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The Future of Gender is Increasingly Nonbinary

New Report Explores Public Opinion, Marketing and Business in the Gender Spectrum

New York, NY, January 7, 2020 — What's the future of gender? That kind of sounds like a crazy question to ask. Yet the conversations around appropriate gender roles, gender equality, and the gender spectrum grow in import and scale. Ipsos steps in with new data and insights about the state of being female, male and everything in between.

On one hand, Harry Potter author J.K. Rowling upset many in her fan base with a tweet supporting an anti-transgender researcher. On another hand, menstruation product brand Always is removing the Venus gender symbol from its packaging following social media criticism that it discriminates against trans men. This extensive report delves into the global public opinion that underlies both ends of that conversation. **One key finding: a slight majority of Americans (51%) don't know anyone who is transgender** but there is growing public awareness.

The report, the latest in Ipsos' award-winning **What the Future** series, also looks at masculinity, representations of women in the media, and the gendered marketing of products from toys to fashion. The full report and all related data can be downloaded now at future.ipsos.com.

Ipsos' gender and industry experts are available for comment on the report and broader industry trends, including:

- Americans still focus on a person's biology to assign their gender, but more Americans agree than disagree that there is a spectrum of gender identities rather than just the binary male or female.
 - Nearly six in ten Americans say that reproductive organs you were born with define your gender.
 - When asked if people can only be men or women and not anything in between, Americans are almost **two to one more likely to say that they agree than disagree**.
 - **Yet, half of women and four in ten men in the U.S. agree that there is a spectrum of gender identities.** More than half (55%) of all respondents ages 25 to 34 were most in agreement by age group. Another 42% of total respondents ages 18 to 24 agreed. This group also had the largest number (28%) to neither agree nor disagree.
- **Men make more gendered purchasing decisions than women when buying for their children**, especially their daughters.
 - Men are more likely to choose products meant for boys for their sons, including toys (64% to 56%), books (60% to 51%), and especially games (68% to 51%) and TV shows (67% to 39%).



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- Similarly, men also are more likely to choose “girl” products for their daughters.
- The number of **Americans who know of someone who is transgender has reached double digits.**
 - Among those surveyed, **16% say they have an acquaintance who is transgender.**
 - A slight majority of Americans (51%) say they don't know anyone who is transgender and 22% refuse to answer or say they're not sure.
 - Among young Americans surveyed, **1% of those ages 25 to 34 identify themselves as transgender and 2.5% of those aged 18 to 24 identify themselves as nonbinary.**
- Media and advertising still box people into traditional gender roles but they can also play a role in changing people's perceptions about them.
 - About half of Americans surveyed (49%) say TV and movie plots keep men and women in traditional gender roles. A bit more (51%) say the same of advertising.
 - But nearly two-thirds (63%) say that TV and movie plots can change how people perceive gender roles.
 - **More women than men (61% to 54%) say advertising can change how people perceive gender roles.**
- Employers are most responsible for suppressing women's equality, say Americans.
 - One in four Americans say **the thing most holding women back from equality is employers not doing enough to close the gender pay gap.**
- The gender discussion is uncomfortable for men.
 - Nearly a third (**31%**) **say they feel excluded from the discussion of a gender spectrum.**
 - Even more (**40%**) **are annoyed or angered** by the conversation.
 - That may be because 44% worry they will be attacked if they say what they're thinking.
- Minorities face gender discrimination in their primary healthcare visits.
 - Hispanic men (16%) and black men (13%) are nearly twice as likely as white men to feel stigmatized for their gender identity.
 - **Hispanic women (16%) are more than twice as likely as white women to feel stigmatized due to their gender identity.**

Ipsos experts also contribute research insights and advice for action. They include:

- How the market research industry is preparing for a non-binary future and the research implications and challenges that creates.
- How men are spending more time on being dads and how the lack of social structures to support that affects their physical and mental health.



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- The moral dilemma that brands face as technology improves the precision of self-serving, personalized messages that feature one gender target as the hero without the larger, real-world context.

About the Study

What The Future is based on a series of Ipsos surveys. Please visit Ipsos.com/en-us for full results and methods.

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