

TO: We Are Rally

FROM: Jamel Love & Kim Cardenas

DATE: October 8th, 2024

SUBJECT: Black voters’ attitudes toward transgender acceptance and transgender messages 2024

Political and Social Perspectives

Most survey respondents identify as politically moderate (52%), followed by liberal (34%) and conservative (14%) viewpoints. Their primary concerns when voting are inflation and the cost of living (56%), crime and violence (34%), housing affordability (33%), and healthcare (33%). LGBTQ+ rights rank lower as a priority, with only 5% of respondents indicating it as a significant voting issue, suggesting it is not a primary concern for the majority.

Views on Transgender Acceptance

Societal Attitudes: Respondents are divided on the issue of transgender acceptance, with 34% viewing greater social acceptance as positive, 19% as negative, and a notable 47% expressing neutrality. This suggests a substantial portion of the population remains undecided or indifferent.

Statements on Identity and Values:

- **Empathy and Freedom:** A majority (63%) agreed with a statement promoting empathy and respect for individual identities. After exposure to supportive messaging, this increased slightly to 64%, indicating a positive shift.
- **Traditional Values:** About 25% agreed with a statement expressing concern for traditional family values. Support for this statement decreased to 24% following messaging exposure, suggesting that these perspectives are somewhat malleable when addressed with empathetic language.

Message Effectiveness:

Messaging

SAFE SCHOOLS

Research shows that schools that foster inclusive environments where all kids feel safe have better learning outcomes for everyone. Black people know kids shouldn't be treated differently at school just because of who they are. For kids to be safe at school, they have to feel welcomed and accepted for who they are.

SCHOOL TOPICS

Education is the key to brighter futures for all children. To be prepared for the real world, kids should learn about each other's identity, history, and expression in age-appropriate ways. Politicians need to keep their agendas away from our children's classrooms and allow teachers and students the freedom to learn.

SCHOOL SPORTS

All kids should be able to join school sports, no matter who they are or what they look like. Fairness in sports is more about everyone getting a chance to play and learn, not just winning. This is important for transgender kids too. The government shouldn't make one rule for everyone. Instead, decisions about which team a student plays on should be made by the student, their parents, and the school. Every kid is different, so one rule can't fit everyone.

CHRISTIANITY

Being a follower of Jesus Christ means upholding his teachings to support, protect, and show compassion to marginalized communities. Christians are taught to welcome and love others, not to divide and hate. This includes transgender kids because God doesn't make mistakes. Creating discriminatory laws or attacking people for who they are goes against what it means to be Christian. Our faith calls us to support all children, especially when they are in school.

DIVISION

By targeting Black trans and queer people, right wing extremists create a false narrative that these groups are the problem, distracting us from their real agenda: stripping away the rights of all Black people. When they ban discussions of gender identity, they also erase Black activists like James Baldwin, silencing our history. They want us to believe protecting trans rights is separate from Black rights, but it's all the same fight. Standing up for Black trans rights is standing up for all of us.

LINKED FATE

Black trans people, like all Black people, face daily discrimination. When states like Texas pass laws to investigate families of trans youth, treating them as criminals, they are targeting Black families who have already faced the weight of discriminatory policing. These laws are another way to control and divide us. When we stand up for Black trans people, we are fighting the same fight against systems that have targeted us all, from Jim Crow to mass incarceration.

Best-Performing Messages

1. **School Topics:** High performance across all groups, particularly among older, non-religious respondents, due to its focus on inclusivity and real-world preparation. This theme aligns with progressive educational values.
2. **Safe Schools:** Also highly rated, particularly by non-religious older adults, who prioritize safety and inclusivity in educational settings.
3. **Parents' Rights:** This message appeals to non-religious older adults by emphasizing family autonomy and respect for parental decision-making.

Worst-Performing Messages

1. **School Sports:** This theme encounters resistance, especially from younger religious individuals, due to concerns over fairness and traditional roles.
2. **Linked Fate:** While this theme resonates with some older, non-religious respondents, younger religious individuals are less receptive, indicating the need for tailored messaging.

Message Effectiveness by Theme:

Overall, most messages tested in the survey received moderate to high support from respondents ranging from an average of 6.4-7.7.

1. **School Topics:** This theme received the highest overall support, with an average rating of 7.7. It emphasizes the need for inclusive, politically neutral education that prepares students for diverse societal interactions. This theme resonated well, with 79% in agreement and 60% in strong agreement.
2. **Safe Schools:** Close in popularity to School Topics, this theme had a mean score of 7.6. It emphasizes safety and inclusivity within educational environments, aligning with community values of support and security.

3. **Christianity:** Rated at 7.0 on average, this message appeals to religious values by framing transgender support as consistent with Christian compassion. It received strong support from religious respondents, with 69% agreement.
4. **Parents' Rights:** Scoring 7.3, this theme appeals to family autonomy, with 72% of respondents in agreement. This approach emphasizes parental roles in decisions about children's identity and aligns with values of familial involvement.
5. **Linked Fate:** This message connects the struggles of Black transgender individuals to broader Black civil rights. It scored 6.7 overall, resonating with audiences who perceive social justice issues as interconnected.
6. **Division:** This theme, with a score of 6.4, addresses how targeting Black trans individuals can divide the community. While it faces resistance from some respondents, it resonates with those who view trans rights as part of a broader push for racial unity.
7. **School Sports:** The lowest-scoring theme, with a mean of 6.2, faced the highest disagreement, particularly from respondents with concerns about fairness and traditional gender roles in sports.

Key Demographic Insights

Older, Non-Religious Respondents: This group consistently rated themes like School Topics, Safe Schools, and Parents' Rights highly, indicating strong support for inclusivity, safety, and autonomy in family decision-making.

Younger, Religious Respondents: These respondents rated themes such as School Sports and Linked Fate lower, reflecting traditional views on gender roles and skepticism about collective identity narratives. Messaging in these areas may benefit from a careful approach that acknowledges their concerns around fairness and traditional values.

Older, Religious Respondents: The message focused on Christianity tested particularly well among respondents who identified as Christian or religious, with this group rating the theme significantly higher than others. This strong response suggests that messaging framed around Christian values—such as compassion, love, and acceptance—resonates well with religious individuals. By aligning transgender acceptance with core Christian principles, such as caring for others and embracing diversity, campaigns can effectively engage religious audiences. This insight highlights the importance of appealing to shared spiritual and moral values when addressing issues of inclusivity within faith-based communities.

Recommendations

- **Targeted Messaging:** To engage non-religious, older respondents, emphasize themes of educational inclusivity, safety, and family autonomy. For younger, religious audiences, frame discussions around fairness and societal harmony, especially when addressing divisive topics like sports.
- **Opportunities for Neutrality:** The high neutrality rates on transgender acceptance indicate potential for opinion shifts. Messages that clarify misconceptions and emphasize empathy could foster more acceptance, especially among younger audiences.
- **Broader Appeal:** Messages like School Topics and Safe Schools hold broad appeal and are effective for building support across varied demographics. These themes are positioned to unify audiences around common values of inclusivity and community safety.