On Culture: How to Talk about Change

Mon, Sep 29, 2025 at 3:30 PM



Friends and partners,

New and ongoing threats to the civil sector complicate an already uncertain communications environment. There is so much we don't know right now, but I'm writing today with what we, at FrameWorks, *do* know.

What we know is that Americans are ready for change. Our latest research reveals that a majority of both Democrats and Republicans say that our political system needs to be dramatically changed or entirely reformed.

This is good news for those of us who want to see a stronger democracy. There is tremendous potential in the fact that people

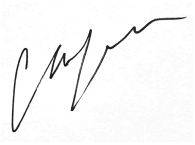
aren't fine with what we have now. But it also presents us with a mandate to *speak* to people's desire for change. If we don't, we leave an opening for those looking to undermine democracy.

SHOW ME THE RECOMMENDATIONS

In the short guide linked above, we share findings from new research on people's desire for fundamental change; challenges and opportunities this thinking poses to communicators; and a formula for talking about systems change in ways that lead people toward democratic—and away from authoritarian—solutions.

We're grappling with exactly how we can communicate in this moment. But at a time when hope is scarce, we hope this research feels promising. Over the coming months we will continue looking into the best ways to communicate about fundamental change, and will keep you informed as we do.

In solidarity,



Clara Blustein Lindholm

SAVE THE DATE FOR FALL 2025 BRIEFINGS

This fall, we'll be continuing our monthly briefing series on *Navigating Public Thinking about Democracy*. Each month we'll share insights from real-time research on how Americans are—or aren't—thinking about things like democracy, authoritarianism, the rule of law, executive overreach, and more. We'll also share emerging strategies for framing conversations in ways that help counter authoritarian threats and strengthen our democracy. We'd love for you to join us on the dates below—full invitations to come.

- **Wednesday, October 22 from 1–2pm ET**
- **Wednesday, November 19 from 1–2pm ET**

Information about these monthly briefings, along with resources from

previous briefings, can be found here.

NEW FROM FRAMEWORKS

FRAMING GUIDE: TALKING ABOUT AUTISM
Recent comments about autism from our nation's highest political leaders are elevating harmful stereotypes of autistic children and painting them as burdens that need to be "prevented." We need a narrative that points to the beauty and fullness of neurodivergence while naming the real obstacle: ableist systems, policies, and structures. In this new guide, we are sharing five recommendations for building and amplifying this narrative.

SHOW ME THE GUIDE

RECORDED BRIEFING: UNPACKING THE ADMINISTRATION'S CHILD HEALTH AGENDA
Earlier this month the Make America Healthy Again Commission released a strategy report for addressing childhood chronic disease. In this conversation, FrameWorks senior advisor, Dr. Julie Sweetland, and senior director of health justice, Dr. Katy Evans unpacked the administration's policy agenda for children's health, the reason the "Make America Healthy Again" slogan resonates with so many, and strategies for shifting how people think and talk about kids' health in the United States.

PLAY ME THE VIDEO

UP NEXT!

FRAMING THE SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF AI | FALL 2025
Despite the increasing prominence of artificial intelligence in public life and discourse, there remains a lack of understanding about how AI works and what it means for our lives. By examining the implicit assumptions that

shape thinking about AI, we will identify and share strategies for deepening understanding of AI technologies, the social implications of their use, and how they can be used on behalf of the public interest.

SPOTLIGHT ON CULTURE CHANGERS

(EN)GENDERING AUTHORITARIANISM | OTHERING & BELONGING INSTITUTE and OVER ZERO

This project explores how authoritarian movements weaponize gender to divide society and opposition movements, launder and normalize social hierarchies, reshape cultural norms, and lay the groundwork for authoritarian power consolidation and violence. The report walks through six strategies used to leverage gender to advance authoritarianism.

CULTURAL WEEK OF ACTION ON RACE AND DEMOCRACY | RACE FORWARD

November 8–November 16 is the Cultural Week of Action on Race and Democracy: a national pulse point for multiracial democracy and cross-racial solidarity. Across cities, towns, and virtual spaces, communities will come alive through music, storytelling, movement, and collective learning. It's a time to shift the narrative, reclaim the deeper meaning of democracy, and elevate the power of culture to shape what comes next.



FRAMEWORKS
Culture Change
Project

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