Of the many insights on generation Z that we uncovered doing research for our latest trend report, some of the most striking were related to gender and sexual orientation. We found that 82% of our generation Z sample (age 12 to 19) say they don’t care about other people’s sexual orientation, 88% say people are exploring their sexuality more than in the past, and 81% do not think gender defines a person as much as it used to.

Drilling down deeper into the numbers, these attitudes become even clearer. The research, conducted using SONAR™, J. Walter Thompson’s proprietary research unit, asked respondents to indicate the strength of their views on these topics—strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree.

The SONAR™ poll found that more than half of teenagers strongly agree that they don’t care about other people’s sexual orientation—51% in the United States, and 54% in the United Kingdom. Those who
strongly disagreed with this statement numbered only 10% of US and 4% of UK respondents.

Generation Z also holds progressive attitudes on gender. In the UK, 41% of respondents strongly agreed that gender doesn’t define a person as much as it used to, while 43% of US respondents said the same. A miniscule 2% of UK respondents and 7% of US respondents strongly disagreed that this was the case.

Many respondents also held strong positive views on same-sex marriage—51% of UK respondents and 47% of US respondents strongly agreed that same sex couples had the right to wed, versus 7% and 15% who strongly disagreed, respectively.

Overall, generation Zers with progressive views on gender are passionate in their convictions, while those with more traditional views tend to be measured. This makes sense given the world they have inherited—the oldest members of our sample, born in 1995, turned six the year same-sex marriage was legalized in The Netherlands, and nine when it became law in Massachusetts. These issues have never been hypothetical for them.

Click here for the executive summary of our report on generation Z, and here to purchase a copy of the full 79-page report.

*Image credit: Agender by Selfridges*

**Study: Generation Z and gender**

*by JWT Intelligence - Wednesday, May 20, 2015*