Episode 146: Meghan Grace

# KL: Katie Linder

# MG: Meghan Grace

# KL: You’re listening to “Research in Action”: episode one hundred and forty-six.

# [intro music]

# Segment 1:

# KL: Welcome to “Research in Action,” a weekly podcast about topics and issues related to research in higher education featuring experts across a range of disciplines. I’m your host, Dr. Katie Linder, research director at Oregon State University Ecampus, a national leader in online education. Along with every episode, we post show notes with links to resources mentioned in the episode, a full transcript, and an instructor guide for incorporating the episode into your courses. Visit our website at ecampus.oregonstate.edu/podcast to find all of these resources.

On this episode, I'm joined by Meghan Grace a generational researcher, host of the podcast #GenZ, and the co-author of the books Generation Z goes to College and *Generation Z Leads*. Her third book, *Generation Z: A Century in the Making*, was just released. She and her co-author, Dr. Corey Seemiller, have been studying Generation Z since 2014 and have conducted two original studies on Generation Z. Meghan's work with Generation Z focuses on utilizing generational research to influence individual practices and organizational strategies that promote empowering environments and experiences for members of Generation Z. Meghan has diverse experience working in higher education and student affairs with a background in program design and management, Greek organizations, leadership development, event planning, curriculum design and research and assessment. Meghan holds her undergraduate degree in communication studies from Chapman University and a master's in higher education from the University of Arizona. She's currently pursuing her doctoral degree at Vanderbilt University studying higher education leadership and policy, and holds an assistantship in the dean of student’s office of assessment and special projects.

Thanks so much for joining me on the show today, Meghan.

**MG:** Oh, thank you, Katie. I'm excited to be here, and to hang out and chat.

**KL:** Okay, so let's dive into your research on Generation Z, and I think that many of our listeners have probably heard all kinds of different generational terms. Maybe they're most familiar with, like Millennials. So let's start with a definition of Generation Z. What does that mean?

**MG:** Yeah. So for the context of my research in my work, I utilize the timeframe of the birth years of 1995 to 2010 to define this generation. Mind you, there's so much more that goes into shaping a generation than their birth years, but it's helpful to give us kind of number quantifiers, if you will, of the - the age demographic were looking at. And that really does help us when we take potentially a data set of people from - say an age range of 50 different years, we’re able to segment and say, “This is what these young people specifically…” and pull that out and look at that. And so, we look at 1995 to 2010 as the defining years for Generation Z. That kind of varies. It really - I mean, there is no unified association, if you will, that comes together to determine when a generation begins and ends, and so you might see some variability of like technically when Generation Z starts. So some might say ‘96, some might say it's ’97 - when we started our research we started with 1995, and so that is what we’ve heard from other sources we were looking at and what we run with sense.

**KL:** What are some of the characteristics that you would associate with Generation Z that our listeners may be kind of more familiar with?

**MG:** Absolutely. So I look at context and characteristics as two different things, and so we get characteristics coming from that shaping context. And so some really important context to clue in on, is the fact that this generation is heavily shaped by technology. Not to say that we all haven't been shaped by technology, but they've never known a world without the internet - that's something I think that is really key with this group - is in 1995 is when the internet was commercialized, and so truly the oldest don't remember a world in which the internet wasn't available to them. Most don't even remember a time in which a smartphone was available to them -or wasn't available. And so that is that's a huge context that shape some of their characteristics. So technology having such a large influence on them - we can characterize them as not only digitally savvy - they're so integrated into technology, it's a part of their experience - how they navigate the world. Some other aspects of their world is they're very, very in tune with what's going on. I think that they're very educated and aware of the - the social issues of today. I can definitely account for myself, and potentially some of my peers and my close friends circle, uh that today - this younger generation, is more interested, involved, and informed on social issues than I think I was at their age. And so I think those are two really defining characteristics. Some other ones - I think that despite having more conversation around mental health, and anxiety, depression, that's a very resilient group. A group that is really willing to put in hard work, and they're very motivated and determined. And so I think that they're having both honest conversations about when it's okay not to feel okay, but also the importance of hard work, and putting in the time and the effort to making things happen. So I think those are three areas that I see their characteristics being very influenced by technology, very informed and very involved in social issues, but also this idea of hard work is important, and we need hard work to solve some of those issues in our world.

**KL:** For sure. And you'd mention context - I mean, I often hear about kind of these later generations being described in terms of historical moments that they are more aware of, like 911 for example. Um are there aspects of that that also get kind of pulled into your definitional work with this group? Yeah, we definitely use contextual factors, um and I think that you can take four primary contextual factors, and apply to any generation and really peel away what motivates their behaviors as a collective group. So if you think about technology, if you think about what's going on like a social - the social issues of the time - if you will, uh if you look at what's going on in our government our politics and what is going on in our economy, are the huge shaping factors. And um, I mean, you can stem this back to the generation that was born in, you know, the early nineteen hundreds, and think about what was going on in the economy and that time - the Great Depression. Those are huge. Or we can look at Wars that were taking place that are shaping groups of young people. And so for this group, we - we take that same that same process and we apply it with what has been going on in the upbringing and the adolescents of Generation Z to understand what is shaping this group. I think that the Great Recession of 2008, while they were not in their earning years yet, it is - it was - that happened during a time in which they were understanding how money worked. And so they're heavily financially concerned, because they saw budget cuts left and right going on around them as some of them as teenagers, some of them as kids. And so when you're learning how to spend your allowance, but you're having conversations with your parents and family members about the importance of saving or the importance of reducing spending, it's a conversation that sticks with you. And so that's - I think that's one that sticks out a lot. Uh talked about technology - the rapid development of technology, and the unfortunate sense - one of the social issues that's really shaping them right now is personal - personal safety. They see gun violence, they see personal safety threats left and right. And so I think that those are one of the things that we - we need to keep an eye on about how, especially in the U.S. - how personal safety and issues of personal safety are shaping the mindsets of young people today. I think we look at very tangible examples of the March for our Lives movement. There - this is a huge issue that the - this group of young people’s rallying around, but it's also shaping their perspective on the world.

**KL:** So you've raised this really kind of interesting point of US based Generation Z versus folks who are outside of the US. What kind of cultural differences do you see in this, and are you focusing specifically on U.S. based populations in your own work?

**MG:** Yes, so our two studies have been done - conducted in the United States, or I should say North America, because we were able to get a few Canadian and students from Mexico responding, and so can say that we have some representation from a more North American Centric base, But - there is some extension of the this line of thought to international settings. So some of it does extend, but some of it is very country specific. So my research partner, Dr. Corey Seemiller, and I were actually able to replicate our study and conduct our study using our surveys down in Brazil over the summer, and working with a group at a university there that was able to engage college students in Brazil at a few different universities and apply our study in that context. And there's a lot of similarity there, but when we started to see the difference, we were having these conversations across our two cultures and understanding, you know, what's going on in Brazil that’s shaping the young people today, and how is that different than the US, and how is that potentially creating a difference in perspective, and the way they're going about college, the way that they're going about life, and the way they're looking at the world? And so in some cases, I think there are certainly global contexts that are going to impact young people everywhere. I think technology and the way that we are able to disseminate information is probably the most prominent context there, but there are some things that are very country-specific. Think about the conversations that we have in U.S. politics, are different than those that are taking place in China, or are taking place in France, or taking place, you know, down in Australia. So just - there are some country specific things that are going to shape young people - some much larger context that I think are going to transcend.

**KL:** So Megan, I would imagine that as your kind of trying to define an entire generation, there's some generalizability that's going on there, and I know that in certain kinds of definitions of generations, there are kind of common misconceptions or common misunderstandings of, you know, what do we mean when we say, you know, “A generation is like this” or that “They have this characteristic. Um and I think, for example, of Millennials - like I technically fall into Millennial category, but there are a lot of things about Millennials that I would not identify with. So I'm curious if you have certain things you think about Generation Z, in terms of how they might be misunderstood as a generation, are there certain misconceptions about Generation Z that you think are kind of useful for people to think about?

**MG:** Yeah, and interesting you bring up the whole Millennial concept. I too am a millennial, so I feel that generalizable - that that pain in that regard, but the - I would say the largest misconception that we've run into is that people think that Generation Z is just a hyper version of a Millennial. We have actually heard that people call them the ‘hyper Millennials’, and I think that completely discounts the fact of everything that their world is so different and their response to the world is so different than the generations that came before them. That's actually - I would say, probably one of the largest misunderstandings. Just because they're close in age, does not mean that they are going to just to be an evolved version of Millennials. Sure, they're going to share some perspectives that might be similar - hey might sure some behaviors, but I can say that there's some stark differences between myself and Generation Z, I'm not that far removed from the oldest in this age group. But when I think about some of their behaviors that I witness and what I see in there, and what I see in the research, it is different. And so that would probably be the one of the biggest misconceptions about this group. Um - I think that just in general and we think about generational research or just conversations about generations, we will take a very fancy or alluring article that's published and take it at face value without digging in a little bit further and seeing, you know, every piece of research, every piece of writing, is always going to have a little bit of bias. And so sometimes I think as consumers of research, we can spend a little more time and dig into, okay who's writing this, what is their motivation, and really what were their methods? And sometimes that can be where I think a little bit of the misunderstanding around generations can come from, and the - the whole, you know, Millennials are doing X, Y & Z this, and then not going to that next level about why are they doing that? So I feel like you can identify with, and I'll use Millennials, because I think they are - probably have been the most talked about so far. There was finally an article that came out, that Millennials aren’t killing industries because they’re collectively getting together and saying, “We’re divesting in industries”, but that there’s a large economic influence making it more difficult for Millennials to engage with certain industries. So I was like, “Finally someone is saying something that there might be a ring of truth”, that we are observing a quantitative trend, but we also need to look at the larger context that is influencing that, or that there's a qualitative underlying there that is influencing that. And so I think that that is in general some of the misconceptions that we make about generations as whole, and - and then Generation Z as well. I think that there's less misconception about this group so far, just because we haven't - we're still in the early stages of studying this group, because we think about the oldest being just 23 right now. So we still have quite a bit of time to be able to study them, and understand them, and really continue to paint a picture of this group.

**KL:** Excellent. Well, thank you for doing some of this definitional groundwork here. We're going to take a brief break, when we come back we'll hear a little bit more from Meghan about some of her research on Generation Z. Back in a moment.

The “Research in Action” podcast is brought to you by Oregon State University Ecampus, a top ranked online education provider meeting the needs of military service members. Take the Diaz family for example. While Albert Diaz’s military service required his family to move across the country, his wife Samantha earned her Oregon State Psychology degree online, despite the distance and multiple moves. And soon after, Albert followed in her footsteps, earning his post baccalaureate degree online in computer science. Read more about how Oregon State Ecampus fit the Diaz's military lifestyle and help them achieve their dreams at ecampus.oregonstate.edu/albert.

# Segment 2:

**KL:** Meghan, before we dive into kind of some of the more specifics about your research, I'm curious just what led to your interest in researching the population of Generation Z?

**MG:** I will always say that I got into this work on accident, and it was the happiest accident I've ever made, I guess you could say. My co-author and research partner, Dr. Corey Seemiller - we started to notice some differences. We are working together on a college campus, we were working in a leadership program - and it's amazing, I think, that some of the best research comes from this ‘aha’ observation that things - something is happening. And so we were literally at new student orientation promoting our programs, and you know – Corey’s over, she goes, “I'm having students ask questions that are so different than students previous” and I was like, “In what way?” and she's like, “They're just – different, and I'm not sure how to completely quantify it. It might have been the way that they were asking about the service oriented component of the program, or you know, what was the career focus of the program.” Where in previous years, we might have been like well if you join this program, you might make some friends, and we were getting asked some really mature, high-level questions and were like, “Huh. Interesting.” and so we kind of put this on the back burner for a little bit, and then, you know, Corey kind of stuck with it and she actually brought it to our staff retreat at the time and said “Hey, I think we should look more into this and see what's going on there.” And at the time, this was I think 2013, there was maybe some rumbling that there's a new generation coming along, and so when Corey - determine “Oh, this is actually a new generation of students that's coming to campus, that's potentially why we're getting this change.” And so we actually started to feel it from a personal perspective, and so we started to dive into that and she said, “Hey, does anyone want to help kind of look more into this? It might require some Google searching and putting together a slide deck for the division of student affairs just to start, you know, maybe do a professional development about.” I said, “Yeah. That sounds great. I love presenting, I'm really interested in generational stuff, I'm a millennial, let's talk about other people, like, let's do something different.” And so that actually - within that initial inquiry of us looking into what research is out there, we really realized there wasn't a lot that was either college and university specific or looking at the oldest in that group. And so we said, “Who better to do the research than us?” And so we - initially did it with the idea that this was going have some impacts for student affairs practitioners, people that are teaching and instructing Generation Z, and those who are really designing higher education settings for four Generation Z. So it came really from our professional practice of our day-to-day lives of interacting with students.

**KL:** Okay, so given those origins and kind of the context in which are doing this work. What are some of the research questions that you are engaging with regarding Generation Z?

**MG:** Yeah. So in our first study, we did a mixed methodology study and we were kind of thinking about we need to understand the lives of students - you know, so what are the main components of the lives of the students that we’re working with? And we want to ask those questions and - and what are the trends, and what are the prominent themes that are emerging there? So we did do a mixed methodology study, but we are asking the questions really of how it relates to higher education and we were most interested in understanding how to motivate students, communicate with students, engage and educate students. So we were asking questions about, you know, how do you prefer to communicate with other people? What social media are you using and why? That big piece of, ‘and why?’ was a big - I think a game changer for our understanding of this group. We were also asking about which characteristics that they most – or that they would utilize to describe themselves and their peers. We felt it wasn't fundamentally our job to characterize this group without actually asking them first. We could tell their story, but we couldn't say, ‘This is what we're observing” because I was very much so adamant of let's give them an opportunity to self-identify. Because as a millennial we've been told so many times that were selfish and we're lazy and we're the setter another, and no one really asked me how I would describe myself for my peers. So I was -I was at firm advocate for giving them an opportunity to tell us. Some other questions we asked, we wanted to know what social issues they were most concerned with and how they engage with those social issues - so what are the things that are weighing on them their - their biggest concerns? We asked about their learning styles and what were their preferences and methods of learning that - that made learning exciting and - and effective. We also asked about how they built friendships, what was most important to them and those friendships, what were the - the components of friendship that they cared about most, because we did want to have some element of the ability to connect students on basis that made sense. And we also asked about the role of their family members - in knowing that as we are seeing it more and more, family members were becoming present in the college experience. So those were our primary questions in our first study our second study, we weren't really big and broad, and beyond higher education. So we didn't really ask anything that was college-specific, again, we engaged college students in that study, so we recognize that limitation, but we were really looking at, again, these broad questions. We are asking things like, what issues will your generation face in the next 30 years, what issues worry about what you worry about the most, what makes learning enjoyable, what would be a happy life? And so we're really looking at what are the future - future oriented things, these perspective oriented things, and this was a completely qualitative study, so we're able to take, I mean, I'm not even kidding you, thousands and thousands of open-ended questions and - and look at the themes. And so when we started to look at what makes a happy life, it helped us recognize what is driving Generation Z, what is motivating them. And so we were able actually to stem our qualitative work and our second study back to our first study and say our quantitative work about motivation says this, but their desires for a happy life or actually connecting with this, and so it was completely powerful to not only get the numbers around the group, but also the stories and what they're willing to share with us.

**KL:** So you had mentioned kind of a mixed methodology approach to this work, and the second set of a more qualitative. Can you describe some of the methods you're using to collect data and some of the analysis strategies that you're employing, particularly around – it sounds like you're doing quite a bit of coding on the qualitative side?

**MG:** So much coding. Oh my goodness - but happily! So, I mean, we do - we did our data collection for both studies with the gracious help of, we have an incredible network of supporters in higher education, and so on our professional networks both from our graduate studies, and our professional networks, and having our friends in higher education. And so a lot of it was us sending an email and saying, “We’re doing this really interesting study, we think it would apply, we're happy to share our findings. Would you be willing to send the survey link to the students you work with? And we were shocked we were able to engage a number of institutions, and we are incredibly thankful for our friends and partners in higher education that have supported our studies, and got those out to their students, and wanted to be a part of this conversation. So that was a big collection piece, was we are sending out survey links. Everything that we've done in terms of collection has been online and a platform - pretty much either we're using SurveyMonkey or qualtrics, which is fantastic because for the analysis piece of that open-ended and that qualitative work, both of those platforms provide an electronic coating function, if you will - So you’re able to go in and add your theme coding, and color code your codes, and code your codes your codes. My favorite. Um and so looking at what are our primary themes and our sub-themes that are emerging. So a lot of analysis was taking place with coding. We're also just doing frequencies of, you know, when they're saying this is the most prominent social media they're using, we're looking at, you know, they're reported use or that, you know, what they're telling us they use most frequently. So some of our quantitative analysis was a little bit more simple of - just like, they're using SnapChat more than they're using Facebook, which we were able to look at and compare with some of the other larger companies that are specifying their work around social media usage. So we use the GlobalWebIndex, we’re looking at Pew, we’re looking at other people that are also studying social media to - to ensure that what the findings of our study are - we're not off, let's just put it that way.

**KL:** So Meghan, I can imagine that you have so much rich data here - so many interesting things are coming out of it. Are there a couple of maybe interesting findings that you can share so far of the kinds of things that you're learning that you think are kind of especially pertinent for this population?

**MG:** Yeah, I would say that if I have to boil it down to like my three favorite findings - would be what we've learned about their motivations, because I think that that translates to so many settings not only in education but in just about every walk of their life, so they're motivated by relationships, passions, and achievement. So they care about the people that they know, they care about causes, and they care about, you know, building and working in professional development - this idea of achievement. So - they do care about advancing their selves in their career, but that's not – that doesn't come before helping the people in their lives. So I think that's been one of my favorite things that we've learned. I think another finding that has been important - an important conversation, is around the way that they're using social media, and the role that social media plays in their life. I think sometimes social media gets a bad rap, but for Generation Z, the way that they use it is just so fundamental to their - their interaction with the world. And so they're using different platforms for different people, and different audiences and different purposes, and so understanding how they navigate these different apps and platforms to connect with the world and to connect with people has been absolutely fascinating. So the way that they use YouTube is entirely different than the way that they are using Facebook. Mind you, those platforms have completely different functionality, but they're also using those platforms in different ways than previous generations. So I think that's been an interesting comparison we've been able to discuss, and I think that’s something that motivates me personally, is knowing a lot more about their concerns and the social issues they care about. And so the findings that we have found is that their - their concerns really fall in a few primary areas - one being financial security and how that is related to the cost of higher education and education in general, and then employment – so we can see those three kind of braiding together, and then this idea that some of their concerns. Their other concerns are a little bit bigger than just themselves, so they are concerned about personal safety and people feeling safe. So we talked a little bit about the March for our Lives movement, but this idea of the world is a scary place and that they're concerned about violence. But they're also very concerned about equality, and treating people as people, and treating humans as humans, and making sure the people in their lives are taken care of, and that people have equal rights. So they are very concerned about equality, and they're also concerned about the environment. They're concerned about climate change, they're concerned about protecting our Earth and protecting our worlds. And so I think understanding their concerns has motivated me, and learning about that to think about how I can, as someone who's older than them, create a pathway and pave a way for them to engage in social change and be the change makers I think they can be.

**KL:** Well, this is super fascinating to hear more about your research, Meghan. We're going to take another brief break. When we come back, we'll hear a little bit more from Megan. Back in a moment.

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# Segment 3:

**KL:** Meghan, one of the really interesting things in your bio is that you have been the co-author of a couple of books on Generation Z, and you're also working on a third book as well, and you're also pursuing your Ed.D. currently. And I thought it was so interesting that you have gotten into book writing before a doctoral degree, which I think in Academia is a little bit unusual. Can you talk a little bit about kind of the entry point for you into working on those books and maybe how it shaped how you're looking at your Ed.D. degree?

**MG:** Absolutely. I think that it is - it's a unique situation. Again, I say that it's the happiest accident ever that I raised my hand, but I'm so thankful for Corey, my research partner and co-author, for bringing me along with her and allowing me to be a true partner in this, but also taking the time to teach me along the way, because I think there have been some things - you know, she's been working in the space and working in academics much longer than I have. And so I will forever be thankful and put such great value in the mentorship she's provided to me, but she's also helped me realize that I'm a - I'm a good writer, and I'm able to do this work and overcome a lot of the imposter syndrome that I had to - that I had to overcome in both our publishing, our writing, and doing our research. And I'll always, you know, maybe I'll feel a little bit better about it when I have, you know, some extra letters at the end of my last name when I'm done with my doctoral program, but that is been something I've struggled with. But I think it's something that if - if you take the time to put in the hard work and you take the time to learn and Gobble up all the information, you can still provide important and relevant information to people. And so getting involved in the book writing has really been an interesting process. Yeah. I call it the happy accident, but it's been one of those things I've learned so much and I've been self-taught in some things, but I've had good mentorship along the way. But I see the connection to my ADD program, because it's helped me I think take my doctoral program, and it look at it in a different perspective - that I know I can be there, and I can be a contributing member of my cohort, and I can be providing insights in other ways, but also it is inspired me. This whole process of researching Generation Z, it's really lit my heart on fire and my brain on fire to want to learn about so many different other things, and I'm thankful for that opportunity. I always bring a little bit of the Gen Z lens into things, but I'm thankful for the opportunity to continue, learn and grow in academics and - and the field.

**KL:** So as you're pursuing your Ed.D., is Generation Z a part of kind of what you're choosing to focus on, or are there other kind of larger elements or, you know, different directions that you're choosing to take as you are in that program? And that is a program on higher education leadership and policy, so I could definitely see some overlap, but are there other kind of directions you're choosing to take it?

**MG:** So my hope with the program that I'm enrolled in right now, and this is a bit of the how I selected this program, was I want to work with institutional leaders on creating environments that are efficient, and effective, and empowering - and empowering not only for the people that work there, but the students that enroll their. I forever want to be an advocate for students, and I think that that's how I pull in my start and student affairs, but also this work that I do in understanding today's college students, and being a voice for them in whatever capacity I can be is what motivates me. I had those kind of champions when I was an undergraduate, and I think that I want to continue to be that kind of person for students today, and students everywhere - wherever I'm working and whatever capacity, keeping student voice at the front of that. For what I eventually want to do with all of this, I want to work in strategy - whether that's consulting with a firm or working at an institution. The goal is really how do we make college and universities efficient, and work for the people, and solve some of those problems. I mean, they're complex, complex institutions and organizations, and if I can help provide a little bit of insight on strengthening those organizations and institutions, that's what I would just live to do. So with my studies and the program that I'm enrolled in, it’s very much so focused on how do we create positive policies, and interventions, and improvement methods to make education a little bit better, and like I said, more efficient, but more empowering and more engaging.

**KL:** So Meghan, I know you have a little bit of a passion for data-driven decision-making as well. Can you talk about how that is being kind of folded into your program and into your larger work?

**MG:** Yeah. I mean, I think that we can use data in so many fascinating ways, and I used to be terrified of data. If you would have said, “First semester Master's student Meghan, your future life is going to be utilizing data” I would have laughed in your face. But I think it's important that we can't completely, like, live and die by our data, but we need to have it with us in informing what we do and in part of those conversations, because, you know, all of our social scientists and scientists out there know that data is so incredibly important and informs these interesting phenomena and trends that are going on, but we still have to keep a human element into that in our decision-making. And so I think it's really pairing the two - taking your information, taking your data taking, you know, you're supporting evidence, if you will, into making solid decisions that are well thought out, but also engage people from different perspectives to ensure that we are moving in the right direction for the - for the organization. And so in some of my previous jobs were I was kind of helping manage the data infusion if you will of data into our work, I would tell people that data is everywhere, it's not just numbers. And I think that that's one of my favorite things, is that data is everywhere and it's a matter of looking at it and determining what data makes the most sense for the decision that we're trying to make or that we're trying to understand. And so yeah, I'm a big data nerd, but it - it's just fun. It's fun to think about how we can support our feelings as humans with a variety of different sources of evidence.

**KL:** So Meghan, you recently announced your third book *Generation Z: A Century in the Making* I'm wondering if you can talk a little bit about this new project, and also just in general what's next for you?

**MG:** Yeah, so we are so excited and thrilled to be able to share that a book we've been working on for almost 2 years is available now, so anyone can go grab it. You snag it on Amazon or Routledge.com - So we were able to partner with a Routledge Taylor & Francis group to get that out. And this project has been a challenge in the sense that it's not completely higher education specific. So learning about different industries, learning about these different topic areas, and really diving in, not just dipping my toe, but really diving into some areas, like I was looking up teen dating habits. Things I did not think I was going to have to be learning about, but here we are - But really looking at every facet of Generation Z’s life. So how they think about the world, how they think about technology, how they think about communication, and family, and their future, and careers and learning, and politics, religion, spirituality. I mean, we were able to really think about so many different facets of Generation Z, and really understand what's going on there, and taking it beyond just the context of higher education, or colleges and schools, and think about what this mean for the workplace does? What does this mean for the family as an institution? What does this mean for politics and government and the church? So all of these large institutions within our world - how this group of young people is potentially going to shake it up a little bit. But we set that - we set the book in the context of the last hundred years, and the fact that there are generations that have come before Generation Z to create this world that Generation Z is reacting to. So we trace a lot of these elements, a lot of these concepts back to the early 1900s with the G.I. Generation and think about how much the world has changed since then, but also some ways how things have come back around or they haven't changed, and so we really - we make those comparisons and those contrasts to look at the world in a different way, and thinking about it from a generational ones. So that is what the book is about. We're excited. I think it's exciting to share it. We say that it's good for anyone that's at least interested in the topic, but if you have any interaction, or influence, or ability to work with Generation Z, you might find it interesting and informative to what you do. So anything from parenting, to teaching, to coaching, hiring, supervising, mentoring, just hanging out with Generation Z. I have two Gen Z nephews, and sometimes I have to think back to the information I know about their age group to better connect with them. So that is the current project – it’s exciting to be able to share that with everyone, and then what is next is we are just excited to get that out there and see where it goes. It sounds really bad, but I kind of stopped making complete professional goals for myself, because I've kept having really happy accidents. And so I've got professional values, things I care about, projects I enjoy working on, and so I'm going to start thinking about, you know, working with some clients on how we take this information, and apply it, and redesign some environments. That's something that I'm really passionate about is designing environments - keeping the truth of an organization, but designing environments that are empowering for the people that are within it. So looking forward to the opportunity to potentially work with some clients on designing environments for Gen Z.

**KL:** Very cool. Well, Megan, it has been such a pleasure to talk with you and to hear about your work on Generation Z. I want to thank you again for taking the time to come on the show and share about all of these projects that are fascinating.

**MG:** Thank you so much! And I was excited to share, so thank you again.

**KL:** Thanks also to our listeners for joining us for this week's episode of “Research in Action.” I'm Katie Linder and we'll be back next week with a new episode.

# Show notes with links to resources mentioned in the episode, a full transcript, and an instructor guide for incorporating the episode into your courses, can be found at the show’s website at [ecampus.oregonstate.edu/podcast](http://www.ecampus.oregonstate.edu/podcast).

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