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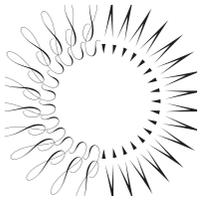
The Pew Charitable Trusts Trust

The Myth (or Not) of the Lonely Church

Are we really becoming less religious?

Winter 2016 | Vol. 18, No. 1





TIME CAPSULE

The Pew Charitable Trusts was founded by two sons and two daughters of Joseph N. Pew, who created Sun Oil Co. Initially a family-owned company, Sun Oil began trading on the New York Stock Exchange in 1925, and a year later the company established one of the nation's first stock-sharing plans for its employees. The Pew family believed that workers who owned company shares would be more productive, loyal, and dedicated to Sun Oil's future. The Pews, in turn, showed a responsibility to their employees by installing phones at their facilities so workers could call home at lunch hour. And during the Great Depression, not a single Sun Oil employee was laid off or saw a pay cut. This entrepreneurial spirit and commitment to helping others still animates Pew's work today.



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Cover photograph by Ed Freeman/Getty Images

A Passion for Giving Back



Generosity and goodwill are basic values that guide many human endeavors, including our work at The Pew Charitable Trusts. The biblical adage “To whom much is given, much is required” inspired the early work of Pew’s founders and made helping others not just a way of life for them, but a legacy that would continue long into the future.

Today, my Pew colleagues and I remain faithful to our founders’ vision of serving the public interest with humility and purpose. That includes a commitment to fostering religious liberty and freedom of thought, a passion that gave meaning to the Pew family’s long philanthropic support of numerous religious faiths and traditions. And because we recognize that religion and culture can drive positive results for our communities and our world, the Pew Research Center continues to study religion and public life in the United States and around the globe.

At Pew, we always begin our work by focusing on evidence and data—and the center’s research on religion offers such an example. The surveys, which began in 2001, provide insights into people’s beliefs, their religious practices, and the role of faith in the public square.

For example, a recent report shows that the percentage of U.S. adults who say they believe in God, pray daily, and regularly attend religious services has declined modestly in recent years. This change is primarily due to the growing minority of Americans—in particular the millennial generation—who say they do not belong to any organized faith.

However, among the 75 percent of Americans who do claim a religion, there has been no discernible drop in most measures of religious commitment. Indeed, religiously affiliated people appear to be even more observant in recent years, with increases in the number who say they regularly read scripture, share their faith with others, and participate in small prayer groups. You can learn much more about the results of the survey in the cover story of this issue of *Trust*.

Our corrections work is based on data that show how to deploy public resources more effectively to control prison growth and reduce recidivism. Pew and its partners have helped 31 states develop evidence-based policies and programs that reduce crime and increase public safety while holding offenders accountable. Those efforts have earned bipartisan support among policymakers and provided a better return to taxpayers, avoiding billions in prison costs.

Last year, for example, Utah passed legislation that reduces penalties for nonviolent offenses—a change that is projected to cut prison growth by 95 percent and forestall the need for \$500 million in corrections

“We will ... never lose sight of the importance of generosity to the success of our mission.”

spending over the next two decades. Now, as reported in “A New View on Corrections,” a bipartisan coalition in Congress, responding to the \$6.7 billion cost of operating more than 100 federal correctional facilities—25 percent of the entire Justice Department budget—is considering similar federal legislation.

In keeping with our founders’ values, Pew’s decade of work on this issue is not just about saving money and making communities safer; it is also about giving a second chance to nonviolent offenders who made mistakes but still have the potential to lead productive, rewarding, and consequential lives.

Preserving what the Rev. Billy Graham—whose early work benefited from the founders’ generosity—called the “order, beauty, perfection, and intelligence” of nature is another way that Pew endeavors to return a lasting dividend to society. In 2012, working with partners, we set an ambitious goal of protecting 1 billion acres of Canada’s wondrous boreal forest by 2022, with

half under formal protections and the other half under development rules that ensure future commercial activities will not harm the boreal ecosystem. At 750 million acres, we are now three-quarters of the way to our goal.

In this issue of *Trust*, you'll meet two people who are helping us balance conservation and sustainable development in a region that is critical to our global environment.

Sophia and Ray Rabliauskas are leading an effort to have more than 8.25 million acres of boreal wilderness known as Pimachiowin Aki—one of the largest undisturbed expanses of forest and wetland anywhere—declared a UNESCO World Heritage site. Securing this designation would help highlight the international significance of the boreal. As Ray explains, the plan “is to educate people about ... how to care for the land and why it's important. And they need to understand that before it's too late.” Their story is the first of several profiles of citizens who are giving back and helping protect the boreal that will be featured in upcoming issues.

From the earliest Jewish teachings on *tzedakah* (charity) to the recent admonition by Pope Francis that “true charity requires courage,” we are reminded that helping others can fuel consequential change for the public good. So while Pew will never walk away from our commitment to evidence and research—and the stewardship of our founders' intent—we will also never lose sight of the importance of generosity to the success of our mission.



Rebecca W. Rimel, *President and CEO*

Trust

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THE BIG PICTURE

Despite a spate of shark attacks in the news, the actual risk of encountering a shark has declined 91 percent since 1950, according to research supported by the Lenfest Ocean Program. Pew marine fellow Fio Micheli helped lead the Stanford University analysis of California waters. Among the findings: Swimmers, like these off of San Clemente, are 1,800 times more likely to drown than be bitten by a shark.



An oasis in the Pacific Ocean, the largely unexplored waters of Easter Island provide an important spawning area for tuna, sharks, marlins, swordfish, and other species. *Eduardo Sorensen for The Pew Charitable Trusts*

Progress for the World's Oceans

BY MICHAEL REMEZ

In October, Palau President Tommy E. Remengesau Jr. signed legislation establishing a marine sanctuary to protect more than 80 percent of the Pacific island nation's rich ocean waters. Although a big accomplishment on its own—safeguarding some 193,000 square miles (500,000 square kilometers), an area slightly larger than California—it followed several other major victories in the Pacific over the past year that have led to a significant expansion of ocean reserves: In fact, of the total ocean area worldwide that has been fully protected, 62 percent has been declared since September 2014.

Just three weeks before Palau's announcement, Chile unveiled a plan to protect a huge swath of ocean

around Easter Island, a territory about 2,500 miles (4,000 kilometers) west of the country's mainland. At approximately 243,630 square miles (631,368 square kilometers), the new marine park would be the third-largest fully protected area of ocean in the world.

The indigenous people of Easter Island, the Rapa Nui, proposed the park to safeguard the biodiversity of their waters, which are home to 142 endemic species, 27 of which are threatened or endangered. Support from the Bertarelli Foundation helped fund research efforts on Easter Island, including a major scientific assessment of the local marine environment and an economic analysis of the impact of a marine park.

And in September, New Zealand announced its commitment to create a fully protected marine sanctuary in the Kermadec region northeast of the country's North Island. The reserve would cover 239,000 square miles (620,000 square kilometers).

That run of good news came on top of the announcement in March that the United Kingdom would



The splendid hawkfish and a wide variety of species live in the Kermadecs, a migratory pathway in New Zealand's waters for marine mammals making seasonal journeys between tropical and cooler waters. Tobias Bernhard/Getty Images

designate a marine reserve in the waters off the Pitcairn Islands in the South Pacific, which would be the largest ever declared. All of that built on successes in 2014. In total, about 1.5 million square miles (nearly 4 million square kilometers) had been granted protection since mid-2014.

Global Ocean Legacy, a project of Pew and partner organizations—Bloomberg Philanthropies, the Lyda Hill Foundation, Oak Foundation, the Robertson Foundation, the Tiffany & Co. Foundation, and the Waitt Foundation—worked with government and community leaders to build support for each of the locations.

"These designations represent important steps toward establishing the world's first generation of great parks in the sea," says Joshua S. Reichert, Pew's executive vice president who oversees environment programs. "Governments have moved to protect more ocean in the past year and a half than at any time in history."

Reichert was part of the Pew delegation to the Our Ocean conference in October in Valparaiso, Chile, where Chilean President Michelle Bachelet laid out her government's plan for the Easter Island marine park.

President Barack Obama also addressed the conference by video to talk about the need to safeguard the world's oceans and combat illegal fishing, a persistent problem that is harming marine life and coastal communities, especially in developing nations. At the start of the conference, the United States

unveiled an initiative called Sea Scout that is intended to boost the use of technological tools to help nations detect and stop unregulated and unreported fishing.

Palau's government plans to aggressively go after vessels fishing illegally in its waters. The tiny nation, in collaboration with Pew and the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, is working with maritime enforcement experts from around the world to finalize a strong enforcement plan for the new sanctuary. And Chile participated in the launch of Pew's Project Eyes on the Seas in January 2015: Developed in partnership with the U.K.-based Satellite Applications Catapult, this satellite technology can be used to monitor marine reserves remotely and detect suspicious activity within moments of it happening.

Combating illegal fishing while creating marine reserves will help keep oceans healthy and local economies vibrant. Research also shows that the benefits of protected areas, such as greater and larger fish populations, tend to spill beyond their borders.

But Reichert says just a tiny fraction of the world's ocean—about 1.9 percent—has so far been protected. Some scientists have called for 30 percent to be safeguarded to ensure maximum benefits.

"We still have a long way to go," Reichert says, "but these nations have made great strides in making sure that life in the world's oceans is healthy and robust for years into the future."



The number of sage-grouse is a key indicator of the health of the surrounding sagebrush environment—where the birds provide a spectacular mating show. *iStockphoto*

Where the Deer, the Antelope, and the Sage-Grouse Play

The greater sage-grouse is a rare bird. About the size of a chicken, it is best known for a larger-than-life mating ritual in which males strut their fanned-out, spiky tail feathers to the rhythmic inflation of gold, pendulous, balloonlike sacs on their breasts that otherwise remain hidden.

This seasonal theatricality, coupled with the birds' importance as an indicator species—the strength of their numbers reflects the health of their surrounding environment—has given sage-grouse a starring role in efforts to protect the sagebrush steppe ecosystem these birds inhabit. That home, stretching across the states that flank the Rocky Mountains, has shrunk in recent decades, dropping sage-grouse populations precipitously as the birds lost about half of their natural habitat from what was once a vast “Sagebrush Sea” stretching 500,000 square miles across North America.

Today, sagebrush country remains crucial habitat for hundreds of animal species, including pronghorn antelope, mule deer, and golden eagles, as well as

the sage-grouse. In September, the Bureau of Land Management announced a historic decision—protections for more than 50 million acres of remaining sagebrush steppe on public lands across California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming.

These plans will balance energy development and recreation and bolster the health of the whole ecosystem while safeguarding important economic drivers such as hunting, fishing, birding, and backpacking.

Recreational activities in areas where greater sage-grouse live infuse about \$1 billion per year into the national economy, according to a 2014 report jointly commissioned by The Pew Charitable Trusts and the Western Values Project.

The Obama administration's largest land protection initiative to date, it is also the greatest landscape-level conservation effort the BLM has ever undertaken. “It's really encouraging that the BLM—which is the nation's biggest manager of sage-grouse habitat—is protecting lands that are most important for the bird,” says Ken Rait, a director with the U.S. public lands program at Pew.

Perhaps best of all, the initiative guarantees that the greater sage-grouse can continue to perform its dramatic and showstopping dance for generations to come.

—Demetra Aposporos

Working Parents: Running on Empty

More moms have been going to work, and in nearly half of two-parent families today, both parents work full time—up from less than a third of families in 1970.

The new finding comes from analysis of U.S. census data by the Pew Research Center, which also polled 1,807 parents with children under 18 for a report released in November. The survey, perhaps not surprisingly, found that working parents feel stressed. More than half—56 percent—say it's challenging to juggle the demands of work and home. And working moms feel the stress even more strongly, with 60 percent of them (versus 52 percent of dads) saying it's difficult to balance everything.

"This survey and some of our past work suggest that working parents—not just moms—are looking for more balance in their lives," says Juliana Menasce Horowitz, an associate director of research at the center. "They say it's hard to manage their work and family

responsibilities, which has implications for the way they see parenting and for their careers."

What does appear to be relatively balanced is the distribution of labor for some household activities. In families in which both parents work full time, the survey found that parents tend to share chores more than in families where only the father works. When both parents work full time, they say they participate equally in playing with their children (64 percent), disciplining them (61 percent), and tackling chores (59 percent).

Still, an overwhelming majority of parents who work tend to feel perennially frazzled: 86 percent of moms say they feel rushed at least some of the time, as do 81 percent of dads.

And it's all taking a toll. "Parents who find it hard to balance work and family are more likely to say parenting is stressful and tiring, and less likely to say it's enjoyable and rewarding," says Horowitz. Only 36 percent of those struggling to find a better work-life balance say being a parent is enjoyable all of the time, and just 48 percent say it's always rewarding.

—Erika Pontarelli *Compарт*

Another Reason to Eat Your Fruits and Vegetables

Following deadly outbreaks of foodborne illnesses across the country from contaminated produce, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration has implemented the first national safety standards for fresh produce and imported food. The rules are targeted at reducing the likelihood that *Salmonella*, *E. coli*, and other bacteria, viruses, or parasites reach U.S. grocery stores and kitchens.

Every year, an estimated 1 in 6 Americans—48 million people—gets sick from eating contaminated food, and 3,000 die, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In recent years, cucumbers, spinach, cantaloupe, and other produce items were linked to thousands of reported foodborne illnesses and scores of deaths.

Under the new requirements, which implement the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act of 2011, companies that grow or handle fresh produce will have to take measures to guard against contamination. Produce growers, harvesters, and packers will have to meet standards aimed at preventing contamination from such

sources as agricultural water, manure used as fertilizer, wild animals, farmworkers, equipment, and tools. These hazards are particular concerns for fresh fruits and vegetables because they are often prepared and eaten raw, without the cooking that could kill pathogens. Also, for the first time, importers will be responsible for the safety of the food they bring into the United States.

Food imports make up an increasing proportion of our diet—from 10 to 15 percent of the foods Americans eat. In some categories, those percentages are greater: More than half of all fruit and nearly a quarter of vegetables consumed in the U.S. are imported.

The regulations are a "seismic change for food safety," says Sandra Eskin, who directs Pew's food safety program. "Rather than waiting for people to get sick and then investigating, the FDA has established standards aimed at preventing the contamination of produce, an important and healthy part of our diets."

Pew now is working with the FDA and partner organizations as well as representatives of the food industry to ensure that the agency has the resources to enforce the regulations and to devise metrics to determine if the regulations are working. As the rules take effect, Eskin says, Americans should see fewer product recalls—and fewer people threatened by tainted food.

—Todd Zeranski





Fewer Americans Say Their Daily Prayers

But a landmark portrait of the U.S. religious landscape finds the majority of people remain committed—and observant.

by David Crumm

Dave Smith, whose family has farmed potatoes and supported a church in rural Michigan for generations, is finding that lately he's been getting a lot more out of prayer, Bible reading, and Sunday school.

Sarah Moreno's connection to her family's Catholic heritage inspired her to complete a rigorous master of divinity program to prepare for work in the church. But her discontent with some Vatican teachings, especially about women, grew. Now living in North Carolina, she feels her true vocation lies outside the church's walls as a professional actor.

On Oregon's Pacific coast, educator Jeanne St. John spent years without any particular religious affiliation, because mainline congregations seemed to shy away from her and her same-sex partner. Then a tiny Episcopal church welcomed the pair. Their marriage was blessed, and now St. John is head of the parish council.

At Harvard University's humanist chaplaincy center, meditation teacher Rick Heller spends one night a week leading a small group that practices traditional Eastern meditation techniques stripped of all religious references. He's just finished writing a guidebook arguing that people don't need religion to benefit from meditation.

Though separated by thousands of miles and devotees of different spiritual practices, all four say they're fascinated by a major new portrait of American religious life, published by the Pew Research Center—because they see their own lives mirrored in sections of the 265-page report. *U.S. Public Becoming Less Religious: Modest Drop in Overall Rates of Belief and Practice, but Religiously Affiliated Americans Are as Observant as Before* was released in November as part of the center's ongoing U.S. Religious Landscape Study, which has become a leading source for in-depth analysis of religious trends nationwide.

The report reflects The Pew Charitable Trusts' long-standing interest in religion and public life. For 15 years, the research center has surveyed religious practices and attitudes around the world. The most recent studies in the United States are proving crucial to understanding the nation's growing diversity, drawing the interest not only of clergy and religion scholars but also health care administrators, sociologists, political scientists, and urban planners.

"We know that these reports are useful to a wide variety of people, not just religious leaders," says Alan Cooperman, who directs religion research at the center. "Because of the size of this survey, we're able to look at what is happening in even the smaller groups across the country." The survey is based on telephone interviews with more than 35,000 Americans from all 50 states and continues on the baseline built from an earlier survey of more than 35,000 Americans that was conducted in 2007.

"The number one thing we see in this new report," says Gregory Smith, the associate director of religion research,

"is a pretty dramatic growth in the share of the population that is not religiously identified—now accounting for 23 percent of the adult population, up from 16 percent in 2007. That's what's driving the small declines we're seeing in overall rates of religious observance in the United States: The 'Nones' are growing."

But, says Smith, "that's not the whole story. At the same time, the vast majority of American adults—77 percent—is religiously affiliated, and that group is about as religious today as when we first conducted the Religious Landscape Survey in 2007. In fact, on some measures those who are religiously affiliated appear to be even more religiously committed than in 2007."

Cooperman says, "Even though the title of our report begins with the observation that America overall is less religious, readers should look at the entire balance. If you read the report, you'll find a picture of a robustly religious culture in this country, in many respects."

With its sample size and scope, the new report is a watershed in understanding the changing U.S. religious landscape. While there are clear signs of secularization in the unaffiliated segment of the population, "stability" is perhaps the best single word to sum up the findings about beliefs and practices of religiously affiliated Americans.

Yet, these Americans are changing, too, becoming more ethnically and racially diverse as well as somewhat more active in prayer, Bible reading, and small worship groups. There is also a marked change in attitudes toward gays across the religious spectrum—now including majorities of Catholics and mainline Protestants who say society should accept, rather than discourage, homosexuality.

RISE OF THE NONES

A great deal of discussion about the new report centers on the growing number of Nones and who they are. Scholars studying the group stress that this is an especially diverse minority.

In fact, there is no single "none" response offered in the Pew survey. Smith explains the process: "We ask people, 'What is your present religion, if any?' And then we list choices—Protestant, Catholic, and other options, including atheist, agnostic, or nothing in particular. We found that 3.1 percent of adults identify as atheist, 4 percent identify as agnostic, and 15.8 percent identify as nothing in particular. Those three groups together constitute the Nones.

"The question of what the growth of the Nones means for the future is an inherently difficult one," Smith says. "Religious trends in America are too complicated for us to assume that this rate of growth will continue indefinitely."

University of Notre Dame political scientist David Campbell, who studies religion and civic engagement, says that the Nones eventually will peak. "Every time

How the U.S. Public Became Less Religious

As of 2014, the religiously affiliated are, by and large, about as religious as they were in 2007...

Among the religiously affiliated



... but the percentage of adults who describe themselves as religiously affiliated has shrunk.

% of adults who are religiously affiliated



At the same time, the percentage of adults who are religiously unaffiliated has jumped about 7 points...

% of adults who are religiously unaffiliated



...and the “nones” have become even more secular in their beliefs and practices.

Among religiously unaffiliated



The net result is an overall U.S. adult population that has become slightly less religious.

Among all U.S. adults



■ Believe in God ■ Pray daily ■ Say religion is very important ■ Attend services at least monthly

Sources: 2014 Religious Landscape Study, conducted June 4 to Sept. 30, 2014, and the Pew Research Center

we get a new report from Pew, I keep expecting the percentage of Nones to plateau. Year after year, the numbers are still rising, but I think at some point we have to hit a ceiling,” Campbell says. “Religion ebbs and flows in American life, and this recent rise in secularism is not a continuation of a long trend that goes all the way back to the American Revolution.”

Rather, he says, “this is an upswing we’re seeing right now. I think at least part of [the increase in Nones] is a backlash, an effort to get around the political baggage of religion and in particular the anti-gay rhetoric—which is particularly radioactive for millennials.”

New York University sociology professor Michael Hout says the Nones reflect a variety of changes in contemporary American life.

“Think of organized religion as having two parts—the organized part and the religious part—and it’s true that some Americans are distancing themselves from the organized part in a backlash against what that represents.

“But we’re also seeing the millennials’ slowness to make any kind of attachments, and to limit this to just religion is to miss the extent of what’s happening. Millennials are working various gigs instead of taking full-



The Pew study found that the three-fourths of Americans who claim a religious affiliation, such as these worshippers at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City, are more devout than ever. Spencer Platt/Getty Images

time jobs; they're living with partners instead of getting married; they're deciding how to vote at the last minute."

Heller, the meditation teacher, says he sees the distancing Hout describes in many people he knows. Like Heller himself, they've concluded that it's possible to use some religious techniques, such as chants, while declining to accept religious doctrine.

For his weekly sessions at Harvard's humanist chaplaincy center, Heller revises traditional Eastern chants to omit references to supernatural concepts—in keeping with the theme of his newly published book, *Secular Meditation*. "In the age of the Internet," he says, "people are exposed to all the possible beliefs and choices around the world.

Some people respond by becoming spiritual but not religious, and then some decide that they don't need religion at all." But, he adds, "I do think religious groups have a lot to offer. Churches and synagogues are communities, and if we leave those behind then we can feel lost."

In Vermont, publisher Stuart Matlins finds support in the Pew data to explain the interest he is seeing in books that help readers explore everything from traditional Judaism and Christianity to more secular reflections on compassion and mindfulness. Matlins owns both the SkyLight Paths and Jewish Lights publishing houses, which produce books covering that entire range.

"For the Nones, we publish books about ethical and spiritual concerns, and those books are doing well," Matlins says. "But all the attention on the Nones is distracting us from other trends identified in the Pew report that I see among our readers. Yes, people at the edges of religion are falling away, but the Pew report also shows that people who are [still affiliated with] a religious tradition are more committed and more involved," in some ways, than they were before.

GROWING GROUP BY GROUP

While Heller's group is untraditional, its small size is part of a trend shared with more traditional U.S. religious practices, such as prayer and Bible-study groups.

In recent years, the growth of small religious groups has been fueled—somewhat counterintuitively—by the growth of large evangelical churches, says Lyman Kellstedt, emeritus professor of political science at Wheaton College in Illinois. "I go to Willow Creek Community Church, which was a precursor to today's megachurches, where I'm a small group leader myself. Vital churches, the ones that aren't declining, are really emphasizing" small groups.

That's also true in small rural churches like the one Dave Smith and his wife, Sue, attend in Erie, Michigan. The Smiths take part in Sunday school classes and

Bible-study groups as well as a special book-discussion series they occasionally add to the mix at Erie United Methodist Church.

“Sue and I are always looking for ways to tell people about our church,” says her husband, a retired farmer who works part time for an agricultural cooperative. “When we’re telling people about our church, we usually say it’s a really good church and we’ve got a good pastor—but, until now, I guess it hadn’t occurred to me to point out that we’ve got some great classes and prayer and Bible-study groups. I know [the small groups] are something that’s meant a lot more to me in recent years.”

STABILITY MINGLED WITH CHANGE

The Smiths’ experiences in their Michigan congregation illustrate some trends identified by Pew, but the couple also is resistant to other trends. For example, the Smiths are opposed to same-sex relationships and marriage, while overall the survey found that acceptance of gay marriage is rising significantly among religiously affiliated Americans.

St. John’s congregation in Oregon is similar, in many ways, to the Smiths’ church. Small-group activity is the lifeblood of the church—and, like the Smiths, St. John enjoys telling others about her congregation. The chief difference is that St. John’s church is fully accepting of gays.

As a teenager, St. John not only enjoyed attending church services; she credits that experience with giving her confidence as a young woman. But when she came out as a lesbian in her 30s, she and her partner, Kae, found themselves spiritual exiles. “We were living in the San Francisco Bay Area, and we were finding that even there in the 1970s and 1980s most mainline churches were not welcoming,” says St. John. “So, we wound up exploring religious alternatives for a number of years.”

Flash forward to the couple’s discovery of an Episcopal church in Oregon, where St. John says she feels at home again in mainline Christianity. She and Kae, now her wife, are active in their parish. At home, the women regularly pray and enjoy reading from the Bible and other inspirational literature.

‘THE MEANING AND PURPOSE OF LIFE’

University of Michigan sociologist Wayne Baker, who studies American values, says he was especially interested in the report’s findings that Americans seem to be increasingly prone to spiritual reflection.

“What really stood out for me in this new report are a number of questions that try to get at the way Americans are wrestling on a deeper level with the meaning and purpose of life,” Baker says. “I’m really intrigued by these Pew findings that, to cite one example: Whether you’re religiously affiliated or not, there’s a growing number of people who experience a

deep sense of wonder and awe about the universe.”

Baker says that his own research includes examination of how people can sometimes seem to hold conflicting values and that those people often are deeply thoughtful about existential questions. “I’ve found that people who strongly feel cultural contradictions are more likely to report that they think about the meaning and purpose of life,” he says. “And in this new Pew report, there’s a finding about that, too.” That’s an issue Pew researchers added to the 2014 survey, finding that 55 percent of all respondents say they frequently think about the meaning and purpose of life.

In North Carolina, Moreno says it’s certainly something she ponders. She grew up with such a strong commitment to her Catholic faith that she chose the study of Christianity as her undergraduate major and then completed a three-year master’s degree at Wake Forest University School of Divinity. “I really wrestled with so many things about this question of a calling,” she says. “I’m a strong feminist and—for example—as Catholics, we’re used to making the sign of the cross to the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. And, yes, Jesus certainly was male, but God is not. That’s just one example. I wish our tradition would explore more of the feminine nature of God.”

Moreno concluded that her vocation lies outside the walls of the church. She now performs most weekends as an actor at Renaissance festivals and writes her own material to highlight women as noble heroes.

“I see my generation in this Pew report,” says Moreno, who is 25. “Many of my friends had bad church experiences and are disconnected from organized religion—but that doesn’t mean they’ve given up on what they need for their own spiritual well-being. My friends didn’t leave the church to become atheists. They still want to find eternal peace.”

The experiences of Moreno, St. John, the Smiths, and Heller are windows into the personal stories behind the trends that the Pew report documents. Nearly a decade into the long-term study of the evolution in the nation’s religious landscape, Pew’s continuing research is laying a baseline that over time will be able to provide historical context for the role of religion and how it affects social change in the United States.

“We are seeing some expressions of generic spirituality that are up across the board, plus a lot of stability in traditional religious behavior—and yet, at the same time, the number of Nones is still growing,” says Pew’s Cooperman. “Why are these things happening? Where are these trends going? These are tough questions to explore—open questions that we need to pay attention to in our ongoing research.”

David Crumm covered religion for the Detroit Free Press and is the editor of the online magazine and publishing company Read The Spirit.



A New View on Corrections

After decades of rising prison costs and stagnant recidivism rates, many states found better ways to protect the public. Now it's the federal government's turn.

by Charles Babington

Like dozens of other states, Georgia faced a quandary five years ago. The prison population was soaring, costs were climbing, and taxpayers—who were seeing no reductions in recidivism rates—were asking what they were getting for their money.

For decades, Georgia had handled crime like many other states, especially those with conservative electorates. “Lock ‘em up” was the motto, and new prison construction was the means. By 2011, the number of inmates in the state had doubled from two decades earlier and the annual price tag for prisons had grown to \$1 billion. Governor Nathan Deal (R) wanted change, even if it carried the political risk of being seen as soft on crime.

After enlisting support from state legislative and judicial leaders five years ago, he turned to The Pew Charitable Trusts’ public safety performance project, which has now worked in more than half of the 50 states and developed a record of finding smarter, data-driven ways to keep communities safe while earning a better return on taxpayers’ investments in prisons and corrections programs.

In less than two years, Pew had helped guide policymakers through comprehensive revisions of criminal and juvenile justice laws that reduced prison populations and changed the policy discourse among state leaders.

During the 2014 gubernatorial campaign, *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution* noted a significant drop in imprisonment rates, especially among minorities. “The change reflects a new philosophy on sentencing in Georgia, which led the nation in criminal punishment as recently as 2009 but is now bent on saving money and changing lives,” the newspaper reported.

Deal emphasized this new approach throughout the campaign and won re-election on a platform once unthinkable in conservative states: expanding the types of reforms that were already sending fewer Georgians to prison and shortening many inmates’ sentences, while also expanding programs to help nonviolent offenders turn to productive lives.

In hindsight, the governor’s positions may not have been so politically fraught after all. Increasingly, the leaders of many states are searching for more efficient and effective ways of protecting the public and reducing what has been one of the fastest-growing costs to taxpayers.

These leaders are reacting to the fact that the U.S. prison population has soared over the past three decades, rising more than 700 percent, thanks largely to state laws and policies that put more offenders behind bars and kept them there longer. By 2008, 1 in 100 adults in the U.S. was imprisoned. And costs had risen, too, with states spending more than \$50 billion annually on corrections.

But despite more people being locked up, there was little long-term impact on public safety. Studies attribute as much as 25 percent of the drop in crime since the early 1990s to increased incarceration. But in 2011, Pew published *State of Recidivism: The Revolving Door of America’s Prisons*, a report showing that recidivism rates had remained virtually unchanged for decades despite the new laws and the jump in prison spending. Working with the Association of State Correctional Administrators, Pew’s researchers showed that more than 40 percent of the inmates released in 2004 were back behind bars by 2007. That, the report concluded, “is an unhappy reality, not just for offenders, but for the safety of American communities.”

While other organizations now work on the issue, a decade ago Pew was among the first, conducting the extensive research that has yielded troves of new data about sentencing, incarceration, parole and probation, recidivism, and other key subjects. “The issue wasn’t on anybody’s radar a decade ago,” says Adam Gelb, director of Pew’s public safety performance project. “It wasn’t discussed much at all, and many elected officials believed Americans just had an unquenchable thirst for punishment.” Today’s political climate, Gelb says, “is unrecognizable” in comparison, “and almost unimaginable if you look back just eight years.”

So are the trends in the states, when compared with the get-tough-on-crime era. A Pew analysis of Justice Department data shows that between 2009 and 2014, there was no causal link between higher incarceration rates and lower crime. In fact, 30 states have managed to reduce both.



The intensive technical assistance provided to Georgia and other states is part of the Justice Reinvestment Initiative, a collaboration between Pew and the U.S. Department of Justice’s Bureau of Justice Assistance, in which Pew works with the Council of State Governments Justice Center, the Crime and Justice Institute, and other partners. When states seek help, Pew and its partners start by garnering bipartisan support from leaders of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches. They obtain letters from the governor, Senate president, House speaker, and chief justice acknowledging the problems and specifically asking for assistance.

Pew then gets to work, analyzing the state’s data to uncover the main causes of prison population growth; strategies to slow or reverse it; shortcomings in parole and probation services; and viable ways to reduce costs while combating recidivism. Because the circumstances in each state are different, there is no magic solution that fits them all.

An early test came in Texas, long known for tough corrections policies. Between 1979 and 2000, Texas



Senator Orrin Hatch (left) joined Utah Governor Gary Herbert at Pew's Washington conference center in October to discuss their state's experience with corrections reform. *Julia Hoppock/The Pew Charitable Trusts*

UTAH'S CORRECTIONS BLUEPRINT

In April 2014, Governor Gary Herbert (R) charged the Utah Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice with finding ways to make meaningful, lasting reforms in the state's criminal justice system. Unless something was done, the prison population was forecast to grow another 37 percent by 2034—at a cost to Utah taxpayers of \$500 million. And a high percentage of probationers and parolees were returning to prison not for new crimes but for violating the terms of their release. Pew provided technical assistance to the commission, whose recommendations culminated with new legislation that the governor signed into law in March 2015.

Seven months after those reforms took effect, Utah officials, led by Gov. Herbert and Senator Orrin Hatch (R), came to Pew's Washington conference center to share lessons from their experience. The audience at the Oct. 1 discussion included corrections officials from other states, academics, criminal justice reform advocates, and policy analysts.

Utah's reforms, said Sen. Hatch, "focus resources on individuals who are the greatest dangers to our communities, improve mental health and other treatment services, give probation and parole officers greater flexibility in supervising releases, and strengthen programs to help offenders successfully re-enter society."

Gov. Herbert said he sought the overhauls after realizing "we were failing to improve people's lives"

through incarceration. "The majority of crimes were caused by drug addiction and substance abuse," he said. "Most people behind bars were nonviolent."

The state was planning to build a new \$1 billion prison and was thinking big—a 10,000-bed facility.

"But then we said we don't just want to build more and more beds," said Ron Gordon, executive director of the state's criminal and juvenile justice commission. "Even though we had a relatively low incarceration rate, we still had people in prison who just didn't need to be there."

Pew analyzed Utah's corrections system and helped guide the state commission's recommendations for the final legislation. The new law downgraded all first- and second-time drug possession convictions from felonies to misdemeanors, and 241 misdemeanors to citations no longer subject to arrest or jail. It garnered widespread support, including from law enforcement leaders, and passed the state Senate unanimously and the House 67-2.

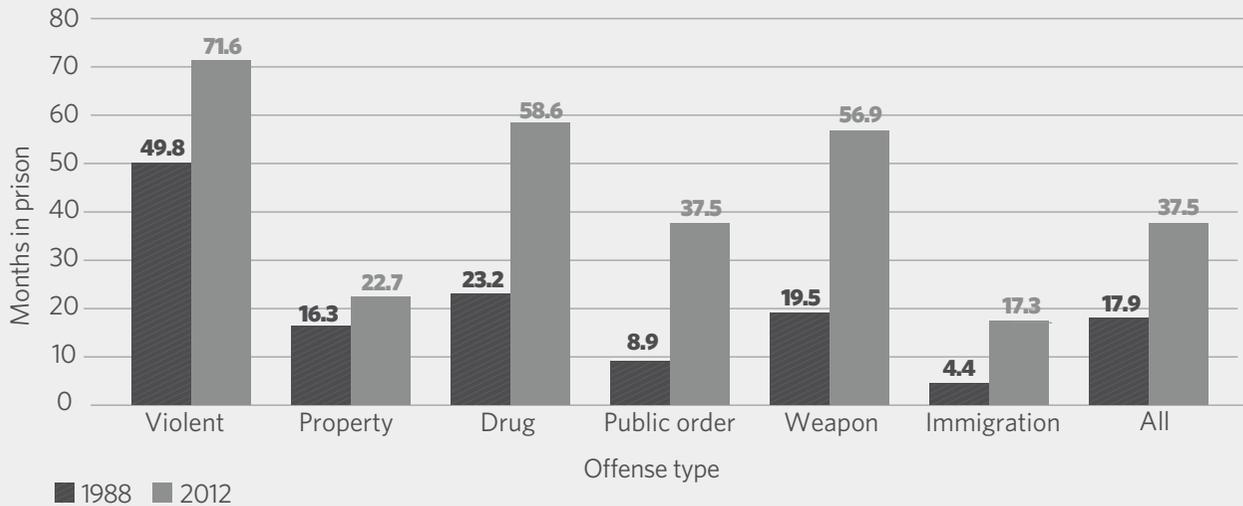
Gordon said, "It took a lot of data analysis to show that prison was not improving any outcome for these individuals [and] that the most effective way to rehabilitate them and improve public safety was to provide treatment in the community that was based on [each offender's] specific needs."

—John Briley

Watch the discussion at magazine.pewtrusts.org/Utah-corrections.

Average Time Served Rose Sharply for All Federal Offense Types From 1988 to 2012

Increases ranged from 321% for public order crimes to 39% for property offenses



Notes: Data show average time served by inmates released from prison in 1988 and 2012. Public order offenses include tax law violations, bribery, perjury, racketeering, extortion, and other crimes.

Sources: Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Federal Criminal Case Processing 1982-1993*, Table 18 (1988 data); *Federal Justice Statistics 2012—Statistical Tables*, Table 7.11 (2012 data)

built 137 prisons. By the mid-2000s, state officials were growing increasingly concerned about the rising corrections costs and began to seek alternatives. Helped by the Council of State Governments Justice Center and Pew, Texas began by identifying the nonviolent offenders who presented little danger to the public and could go into alternative programs. After launching reforms in 2007, state leaders soon were saving hundreds of millions of dollars annually by diverting money to substance abuse and mental health programs, halfway houses for released offenders, and short-term facilities to hold people who violated parole or probation rules.

Since then, more than half the states have passed laws to improve public safety, provide alternatives to prison, and save money. Many divert some of the resulting savings to parole and probation programs designed to help former inmates succeed in society and avoid returning to prison.

"Pew has been absolutely critical to the success in the states," says Patrick J. Nolan, a leading national advocate of corrections reforms. "Its data is the gold standard." Nolan holds a unique place among criminal justice experts: A former Republican leader in the California State Assembly, he spent more than two years in federal prison on a racketeering charge stemming from a

government sting operation—which gave him, he says, special insight into how society deals with offenders, punishment, and public safety.

In state after state, Nolan says, Pew has helped leaders realize that there are tested, proven ways to handle criminal justice more efficiently, effectively, and humanely. Too often in legislative debates, he says, information is a matter "of conjecture and opinion. It's like a barroom discussion: 'Says who?'" By working in a bipartisan way across the political spectrum, Nolan says, Pew presents well-researched reports that replace opinions with facts.

Seeing the success in other states, Georgia officials decided in 2011 that they could wait no longer to address a prison population that had more than doubled since 1990, to nearly 56,000. The state was spending more than \$1 billion a year on corrections, with more growth projected.

And Georgians were beginning to question what they were getting for the investment. The rate at which former inmates returned to prison for committing a new felony within three years of their release had remained steady—at nearly 30 percent—for a decade.

So state leaders created the Georgia Council on Criminal Justice Reform, which turned to Pew for research and technical assistance. The analysis produced some telling findings to guide legislators and the governor: Well over half of Georgia's new inmates were drug and property offenders, and courts had few viable sentencing alternatives to prison. In addition, parole and probation agencies lacked the resources to adequately supervise inmates who were released.

With help from Pew, the Council on Criminal Justice Reform made several major recommendations: Use prison space mainly for serious offenders. Strengthen probation and alternative sentencing options. Relieve local jail crowding. And find better ways to measure public safety and criminal justice performance.

The Georgia Legislature unanimously endorsed the package. "Pew and other stakeholders provided invaluable support and input throughout this effort," says Gov. Deal. "Their work resulted in bipartisan legislation that is paying dividends." He signed the legislation in May 2012.

Georgia officials said the law would eliminate the need for any new prison beds in the first five years, saving at least \$264 million. In the first year, the state funneled more than \$45 million in savings from prison construction into efforts to reduce new crimes by former inmates, particularly those with drug and alcohol problems. Services include housing, job training, substance abuse treatment, mentoring—even help finding a job for someone else in the supervised person's household, "because stability in that home helps everyone in that home," says Michael Nail, commissioner of the new Georgia Department of Community Supervision.

Following the success of the criminal justice effort, Georgia leaders used the same data-driven approach in partnership with Pew to develop and enact sweeping juvenile justice reforms in 2013. By reducing the number of less-serious offenders sent to secure facilities and investing in effective, community-based alternatives to incarceration, the legislation was projected to avert the need for two new juvenile corrections facilities. In the nine months after implementation, the number of youth held in secure facilities fell by 14 percent, fueled by a 62 percent drop in counties that received funding to steer lower-level offenders toward alternatives.



While still working with states, Pew has begun to focus on the federal prison system, where the inmate population has climbed from about 24,000 in 1980 to more than 215,000 in 2013, at a cost of \$6.7 billion a year—about one-fourth of the Justice Department's spending. A Pew report released in August shows that 95,000 federal prisoners are serving time for drug-related offenses, up from 5,000 in 1980. Part of the

growth came from changes in drug crime patterns and law enforcement practices, but the analysis also found that federal sentencing laws enacted during the 1980s and 1990s have required more drug offenders to go to prison—and stay there much longer—than three decades ago.

A follow-up report in November found that the average length of time federal inmates served more than doubled from 1988 to 2012, from 17.9 months to 37.5 months—at a correspondingly high increase in costs: The analysis determined that keeping inmates those additional 19.6 months costs taxpayers an additional \$2.7 billion annually.

"There's a lot the federal government can do" to lower its prison population and costs without endangering public safety, says Representative Bobby Scott (D-VA), co-sponsor of a major reform bill pending in Congress. He's urging lawmakers to reduce mandatory minimum sentences and devote more resources to drug courts, rehabilitation programs, police training, and pretrial diversion programs.

Scott's bipartisan House bill draws heavily from the states' successes, which proponents say could apply at the federal level. Among other things, the legislation would allow federal inmates, and former inmates under supervision, to earn credits by completing certain evidence-based programs. It would provide new authority to impose swift and certain sanctions on those who violate their supervision rules.

Pew's Gelb agrees that the federal system could reduce recidivism by strengthening its probation and post-prison supervision programs.

The Senate is also weighing reform legislation, with Senator Chuck Grassley (R-IA), chairman of the Judiciary Committee, telling reporters, "I've learned from what some states have done, changes could be made and money could be saved and not hurt society with people that do harm coming from behind bars."

"States as diverse as Connecticut, South Carolina, Georgia, and Texas are showing that it's possible to cut crime and imprisonment at the same time," Gelb says. "These state successes have fueled the momentum in Congress and given it the best opportunity in years to protect public safety, hold offenders accountable, and contain the spiraling cost of the federal prison system."

At both the state and federal levels, "I think we're just beginning," says Nolan, the national corrections reform advocate. He hopes more states will adopt data-driven policies in the areas of juvenile justice, mental health care, community supervision of offenders, and the handling of elderly inmates.

And, he adds "there's plenty of work ... to come."

Charles Babington has written about politics and policy for The Washington Post and The Associated Press.

A ceremonial tepee on the banks of the Poplar River hosts traditional indigenous gatherings.





THE LAND THAT GIVES LIFE

In northern Manitoba, Sophia and Ray Rabliauskas find peace and purpose by helping to protect the boreal forest—for their grandchildren and for the planet.

by Sheldon Alberts
Photography by Katye Martens



This is the first in a series of stories profiling the people of Canada's boreal forest.



Sophia Rabliauskas strides briskly down a narrow dirt trail toward the rapids, sure and confident despite the steep descent and the rushing river just a few feet below. Her two grandchildren scurry past in a blur of swinging arms and legs, sending up tiny clouds of dust in their scramble to reach the rock ledges that offer a front-row seat for one of nature's great aquatic spectacles.

"Be careful, don't slip," she calls out to them. But her worry quickly gives way to a smile as the water comes into full view, framed against a verdant backdrop of poplar and spruce.

Sophia has been coming to these rapids—called Nagayam Powitik—since she was a little girl. Her father would bring her, just as she and her husband, Ray, bring their grandkids now, to watch the Poplar River roar out of the boreal forest, clear and unpolluted, toward her village.

"Listening to the wind and to the river brings some calmness and serenity into your being," she says. This remote wilderness makes her feel safe and at peace.

"When I need healing," she says, "I go to the land."

Sophia is understandably reverent: She knows in ways spiritual, cultural, and scientific how important this forest is, not just for the survival of her people—the Anishinaabeg—but for the health of the planet.

Just a mile or so below the rapids, the river empties into Lake Winnipeg, the world's 10th-largest freshwater lake, which covers more than 9,400 square miles in the province of Manitoba.

Upstream from these rapids the Poplar River snakes deep into a wilderness region known as Pimachiowin Aki, "the land that gives life"—at more than 8.25 million acres, one of the largest undisturbed expanses of forest and wetlands remaining on Earth.

Pimachiowin Aki is part of the boreal forest ecosystem in Canada, which holds some of the planet's largest stores of terrestrial carbon and plays a critical role in regulating climate.

This region may be wild and remote, but it is certainly not an empty wilderness. It sustains more than 600 First Nations, whose people have safeguarded the forest for millennia.

And since 2000, Pew has partnered with these indigenous peoples, as well as with conservation groups, industry, and governments across Canada, to ensure that the boreal forest remains a global ecological treasure. The goal is to protect the boreal by balancing conservation and sustainable development across the region, which includes 1.2 billion intact acres from Yukon in the west to Newfoundland and Labrador in the east.



Pew has supported efforts by First Nations in Quebec, Newfoundland and Labrador, and the Northwest Territories that in 2015 placed more than 11 million acres of boreal in interim or permanent protection. In addition, Pew urged the Manitoba government to embrace indigenous land use planning as a primary tool in its boreal forest policy. The provincial government promised in November to provide increased funding to First Nations to carry out that planning, with which



Sophia Rabliauskas has been coming to the rapids—called Nagayam Powitik—near her village in Canada’s boreal forest since she was a child. Now she brings her granddaughter, Rita, and her grandson, Aiden, with her to watch the Poplar River’s unpolluted, roaring waters.

they develop comprehensive frameworks for the conservation and development of their traditional territories and the preservation of their culture.



Sophia, a fluent Anishinaabe speaker who was born and raised in Poplar River First Nation, has been a language teacher and led camps for both young

people and adults to connect with their culture. Ray is a Lithuanian-Canadian originally from Kirkland Lake, Ontario, who first came to Poplar River almost 40 years ago to help build houses but stayed after realizing the community was the place he wanted to call home. It’s a place where the couple has raised four children.

“I don’t know of any other place,” he says, “where you’re reminded so much of the beauty of the creator and what he made.” Ray is now Poplar River’s



Sophia and Ray cruise Lake Winnipeg with their friend, Ed Hudson, at the helm. The 10th-largest freshwater lake in the world covers more than 9,400 square miles in Manitoba, where indigenous peoples are leading conservation efforts in the boreal forest.

representative to the Boreal Leadership Council, a coalition of First Nations communities, environmental groups, and companies working to ensure a balance of development and conservation in the forest.

The people of Poplar River have been trailblazers in indigenous land use planning. For more than a decade, Sophia and Ray have helped lead a campaign by the Poplar River First Nation and four other indigenous communities in Manitoba and Ontario—Bloodvein River, Little Grand Rapids, Pauingassi, and Pikangikum—to have Pimachiowin Aki declared a UNESCO World Heritage site, a designation reserved for places of cultural and natural heritage that are deemed to be of “outstanding value to humanity.”

Most of the land included in the proposed World Heritage site has already been permanently protected from industrial development, due in large part to the work of indigenous communities committed to keeping

their traditional territories pristine. But securing an added designation from UNESCO would highlight the global significance of the broader boreal forest in Canada and would recognize the vital role the Anishinaabeg have played in protecting this land, while also drawing their sustenance from it, for more than 6,000 years.

“Anishinaabeg really believe that they’re inseparable from the land because of their sacred connection, because of their sacred responsibility of looking after the land,” says Sophia, who in 2007 was awarded the Goldman Environmental Prize, an international award for grassroots conservation efforts, for her work to keep the forests surrounding Poplar River intact. She and Ray say they want to show the international community the importance of recognizing indigenous knowledge and rights in land use planning.

The Anishinaabe elders “are always trying to educate,” Ray says. “That’s what our land plan is, is to



The couple loves to hike with their grandchildren in the wilderness where they live, a region known as Pimachiowin Aki, which is one of the largest undisturbed expanses of forest and wetlands remaining on Earth.

educate people about ... how to care for the land and why it's important. And [people] need to understand that before it's too late, before they destroy everything."

In seeking UNESCO recognition, Sophia and Ray say indigenous elders are motivated by a desire to share their traditional knowledge with others about how to keep the environment healthy. The Anishinaabe conservation ethic is rooted in a simple concept that applies both locally and globally: Societies cannot survive if they ruin the land that provides them with what they need to live.

"By protecting the trees, we help protect the planet," Sophia says. And, she adds, "it's not by accident that this land is still pristine. It's the way they kept it, and it's the way they have taught us to keep it."

For Sophia, the connection is personal: She says her father taught her countless lessons about "keeping the land" when she was growing up. "I remember taking a

branch off the tree," she says. "And my dad would say, 'Why did you do that? You shouldn't be doing that. Maybe the tree needs that branch.'"

Her father, Sophia says, "provided for his family without any help from outside. And that really gave him pride in who he was." In fall and winter, he would head into the bush to hunt moose and trap rabbits. In summer, he would fish Lake Winnipeg for pickerel. In the spring, he would shoot ducks and geese.

He never took more from the land than the family needed, she says, and hunting in different areas from season to season was to ensure that wildlife populations were never depleted.

"That was their understanding of conservation," she says. "It was [based on the need] to make sure that there is something available for [other] people."

This relationship between nature and Anishinaabe culture is so central to Pimachiowin Aki's World

FAST FACTS

- Poplar River First Nation is located on the east side of Lake Winnipeg, the world's 10th-largest freshwater lake. It has a population of about 1,300 people.
- The proposed Pimachiowin Aki UNESCO World Heritage site, which includes Poplar River, encompasses 12,895 square miles (33,400 square kilometers) of Anishinaabe traditional aboriginal territory and provincial parks within the boreal.
- Pimachiowin Aki's nomination is supported by the government of Canada, the provincial governments of Manitoba and Ontario, and five indigenous First Nations: Poplar River, Bloodvein, Little Grand Rapids, Pauingassi, and Pikangikum.
- The Pimachiowin Aki site is almost entirely in its natural state, and the vast majority of the nominated area is already protected from development.
- The region is home to more than 40 native mammals—including wolverines, moose, beavers, and timber wolves—and provides vital habitat for threatened woodland caribou populations and at least eight at-risk bird species.
- Archaeologists have discovered traditional hunting and cooking tools and have located ancient camps and pictographs on rock faces that date back 6,000 years.

Heritage site nomination that Sophia and Ray have been entrusted by Poplar River's elders with documenting the oral history of the Anishinaabe people and their culture for the UNESCO team evaluating the proposal.

"It's an honor. When an elder gives us a responsibility, it's not to do this work for a few years. How we look at it, it's our lifetime commitment to do what they asked us to do," Ray says. "And we pray a lot to make sure that the work that we do with our elders is done correctly, that we don't abuse it in any way, or we don't belittle it in any way."

The Anishinaabe tradition of storytelling has kept vibrant the memories of ancient burial sites, long-abandoned settlements, early travel routes, and age-old trap lines. The stories form the foundation of an indigenous culture so connected to its natural environment as to be indistinguishable from it.

"You have to have a strong conviction about what it means when you say you are keeping the land. It means you are keeping the land for the future generations," Sophia says.



By any definition, Poplar River is an isolated place, largely cut off from the outside world. The community of about 1,300 is more than 250 miles north of Winnipeg, the provincial capital, and for most of the year it is accessible only by air or boat. An ice road opens for a few short months in deepest winter.

But an all-season road is under construction. While the road will help families lower their cost of living, Poplar River's people worry about its potential environmental and cultural impacts. "Every single person has mixed feelings" about the road, says Ray, who is working with Poplar River elders to limit potential impacts by identifying sensitive cultural and natural sites along the road's path.

"I think it's a privilege to live in isolation," Sophia says. "People [in the city] pay a lot of money to go stay at a cabin by the lake. And I just walk out my front door and out to the dock and swim in the water."

It's another way she connects to, and honors, her people's history—and another reason she's working to have Pimachiowin Aki recognized by UNESCO.

She recalls her father urging her to teach her own children—and her children's children—about how the land can heal and the value of sitting on the edge of the rapids, listening to the trees and watching the water flow.

"I want them to go out on the land, listen with their hearts ... even just respecting who you are, respecting the land," she says.

"Respecting everything that's around you, everything that's alive, everything that God created. I want them to know that and feel that and to walk gently and softly on this land so that they will be able to pass that on to their children."

Sheldon Alberts is a Trust staff writer.



"When I need healing," says Sophia, "I go to the land."

Most Millennials Resist the Label

What's in a name? For a lot of 18- to 34-year-olds, not much.

By Caralee Adams

Glendora Meikle is a millennial, but that's not how she describes herself. "I don't identify with a particular generation, and I don't speak with a lot of people who do," says the 33-year-old, who works for a nonprofit in Washington, D.C. "I hear very few people start a sentence with, 'As a millennial'"

Meikle says she has friends of all ages, to whom she feels connected because of common interests—not because of when they were born.

She's not alone. Just 40 percent of adults ages 18-34 consider themselves part of the millennial generation, according to a Pew Research Center survey released in September. Another 33 percent from that age group say they identify as Generation Xers, whom demographers categorize as being between 35 and 50.

Pew's survey of 3,147 adults focused on four generational labels: millennials, Gen X, baby boomers, and the oldest, the silents, born in the depths of the Great Depression. It found that boomers have the strongest generational identity, with 79 percent of those born between 1946 and 1964 embracing the term.

While millennials may not have the same sense of generational identity as their boomer counterparts, understanding their attitudes is essential to planning the country's future as well as its workplace policies: Millennials will soon become the nation's largest living generation, and they already make up the largest share of the workforce.

"They are just a big cohort, they will change things, and we need to prepare for that," says Karen K. Myers, a communications professor at the University of California, Santa Barbara, who has researched millennials and their role in the workplace.

Previous Pew research on millennials has shown they face a tough job market, given the lingering effects of the Great Recession. That has had ripple effects, with many continuing to live with their parents and delaying

marriage until they are financially secure. A Pew analysis of census data, for example, found that the percentage of 18- to 34-year-old women living at home is at the same level as in 1940.

The names of generations are largely the creation of social scientists and market researchers and can provide a cohesive way of viewing a particular age group. In this latest study, Pew researchers wanted to learn more about how widely accepted these labels are and, especially, which characteristics Americans use to describe their own generations, says Alec Tyson, a senior researcher at the center.

The survey found that the public is more familiar with some of the generational labels than with others. Only 58 percent of respondents ages 18-34 had heard the term "millennial."

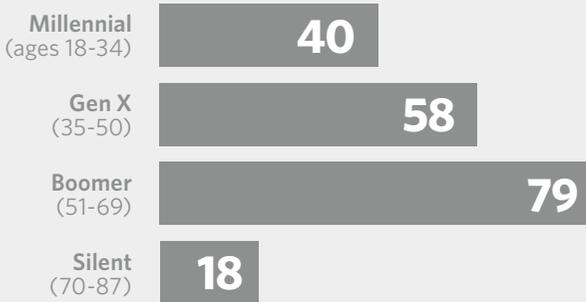
"It's hard to identify with a term you haven't heard of," says Tyson. "That goes a long way toward describing some of this."

The study delved deeply into how the generations view themselves. And more than any other group in the study, millennials describe people their age negatively: 59 percent say their generation is "self-absorbed," 49 percent call it "wasteful," and 43 percent say millennials are "greedy."

A greater share of millennials than of any other age group describe their generation as less willing to sacrifice, less religious, less patriotic, less compassionate, and less politically active. They also are more likely to view themselves as more cynical than any of the other groups (31 percent). Only 24 percent of Gen Xers, 16 percent of boomers, and 7 percent of silents say that about themselves.

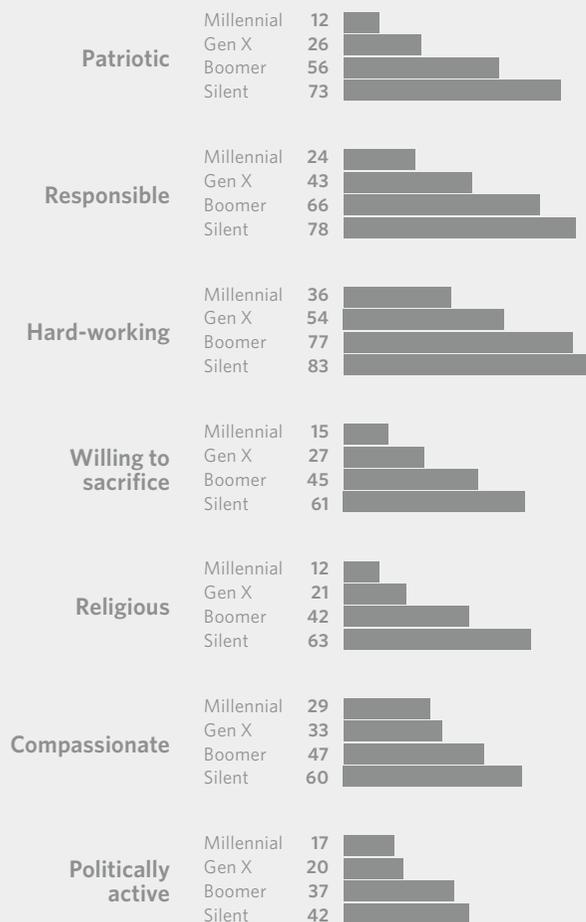
The report's findings resonated with many in the millennial age group. "Maybe why we are cynical is because we don't know how we can make a difference and affect a lot of the problems we see around the world, even though we want to," says Meredith Niles, a

Millennials Less Likely Than Boomers, Gen X to Embrace Generational Label



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Generational Gaps: Silents, Boomers See Themselves in a More Positive Light



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University of Vermont professor who, at 32, falls in the millennial category even though she says she views herself more as a Gen Xer.

Tyler Wayne Patterson, a 21-year-old senior at Lewis & Clark College in Portland, Oregon, says he identifies himself as a millennial. But, he adds, when people his age are pegged as “selfish” or “lazy,” they naturally want to distance themselves from the generational label.

Patterson says that millennials, rather than being “self-absorbed,” are dealing with coming of age in a difficult economy while trying to draw attention to issues that are important to them, such as the need for quality education and affordable housing. And, he says, a defining characteristic of his generation is having grown up alongside the changes in media and technology that have given millennials constant access to new information, ideas, and perspectives.

So that may be why, even though millennials say they are self-absorbed and less willing to sacrifice, they also describe themselves in the poll as “idealistic.” In fact, more millennials use that term to describe their generation—39 percent—than do any of the other groups: Gen Xers (28 percent), boomers (31 percent), or silents (26 percent). And they view themselves as “tolerant” at about the same levels as other generations.

Erik Lampmann, a 24-year-old organizer and writer in Washington, D.C., says people his age have what he calls “idealistic pragmatism.” They can see flaws in the electoral or economic system, he says, and seek change. Millennials have a natural adaptability to new technology, especially for communication, which he sees young people using to expose racial injustice and other concerns.

“I am consistently impressed by the energy, optimism, and creativity of young people,” says Lampmann.

So, cynical yet idealistic, self-absorbed yet tolerant. If there appears to be inconsistency in how millennials view themselves, that also is not surprising, given that they are the youngest generation and are still finding themselves, says Myers, the professor in California.

Millennials “are just developing their identities now. Their values might start to change,” she says. “We all change as we get older. As we have kids, our values can change, and certainly theirs can, too.”

Caralee Adams is a Washington-based writer.

A New Way to Look at Philadelphians

Pew surveys residents of its hometown, focusing on their attitudes about the city rather than demographic categories, to give policymakers a fresh perspective.

by Tom Infield

Photography by Katy Martens

Artist Nancy Merritt and her husband, Al, a retired veterinarian, like what they see happening in Philadelphia. Now in their 70s, they recently moved to the city from Florida and have steeped themselves in its rich broth of arts, history, good food, and other urban amenities. They are not blind to the city's problems, including distressing poverty and struggling schools, but they see their adopted hometown as moving forward. And they view Philadelphia as underappreciated, even by many of its own residents.

"It's the energy" of the city, Nancy Merritt says one sunny winter afternoon as the couple examines the menu in the window of an East Passyunk Avenue restaurant.

The Merritts first lived in Philadelphia 40 years ago, when Al Merritt was on the veterinary faculty at the University of Pennsylvania. They went south so he could take a position at the University of Florida. On visits back to see friends, they'd see Center City and some of its neighborhoods flourishing and feel a tug. Two years ago, they returned for good and bought a row house in the Pennsport neighborhood of South Philadelphia, and they expect to stay for the rest of their lives.

About a fifth of the city's residents, like the Merritts, can be classified as Enthusiastic Urbanists, according to "A New Way of Looking at Philadelphians," a report released in November by Pew's Philadelphia research initiative.

Using computerized cluster analysis, Pew researchers and consultants examined the opinions of 1,603 Philadelphians ages 18 and older who took a 26-question survey. The researchers sorted the data and

developed four categories for city residents: Dissatisfied Citizens (30 percent), Die-Hard Loyalists (25 percent), Uncommitted Skeptics (25 percent), and Enthusiastic Urbanists (19 percent).

Larry Eichel, director of the research initiative, says the report uses Pew's polling expertise in a new way. Instead of grouping respondents based on the traditional categories of income, neighborhood, race, age, and education, the new analysis focuses on respondents' opinions about the city. "I think it's an invitation to everybody who cares about Philadelphia to go beyond the demographics and look at attitudes," Eichel says.

Respondents were asked questions such as whether they plan to stay in or move from Philadelphia, if they believe race plays a role in city government decisions and policies, whether they feel safe when going out at night, and how they view the importance of Center City to Philadelphia's future. On two questions, there were solid majorities: About two-thirds of respondents to the survey viewed immigrants as a vital addition to city neighborhoods, and two-thirds said Philadelphia's best days are still ahead—both signs of real optimism.

David Thornburgh, president and CEO of the Committee of Seventy, a public policy group in

On her way to a yoga retreat, Nicole Snyder, 32, watches for a train on the Chestnut Hill East platform. A stay-at-home mom with two small children, she came to Philadelphia from San Francisco when her husband, Curtis, accepted a new job in Center City. "We're foodies; it's fun to check out all the little restaurants," she says. She enjoys their life in Philadelphia but says she misses "the weather and the lifestyle of the West Coast."





Headed back to his job at Philadelphia Gas Works, Abe Awad, 35, dangles his bagged lunch of sesame chicken that he bought from a food vendor near Temple University. A boy when his family immigrated to Pennsylvania from Syria, he has lived in the city since enrolling at Temple in 2003. "I hope to live in the city the rest of my life," he says. "Besides the school district, I have no issues. I like the city life. I like my neighborhood. I don't see any reason to get up and move."

Philadelphia, says the report demonstrates how the "harnessing of big data" can be used to "ask a set of questions that we care about—and that everybody who cares about cities should care about." The report, he says, "delivers some terrific insight into some of the fundamental questions that don't get as much attention as they should."



Al and Nancy Merritt, who retired from Florida to Philadelphia, walk along East Passyunk Avenue in a traditionally Italian enclave of South Philadelphia that has become a diverse area of hipsters, young couples, and gays. In their nearby Pennsport neighborhood, "things are going up so fast we sometimes think there aren't enough [building] controls," says Nancy. Adds Al: "We're part of the gentrification, I guess. But we like the diversity."

Here's a closer look at the four groups:

Dissatisfied Citizens, the largest of the groups, are most likely to say Philadelphia is on the wrong track and has seen its best days. Disproportionately, they are unhappy with their neighborhoods, distrustful of police, and disenchanted with city government, which they believe lets race influence policy decisions. They are relatively



Tawanna Rose, 56, a retired maintenance supervisor for the School District of Philadelphia, waits as her clothes tumble at the Wadsworth Plaza Laundromat in Mount Airy. She says she loves Philadelphia despite what she sees as its many flaws. “A lot of things need to change,” she says, starting with the school system: “It’s really run down.” A lifelong Philadelphian, she says she would be open-minded to an adventure elsewhere. “You’re always supposed to leave room for change,” she says.

young (68 percent under 50) and female (61 percent). Half are African-American. Almost two-thirds are born-and-raised Philadelphians. They wouldn’t recommend the city to others and would move if they could.

Die-Hard Loyalists, who make up 25 percent of residents, see a bright future for Philadelphia and want to be a part of it. They tend to be older and settled, with



Collar turned up against the cold, musician Paul Robinson, 67, pauses on Germantown Avenue, the cobblestone main street of Chestnut Hill, where he meets friends for coffee most mornings. A 40-year city resident, he rates Philadelphia “excellent,” but notes: “It depends on where you are on the socio-economic scale and the opportunities you may or may not have.” He sees Philadelphia getting better and says his only complaint is “drug-related petty thefts.”

79 percent having lived in the city for 30 years or more. They are comfortable in their neighborhoods, and nearly all of them (95 percent) hope to remain in the city for the rest of their lives. They are racially and ethnically diverse. By a 5-1 ratio, they think the city should focus on the welfare of longtime residents rather than on attracting newcomers.

Uncommitted Skeptics, also about a quarter of residents, are the least connected to Philadelphia. While 58 percent rate the city as good or excellent, 97 percent would leave if the circumstances were right. They are skeptical of institutions, including the business community, the police department, and city government. More than a third live in Northeast Philadelphia, traditionally an insular area, and only 19 percent think the city should focus on gaining new residents. Racially, they mirror the city as a whole.

Enthusiastic Urbanists, the smallest of the groups, are the best-educated and the best off financially. Two-thirds think Philadelphia is headed in the right direction, and three-quarters believe its best days lie ahead. They have a more favorable view of the police and local government than do other groups. They see Center City as key to the future and think Philadelphia should work to attract new residents. And they are mobile; only 52 percent hope to spend their entire lives in the city.

Opinions varied among the four groups on many issues, but the respondents did share some common perspectives, including a negative view of Philadelphia's public schools. The analysis found it didn't matter whether someone was a parent with firsthand knowledge of the schools or someone without a school-age child; just about everyone was unhappy with the system.

A trip through the city's many neighborhoods quickly reveals the voices behind the categories.

At a laundromat in Mount Airy, where she shares Bible readings with the manager while washing her clothes, Tawanna Rose, 56, says, "A lot of things [in the schools] are not working for the benefit of the children in the inner city, and it's just not fair." The retired maintenance supervisor for the School District of Philadelphia, who shares some opinions with Die-Hard Loyalists and some with Dissatisfied Citizens, says she loves the city. But, she adds, "you shouldn't have to move out of the city for your children to have a halfway decent education. If they don't have an education, where is the city going to go? It's going to go downhill."

Abe Awad, 35—who emigrated from Syria to Pennsylvania as a boy, earned an engineering degree from Temple University, and works as a manager for Philadelphia Gas Works—says he expects to always live in the city, although his parents in Allentown are worried about his safety. ("My whole family, you mention Philadelphia and, whoa! They say, 'You live in Philadelphia and you are still alive?!'"")

Sitting on a bench with a foil-wrapped lunch from a local food vendor, Awad says he plans to one day get married and have children. His lone reservation about Philadelphia? The schools. "The only bad thing is the school district. I would say the school district is not the best."

Former Mayor Michael Nutter, who left City Hall at the end of 2015, after eight years in office, agrees

that better schools are key to Philadelphia's future. He says the Pew report, with its "different slice" of public opinion, can help policymakers get to the root of this issue and others. "As government people, we love data, and we love different ways of looking at data," he says.

Nutter says he is not surprised by the Pew finding that 64 percent of Philadelphians—nearly two-thirds—believe the city should do more for longtime residents than to attract and retain new ones. That attitude was heavily expressed by Dissatisfied Citizens but also by large segments of Die-Hard Loyalists and Uncommitted Skeptics. Only the Enthusiastic Urbanists—69 percent of them—felt strongly that Philadelphia should focus on new residents.

"People who have lived here all their lives, maybe they're not interested in anybody new," Nutter says. "If you're a government leader, or if you're a business leader, you don't have the luxury of being myopically focused on [one group]. You've got to deliver a message to everybody, you've got to do things for everybody, [but] you can't make everybody happy."

Nicole Snyder, 32, a stay-at-home mom living along the cobblestone streets of historic Chestnut Hill, sees her loyalty to Philadelphia as conditional. It is based on her husband's managerial job at Comcast Corp., which lured the couple to Philadelphia from San Francisco. She rates the city as "good to excellent."

"We love the area," she says from the platform of the Chestnut Hill East train station while on her way to a yoga retreat in Connecticut. "We end up going into Center City a lot. We love the arts, and everything that you can do with kids is awesome." But she foresees a move back to California at some point.

Given her mobility, she doesn't think policymakers should necessarily focus on her needs. She is one Enthusiastic Urbanist who believes more attention should be paid to long-term residents and their neighborhoods. "There are pockets of Philadelphia," she says, "that could use that extra attention."

The survey is online at pewtrusts.org/philaresearch, where visitors can answer questions and find out in which category they belong.

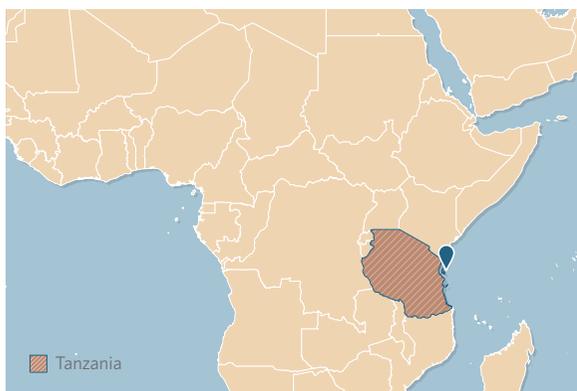
Tom Infield spent three decades as a reporter and editor at The Philadelphia Inquirer.

Despite the "California" shirt, Anthony Long has lived all of his 23 years in Philadelphia. Once he finishes his degree in strategic communications at Temple University in May, he hopes for a sales career that will allow him to stay in the area. He says he's thrilled by Philadelphia's growing cosmopolitanism, which he feels strongly on the diverse Temple campus. "It's a plus," he says, "that my city attracts people from all over the country—and the world."



Off the Tanzanian Coast, a Pew Marine Fellow Follows the Fish

Plying distant waters, Gill Braulik is filling the vast gaps in scientific knowledge about marine mammal habitats off East Africa—while witnessing explosions along the way.



BY DEBORAH HORAN

Gill Braulik was standing starboard side, binoculars in hand, when she saw the distinctive plume of water shoot into the air. The marine biologist was too far away to hear any sound, but she knew immediately that the spray wasn't from the whales her research team had been tracking in an ambitious effort to map ocean mammals off the coast of Tanzania.

It was something more sinister.

"I just saw a dynamite blast," Braulik shouted to her colleagues over the din of the motor of their 50-foot catamaran, the *Walkabout*. "Let's write down the time."

At that exact time—11:32 a.m. on a March day in 2015—a short, sharp ping was recorded by the boat's hydrophones, which had been installed to help the team locate the muffled tones of whales and dolphins. Fishermen use dynamite because it kills many fish at a time and makes it easy to collect them. But it also frequently destroys coral reefs and other habitat fish need.

Braulik and her colleagues soon realized that they had witnessed an incident of illegal dynamite fishing—and it wasn't the only one. Over the next 31 days, the shipboard recordings documented 318 bombings along Tanzania's shores, including two days with more than nine blasts per hour. The majority—almost 62 percent—occurred in waters less than 50 miles from Dar es Salaam, capital of the East African nation.

"We didn't even set out to collect data on blasts," Braulik says. Instead, the team of six Tanzanian and international marine biologists, a Spanish captain, and two crew members had planned to spend six weeks at sea last March and April assessing the marine mammals inhabiting the Indian Ocean coastal waters for a project supported by The Pew Charitable Trusts and the Wildlife Conservation Society.

"Now we've got this really interesting side line," she says. "We're hoping the information we've collected will help Tanzanian authorities put an end to this kind of destructive fishing."

Braulik and other researchers quickly published the unexpected data in a November report issued by the Wildlife Conservation Society that catalogued the evidence of bomb blast fishing during the voyage.

"Documenting this is important," says Andrew Read, a marine biologist at Duke University who is familiar with Braulik's work. He is also impressed by Braulik's broader quest to record the habitats of mammals in waters where few biologists have gone before. "I admire what she's doing," Read says.

Originally from London, Braulik has spent more than 15 years studying marine mammals in places such as Hong Kong and Pakistan. At times it has been rough, even dangerous. In 2001, she and her crew came under gunfire while traveling on the Indus River in a remote tribal area of Pakistan and escaped unharmed only after their police escorts negotiated safe passage with the attackers. She has spent the past 2½ years living in Zanzibar with her two children, who are 3 and 7.

In 2013, Braulik won a Pew marine fellowship to map marine mammal habitat along Tanzania's coastline and create a model for collecting this type of data that can be easily replicated in other countries. She will complete the fellowship this year and hopes next to map the habitats of whales and dolphins in Mozambique. The work is important to help determine which species live where and whether any of the animals face extinction—essential information that East African governments currently lack.

The work can be tedious. On the six-week Tanzanian voyage, Braulik and her colleagues served



Pew marine fellow Gill Braulik explores waters around the world, including here on Pakistan's Indus River, studying dolphins and other marine mammals. *Albert Reichert*

as lookouts for up to 12 hours each day. They slept in the boat's four cabins and subsisted on rice and beans, ugali—a Tanzanian maize porridge—and the fish they caught. For the most part, it was smooth sailing, interrupted by only one tropical storm that poured unseasonable rains onto the boat for five days.

Every so often, the calm would be punctuated by an animal sighting, which electrified the crew. On one occasion, they watched hundreds of spinner dolphins swim and splash and flip out of the water, a pod so large it stretched all the way to the horizon. Sometimes the playful dolphins would swim along the boat's bow, gliding along the waves like surfers.

"It's pretty grueling with the heat and the motion of the sea," Braulik says. "So when somebody spots something, there's real elation. Every time, it was really exciting. We had really good luck and a lot of fantastic sightings of many species.

"The most amazing days were in the Pemba channel, between the Tanzanian mainland and Pemba Island," Braulik continues. "We encountered so many different species there, one after another. It's a special place."

One rare encounter began when Braulik saw a big swirl of water appear alongside the boat. Just below the surface was a dugong, a mammal related to the manatee that looks like a cross between a walrus and a hippo. The unusual animal is on the Red List of Threatened Species compiled by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and is listed as extinct in many waters. On another occasion, the team spotted a humpback dolphin,

which is also on the IUCN Red List. In all, Braulik and the team catalogued 10 species of dolphins and whales, plus the dugong. But the sightings also gave the team a glimpse of the hazards that marine mammals face in the area: 15 of 36 endangered humpback dolphins that the team saw had scars from fishing nets on their dorsal fins, recognizable by the unusual straight lines found at regular intervals, similar to the lines of a net.

In December, the team finished mapping the places where they saw the animals, information that will help to fill gaps in scientists' knowledge about where various species live and which ones might be endangered. These baseline data will guide Tanzanian officials as they create marine reserves and designate fishing areas in order to reduce the number of dolphins and whales that die after becoming entangled in fishing nets.

Braulik also hopes that the separate blast data—which will be provided to Tanzanian officials along with the audio recordings of the dynamite fishing—will prompt the government to take stronger measures to prevent fishermen from throwing bombs that kill scores of fish and damage coral.

"I'm quite happy and excited about our findings," Braulik says. "I think it's been very successful, and I hope that it will serve as a guideline for where we should be focusing our efforts on conservation."

Deborah Horan, a former reporter with the Chicago Tribune, is a Washington-based writer.

How to Make Banking Better

Since 2010, Pew has worked to improve regulation of the banking and financial products that most Americans use to conduct their daily lives, seeking to make them fairer and easier to understand. Susan Weinstock, who directs the consumer banking project, sat down with Trust to explain those efforts.



What are the goals of the consumer banking project, and what prompted Pew to get involved in this area?

For most Americans, their first financial product is a checking account—more than 90

percent of U.S. households have one. Yet this very basic product comes with hidden risks, particularly when it comes to fees on overdrafts. Our research has shown that financial institutions can charge outside fees for typically small overdrafts and that some banks manipulate the order in which transactions are processed to maximize these fees. We've also studied newer products that can substitute for checking accounts, including general-purpose reloadable prepaid cards—cards that you can buy in stores and online that work like debit cards but are not tied to a checking account. And recently we began looking at the burgeoning field of mobile payments, where consumers make purchases or transfer funds using a smartphone. Our goal is to ensure that all of these products are safe and transparent, allowing consumers to manage their money without hidden fees or onerous terms and conditions.

So what's important in making these products safe and transparent for consumers?

It's only fair that people can easily understand the rules governing their checking accounts and prepaid cards. But when we first started looking at checking accounts, we found that the median length of the bank's disclosure of terms and fees was 111 pages—way too long and complicated for most people to read. So we developed a model disclosure box that simplifies and standardizes the information, and now more than 30 financial institutions have voluntarily adopted it, including the 12 largest banks and the three largest credit unions. We have been urging the federal Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to write new rules that would require financial institutions to provide a short, clear disclosure

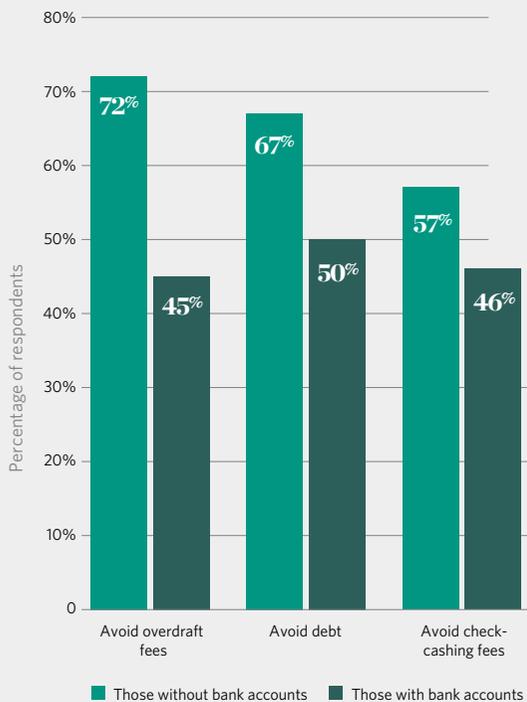
like the one we came up with so that consumers can compare the terms of accounts just as they compare calories or sodium levels on food at the grocery store. We've also proposed a similar box for prepaid cards. I'm happy to say that the bureau's new proposed rules on prepaid cards included disclosure requirements that mirror our recommendations.

Another important focus in keeping checking accounts fair is overdraft policies. Sometimes people spend more than they have in their accounts. When the bank covers that spending, it is essentially making you a loan and charging you a fee to do it. Once this was an occasional courtesy to customers, but now banks are seeing that this is a significant revenue generator for them. Our research shows that most banks charge around \$35. The research also shows that the typical debit card overdraft is about \$24 and paid back within a couple of days. As the head of the CFPB has said, getting a loan on those terms would equate to an annual percentage rate of over 17,000 percent. We've recommended that the CFPB write new rules limiting overdraft fees.

These bank policies on overdrafts seem hard for consumers to understand. How do they work?

Even the names used to describe overdraft loans are confusing—overdraft protection, bounce protection, courtesy pay—none of which conveys the costs to consumers or the rules that apply.

Before the Federal Reserve adopted new rules for debit card overdrafts back in 2009, many banks would automatically place consumers in an overdraft program without their knowledge. When they used their debit card to, for instance, buy a \$3 cup of coffee, they would be hit with a large fee if they didn't have enough money in their account, making that one cup of coffee cost almost \$40. Under the new regulations, the consumer has to opt in and accept the rules before the bank can charge a fee. If a consumer does not opt in, debit transactions like that \$3 cup of coffee would just be declined and there would be no fee charged. But our research shows most consumers don't know whether they've opted in or not—so they don't know that they'll be hit with a costly overdraft fee.



Source: Survey in the Pew report "Banking on Prepaid"

Many Rely on Prepaid Cards to Avoid Fees and Debt

Many Americans have come to count on prepaid cards for their financial transactions, with most users without bank accounts saying they use them to avoid check-cashing and overdraft fees. So Pew developed simple disclosure statements whose key elements are reflected in new regulations that federal officials have proposed. Pew also designed sample disclosure packaging (right) to illustrate that it's feasible to display clear disclosures that customers can read in stores where cards are sold.



By the way, the rules are just the opposite for written checks. Under rules for those products, consumers have to opt out if they don't want their transactions to go forward when there's not enough money in their accounts. Again, research shows most people don't know their opt-in status.

We have urged the CFPB to write new rules that limit these fees and make them proportional to what it costs the bank to provide this loan.

Talk more about how banks reorder transactions and how that affects overdraft fees. Is it still a problem?

Unfortunately, this is still a problem. Here's how it works. Let's say that Sarah has \$100 in her account. She gets a cup of coffee for \$4, picks up lunch for \$10, gets her dry cleaning for \$18, and picks up her dog from the groomer for \$90. If the bank processes these transactions in the order they were made—\$4, \$10, \$18, and \$90—she will incur one overdraft fee, because the dog groomer charge put her account into the red. However, what the bank can do to maximize these fees is reorder the transactions to pay the most expensive first—\$90, \$18, \$10, \$4—and she will pay three overdraft fees instead. Since the typical overdraft fee is \$35, she would have paid just one \$35 fee if the bank had processed them in order but will have to pay \$105 just because of the bank's manipulation of the order.

We have recommended that the CFPB ban this practice as part of its new overdraft rules, so we hope this will soon be prohibited. Fortunately, some of the banks have seen the light and stopped engaging in this practice.

With technology evolving, what will banking consumers face next?

The smartphones we use every day could soon become our go-to transaction account—no need to carry a credit or debit card, because they can be loaded into the phone and consumers could make purchases by waving a phone at a terminal. This is already happening with products like Apple Pay and Google Wallet, although the most successful mobile payment product to date is the Starbucks mobile app, which allows customers to order and pay for their coffee online (and avoid standing in line) and gives them rewards for doing so.

Unfortunately, the laws and regulations covering these transactions have not kept up with the technology. At least 13 federal laws and eight federal government agencies cover some part of the mobile payments marketplace, making it confusing for providers and consumers. Current laws are filled with gaps, ambiguities, and overlap that actually undermine important consumer protections. We are working to ensure that new rules establish uniform consumer protections for mobile payments.

The Philanthropy That Transformed Australia's Future

Now, as he faces his own future at the age of 77, devoted environmentalist David Thomas plans a bequest to Pew to continue making a difference in marine conservation.



David Thomas says that philanthropists should follow their passions—but employ dispassionate analysis to ensure results.
Courtesy of David Thomas

BY DANIEL LeDUC

Growing up on the Australian island of Tasmania, David Thomas loved to bushwalk—"you Americans would call it hiking"—as well as to fly fish and sail. "Nature just seemed special to me," he says, "and I always wanted to be in it."

In his younger days, Tasmania was undergoing a transformation. Rivers were being dammed for industrial uses, and a nascent environmental movement grew in response. With his love for the nature, Thomas took up environment-focused politics for a period in the 1960s because, for him, "protecting special places was all about political action."

But as his business career progressed and he began to travel more, he realized there were other ways to promote conservation. His success in business—the company he created, Cellarmaster Wines, introduced wine-of-the-month clubs to Australia in the 1980s—allowed him to pursue his passion for fly fishing on trips to New Zealand, Alaska, Russia, and elsewhere. While abroad, he frequently found himself rubbing elbows with fellow fly fishermen who also were successful professionals—most of them Americans, he says—and who shared his zeal for protecting

the environment. But they were involved in land acquisition through nature conservancies, which he saw as a new and potentially fruitful way to have a transformational impact in his own country.

The conversations he had while knee-deep in hip waders were the beginning of his self-education in philanthropy, eventually leading him to create, together with his wife, Barbara, the Thomas Foundation. The foundation has helped protect land and create marine reserves in Australia—and made him one of the nation's leading environmental figures.

Now retired, widowed, and living near Brisbane, Thomas is eyeing the end of his decades of giving and contemplating the lessons he's learned. And he's making plans for his final gifts, which will include a bequest to Pew for marine conservation projects.

"I'm 77. I've lost my wife," he says with a low-key, dry matter-of-factness. "I think about mortality."



When Thomas sold Cellarmaster in 1996, he and Barbara began to contemplate the next chapter in their lives. "We knew nothing about philanthropy," he says. "It's relatively new in Australia." But they were quick learners, and two years after selling the company, the couple created the foundation, which initially focused on education and the arts in addition to conservation.

One early lesson Thomas says he learned is that philanthropists should follow their passions—but employ dispassionate analysis to ensure results. He saw that his grants to The Nature Conservancy, which he encouraged to come to Australia, were helping to protect large swaths of land.

As he evaluated the return on his investment in that work, he saw the chance to spur real change in the way Australia treated its natural heritage. Soon conservation became the foundation's overriding emphasis, because, he says, "to have impact, we had to have focus. If something is working, you do more of it."

From 2005 to 2012, he sponsored the Thomas Challenge, a matching funds program for purchasing



The Kimberley Coast, one of the world's most pristine tropical marine regions, is now the site of a protected marine park thanks in part to the work of Thomas, a leading figure in Australia's conservation movement. Sara Winter/Shutterstock

land for conservation reserves that grew so large it was named one of Australia's top 50 philanthropic gifts.

About five years ago, Thomas shifted his attention to marine conservation. As he schooled himself on the issues, he says, he discovered that "when it comes to the ocean, all compass headings lead to Pew."

For more than a decade, Pew has been working around the world to encourage establishment of large marine reserves, based on research showing that such reserves play a vital role in rebuilding fish stocks and protecting the health of the oceans. In 2012, Thomas met Joshua S. Reichert, Pew's executive vice president for environment projects, at a conference in Singapore. Soon they were looking for ways to collaborate.

Since then, Pew has worked with Australian partner organizations, which Thomas supports, to successfully advocate for the Western Australian government's creation of the Great Kimberley Marine Park in the northwestern corner of the country. Together, the groups have also taken steps to ensure that the world's largest network of marine parks—in place around Australia's coastline—endures. Additional ocean-focused work by the Thomas Foundation has supported major campaigns to protect the Great Barrier Reef.

"David's philanthropy has been groundbreaking in Australia," Reichert says. "He joins Pew in also having a deep commitment to the science that underlies what we do on behalf of the health of the oceans."

Thomas' devotion to science has included an annual "oration," in which, with Pew's help, he brings a renowned scientist to Australia for tours and speeches to increase professional knowledge and public awareness about the latest findings important to the conservation of biodiversity. Recent speakers have included biologists Callum Roberts and Daniel Pauly.

"We do deep research before we invest so we understand what we invest in," Thomas says. "For me, Pew's got a five-star investor rating."



Thomas placed the bulk of his assets in his foundation when he created it. What was left was what he calls his "cushion" so he could enjoy retirement. "Everybody wants a cushion," he says. "But then the question for later is what to do with your estate?"

Always a long-term planner, Thomas has decided to sunset the foundation by 2018. He says he's made arrangements for his three children and—in what he says is the next and final logical step in his giving—has decided to bequeath the largest portion of his "cushion" to Pew and another major conservation organization.

"I like to build things," Thomas says, "and Pew has just begun its bequest program." In remembering Pew in his will, he says, he has a chance to extend his giving—and believes his bequest will be used wisely because of his trust in the organization's leadership.

"The oceans are not going to disappear after I'm gone; the issues are not going to disappear.

"But there's enough flexibility [in the will] for Pew to use its best judgment" about how to use the resources in the future, Thomas says. "This is an act of confidence meant to inspire others."

For more information about philanthropic partnerships at Pew, please contact Senior Vice President Sally O'Brien at 202-540-6226 or sobrien@pewtrusts.org.

Daniel LeDuc is the editor of Trust.

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

*The Pew Charitable Trusts applies a rigorous, analytical approach to **improve public policy, inform the public, and invigorate civic life**, as these recent accomplishments illustrate.*

IMPROVING PUBLIC POLICY



Caribbean reef sharks, like this one eyeing a school of French grunts, have a new sanctuary. *Steven Hunt/Getty Images*

Dutch Caribbean islands declare shark sanctuaries

On Sept. 1, the Netherlands and its overseas special municipalities of Bonaire and Saba designated nearly 9,000 square miles (roughly 22,000 square kilometers) of island waters as a shark sanctuary. Pew worked closely with officials from the islands—located in the southern Caribbean Sea, off the coast of

Venezuela—and from the Dutch central government to create the haven for sharks. The designations mean that Pew has helped with the creation of 5.9 million square miles (15.45 million square kilometers) of shark sanctuaries across the globe, an area larger than Antarctica.

Rhode Island and Alabama join effort to improve voter records

Rhode Island (in July) and Alabama (in October) became the 13th and 14th members of the Electronic Registration Information Center. ERIC, which Pew created in 2012, alerts election officials to out-of-date voter records and assists them in finding citizens who are not yet registered to vote. The program has helped states identify more than 2.5 million voters who had moved from their addresses on file, more than 100,000 deceased individuals still on the voter rolls, and nearly 12 million eligible but unregistered citizens.

Pacific managers to reduce bycatch in gillnet fishery

The Pacific Fishery Management Council set strict limits Sept. 13 on how many marine mammals and turtles can be killed unintentionally in drift gillnets that target swordfish. Drift gillnets are destructive fishing gear that catch a large amount of “bycatch”—marine life caught while fishermen are seeking other fish and then discarded.

Under the council’s measure, the fishery will be closed for the remainder of the season if the new bycatch caps are reached. The council also agreed to require that all boats with this gear be monitored with observers or electronic methods by 2018. The decisions mark a significant milestone in Pew’s work to phase out drift gillnets in this fishery.

Oregon seeks to improve ‘rainy day funds’

On July 28, Oregon Governor Kate Brown (D) signed a bill creating a legislative task force to study the state’s two reserve funds, known colloquially as “rainy day funds.” Senator Richard Devlin (D), co-chair of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means, sponsored the legislation creating the task force, which draws heavily on Pew’s research. Pew also will provide technical assistance to the task force, which will review the state’s general fund reserve and education reserve to assess their performance and adequacy given Oregon’s historic revenue volatility.

Washington state sidelines payday lending expansion

The Washington state Legislature adjourned from a special session in July without passing a bill to expand high-cost payday installment loans in the state. Passage of the legislation also would have made it more politically challenging for the federal Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to propose strong national

standards that would make payday loans safer and more affordable. The industry-supported legislation in Washington had significant momentum when introduced, with 35 co-sponsors. Pew’s small-dollar loans project analyzed the legislation and informed elected officials of its potential harmful impact on borrowers. When discussing the bill, news reports, local organizations, and elected officials cited Pew’s research.

Key nations agree not to fish in Central Arctic Ocean

On July 16, the United States, Russia, Canada, Norway, and Denmark (on behalf of Greenland) agreed not to begin high seas fishing in the Central Arctic Ocean unless research shows that the region’s habitat and ecosystem can sustain it. The Arctic Fisheries Declaration was made possible when Russia became the final signatory, after months of outreach by Pew. The declaration also provides the basis for negotiating a future international agreement to include major fishing nations that do not border the Arctic, such as China and Japan.

National dental therapy accreditation standards go into effect

The Commission on Dental Accreditation, the nation’s accrediting body for academic dental programs, voted in August to implement national standards for dental therapy training programs, marking a turning point in the growth of the dental therapy profession.

Pew is advocating for more dental therapists—midlevel professionals who provide preventive and routine restorative care, such as filling cavities—to increase access to care for millions of the nation’s underserved.

Pew worked with partners to provide evidence to the commission. The commission’s standards offer validation to state legislators, academic institutions, and prospective students as to the need for, and legitimacy of, dental therapy.

Maine to evaluate economic development tax incentives

A law took effect July 12 ensuring that the Maine Legislature’s nonpartisan Office of Program Evaluation and Government Accountability will evaluate whether tax credits, exemptions, and deductions are achieving their goals cost-effectively—and how these programs can be improved.

The legislation also requires state agencies to share data needed for the evaluation, while protecting confidential information.

Military cites Pew research in protecting service members from harmful loans

In July, the Department of Defense issued the final Military Lending Act rule, which cited research from Pew's small-dollar loans project. The updated regulations will better protect members of the armed services and their families from harmful financial products, including short-term, high-cost loans.

Alabama dedicates funds to reduce prison crowding

Alabama Governor Robert Bentley (R) signed into law Sept. 17 a state budget that allocates \$16 million for reforms to reduce prison overcrowding,

including more investment in community corrections and parole programs. Pew's partner, the Council of State Governments Justice Center, provided technical assistance to Alabama in developing the programs.

Pew shares research with U.S. Department of Education

On July 13, Pew's fiscal federalism initiative briefed a dozen officials from the U.S. Department of Education on the findings from its research, *Federal and State Funding of Higher Education: A Changing Landscape*. The officials included the deputy undersecretary of education and the deputy assistant secretary for higher education and student financial aid.

INFORMING THE PUBLIC

Modern immigration wave will drive U.S. population change through 2065

The Pew Research Center released a report in September examining immigration's impact on the country's population growth and racial and ethnic makeup. The report found that, over the past 50 years, nearly 59 million immigrants arrived in the United States, pushing the foreign-born share of the population to a near-record 14 percent. By 2055, Asians are expected to become the largest immigrant group, surpassing Hispanics. The report drew wide media coverage, including being cited on the front pages of 30 newspapers.

What the public knows—and doesn't know—about science

A Pew Research Center report released in September found substantial differences in the public's knowledge and understanding of science topics. Pew researchers developed science questions for a survey to which Americans gave more correct than incorrect answers, with a median of eight correct answers out of 12. Only 6 percent of respondents answered all questions correctly, however, with education proving to be a major factor distinguishing higher performers—those with college

or postgraduate degrees were more than twice as likely to get at least eight of 12 answers correct, compared with those with a high school diploma or less. The report was accompanied by an online quiz allowing users to test their own knowledge of the survey questions. It has been taken by more than 3.4 million people.

More millennials living with family despite improved job market

According to a Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data, improvements in the labor market since the Great Recession have not inspired more millennials to live apart from their families. In fact, the nation's 18- to 34-year-olds are less likely to be living independently of their families and to be establishing their own households today than before the economic recovery. In 2010, 69 percent of millennials lived independently, but as of the first four months of 2015, only 67 percent of millennials were living independently. Over the same period, the share of young adults living in their parents' homes increased from 24 to 26 percent. Meanwhile, the national unemployment rate for those ages 18 to 34 declined to 7.7 percent, a significant recovery from 12.4 percent in 2010.



Report details City Council role in land use

In July, Pew’s Philadelphia research initiative released *Philadelphia’s Councilmanic Prerogative: How It Works and Why It Matters*, the first independent analysis of a long-standing practice in which individual City Council members make nearly all of the land use decisions in

their jurisdictions. The study, which was conducted in partnership with WHYY’s PlanPhilly, was based on extensive analysis of city records as well as interviews with individuals involved in the process, including officials, developers, academics, and community advocates.

Grants and accolades for the arts in Philadelphia

The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage awarded its fifth advancement grant, supporting Philadelphia’s Curtis Institute of Music in its design and implementation of a new curriculum to prepare graduates for careers in classical music in the 21st century. The \$500,000 investment will support programs that coach the conservatory’s students to produce, promote, and present their music in new and innovative ways.

A number of Pew-supported artists and projects have attracted noteworthy media attention in recent months:

- Pew arts fellow Geoff Sobelle was interviewed on NPR’s “All Things Considered” about his theater piece “The Object Lesson,” which he describes as “a meditation on our relationship to things.” The segment recounted how each performance of the improvisational

work morphs into its own unique experience, both funny and poignant, through audience participation.

- *The New York Times* reviewed director Ivo van Hove’s theatrical adaptations of two Ingmar Bergman screenplays, “After the Rehearsal” and “Persona.” They premiered with Pew center support at Philadelphia’s FringeArts festival, and the *Times* called the pairing of the two works “revelatory.”

- *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* covered Opera Philadelphia’s plans to shift its seasonal structure to include more festival-style programming—the result of in-depth audience research supported by a Pew center advancement grant—with the *Post* noting that the organization was “working on becoming the very model of a modern opera company.”

Progress Toward Ending Overfishing in U.S. Waters

Evaluators examined Pew's efforts to strengthen the nation's fishing policies, illuminating a success story.

BY JOSH JOSEPH, RICHARD SILVER, and LESTER BAXTER

For most of history, the sea has been viewed as an inexhaustible resource. But by the 1990s overfishing had left many fisheries on the verge of collapse. Pew recognized the need for change and in 1993 launched a program to educate the public and mobilize environmental organizations and decision-makers to promote sustainable management of marine resources.

The program helped win strong conservation provisions in the 1996 and 2006 reauthorizations of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, the primary law governing management of federal ocean fisheries. Pew then sought faithful implementation of the law at both the federal and regional levels and began advocating for ecosystem-based fisheries management by focusing on smaller forage fish, such as herring, menhaden, sardines, and anchovies, which serve as food for larger marine life. This work, from 2008 through 2013, had two main goals: ensuring that the United States adopts regulations and management plans that lead to the end of overfishing, and establishing a national policy to prevent expansion of fishing of forage species and limit catches so there will be sufficient numbers of these fish to support other marine wildlife.

By late 2013, the program reported that its goal to end overfishing was largely complete and Pew's planning and evaluation staff launched an assessment of those efforts by engaging a team of outside evaluators (see "Methodology"). The assessment also examined progress toward Pew's second goal—to develop a national, science-based policy to protect forage fish.

The evaluation found that the marine program accomplished nearly all of its objectives, saying "with few exceptions, Pew made a decisive contribution to the development and implementation of fishery management policies capable of ending overfishing and protecting forage fish."

The program pursued two complementary strategies: a federal approach focused on stronger management guidelines for regional fisheries and a

regional strategy to ensure that rigorous conservation-minded policies were implemented on the water. The federal efforts were decisive. Pew worked to ensure that new fishery management guidelines from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Fisheries Service would lead to science-based catch limits and accountability measures for all plans designed to end overfishing and rebuild depleted fish populations.

Based on interviews with federal agency leadership and congressional staff, the evaluators credited Pew with influencing the final guidelines "at a greater depth than other players." The program balanced a targeted initiative to inform and collaborate with decision-makers and a grassroots advocacy effort from citizens and public interest groups. Pew also played a lead role in coordinating the supporting activities of a loose coalition of environmental groups and fisheries associations.

Pew's involvement, along with other environmental groups, was also judged important in securing a doubling of federal funding for stock assessments, which provide key data for setting catch limits, between 2008 and 2013. In addition, Pew's role was decisive in fending off legislation designed to weaken the Magnuson-Stevens Act and reduce protections for fish populations. The evaluation also found that Pew suggested ways to reduce the economic impacts on fishermen of ending overfishing, winning over congressional members who might otherwise have backed anti-conservation measures.

On the regional side, all five of the fishery management councils with which Pew worked—New England, Mid-Atlantic, South Atlantic, Gulf of Mexico, and Caribbean—implemented annual catch limits and accountability measures to end overfishing.

The evaluators' summary was definitive: "Every fish stock targeted by Pew is now covered by an amended fishery management plan that includes annual catch limits, determined by the best available scientific data, and accountability measures that enforce adherence."

Dozens of additional fish stocks—upwards of 300, according to program staff estimates—that were not subject to overfishing in 2008 have also been protected through science-based catch limits.

According to regional council members and other sources interviewed for the evaluation, it was how Pew supported its position that mattered most in working with the councils. The program’s mantra, “Follow the science, follow the law,” proved especially credible in the South and in other councils that had tended to favor short-term economic interests over the health of the fish populations themselves.

Pew also made regional progress in helping develop policies to protect forage fish. Staff conducted targeted campaigns to secure catch caps for menhaden and herring and worked in the Southeast and Pacific regions to prevent the opening of new commercial forage fisheries. The evaluation called out Pew’s work on menhaden in particular. As part of a coalition of conservation organizations and recreational fishing groups, Pew’s technical and financial support was credited with securing a 25 percent reduction in catch limits for menhaden from 2011 levels. While other groups working on this issue brought strong scientific credibility and other assets, the evaluators noted that they lacked “capacity to shape and implement a strategic campaign.” Pew brought this piece, providing sophisticated advocacy expertise and translating complex scientific arguments through the media and grassroots outreach in a way that resonated with the public.

In 2012, the New England and Mid-Atlantic regional councils passed fishery management plan amendments that brought new protections for herring and other forage fish, including establishing annual catch caps for river herring and shad in New England and the Mid-Atlantic. The evaluators found that Pew’s contributions were decisive in achieving these policy protections and raising public awareness of the importance to the marine ecosystem of herring and other forage species.

In particular, the evaluation noted the impact of two reports that Pew released in 2007 and 2008: *Empty Rivers: The Decline of River Herring and the Need to Reduce Mid-Water Trawl Bycatch* and *Out of Balance: Industrial Fishing and the Threat to Our Ocean*. The reports explained the need to protect herring, recommended specific policy solutions, and served as a guiding “narrative” for the campaign, the evaluators said, allowing coalition partners to speak in a unified voice.

Pew also worked in the Pacific, where major fisheries for sardines, anchovies, mackerel, and squid have existed under management plans for decades. The program’s strategy focused on



Rita Maassen/iStockphoto

METHODOLOGY

The independent outside evaluators conducted more than 80 interviews with Pew staff, partner organizations, and representatives of important stakeholder groups such as federal and state policymakers, commercial and recreational fishing groups, environmental organizations, and scientists.

The evaluators also analyzed documents and other materials produced by Pew and its partners; assessed public records from relevant federal agencies, fishery commissions and regional fishery management councils; and reviewed media coverage of the campaigns.

The evaluation team was asked to assess whether Pew’s contributions to the progress observed had been decisive (that is, the weight of evidence suggests the outcome would not have been achieved without the program’s efforts); important (multiple actors contributed to the outcome and Pew played a substantive role); or inconsequential (the program played little or no part in the outcome, implying that the outcome would have occurred without its involvement).

The team also was asked to identify relevant lessons from the assessment and, where appropriate, make recommendations to enhance Pew’s ongoing strategy. This article is based on their findings.



The evaluation found that in working to end overfishing, Pew offered ways to reduce the economic impact on fishermen, such as these off the Florida coast, and won over congressional members who might otherwise have backed anti-conservation measures.

Katye Martens/The Pew Charitable Trusts

preventing the expansion of fishing on forage species that are currently not commercially exploited, which policymakers and industry representatives said they found helpful. They also credited Pew with taking a measured approach in its dealings with the Pacific Fishery Management Council rather than adopting the adversarial stance of some groups. Council members and staff complimented Pew for offering constructive solutions and being patient rather than “condemning the system if they didn’t get all they wanted,” the evaluators said. This established the program as a credible, reasonable partner and ultimately made Pew’s arguments more persuasive before the council.

The evaluators noted that much of Pew’s success has come thanks to a two-pronged staffing arrangement. A centralized staff in Washington focuses on overall program strategy and issues at the federal level, while a local staff promotes conservation issues at the regional councils. The evaluators noted that this approach set Pew apart from other U.S.-based marine conservation groups.

Lester Baxter directs and Josh Joseph and Richard Silver are members of Pew’s planning and evaluation team, which regularly assesses the institution’s effectiveness.

Give Schools the Tools to Solve Cafeteria Challenges

BY JESSICA DONZE BLACK

Each day more than 30 million American students get their midday meals at school. For much of the last three decades, as the nation's childhood obesity rate surged, school meals weren't as healthy as they could have been. But thanks to updated school nutrition standards issued by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in 2012—and the work of innovative nutrition professionals—cafeteria menus are now healthier than ever.

Today, every school lunch includes a serving of fruit or vegetables plus lean protein and foods rich in whole grains. Nearly one-third of schools have self-serve salad bars. And the stronger national nutrition standards have reduced geographic and demographic differences: Before the standards were updated, teenagers at

“When the children select their own food, less food gets thrown away.”

larger schools or campuses with predominantly white enrollments were more likely to have healthy options on daily menus than students at smaller or more racially and ethnically diverse schools. But now, the smaller and more diverse schools have increased their offerings of nutritious items enough to close the gap.

Studies from Connecticut to Texas confirm what many school nutrition professionals are seeing in their lunchrooms. Under the healthier meal standards, more children are choosing and eating fruit and consuming more of their entrees and vegetables, increasing their nutrient intake and decreasing food waste. Parents and students alike support the healthier meals.

But like any classroom, successful nutrition programs and education require the right tools and professional training. Both are in too short supply. As Congress works on a five-year reauthorization of the Child Nutrition Act, members should make greater support for training and new equipment a top priority.

When the updated meal standards took effect in 2012, The Pew Charitable Trusts and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation surveyed school meal program administrators nationwide and found that 88 percent of districts reported needing at least one new piece of kitchen equipment to serve healthier meals, such as

ovens to cook baked potatoes and large-capacity slicers to cut fruit and vegetables. Almost two-thirds reported staff training needs, but only 37 percent said they had the necessary funding to provide the training.

The bipartisan School Food Modernization Act, pending in both chambers of Congress, would address these obstacles to healthy, efficient meal programs. The legislation would help schools obtain loans and grants to finance kitchen updates and training for food service professionals. For while Congress has appropriated about \$80 million in recent years to help schools purchase new kitchen equipment, availability of these resources has been irregular and limited to a fraction of the almost 100,000 schools in the United States. The modernization bill would bring improved access and predictability for schools seeking assistance with equipment upgrades and staff training.

The difference made by these investments is tangible. Anna Fisher, director of food and nutrition services for the Mount Diablo Unified School District, about 30 miles east of San Francisco, recently made use of a federal grant to help purchase a new serving line that allows students to choose their own food from a display. “We’ve seen that when the children select their own food, less food gets thrown away,” Fisher reports. The grant also helped her district procure a walk-in refrigerator that lets the staff store and serve twice as much fresh produce while reducing energy costs.

It’s clear why large majorities of voters who have children in public schools, as well as adults nationwide, want to maintain the policies spurring this progress. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, healthy kids learn better. As Congress continues to evaluate the successes and challenges of the Child Nutrition Act, the debate should not be over whether to require that school meals include healthy food. Instead, lawmakers should look at how far schools have come and build on the programs that are working so well.

Jessica Donze Black directs the Kids’ Safe and Healthful Foods Project, a collaboration between Pew and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. A version of this column originally appeared in The Huffington Post.



Extra! Extra! Read All About the News

The digital revolution continues to upend journalism in the United States. How well U.S. democracy functions depends to some degree on whether people gravitate to the same sources for news, how well citizens can be informed about their elected officials, and how connected residents feel in their communities. The Pew Research Center's latest installment of the annual "State of the News Media" report illustrates how news organizations are adapting in a constantly churning world that affects how well they can do their jobs, their bottom lines—and what these trends mean for consumers of news.



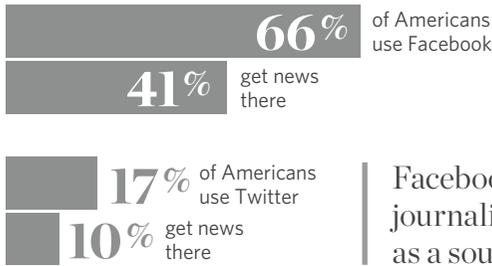
A Mobile Majority

39 out of 50
top news sites get more traffic from mobile devices than they do from desktop computers.

But only

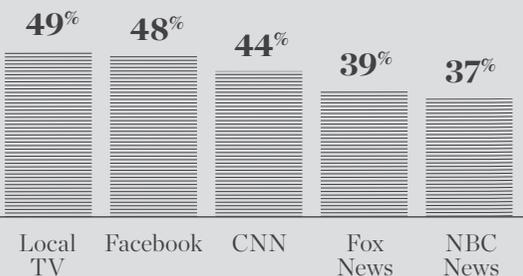
10 out of 50
sites see mobile visitors spending more time per visit than desktop readers.

Is Facebook the New Newspaper?

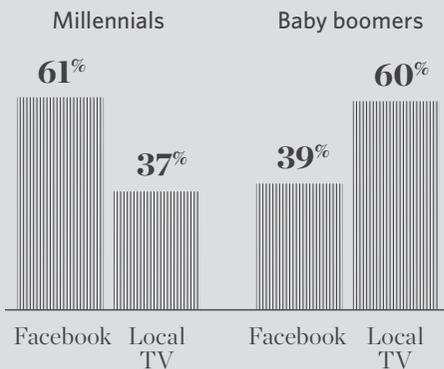


Facebook rivals traditional journalism organizations as a source for news.

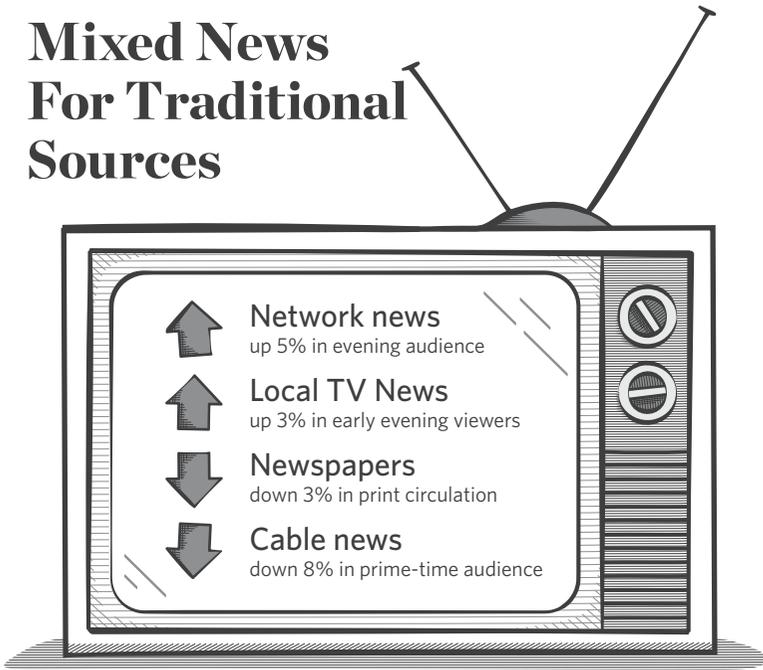
Percentage of Web users who said they got news about government and politics from these sources in the previous week:



But there's a generational divide:



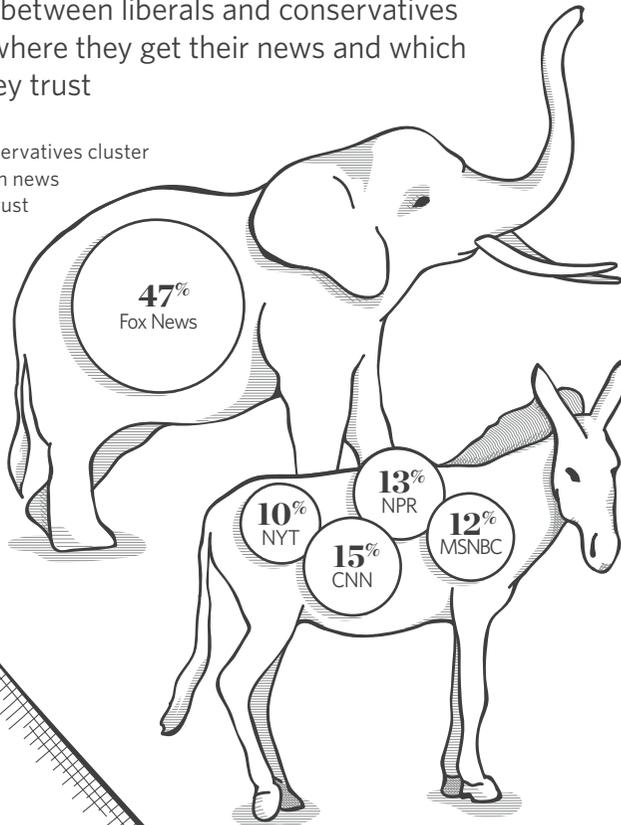
Mixed News For Traditional Sources



Living in Different Worlds

The divide between liberals and conservatives is clear in where they get their news and which sources they trust

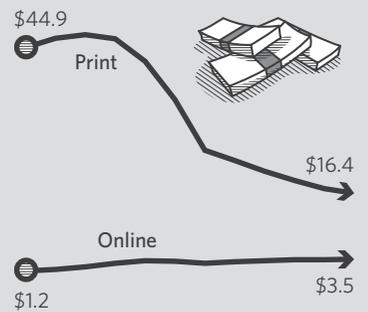
Consistent conservatives cluster around one main news source and distrust more than trust 24 of the 36 news sources surveyed.



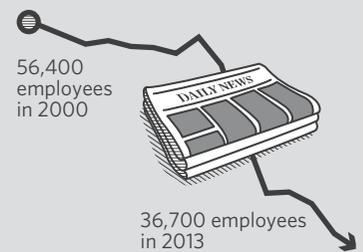
Consistent liberals name an array of main news sources and trust more than distrust 28 of the 36 news sources.

Newspapers Take a Hit—With Implications For Important Coverage

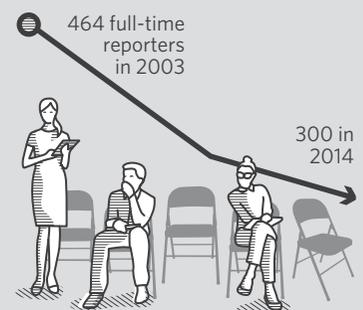
Newspaper ad revenue has declined, 2003-14 (in billions)



...which has led to a 35% drop in newsroom staff



...which has led to 35% fewer statehouse reporters

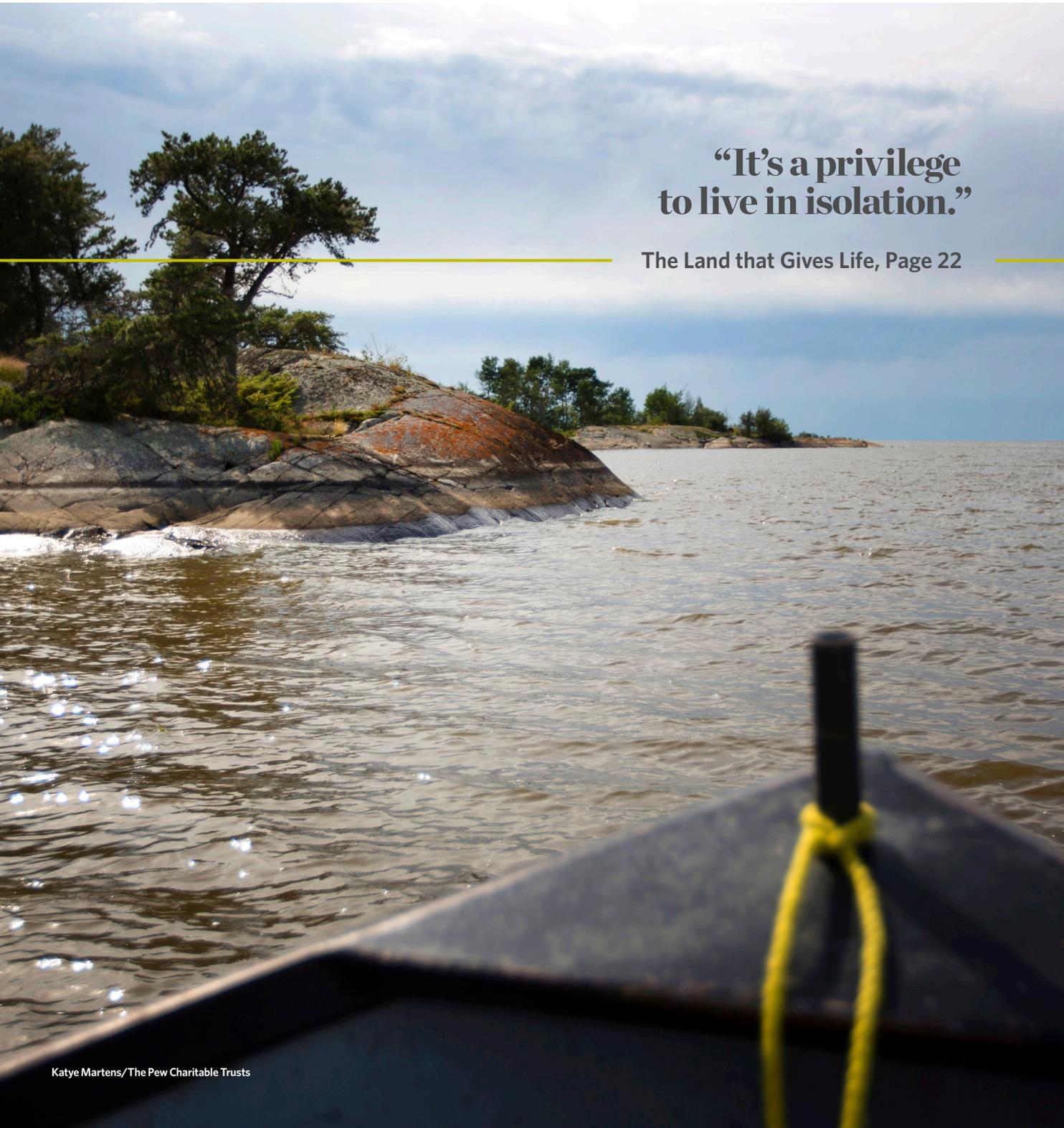




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**“It’s a privilege
to live in isolation.”**

The Land that Gives Life, Page 22
