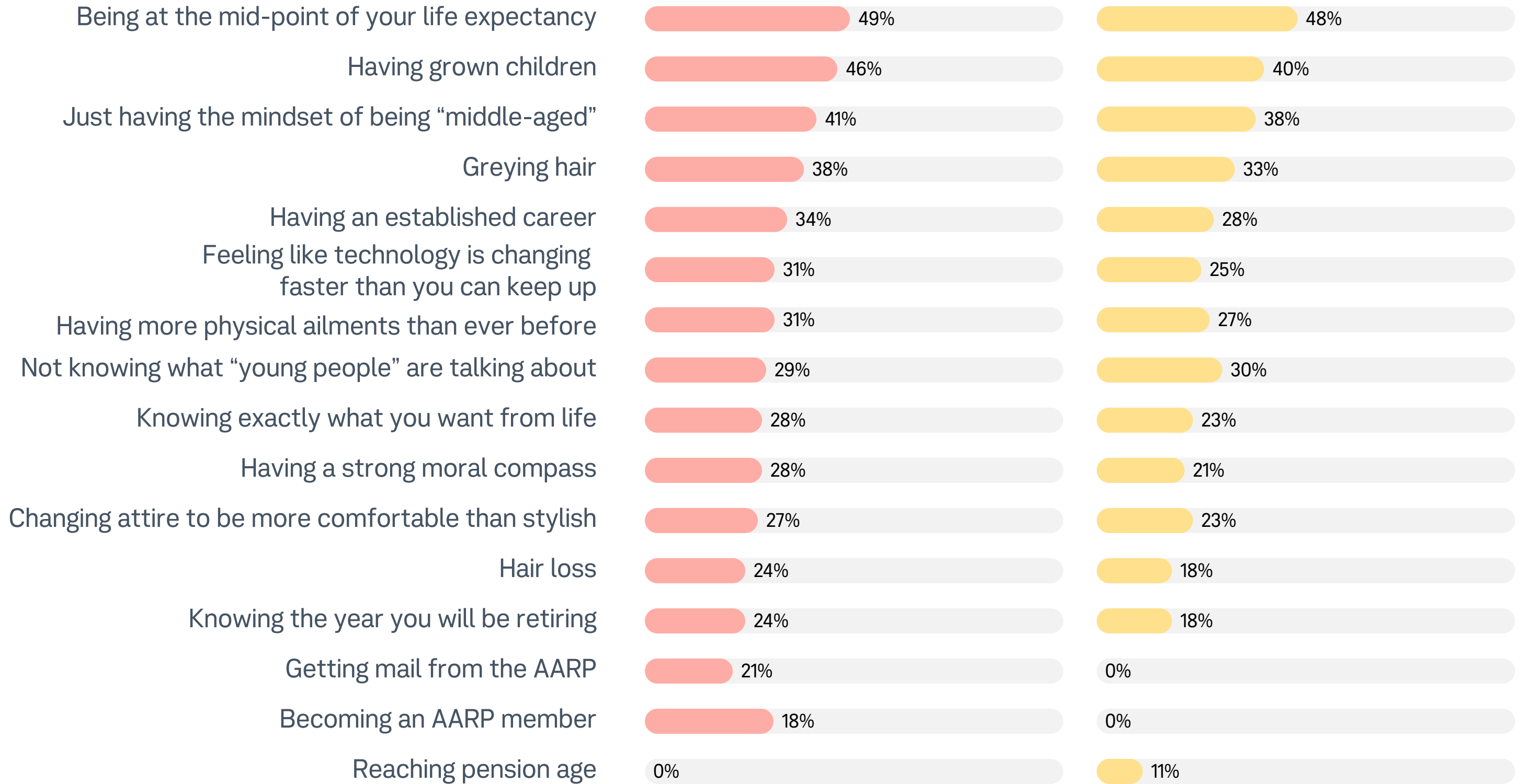
As “adulthood” becomes harder to define, so too does its midpoint: middle age. Young millennials (20-29-year-olds) generally think middle age comes at around 40. The New Adults (30-45-year-olds), however, aren’t quite ready to admit that their youth is over, pushing back the midpoint to 43 (United States) or 44 (United Kingdom).

“Middle-aged” is easier for consumers to define than “adulthood”: Nearly half of respondents consider age or children’s age a key indicator. Intangible milestones, such as “Knowing what you want from life” or “Having a strong moral compass” scored lower. As “adulthood” expands to encompass years of self-discovery, these stages have likely been wrapped in. And just 30% of respondents expect a middle-aged person not to know “what ‘young people’ are talking about,” indicating a more connected middle age.

AGE TO BECOME "MIDDLE-AGED"



INDICATORS OF BEING “MIDDLE- AGED”



USA

UK

Advertising

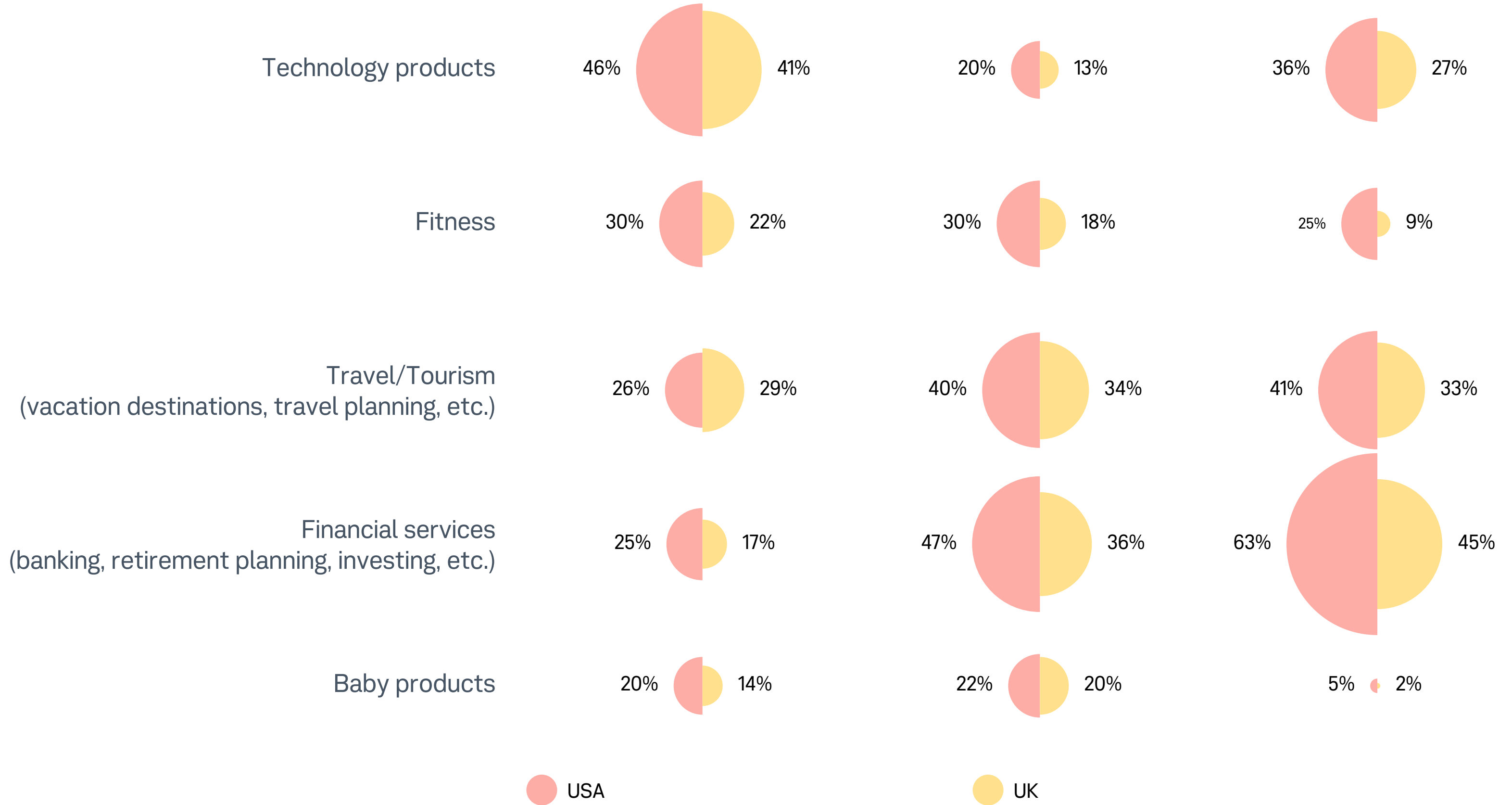
Advertising

Visual Representation in Advertising

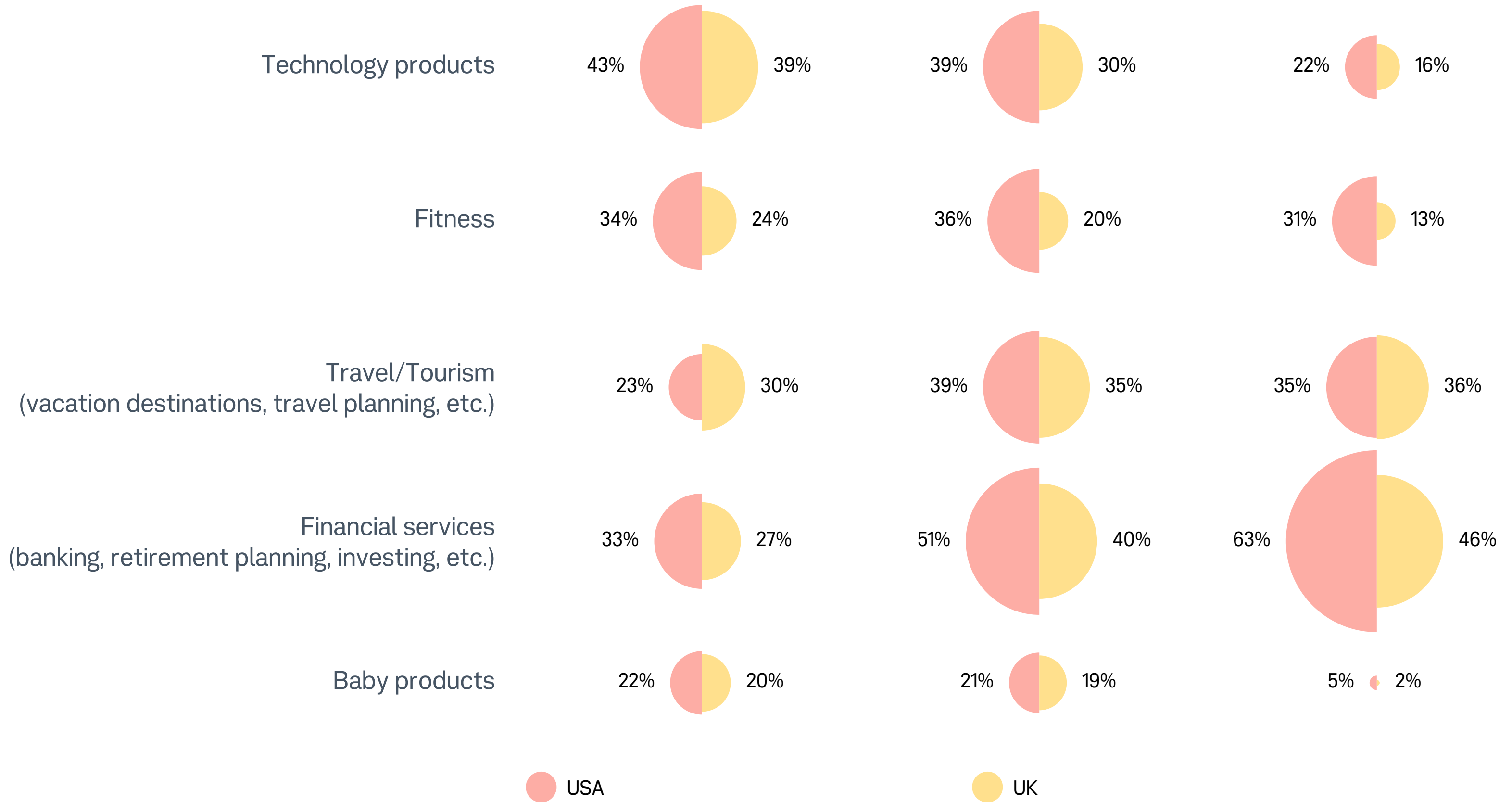
As expected, young millennials (aged 20-29) see themselves reflected the most often in ads for technology products, while older gen Xers (aged 46-55) see themselves in ads for financial services. Advertisers should make sure they are accurately reflecting different age groups as they enter new life stages, rather than playing into generational stereotypes.

Advertisements have room to improve across the board: New Adults (aged 30-45) see themselves represented in advertisements less than half of the time.

ADS THAT REPRESENT PEOPLE MY AGE



ADS THAT ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF PEOPLE MY AGE



About the Innovation Group

The Innovation Group is J. Walter Thompson's futurism, research and innovation unit. It charts emerging and future global trends, consumer change, and innovation patterns—translating these into insight for brands. It offers a suite of consultancy services, including bespoke research, presentations, co-branded reports and workshops. It is also active in innovation, partnering with brands to activate future trends within their framework and execute new products and concepts. It is led by Lucie Greene, Worldwide Director of the Innovation Group.

About J. Walter Thompson Intelligence

The Innovation Group is part of J. Walter Thompson Intelligence, a platform for global research, innovation and data analytics at J. Walter Thompson Company, housing three key in-house practices: SONAR™, Analytics and the Innovation Group. SONAR™ is J. Walter Thompson's research unit that develops and exploits new quantitative and qualitative research techniques to understand cultures, brands and consumer motivation around the world. It is led by Mark Truss, Worldwide Director of Brand Intelligence. Analytics focuses on the innovative application of data and technology to inform and inspire new marketing solutions. It offers a suite of bespoke analytics tools and is led by Amy Avery, Head of Analytics, North America.

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