Beloit College Mind-Set List

What Freshmen Know ... and Don't Know

August 18, 2015
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Each August since 1998, Beloit College has released its "mind-set list" to help faculty and administrators understand what a new class of freshmen have experienced and not experienced. Here is the list for the entering college class of 2019, most of whom were born in 1997. Among those who have never been alive in this group of students' lifetimes are Princess Diana, Notorious B.I.G., Jacques Cousteau and Mother Teresa.

Since these students have been on the planet:

- Hybrid automobiles have always been mass-produced.
- Google has always been there, in its founding words, “to organize the world’s information and make it universally accessible.”
- They have never licked a postage stamp.
- Email has become the new "formal" communication, while texts and tweets remain enclaves for the casual.
- Four foul-mouthed kids have always been playing in South Park.
- Hong Kong has always been under Chinese rule.
- They have grown up treating Wi-Fi as an entitlement.
- The National Collegiate Athletic Association has always had a theoretically precise means to determine a national champion in college football.
- The announcement of someone being the first woman to hold a position has only impressed their parents.
- Charlton Heston is recognized for waving a rifle over his head as much as for waving his staff over the Red Sea.
- Color photos have always adorned the front page of The New York Times.
- Ellis Island has always been primarily in New Jersey.
- "No means no" has always been morphing, slowly, into “only yes means yes.”
- Cell phones have become so ubiquitous in class that teachers don’t know which students are using them to take notes and which ones are planning a party.
- The airport in Washington has always been Reagan National Airport.
- Their parents have gone from encouraging them to use the Internet to begging them to get off it.
- If you say “around the turn of the century,” they may well ask you, “Which one?”
- They have avidly joined Harry Potter, Ron and Hermione as they built their reading skills through all seven volumes.
- Attempts at human cloning have never been federally funded but do require FDA approval.
- “Crosstown Classic” and the “Battle of the Bay” have always been among the most popular interleague rivalries in Major League Baseball.
- "Carry Me Back to Old Virginny" has never been the official song of Virginia.
- Phish Food has always been available from Ben and Jerry's.
- Kyoto has always symbolized inactivity about global climate change.
When they were born, cell phone usage was so expensive that families only used their large phones, usually in cars, for emergencies.

The eyes of Texas have never looked upon the Houston Oilers.

Teachers have always had to insist that term papers employ sources in addition to those found online.

In a world of DNA testing, the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington Cemetery has never included a Vietnam War veteran “known only to God.”

Playhouse Disney was a place where they could play growing up.

Surgeons have always used superglue in the operating room.

Fifteen nations have always been constructing the International Space Station.

The Lion King has always been on Broadway.

Phoenix Lights is a series of UFO sightings, not a filtered cigarette.

Scotland and Wales have always had their own parliaments and assemblies.

At least Mom and Dad had their new Nintendo 64 to help them get through long nights sitting up with the baby.

First responders have always been heroes.

Sir Paul and Sir Elton have always been knights of the same musical round table.

CNN has always been available en Español.

Heaven’s Gate has always been more a trip to Comet Hale-Bopp and less a film flop.

Splenda has always been a sweet option in the U.S.

The Atlanta Braves have always played at Turner Field.

Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic have always been members of NATO.

Humans have always had implanted radio frequency ID chips -- slightly larger than a grain of rice.

TV has always been in such high definition that they could see the pores of actors and the grimaces of quarterbacks.

Mr. Jones and Mr. Smith have always been Men in Black, not their next-door neighbors.

Their proud parents recorded their first steps on camcorders, mounted on their shoulders like bazookas.

They had no idea how fortunate they were to enjoy the final four years of federal budget surpluses.

Amoco gas stations have steadily vanished from the American highway.

Vote by mail has always been the official way to vote in Oregon.

...and there has always been a Beloit College mind-set list.