

YOUNG FUTURES

SASKATCHEWAN MILLENNIAL STUDY USING AN ONLINE COMMUNITY
THEME: IDEOLOGIES





YOUNG FUTURES- MONTH FOUR-IDEOLOGIES

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OVERVIEW

THE PROJECT

In November of 2017, Insightrix Research® launched the Young Futures study- an innovative and interactive study with 20 Millennials from the province of Saskatchewan. There were many purposes of this study;

- To set the bar for research with millennials, and learn about best practices for engaging this 'difficult to engage' age group.
- To learn about the perspectives, interests, habits and beliefs of millennials in Saskatchewan.
- To have primary data upon which to do cost analysis between this type of study and traditional methods, such as focus groups.
- To test the capabilities of our SaskWatch Research panel, and use it for projects that thought outside of the box.

Retention rates and engagement rates were high, data gathered were rich and insightful, participants provided thoughtful and thorough answers, and interacted amongst themselves and with the moderator. We learned about the lifestyles and perceptions of millennials in the province.

Using an Online Community to engage with millennials proved to gather rich data and facilitate discussion, save on research costs, and emerge as a best-practice for engaging busy and hard-to-reach groups.

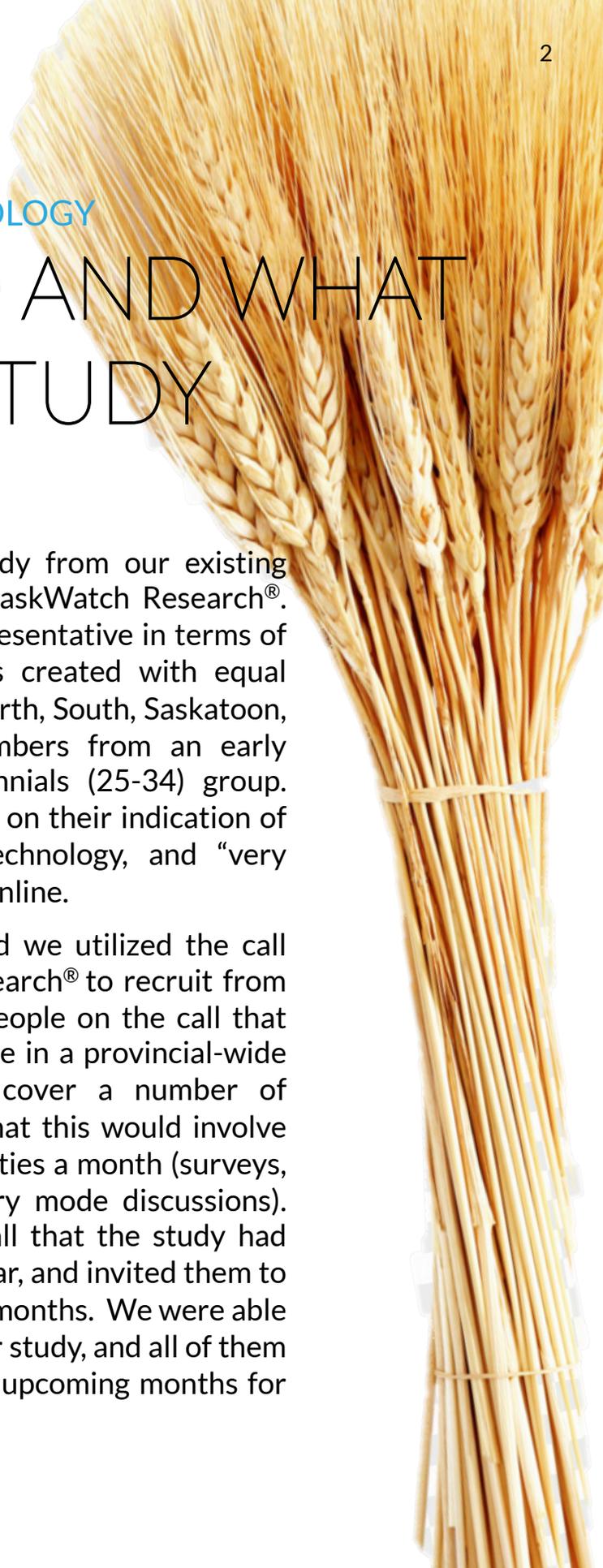
This report is intended to serve as one part in a twelve part series. Young Futures ran every month through November 2018. The data gathered each month will be included in unique reports, with a comprehensive book released at the end of the study to review findings and learnings of the project overall.

SAMPLE AND METHODOLOGY

THE WHO AND WHAT OF OUR STUDY

We chose participants for this study from our existing provincial Online Research Panel, SaskWatch Research®. We strived to make our sample representative in terms of age and location. Our sample was created with equal numbers of participants from the North, South, Saskatoon, and Regina, as well as equal numbers from an early millennials (18-24), and late millennials (25-34) group. Participants were also chosen based on their indication of being “very comfortable” using technology, and “very comfortable” sharing their opinions online.

Thirty people were short-listed, and we utilized the call center on location at Inshtrix Research® to recruit from this narrowed list. We informed people on the call that they had been selected to participate in a provincial-wide study of millennials that would cover a number of interesting topics. We described that this would involve participation in three research activities a month (surveys, bulletin board discussions, and diary mode discussions). We also informed people on the call that the study had intentions of carrying on for a full year, and invited them to participate in the study in upcoming months. We were able to find 20 people to participate in our study, and all of them agreed to continue to participate in upcoming months for the duration of the study.



METHODS

HOW WE DID IT

The Young Futures study utilized both qualitative and quantitative research methods. Surveys were used to gather quantitative data, and bulletin board discussions and diary mode discussions were used to gather qualitative data.

BULLETIN BOARD

Large or small online group discussions; richer insights than traditional focus groups, many-to-many dialogue where the moderator and participants interact together, qualitative data collection.

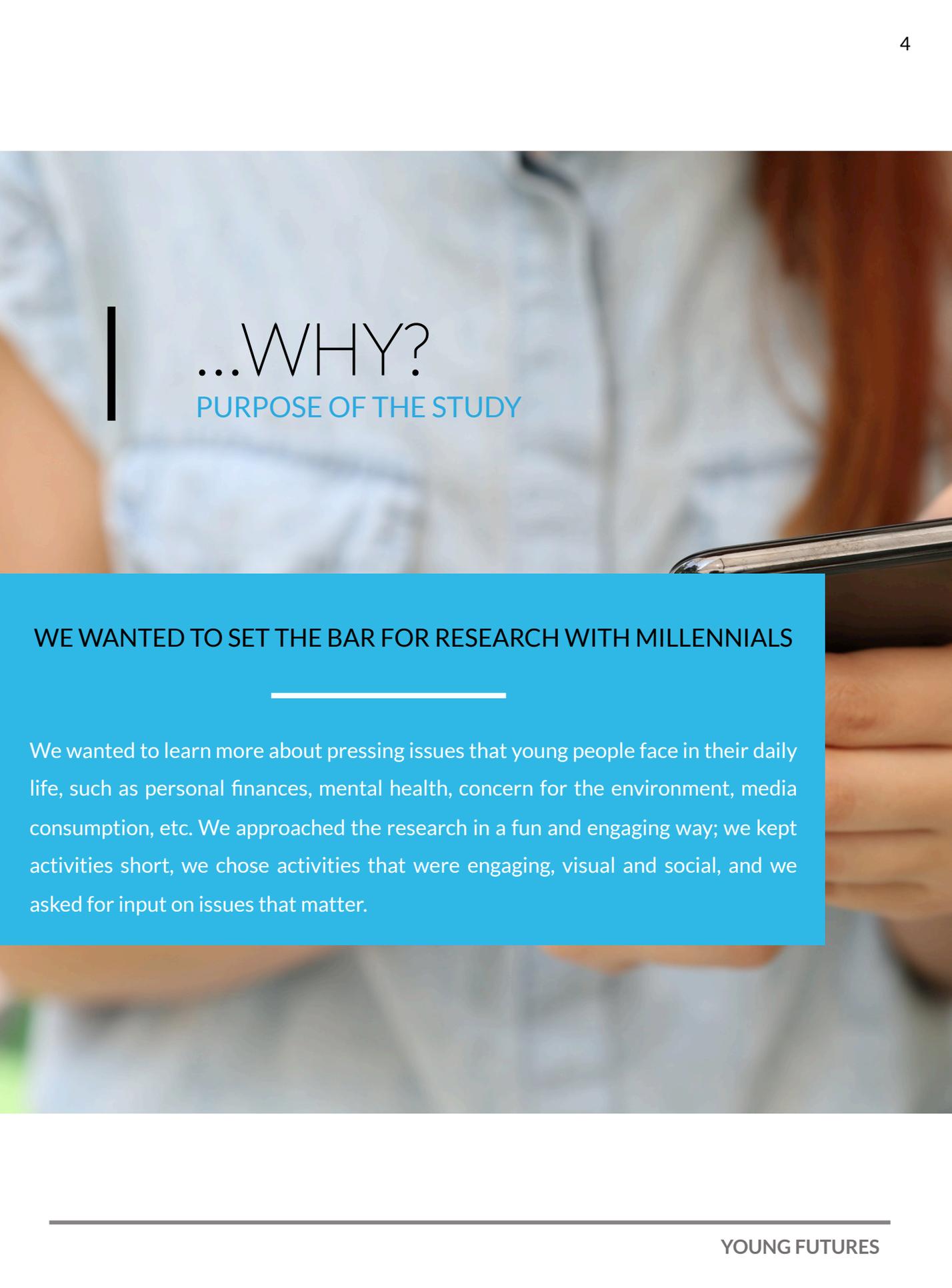
DIARY MODE

One-on-one online discussion; suitable for sensitive topics, qualitative data collection.

INCENTIVES

WHAT WE OFFERED

Young Futures ran for three days each month, with a new research activity each day. Participants who completed all three activities for the month were awarded with an incentive of \$50. Those who completed all three activities each month also qualified for the monthly draw of \$100.



...WHY?

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

WE WANTED TO SET THE BAR FOR RESEARCH WITH MILLENNIALS

We wanted to learn more about pressing issues that young people face in their daily life, such as personal finances, mental health, concern for the environment, media consumption, etc. We approached the research in a fun and engaging way; we kept activities short, we chose activities that were engaging, visual and social, and we asked for input on issues that matter.

THE SECRET SAUCE

KEY ELEMENTS

Our participants are awesome, obviously. But, there are three other main factors that made this project a success: cost effectiveness, speed, and accessibility.



COST EFFECTIVENESS

Online communities provide fast, cost effective access to research participants, including millennials, everywhere.



SPEED

From research activity conception, programming and gathering data, and exporting the information we collected- all stages of the study were quick and easy to understand.



ACCESSIBILITY

Our participants could engage comfortably- wherever and whenever. Familiarity of technology with this group eliminated communication barriers. The geographic challenges found in traditional focus groups were also eliminated since participant location is irrelevant to an Online Community. Time is saved by allowing one skilled moderator to administer many groups at once.

SNAPSHOT

FINDINGS SUMMARY

PARTICIPATION



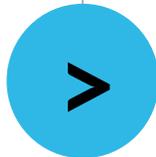
20 out of 20 participated in all three activities this month

GOTTA SEE TO BELIEVE



Religiosity and spirituality not common

SALVATION & DAMNATION? NAH.



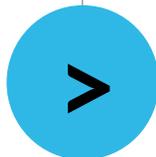
Most do not believe in heaven or hell

TRUE NORTH STRONG & FREE



Identifying as “Canadian” rather than ethnic background common

NOT TODAY...OR TOMORROW



Zero respondents indicated they attend church or religious services at least once a month

THE TRUTH IS OUT THERE



Unanimous perception that we are not alone in the universe



I'M A BELIEVER

RELIGION

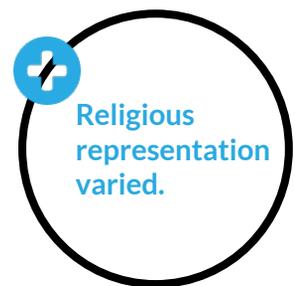
Religion and its role in society has changed dramatically over time and space. Millennials are known to not be a very religious group, so we decided to look deeper into this idea and ask our group of millennials about their religiosity and view of religion.



Only one quarter of our respondents indicated that they identified with a religion.



Of those that indicated that they identify with a religion, less than half stated that they are a member of a church, and nobody identified as attending at least once a month.



Participants who stated that they identify with a religion listed Roman Catholic, Islam, Hindu, Lutheran and Christian.

RELIGION

Our group of millennials reported varying levels of religiosity and spirituality. Of those who did identify as spiritual and/or religious, the religions and belief systems represented by our group varied greatly as well. Regardless of whether or not someone identifies as religious or spiritual, we all have our ideas and opinions about it.

We asked our millennial group to **LIST THE TOP THREE POSITIVE ATTRIBUTES THEY ASSOCIATE WITH RELIGION, AND THE TOP THREE NEGATIVE ATTRIBUTES THEY ASSOCIATE WITH RELIGION.**

The results were extremely interesting, and strangely enough, had minimal overlap of answers. There were however, three general themes that evolved in the findings for negative attributes:

1. JUDGMENT AND DISCRIMINATION

- “Against human rights”
- “Colonialism”
- “Discrimination against LGBT community”
- “Feeling of being judged by other religions”
- “Homophobia”
- “Judgmental”
- “Racism”
- “Sexism”

2. THE RULES

- “Ambiguity of 'rules'”
- “Restriction”
- “Does not evolve with society”
- “Too many rules”

3. US VS THEM

- “Being considered lesser because I do not believe in their God.”
- “Bigotry”
- “Cult like behaviour”
- “Divisive (us vs. them narrative)”
- “Pack mentality”
- “The way they try to force their beliefs on others”

RELIGION



Likewise, the results when we asked about the top three positive attributes associated with religion varied quite vastly as well. These answers however had a lot more overlap than the question before it. The most common answer had to do with a sense of community, with 14 responses related to this idea. Other common response categories related to happiness and comfort- with 9 responses following this theme. The third major theme in the findings has to do with hope, and motivation- which was represented in 7 responses.

Other interesting additions to this list were:

“Charity work”

“Someone cares enough to pray for you”

“Volunteering and community helping”

RELIGION

Although there was a low level of religiosity with our group, there were many related ideas that the group was divided about. For instance, exactly half of our respondents believe that religious and scientific explanations are incompatible, while the other half does not. Another divided opinion was regarding happiness associated with religion.

WE ASKED: DO YOU THINK RELIGIOUS PEOPLE ARE HAPPIER THAN THOSE WHO ARE NOT?

"(...) On one hand, if you subscribe to a belief that your own destiny/judgment is out of your hands - it can be calming and reassuring. On the other, your happiness could be negatively affected by the knowledge that you aren't in control of and will be tested. If you had to pick one side to be 'happier', I'll go with the non-religious one due to the fact that they have autonomy and ownership of their own decisions"

"I think religious people are more happier as they know what path they have chosen and what are the benefits of it."

"I believe it depends on the person. Religion is a type of social network and in the absence of other community connections it may be a primary contributor to happiness. I would argue it is not necessary as others may find that same comfort from other groups."

"Not really. I don't think it has any bearing on the quality of one's life. I think religious people may believe that they are happier than those who are not."

"I really think they are. They simply have it all figured out. I honestly envy those kinds of people on some level."

"Not really cuz deep down they have to know they're doing bad things they might get a high feeling during but later I'm sure they look back and be like why did I do that?"



RELIGION



Asking our Young Futures group about the top three positive and negative aspects of religion gave us a picture of the varying perceptions of religion within our group.

GROUP NOT VERY RELIGIOUS OVERALL

Our group of millennials identified as not being very religious overall. Only 2/20 respondents claim to be more religious now than they were five years ago. The most common answer was that they are not religious at all, with just under half giving this response. Three quarters of our sample claim that they are less religious now that they were five years ago, or are not religious at all.

GROUP NOT VERY SPIRITUAL OVERALL

The low levels of religiosity are most likely related to the fact that nearly half of our group reported to not be spiritual at all. One quarter of respondents reported to be less spiritual now with age, while 3/20 reported that they were more spiritual now than they were previously. Only 3/20 reported that they are the same level of spiritual as they were before.

LOG INFLUENCERS

DIARY MODE DISCUSSION

Everyone experiences religion differently, and some not at all. Some keep it to their belief system about a creator and higher power, while others extend their religiosity to influence their every move. We wanted to explore this idea and ask our group about the role of religion in moral debates.

We asked: **“WHAT ROLE DO YOU THINK THAT RELIGION PLAYS IN MORAL DEBATE ISSUES? FOR EXAMPLE, PRO-LIFE/PRO-CHOICE, GAY MARRIAGE, ETC?”**

Since this was a diary mode discussion, our respondents were able to share their thoughts and opinions privately, in a one-on-one conversation with the moderator. These were their responses:



KEEP BETWEEN THE LINES

“I think religion has defined strict guidelines as to what is considered right and to what is considered wrong. And unfortunately if you do not abide by their guidelines your morales are deemed wrong and punishable.

I am not saying that every person who is devout to their religion are all so strongly opinionated, many still respect others’ lifestyles. It's the ones who are voiceturous with their opinions that try to push people into seeing that only their views are right. We see these through hate crimes, protests and negative news.

I find it unfortunate for these "extremists" demand our respect for them, their religion and beliefs but do not believe that they have to return such respect.

Times have changed and I think people should make their personal choice as to how to live their lives and not base their decisions on what society says is right or wrong.”

DIARY MODE DISCUSSION



PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

“In my opinion religion is very dated. It’s not up to the standards to coincide with modern life. I’d like to focus on gay marriage.

I, being a gay man myself, have turned away from religion due to that fact that it tells me I’m doomed, I’m going to hell, I’m disgusting, I’m crazy etc.

Why should I not be entitled to living a life to its full potential in love (in the churches eye) due to a characteristic of myself that I cannot control. When religion says it’s a life choice, that drives me up the wall. Do you think someone would intentionally live a life where you have to be cautious and look around before I can kiss my partner or hold his hand? Do you think I’d intentionally choose to potentially be neglected by family, friends, co-workers and so on. And lastly what bothers me the most- My boyfriend’s family are non-denomination Christians. They believe that if you’re gay, you will go to hell, and that you should not involve yourself with people who live that life.

In result, after a 1.5 year relationship, his family does not know about my existence, nor do they know the true him. That is because he fears if he tells them, they will disown him because “God” does not approve.

If “God” didn’t want to give them a gay child, then why was he born?

If “God” doesn’t believe in the life of a gay, why do we live in a world with gays? I say “God” because there are many different understandings of who/what God is.”



ANOTHER TOOL IN THE TOOLBOX

“I think that religion is used very negatively in moral debates. I believe that religion has turned into a political tool to guilt people into voting a certain way or get people distracted from other corruption.”

DIARY MODE DISCUSSION



CULTURE OF FEELINGS

“I think that religion plays an enormous role in moral debate as it seems the whole point of religion is to instill morals/beliefs/values.

To me this seems like a fairly obvious conclusion. However as religion starts to become less and less popular among millennials, it's not directly responsible for how they/we feel about moral debate issues. But, since we were brought up in a society where moral debate issues were often influenced by religion, some of our beliefs in turn are indirectly related to that.

I think however, that younger people are making more decisions based on how they personally FEEL about things rather than how they are being told to feel about things because of religion. We are very much currently based in a culture of feelings in North America.

Christianity is slowly on the decline for Canadians, however other western religions are on the incline as more and more immigrants come to Canada.

When first generation Canadians/immigrants are asked how they feel about moral debate issues, they are likely more influenced by religion than someone whose family has been here for 100 plus years and slowly dropped religion as time goes on.”



CITATIONS NEEDED

“I believe people use religious justifications for their own opinions/prejudices. You can easily find scripture to support almost any position or action and people do just that. The religious people who claim you cannot be a moral person without God or religion also scare me a little bit. They're implying they aren't moral on their own but only because God is watching or the Church tells them to be.”

DIARY MODE DISCUSSION



REMEMBER SECULARITY?

“I think that religion should have no affect on anything outside of what someone, as an individual, does in their private life. Our country may have been founded by people who lived their life ruled by a religion but by and large we are a secular culture now and we should remain that way. To go back to allowing books written hundreds to thousands of years ago to define what is right and what is wrong would be dangerously regressive. Allow kindness, empathy, rationality, and logic to define what is moral and what isn't instead.

You may be pro-life or anti-gay marriage, and you can live your entire life not having an abortion or not marrying someone of the same gender, but science supports being pro-choice and empathy supports allowing gay marriage.”



POLITICAL IDENTITIES FROM RELIGION

“I believe that it's hardly a debate - society has largely devolved politics into a team sport, and religion (or lack thereof) plays an integral role behind the scenes. We all lose when lobbyists and churches get involved in public policy. For another example, it's difficult to identify as a conservative without being prejudged as a religious hardliner, the same way as it would be to identify as an NDP fanatic without the notion of being a granola-fed unionist. On the surface, the former is strictly the party of Christians/Catholics and the latter the party of godless atheists. Things get complicated as a moderate who prefers financial conservatism but also is a social progressive, and those individuals find it hard to feel at home in either party.”

IF ANYBODY IS LISTENING

BULLETIN BOARD DISCUSSION

Everyone has different reasons to have religious beliefs or not, and the role (or lack thereof) that religion plays in everyone's life is as unique as each of us. We wanted to ask our millennials if religion has ever help in a tough time, and what that looked like.

HAVE YOU EVER LEANED UPON RELIGION OR SPIRITUALITY DURING A DIFFICULT TIME IN YOUR LIFE? IF SO, DID IT HELP YOU GET THROUGH THAT SITUATION?

+

TIME WILL CHANGE YOU

“When I was a child we occasionally attended church until recreational activities such as hockey got in the way. At the time I believed in religion. However, as time went on and I developed my ability to think critically I decided that I was a non-believer. When my grandfather subsequently passed away I turned back to religion very briefly to help me understand, however, I found it very difficult to believe in something that I cannot quantify and did not find it effective. To me the teachings of religion are typically positive, however I do not see it as anything other than a vehicle to teach values.”

BULLETIN BOARD DISCUSSION

EARLY ATHIEIST



“No, I have never leaned on religion or spirituality for difficult times. I have been atheist since I was really young. I went to Catholic school from kindergarten to grade 6 and realized early that I didn't want religion in my life. I wanted to control my own choices and beliefs.”

DEFINITE RESOLUTION



“I believe that religion is a way of life and it helps me in finding peace for my soul. I have always leaned on religion during difficult times in my life and it helped me a lot in getting through such situations. It taught me how to be very patient in difficult situations and to feel that there is a greater power that is capable of doing anything. According to my religion, patience and prayer are the key to getting through any difficult time, and by following that I have been able to feel relieved in any tough situation knowing that it will definitely be resolved.”

CATS & MUSIC > RELIGION



“When I was growing up I was raised as a Lutheran. In those times I would occasionally rely on religion to help me through different things. I think it did help in a certain way in that it gave me a sense of security at that time. As I've grown I have also become more agnostic. I haven't found myself relying on a higher power since this change in views. I find my cats and music help me through difficult times more than religion ever did.”

BULLETIN BOARD DISCUSSION

⊕ SPIRITUALITY, NOT RELIGION

“As a child, I attended church very sparingly. I would go with my grandma if we stayed at her house for a weekend, and Christmas Eve service. Religion was not a big thing in our home growing up. After I left my ex husband, I actually attended church with my children regularly, more so as a reason to get out of the house. I had realized that I always walked out with more questions than answers, and eventually stopped going. I do consider myself to be very spiritual, but not religious. I believe we live on after "life" and that we have past loved ones that guide us on our journey.”

⊕ POWER SOURCE

“Yes, in fact many times. I call myself a religious person, I am a proud Hindu and I worship my god everyday, during difficult times I feel that spirituality often helps me to keep myself motivated and have a continued faith in myself, it gives you the power to fight for the difficult time and guide you to the right path.”

⊕ WHEN IN NEED

“I am not religious, but since my family was part of the Catholic church at one time, I will occasionally pray in times of difficulty, albeit in an off-hand, "if there's anybody out there" manner, although this is more of a verbalization of a desire to fix the situation than leaning on religion to get me through the situation.”

BULLETIN BOARD DISCUSSION

HIGHER CONVERSATIONS



“My mothers side of the family were always very strict Catholics but growing up my parent took me to the Anglican Church. They made us attend church just to make us aware of other beliefs and that we need to respect everyone's beliefs even if they aren't the same as our own. That being said, I stopped attending mass when I was around 8 years old. I also learned and participated in the aboriginal spiritual culture from the elders from my community.

I have never claimed a belief system as part of my identity and though I respect them all I guess I could be considered atheist.

In regards to leaning on a faith during a difficult time I can't say I have. But my grandmother passed away when I was about 5 years old and don't remember her very well. When times have gotten tough I have been known to "talk" to her. I am not doing so as in asking her to give me guidance but in the concept of talking about my problems and hoping that she is just listening. I don't know if people would consider this a prayer to an angel or guardian angel, I just consider it wishing my grandma was still around to be able to talk to.”

LOOK TO FAMILY



“I have never leaned to religion, I was raised in a family that didn't push it on me, they let us kids find our way through life, and what was best fit for us individually. Which in return, resulted in my leaning towards family in hard times.”



SPIRITUALITY NAMASTE

WHAT SORT OF SPIRITUAL BELIEFS DO YOU FOLLOW?

The most common answer was “none”, but there were quiet a lot of side notes even on those answers:

“Reverence for nature and the grander environment.”

“I believe in angels, and spiritual guidance from past loved ones and energy from the earth.”

“I hope there is a higher power! Otherwise this life is pretty lonely.”

“None - I do accept all people who follow their faiths in a respectful manner.”

“None really; I believe in the universe and cyclical energies.”

“None. I am a very fact based person and unless I can measure and quantify it, I have a hard time with it. However, I feel very connected to the earth and understand our relationship with it, but I don't consider that to be spiritual.”

“I believe that there is a creator, who has created this world and everything in it. Also, I believe that messengers were sent to deliver his message.”

SPIRITUALITY

When we asked our participants if they thought the world would be a better place if people were more, less, or equally spiritual, the answers were quite similar.

Only one quarter of our respondents thought the world would be better off if there was more spirituality, while only two more people thought the world would be better off if it was less spiritual. The most common answer was that it would not make a difference.

But what does this mean? We wanted to know how spiritual our group regarded themselves overall. Using a balance type question, we asked our group to pick a point along the continuum that best represented their level of spirituality. More than three quarters reported that they were closer to being not spiritual at all than to spiritual, and the most common answer was “Not spiritual at all”, with 9/20 respondents entering this value.



SPIRITUALITY

Although it was most common for our group to report that they were neither religious nor spiritual, they were very likely to believe that we have a soul. Yet, beliefs about what happens to that soul when we die did not have a religious tone despite it being more common to believe in karma than to not. And finally, there was one thing we all agreed on when asked about life in the universe.

Do you believe that we have a soul??

13/20 YES

7/20 NO

0/20 I DON'T KNOW

Do you believe that heaven and hell exists?

5/20 YES

15/20 NO

Do you believe in karma?

11/20 YES

9/20 NO

Do you believe we are alone in the universe?

0/20 YES

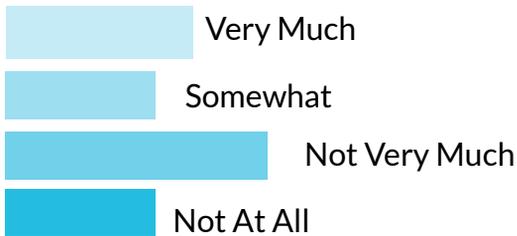
20/20 NO

ETHNIC IDENTIFICATION

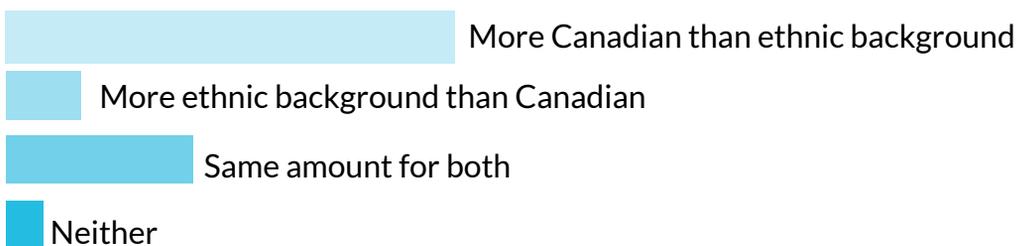
WHAT ARE YOU?

Multiculturalism is a distinct part of Canadian society, and people who are not Aboriginal Canadians have ethnicities separate from their Canadian citizenship. How much weight this identity holds varied across the group.

DO YOU IDENTIFY WITH YOUR ETHNIC BACKGROUND?



DO YOU IDENTIFY MORE SO AS A CANADIAN OR MORE SO AS YOUR ETHNIC BACKGROUND?





PARTICIPATION & RETENTION

PROJECT LOYALTY

Our high retention rate is another measure of success of our project. This month, we had another high engagement rate, with 20/20 participating in all three activities for the month! We couldn't have done it without the dedication of this group of millennials!

**THANKS
EVERYONE!**

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

CONTACT INFORMATION

TALK TO US



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