On Culture: Three Things to Know about How Americans are Thinking about Gender

June 26, 2023



Friends and partners,

Over the past year, gender-based issues have dominated our public discourse. From debates about access to gender-affirming care, to the revocation of reproductive rights across the country, the volatile dialogue appears to only be ramping up.

What is at the heart of these debates? What are Americans' most deeply-held assumptions about gender, and how are they showing up in our discourse today, amidst increased tensions, policy disputes, and battles for basic human rights?

Three Things to Know about How Americans are Thinking about Gender

In the second half of 2022, we investigated Americans' thinking about gender as part of our Culture Change Project. In this new resource, we take a deeper look into the cultural mindsets—the deeply-rooted, broadly shared assumptions that inform how we see the world—that Americans use to think about gender.

With an understanding not just of what, but *how* people think about gender, we can communicate in ways that build support for gender equity and liberation.

READ MORE

In partnership,



Carinne Wheedan, Director of Communications

MORE ON CULTURE CHANGE

VIDEO: Perceptions of Government: Where We Are Now, Where We Go Next

In this conversation, you'll hear about new research from the Partnership for Public Service and the FrameWorks Institute about public perceptions of our political system—from democracy to the Constitution. Each organization's respective research provides insight into how government can be part of the solution to address injustice and improve people's lives.

WATCH NOW

VIDEO: Talking about Science in an Age of Misinformation

At the 2023 Nobel Prize Summit, FrameWorks CEO Nat Kendall-Taylor discussed two cultural mindsets that undermine trust in science and two that can be activated to build it. The way we frame scientific topics—the choices we make in how we say what we have to say—influences which of these mindsets become active and shape how people see the world. Check out the video for tips on what ideas to *avoid* and what to *advance* in your own communication.

WATCH NOW

FRAMING GUIDANCE: Talking about Health Equity

Among the general public, the term equity isn't widely understood. FrameWorks researchers have found that most people associate the term with financial topics, as in home equity or equity in a business. For communicators, this means that if you're using the term, it's vital to pair it with a clear explanation.

READ MORE

TOOLKIT: Boosting Public Discourse: Reframing Childhood Immunization

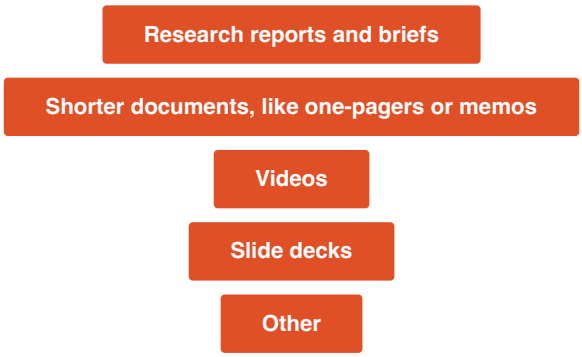
Building on our early 2023 report, this toolkit—also produced in partnership with the American Association of Pediatrics—provides recommendations for effectively communicating about vaccine access and vaccine policy in these and other contexts:

- Social media messaging
- Testimony to legislative committees or other public bodies
- Letters to the editor, op/eds, or other written commentaries
- Public talks to nonscientific audiences
- Press releases or media advisories

EXPLORE THE TOOLKIT

POLL

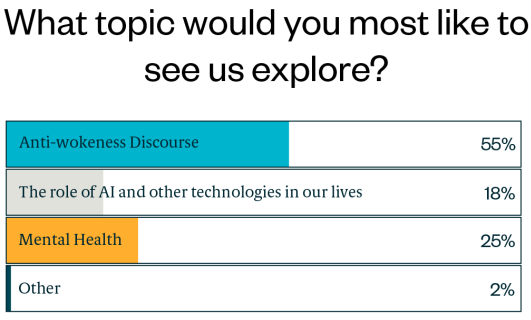
We love sharing these updates with you. To make sure we're providing the greatest possible value to you, can you let us know what types of resources you find most helpful?



See the "Up Next" section below for what we learned from our last On Culture *poll, and how it's helping shape our future research.*

UP NEXT

In the last installment of *On Culture*, we asked about topics you'd like to see us investigate through the Culture Change Project.



More than half of people who responded voted for more exploration of the "anti-wokeness" discourse.
This summer, in a series of peer discourse sessions, we'll be digging deeper into the mindsets that underlie the discourse around "wokeness" and "anti-wokeness."

More than a quarter asked for further insight into how people are thinking about mental health.
Later this summer, we'll be hosting an Instagram Live conversation with health and mental health experts and activists on how individualistic

thinking about health affects our discourse about mental health. More info to come—for now, learn more about our first Instagram Live event of the summer below!

Other things to look out for:

- **DEMOCRACY:** We are currently wrapping up research to map the ways in which people are thinking about democracy during this politically tumultuous time. We will share findings from this research later this summer.

- **CLAIMING THE SYSTEM-IS-RIGGED NARRATIVE:** How can we communicate about our economic and political systems being rigged in ways that fuel systemic action *without* activating fatalist or racist thinking? By the end of this summer, we'll share findings from qualitative and quantitative research on how to talk about "the system." Stay tuned!

INSTAGRAM LIVE SUMMER SERIES

This summer, we're talking with advocates, activists, researchers, and issue experts about the shifts we're seeing in American cultural mindsets.

JOIN US

The first of these conversations will focus on care work: what is it, why is it so important, and why is our public discourse about it so reliant upon harmful narratives?

Join us on Instagram Live on **Thursday, July 27th from 2:30-3:15 pm ET** as we dive into Americans' perceptions of care work, and the profound implications of cultural mindsets for advocates and supporters. For instance—when you think of care workers, what comes to mind? We hear words like "compassionate," "patient," and "empathic" frequently. But what about "underpaid," "unsupported," and "stretched"? It's time to expand the conversation.

In this Instagram live, you'll also hear from three of our collaborators, who will share how they are challenging perceptions and reshaping the narrative on care work:

- Jenn Stowe, *National Domestic Workers Alliance* (@domesticworkers)
- Robert Espinoza, *PHI* (@robertespinoza)
- Ishita Srivastava, *Caring Across Generations* (@caringacrossgen)



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