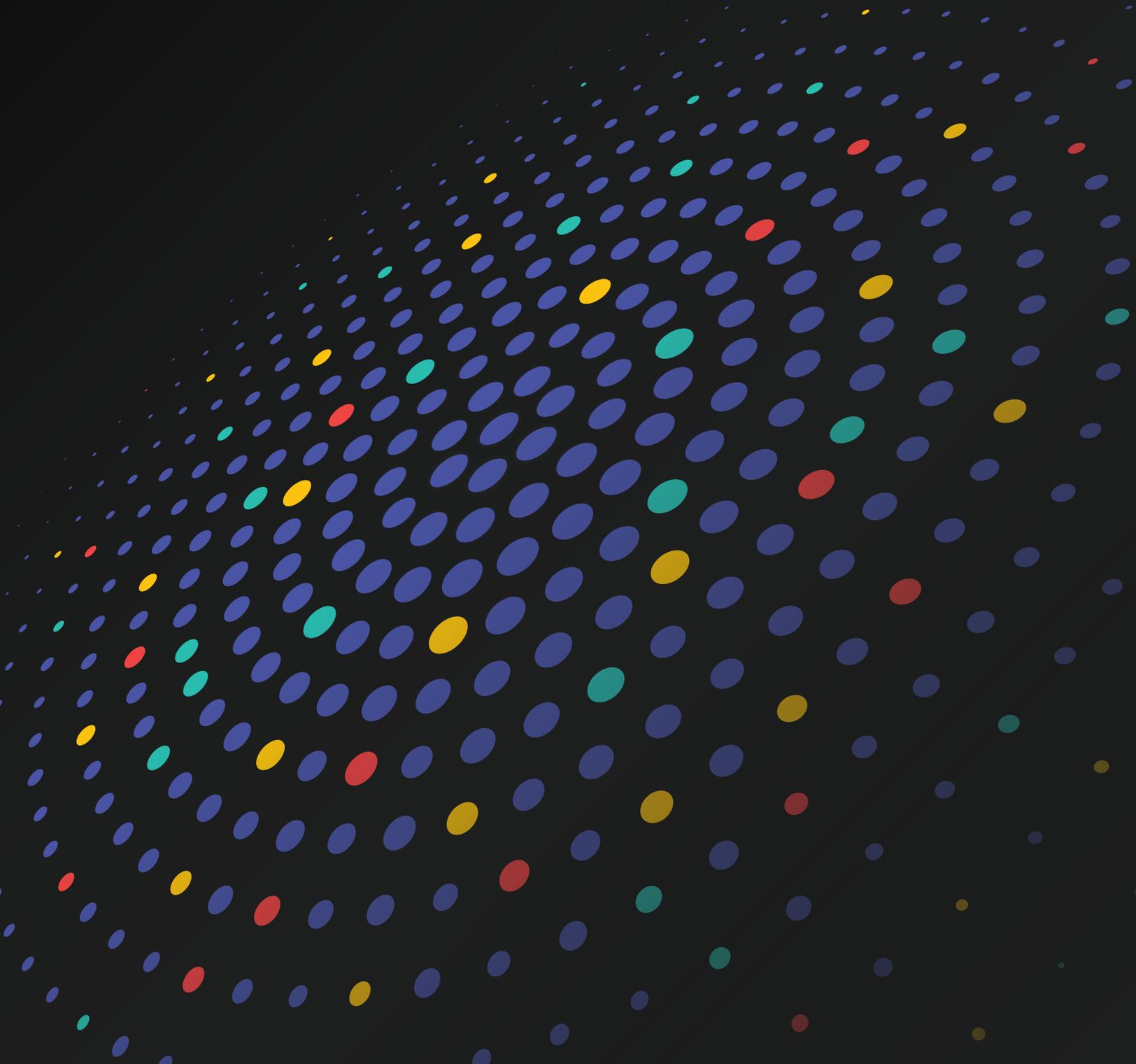


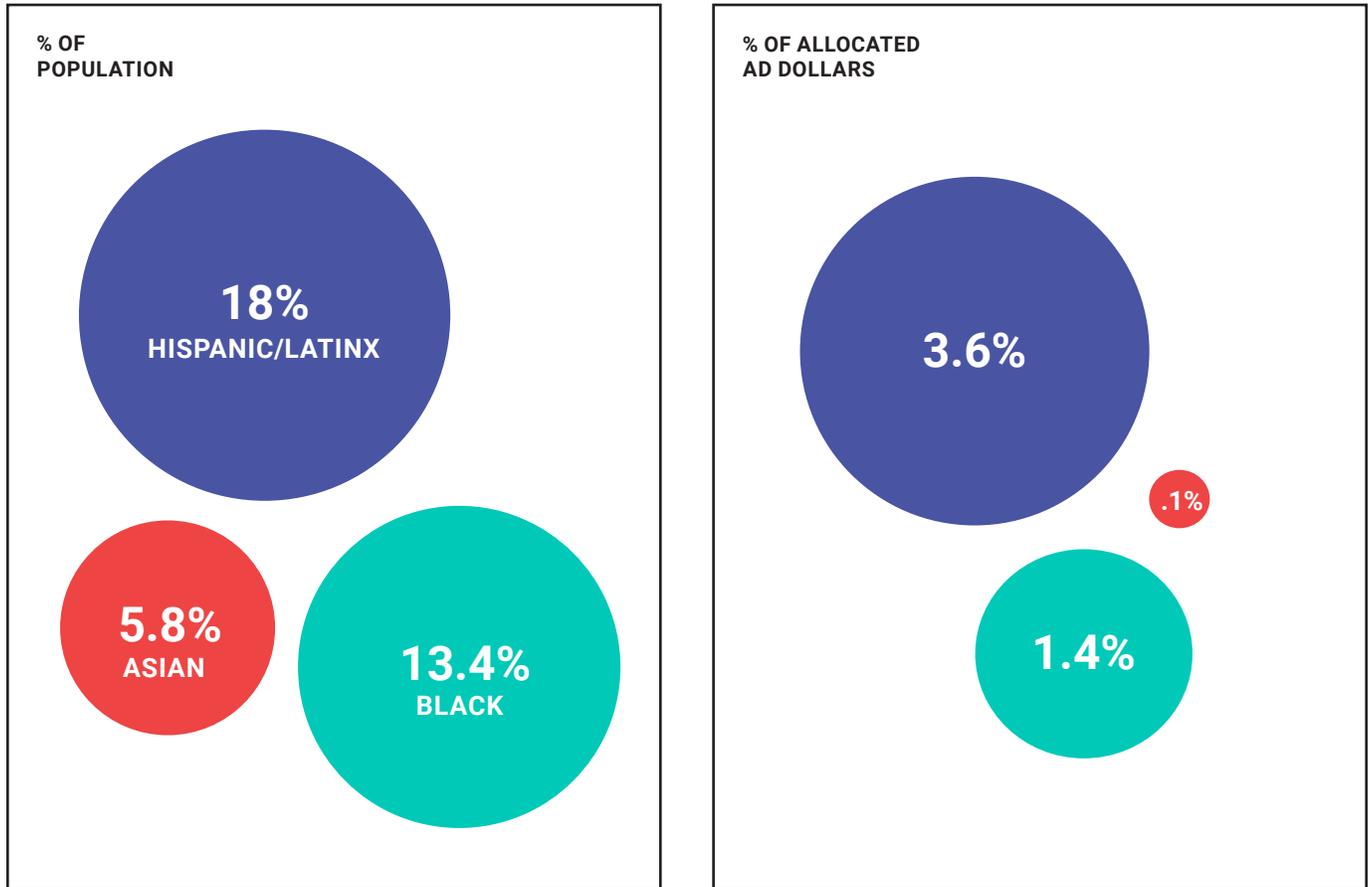
# Media Buying

Setting A New Path For  
Multicultural Marketing



## Setting a new path

From the pandemic to racial reckoning, the events of 2020 forever shaped the way we think about advertising and marketing. Across the industry, there has been a much greater focus on representation, inclusion, and racial inequality, and yet, advertising spend does not match the growing diversity of the population:



Historically, marketers have framed these topics within the context of “multicultural” marketing. **But in 2022, after two years of new voices and shifting perspectives within our world, is “multicultural” still the term we should be using?**

The answer we found is **complicated... but presents an opportunity to evolve together.**

Here at Vox Media, we’ve internally reframed “multicultural” marketing as **Marketing Equity & Inclusion Partnerships**. We believe that change starts from within, and as we continue to grow and reach more consumers than ever before, it’s our goal to be responsible and inclusive as we work to strengthen our company, our partnerships, and our industry.

Until relatively recently, multicultural marketing was often used to target perceptions of certain groups of people, rather than their actual interests and values. As we move into better understanding consumer sentiment around this topic, **it's an exciting time to come together and find more evolved and intentional approaches to traditional "multicultural" media buying.** Though we don't have all the answers today, what we do have is clarity and insight into how consumers feel.

In order to better understand how they view the concept of "culture," Vox Media and Bastion db5 spoke to 1,000 U.S. adults (18+) with equal representation from four races: Caucasian, Hispanic/Latinx, Black, and AAPI. What we discovered is that most people do not want to be targeted by demographics alone; in 2022, traditional notions of race, nationality, and culture have a chance to **evolve toward visibility, representation and inclusion.**

Today's consumers believe that:



### Definition of culture is more

Culture is much more than nationality, race or ethnicity: age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, politics, and geographical region now play a much greater role in how we define ourselves.



### Working together to represent

True representation in marketing means working with publishers that reflect our identity, both individually and collectively.



### Vox consumers offer more

Vox Media consumers offer a rich and diverse target audience.

**We are living in a new, more diverse reality, and right now, marketing can help lead the conversation instead of playing catch up.** We wanted to do this work to create an opportunity to explore what "multicultural" means today, and how we can use the perspective of consumers to enact change that is meaningful to them.



Culture isn't just how we define ourselves; it's also how we live together to ultimately create a larger social identity:

“

“Culture encompasses the way our society views the main tenets of community”

“Culture can be defined as all the ways of life including arts, beliefs and institutions of a population that are passed down from generation to generation. Culture has been called “the way of life for an entire society.”

“Culture is the trends over the course of time from a group of individuals that influence the way they live”

“Culture means something strong that can't be broken because of the years the culture put into making it what it is now.”

“Growth of a group identity fostered by social patterns unique to the group social identity.”

“The way people do things, what entertains them, and how they view the world, including but not limited to art, food, entertainment, leisure time activities.”

“Culture is what provides you a background for how you think and influences how you think and what you believe in.”

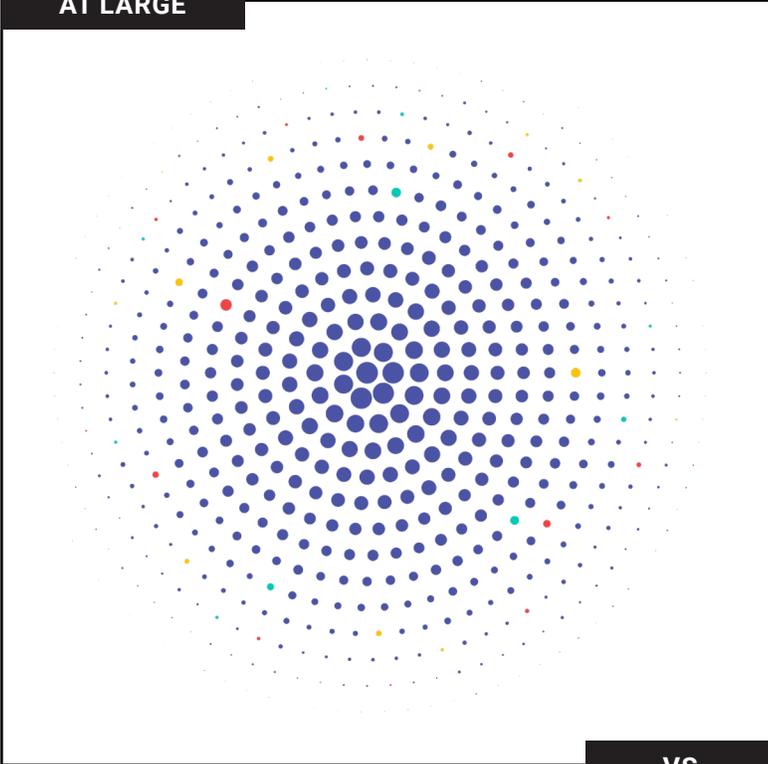
“A set of values which are shared by a group of people have a great amount of influence on their behaviors and ways of life.”

“Culture is the beliefs, customs, and way of life of a group of people. I do tend to use the more textbook definition of it. But broadly it's whatever spirited and respected traditions and interactions help bring people together, even if they're not geographically or ethnically connected.”

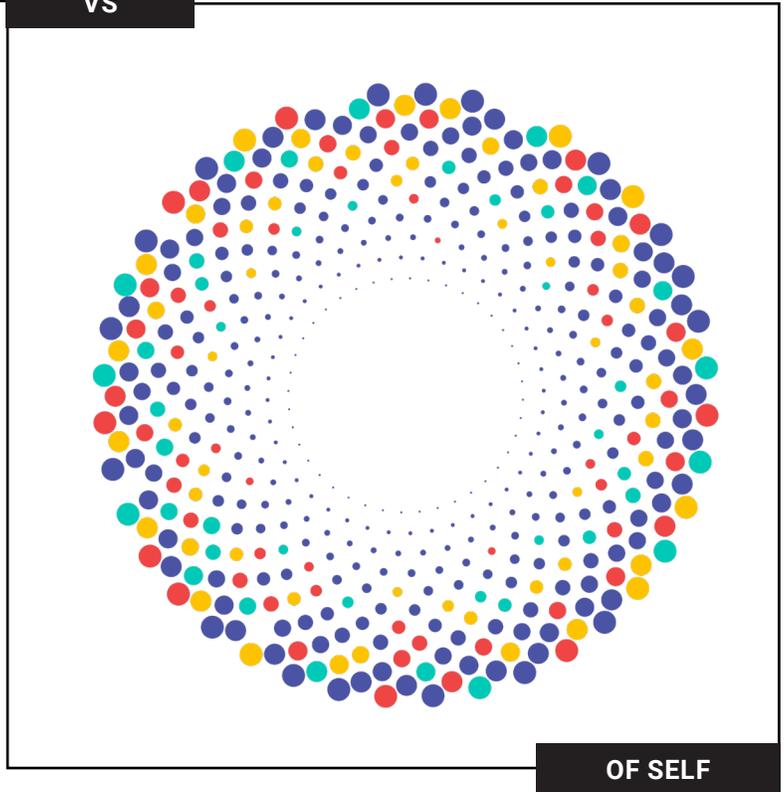
”

As such, we wanted to understand how consumers view culture at large vs. of self:

**AT LARGE**



**VS**



**OF SELF**

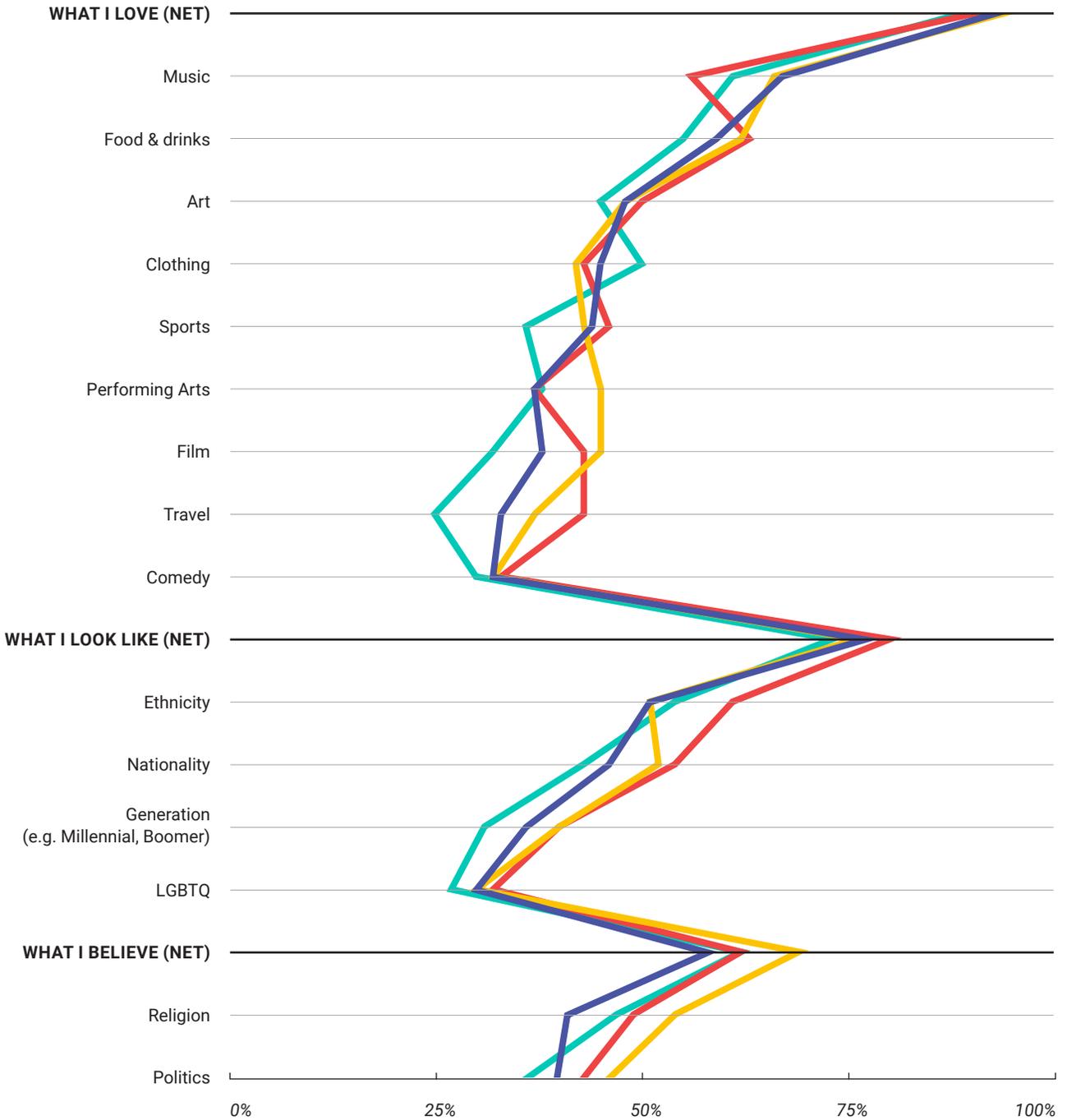
# Defining culture at large

We found that culture is created by combining **what I love**, **what I look like**, and **what I believe**.

## CULTURE AT LARGE - WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING DO YOU FEEL ARE IMPORTANT PARTS OF CULTURE?

### ETHNICITY

Black Asian White Caucasian Hispanic Latinx

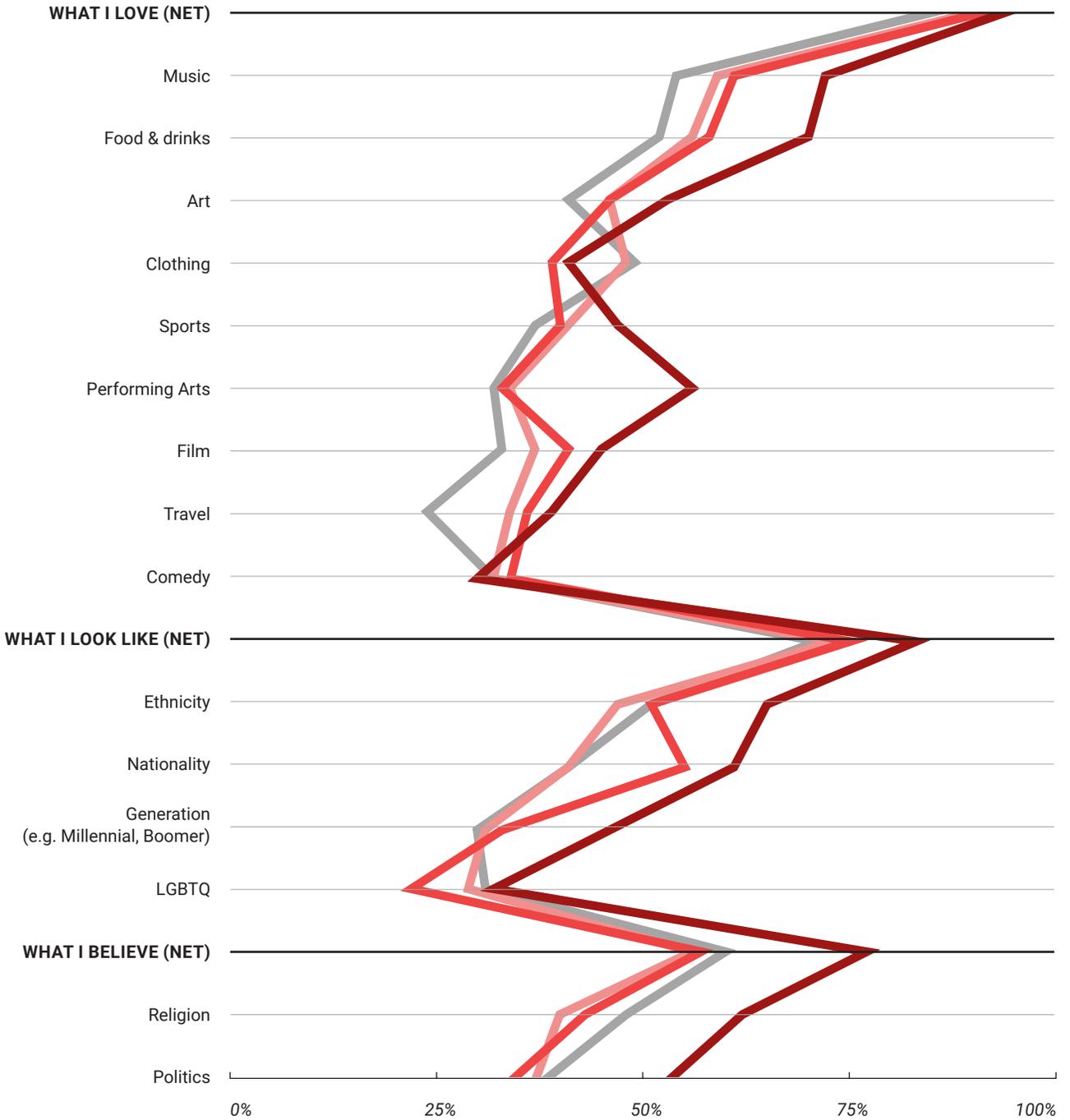


Culture is more than heritage, and includes all our passions and social touchpoints. Surprisingly, this rings even truer for those who are older:

**CULTURE AT LARGE - WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING DO YOU FEEL ARE IMPORTANT PARTS OF CULTURE?**

**AGE**

18-23 24-39 40-54 55+



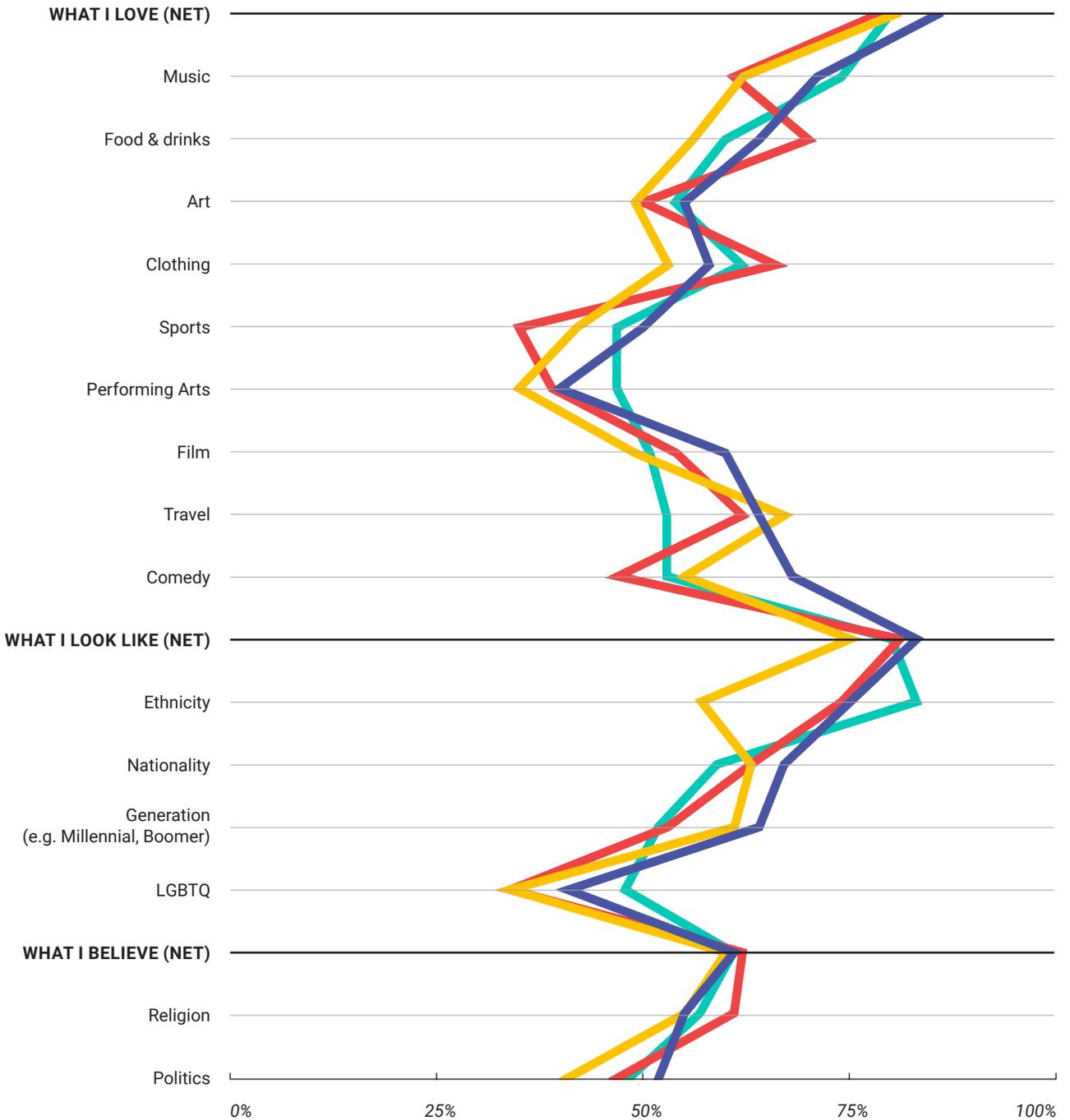
# Defining the culture of self

When defining self, it's clear that who we are is made up from components of our daily lives, including hobbies like music, art, and sports. Regardless of diversity segment, on average, there are seven categories we consider when creating our own cultural definition:

**NOW, THINKING ABOUT YOURSELF AND YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THESE DIFFERENT CULTURAL ELEMENTS, WHICH OF THESE DO YOU CONSIDER AN IMPORTANT PART OF WHO YOU ARE AS A PERSON OR HOW YOU IDENTIFY YOURSELF PERSONALLY**

## ETHNICITY

Black Asian White Caucasian Hispanic Latinx



Culture is nuanced, and its definition must take into context externalities of environment, media, and beliefs. Cultural identity is in a constant state of flux.

Your values will change based on the new thinking you get exposed to all the time.



Your sense of attachment will change based on the situation you are in right now.



Your behavior will change based on the needs of the people around you.



Your worldview will be challenged by new ways of thinking.



Seeing the world as a place full of unlimited learning opportunities means that every day marks another opportunity to not only learn something new, but **be someone new**. Exposure brings us closer to becoming a more optimized self.

# Consumers view culture positively

The large majority of consumers, regardless of race and ethnicity, want to see different perspectives represented in the content they enjoy. Most view culture positively, with 6 in 10 believing “culture shapes me as a person and helps define who I am.”

## WHAT DO YOU AGREE WITH MORE?

I **enjoy** learning about other cultures

I **don't care** to learn about other cultures



Culture **makes life and living more interesting**

Cultures **create more problems than they are worth**



When I see a culture different than mine, I **look at it positively**

I find cultures different than mine as **confusing or look at them in a negative light**



I feel a responsibility to keep up to date on world events, **even if it may never directly affect me**

I only really care about local news and **events that directly affect me**



It's **important to me to understand cultures** that are not my own

I tend to **focus on my own cultures** when seeking out content



100%

0%

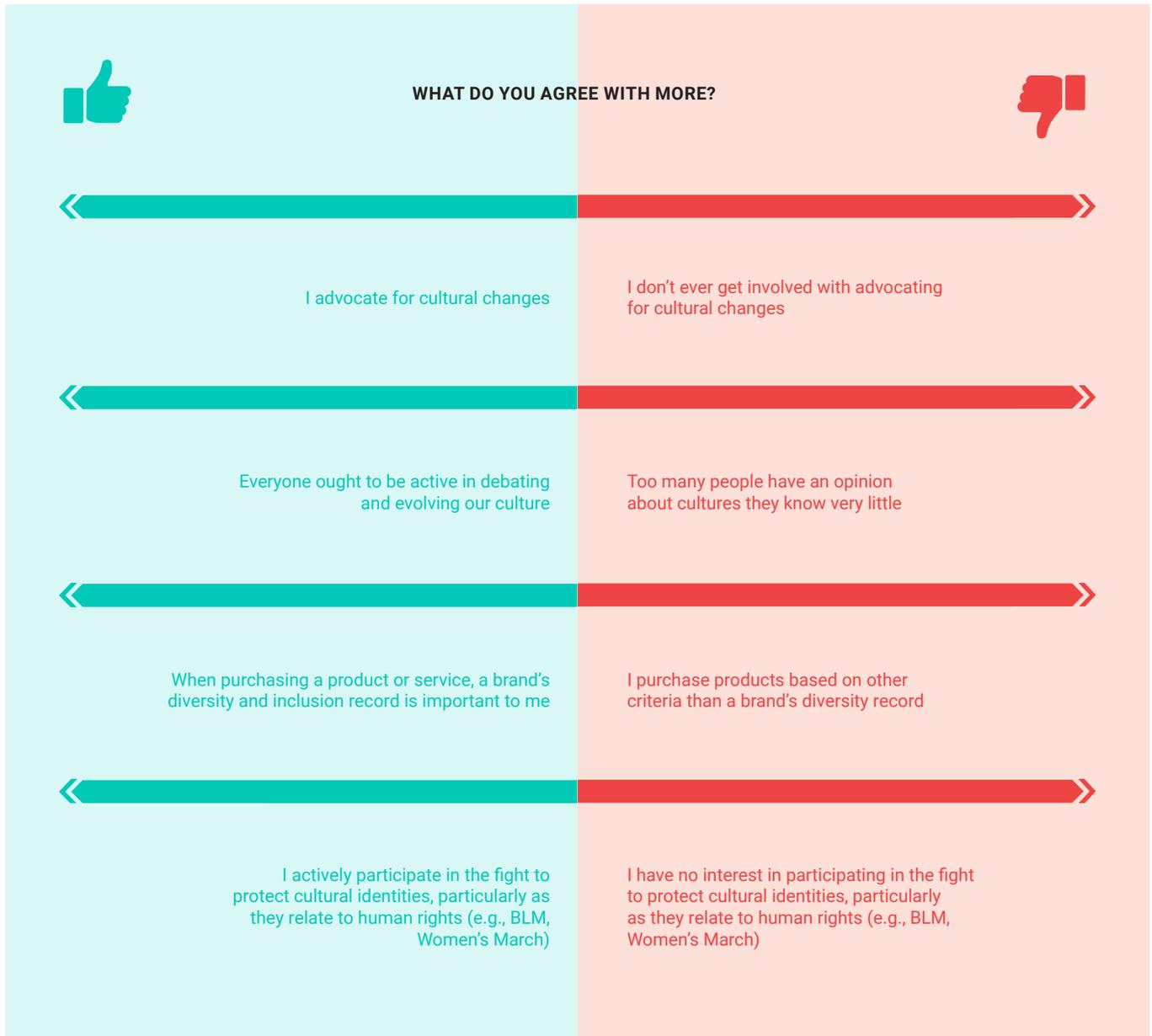
100%

*Q: We'd like you to think about culture as the background or heritage, beliefs, behaviors, objects, and other characteristics shared by groups of people. We'll now show you two sets of statements on either end of the scale. Please select where on the scale BEST represents how you feel about culture.*

We made a distinctive point not to break out into traditional subgroups because there was such consistency. These findings were consistent with recent work Vox Media put out earlier in the year around **Why equality matters**.

# Active participation in cultural shifts

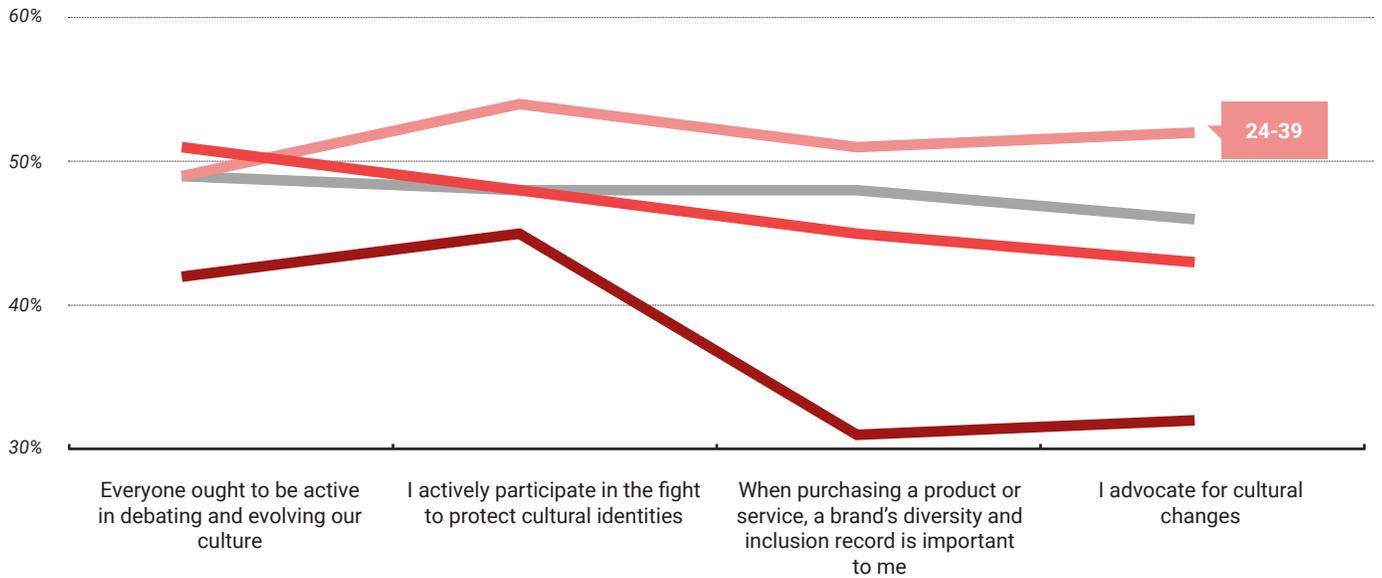
While learning and immersing in culture is at parity, participation in active societal change is significantly stronger among the young and Black Americans. Mere representation isn't enough; actively advocating for change will become increasingly more important. Here's what we saw:



Actively promoting culture is generally more important to those who are 24-39 years old, and especially pronounced among Black Americans.

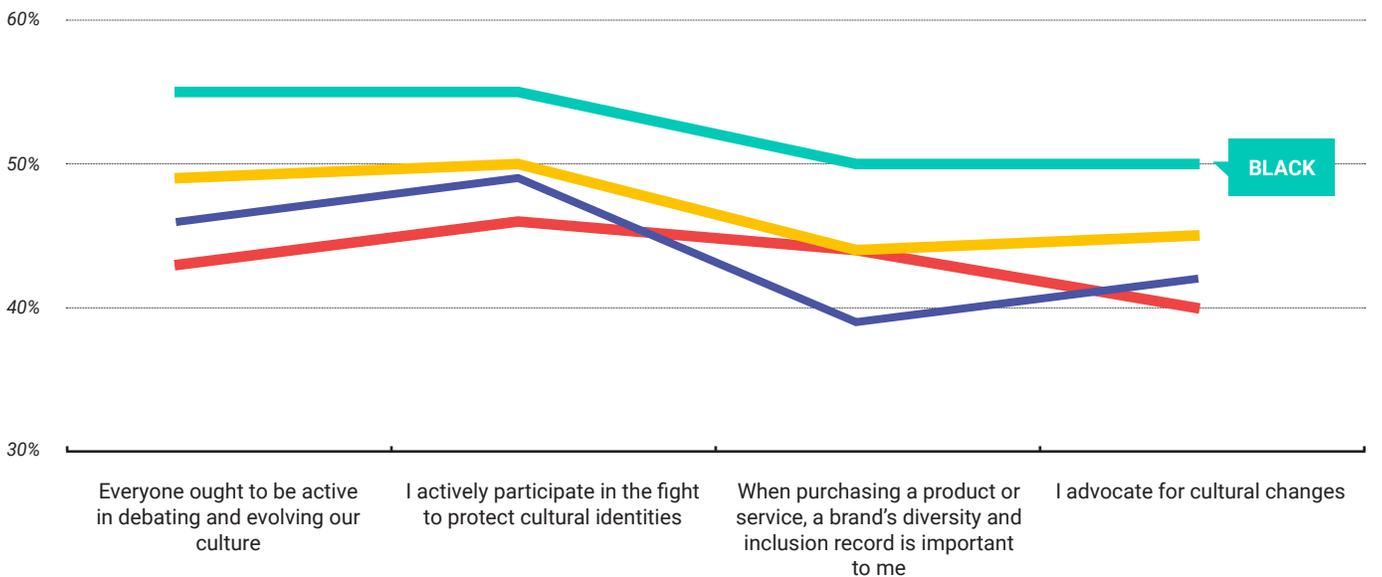
**AGE**

18-23 24-39 40-54 40-54



**ETHNICITY**

Black Asian White Caucasian Hispanic Latinx



# When it comes to content

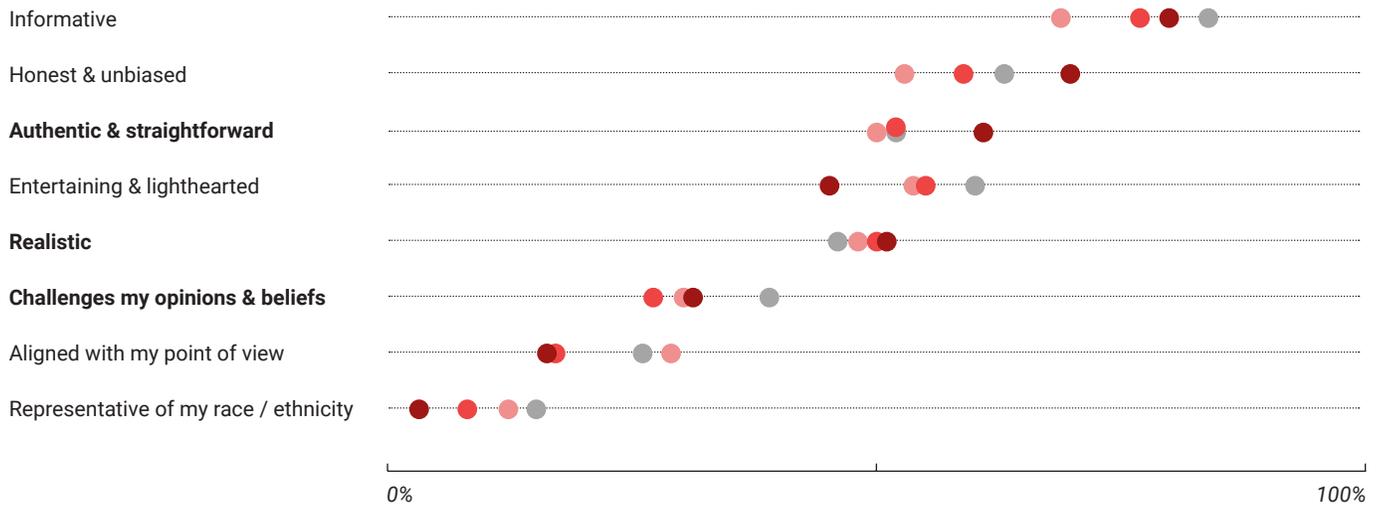
Regardless of how they define themselves, all consumers crave digital content that is informative, honest, and entertaining.

Consumers want to see the bigger picture and are eager to hear varying opinions in order to refine their own POV. They want to engage with content that is authentic and real — not just representative of their own race or ethnicity.

"I READ OR WATCH DIGITAL CONTENT THAT IS \_\_\_\_." SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.\*\*

## AGE

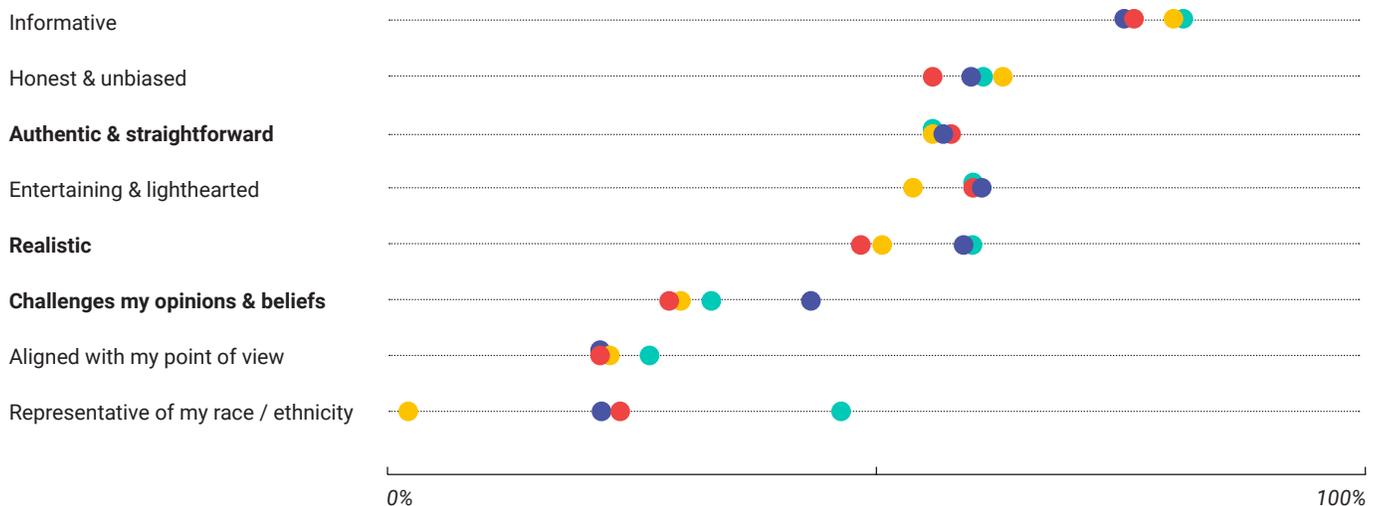
● 18-23 ● 24-39 ● 40-54 ● 55+



That being said, Black Americans are more likely to prioritize representation in the digital content they consume.

## ETHNICITY

● Black ● Asian ● White Caucasian ● Hispanic Latinx



# How can we redefine multicultural marketing?

As the world and consumers' perspectives evolve, so should the concept of "multicultural marketing." How can we, as an industry, better keep up with the times?

The key lies in broadening our outlook. 52% of consumers want companies to serve ads that relate directly to past behaviors. But a **larger** majority (59%) strongly prefer to see ads and content that are representative of everyone, not just themselves.

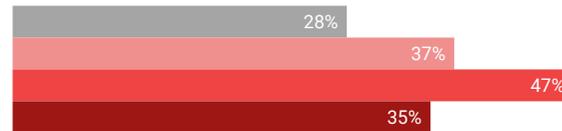
Our targeting capabilities, media buys, and ad tech must adapt beyond demographics and contextualize new ways of looking at the world. In fact, **consumers are clearly evolving (ie, aging out) from wanting to be targeted or have media bought based on their demographics alone, and increasingly want more personalization based on their interests.**

## WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING WOULD YOU PREFER ADVERTISERS DEPEND ON MOST TO TARGET YOU?

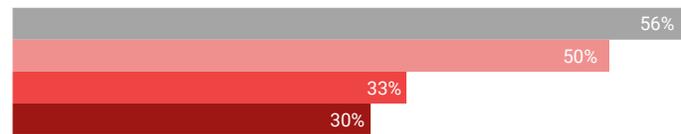
### AGE

18-23 24-39 40-54 55+

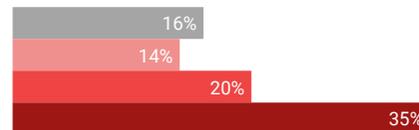
Prefer to be targeted on demographics



Prefer to be targeted on my interests



No preference



### ETHNICITY

Black Asian White Caucasian Hispanic Latinx

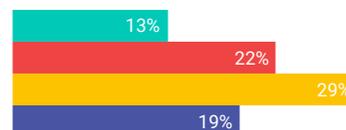
Prefer to be targeted on demographics



Prefer to be targeted on my interests



No preference

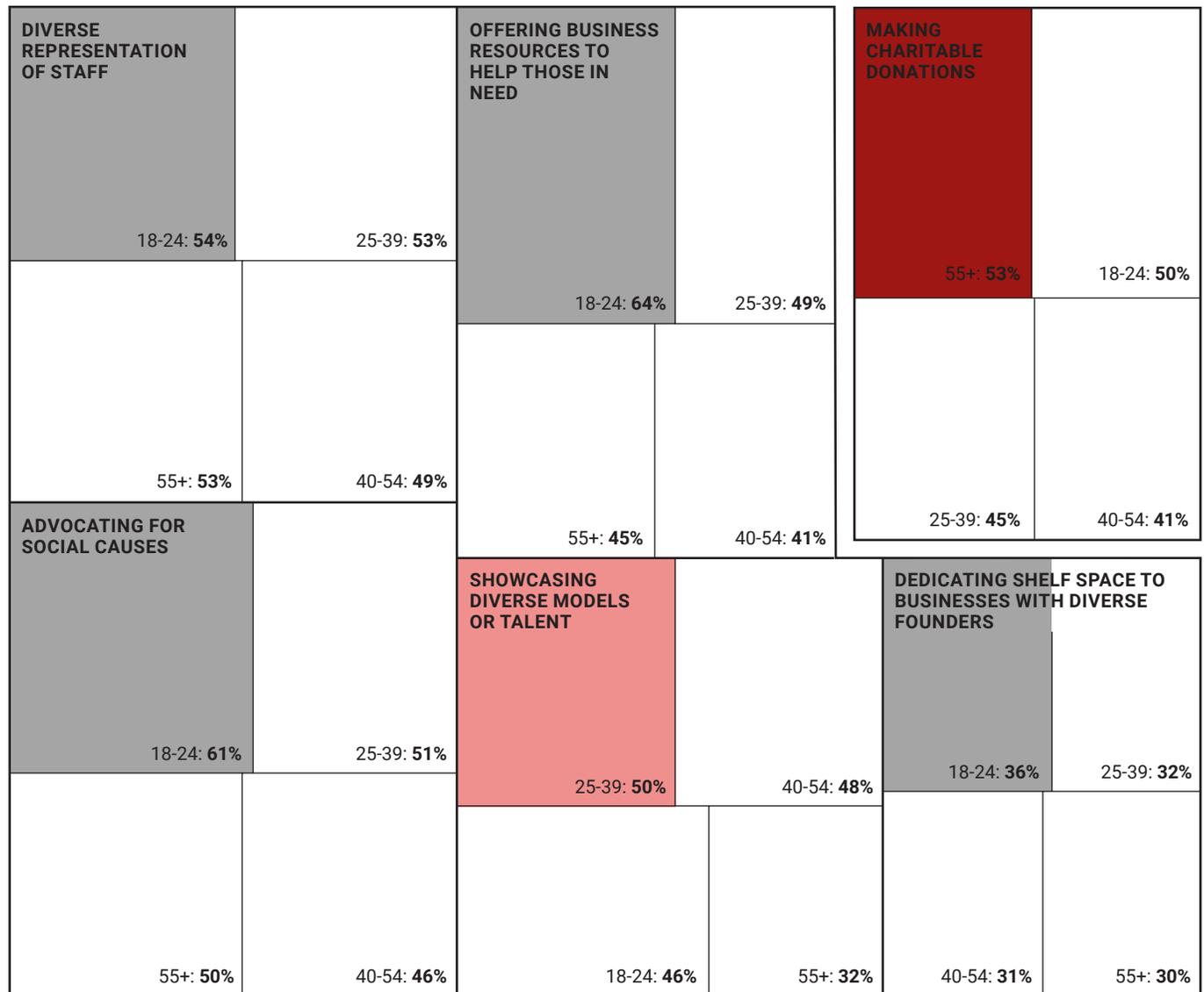


# Consumers want action

Consumers don't just want brands to talk about diversity and culture – they want to see real action. That means changes related to hiring practices, resources offered, and dedicating space for businesses owned by diverse communities and economic inclusion. Younger consumers, especially, would rather brands be advocates for social causes than make charitable donations.

**WHEN IT COMES TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION IN BUSINESS AND ADVERTISING, WHAT DO YOU EXPECT TO SEE FROM YOUR FAVORITE BRANDS/RETAILERS? SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.\*\***

## AGE



This is especially true for Black Americans; specifically around staff hires and collaboration with small and diverse-owned businesses.

**ETHNICITY**

<b>DIVERSE REPRESENTATION OF STAFF</b>  Black: <b>73%</b>	Hispanic Latinx: <b>54%</b>	<b>SHOWCASING DIVERSE MODELS OR TALENT</b>  Black: <b>64%</b>	Asian: <b>51%</b>	<b>OFFERING BUSINESS RESOURCES TO HELP THOSE IN NEED</b>  Hispanic Latinx: <b>54%</b>	Black: <b>53%</b>
	White Caucasian: <b>51%</b>		Asian: <b>41%</b>		Hispanic Latinx: <b>49%</b>
<b>ADVOCATING FOR SOCIAL CAUSES</b>  Black: <b>58%</b>	Hispanic Latinx: <b>56%</b>	<b>MAKING CHARITABLE DONATIONS</b>  Hispanic Latinx: <b>51%</b>	White Caucasian: <b>48%</b>	<b>DEDICATING SHELF SPACE TO BUSINESSES WITH DIVERSE FOUNDERS</b>  Hispanic Latinx: <b>44%</b>	Black: <b>43%</b>
	Asian: <b>53%</b>		White Caucasian: <b>50%</b>		Black: <b>44%</b>

Ultimately, consumers recognize that **improved representation is a starting point for brands**, but to move the needle, brands must be **advocates who offer real support and promote cultural change**. The Vox Media audience are consumers who will drive this change.

# Vox Media reflects cultural change

Vox readers tend to be more culturally engaged than the average online browser.

- Vox Media Consumers
- Not Vox Media Consumers
- Difference

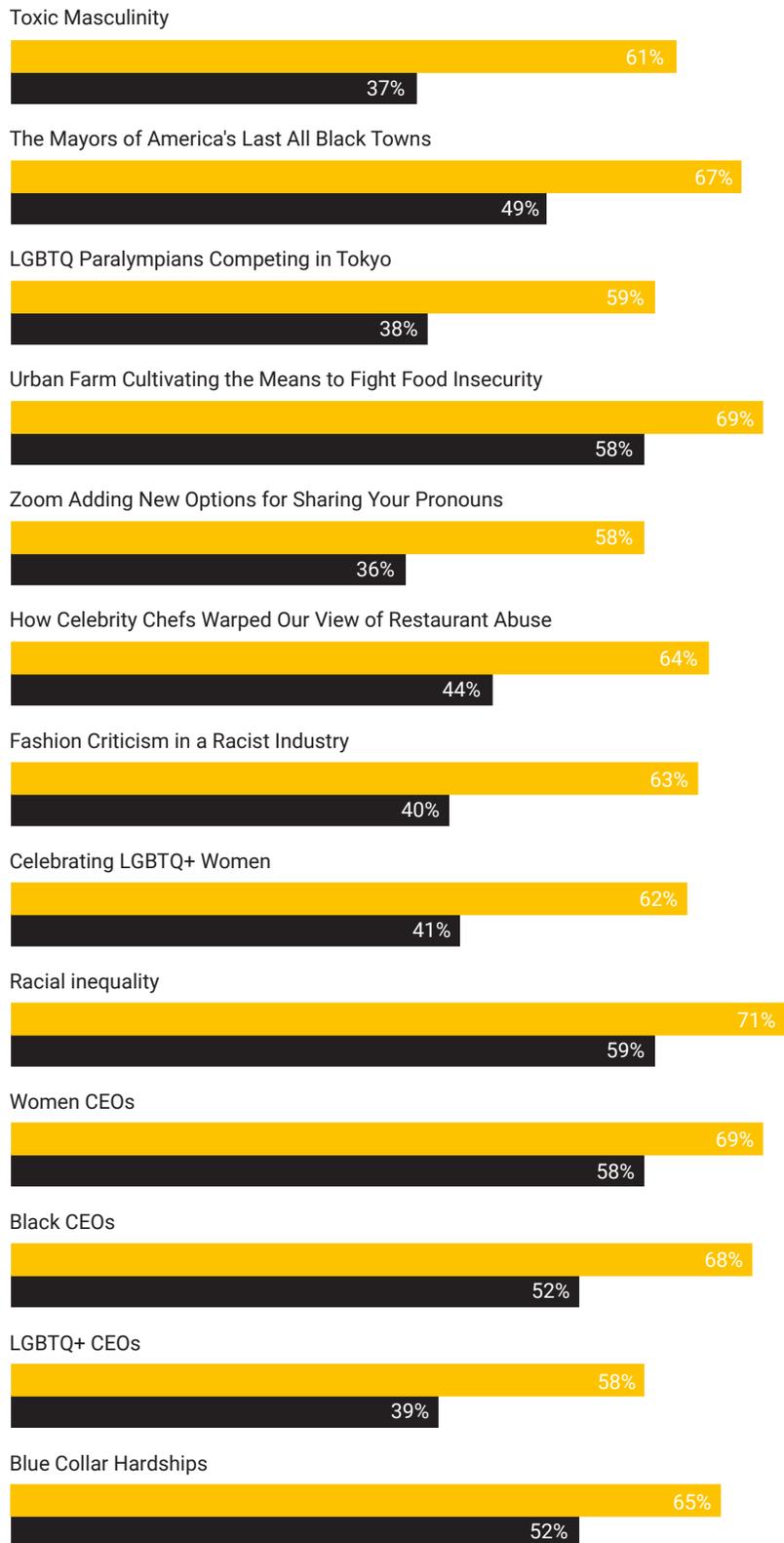


# Vox Media consumers seek to understand diverse issues

If content is a key indicator to cultural awareness, the following are some topic choices Vox Media has currently covered. Vox Media readers are significantly more likely to seek out and find a greater diversity of societal and cultural information on Vox Media sites.

## HOW INTERESTED WOULD YOU BE IN THE FOLLOWING SUBJECTS OF CONTENT?

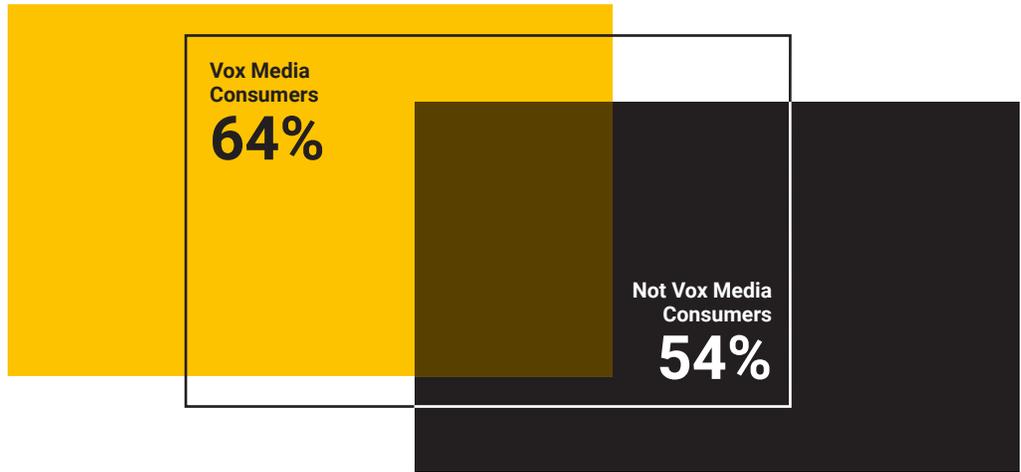
■ Vox Media Consumers  
■ Not Vox Media Consumers



They are more satisfied with the types of advertising they are served on Vox Media sites than other sites.

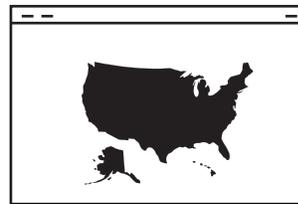
**I'D PREFER TO SEE ADS AND CONTENT THAT ARE REPRESENTATIVE OF EVERYONE VS. JUST ME**

*Thinking about the advertising you see when you're online, which of these statements do you agree with?*

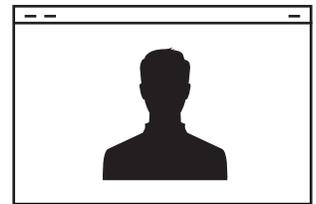


They also feel Vox Media is more reflective and inclusive of their culture. The following questions were asked for individual Vox Media sites and a selection of 3-5 competitor sites:

**WHICH OF THESE SITES ARE REPRESENTATIVE OF \_\_\_\_\_?**



**THE US AS A WHOLE**



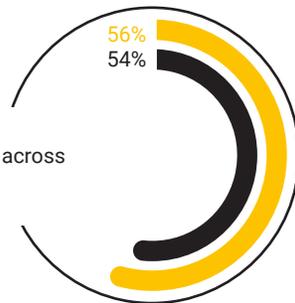
**MY OWN WORLD**

<b>Vox Media Consumers</b>	71%	45%
<b>Not Vox Media Consumers</b>	63%	47%

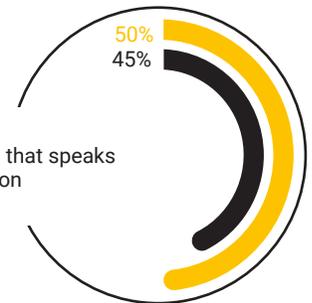
**WHICH OF THESE SITES \_\_\_\_\_?**

- Vox Media Consumers
- Not Vox Media Consumers

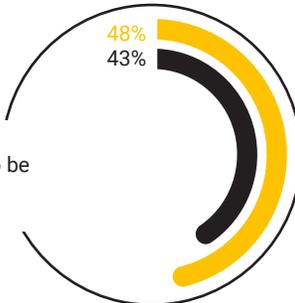
Broad mix of users across cultural elements



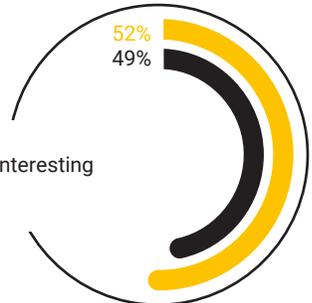
Has advertising that speaks to me as a person



Makes me proud to be American



Often features interesting cultural info



# Advocacy and impact = culture

Most importantly, true cultural change and impact is about advocacy. Vox readers are significantly more active in driving cultural movements than non-readers.

While we can't yet capture every data element representing the vastness of a person and their needs, wants, hopes, and desires, we can acknowledge that old models for targeting people with how they look are overly simplistic.

Right now, there is an opportunity for marketers to work with publishers to create quality work and connection to an ever-changing definition of culture; this will require applying human judgment instead of relying on traditional media buys.

**As the concept of multicultural marketing evolves, it will be less about targeting, and more about celebrating the richness and diversity of culture itself.**

## % AGREE I ORGANIZE EVENTS, I'M A THOUGHT LEADER IN THE COMMUNITY

■ Vox Media Consumers  
■ Not Vox Media Consumers

### WHAT I LOOK LIKE

Ethnicity



Nationality



BLM (Black Lives)



LGBTQ



### WHAT I BELIEVE

Religion



Politics



### WHAT I LOVE

Food and drinks



Performing Arts



Music



Comedy



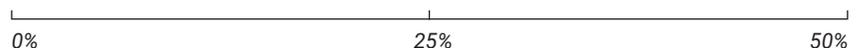
Art



Sports



Travel



# Thank you.

## Contributors

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Margo Arton

**Bastion db5** is a consumer insights and strategy consultancy specializing in qualitative and quantitative research, brand strategy, innovation and communications. Helping global businesses and disruptive startups empathize with their targets so they grow, Bastion db5 conducts consumer research in North and South America, APAC, Europe, Africa, and the Middle East. They help discover new paths to transform and grow by providing the right data (big or otherwise) and insights that are the keys to transforming brands and businesses. [www.bastiondb5.com](http://www.bastiondb5.com).

## Special note on methodology

Data from this write-up came from two sources:

*Source 1: We took the approach of recruiting a sample of adults 18+, with one exception; we polled people who self-identify as belonging to one of four groups in order to have a robust and representational sample of n = 1,000 consumers.*

- White Caucasian (n = 300)
- Black (n = 305)
- Asian (n = 200)
- Hispanics Latinx (n = 225)

*Our focus was to understand differences across subgroups, with an emphasis on ethnicity. All other demographics within ethnic groups are US national representation of the digital English speaking population in the US. It should be noted that being mixed race was an option, however sample sizes were not large enough to report. Therefore, results are looked at in absolute terms within an audience/sub-group and not by national proportions.*

*Source 2\*\*: This data was collected by our Vox Media: G9 audience panels of adults 18+ among a sample of ~950 respondents.*