MAKING WAVES:

A Guide to Cultural Strategy

THE **CULTURE** GROUP

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Hello!

Hello and welcome to Making Waves, The Culture Group's first-ever Guide to Cultural Strategy! This is our take on the field of cultural strategy, which is about realizing the full potential of arts and culture in helping shift public sentiment toward a more just and equitable world.

To be sure, we are not the first to notice that the arts have played a powerful role in introducing new perspectives and advancing the cause of social change; creative activism has been going on for a long, long time.*

What is newer is applying rigorous strategy and long-term planning to the marriage of arts and culture, on the one hand, and activities that advance social change on the other.

We believe that an intentional partnership of socially conscious artists, advocacy groups, organizers, and funders can mean the difference between isolated campaign wins and transformative social change.

Over the past decade, progressives have worked mightily to build an infrastructure that can compete effectively against the massive and well-funded apparatus of the right wing. Progressives have made major investments in think tanks, policy and law centers, youth organizing, religious engagement, progressive media, conservative media monitoring, leadership training, and grassroots electoral mobilization—but not specifically culture.

* In 421 BC Aristophanes's anti-war satire *Peace* was produced. Cleon, the pro-war leader of Athens, would have been very unhappy with it, had he not died in battle a few months earlier.

> "Public sentiment is everything. With public sentiment, nothing can fail; without it, nothing can succeed." — Abraham Lincoln

Portions of progressives' investments may have financed projects with cultural facets, but few cultural strategies are a result of express allocations by funders. Cultural strategy in and of itself has seldom been funded—either as infrastructure or as a dedicated and separate line item within institutional financing. We are convinced that it should be.

And why is culture—the vast realm of creative expression and popular pastimes—important? Culture reaches everybody in one way or another. In today's world, culture encompasses a huge range of activities and values—and thus brings huge opportunities for winning hearts and minds. Culture is too potent a force to go unorganized and be allowed to slip through the cracks between arts funding and social justice funding. Given the resources and passions that conservatives have devoted to fighting what they named "the culture wars," we cannot afford to watch from the sidelines.

Over the next 50+ pages, we'll be talking about what exactly we mean by "culture" and why it merits serious attention and investment as a key driver of change. Through our years of experience in the field, we have come to understand what works and what doesn't. We will discuss these best practices at length in this guidebook, which we hope will provide useful information and inspiration to advocacy groups, organizers, funders, artists, and individuals going forward.

Ready? Then let's begin!

CHANGE: SURFING THE WAVE, MAKING WAVES

Before we can talk about culture and cultural strategy, we must talk about change. We're all here because we want to see a society that is just, equitable, and works for everyone. To reach that goal, we must change laws, beliefs, values, and behaviors in a systemic, enduring way.

But how does change work anyway? How can we make it happen?

A WAVE AS AN EVENT. Social and political change is often described in terms of waves. In politics, people talked about 2008 as a wave election, which was followed by another wave in 2010. Those are discrete events, like a wave breaking on the beach.

A WAVE AS A PROCESS. Even more popular is the use of the wave metaphor to describe a change that stretches across time and has a lasting impact. There are waves in social movements (second-wave feminism), the arts ("New Wave" cinema), and demographics (the baby boom or today's Latino boom). These examples reflect another natural principle of a wave: it is something that builds.

A wave can be shaped by many different forces: the gravitational pull of the moon, the speed of the wind, and tectonic shifts at the bottom of the ocean. Those forces are pretty much invisible to us, but they are always at work, keeping the ocean moving.

That's the wave metaphor that we want to emphasize:

CHANGE AS AN ONGOING PROCESS.

Right now, progressive work is largely geared toward discrete events in time, such as elections, judicial decisions, and the passing of legislation. But there's a vast world outside of these discrete events—full of invisible forces creating forward movement all the time. Just like the ocean, which covers 71% of the Earth's surface.

Now think of culture as the ocean. Think of how vast and how powerful the ocean is, and you're on your way to understanding how important culture is.

That leads us to our next topic: culture.

And just what do we mean by "culture," anyway?

THE MEANING OF CULTURE

Before we can delve deeply into cultural strategy, we need to define some key terms. We begin with "culture," a word you will come across many times in this guide. There are two main definitions for "culture":

1. **The prevailing beliefs, values, and customs of a group; a group's way of life.**

    The first definition refers to "culture" as a SHARED SPACE. This is culture as group identity, based on prevalent values, pastimes, mores, etc. For example, belief in equality, democracy, justice, and freedom is deeply embedded in American culture. Friendliness and openness are behaviors that are greatly prized in American culture. And within the macro group of America, there are many, many communities with their own cultures: racial, regional, generational, religious, professional, and so on.

    It's important to note that American culture is not singular—it's manifold. For example, common American values such as "exceptionalism," "individualism," or so-called "family values" can result in oppressive, bigoted, or exclusionary aspects to American life. Nor is culture permanent or fixed; it is always in a state of influencing, being influenced, molding, and being molded.

    ## Culture is like the ocean: vast and ever-changing.

2. **A set of practices that contain, transmit, or express ideas, values, habits, and behaviors between individuals and groups.**

    The second definition refers to the various types of artistic, creative, and social ACTIVITIES and PRACTICES that constitute our shared space. Culture in this sense is the way in which we express ourselves in the here and now and, ultimately, through time and history. It's how we spend our time when we are not working or going to school (and how some of us spend time while at work, as professional artists or culture workers). Through these activities and practices, we express what we believe and what we want to change.

    ## These activities and practices are what make waves in the big ocean of culture.

We change culture through culture.

That means that culture is both the *agent* of change and the *object* of change.

How can we be so certain? Because history—including recent history—tells us so. Later in this guide, we'll show you different examples of what we mean, all of which illustrate the central principle behind cultural strategy:

THERE IS NO CHANGE WITHOUT CULTURAL CHANGE.

VOCABULARY

Along with "culture," there are particular terms and words that regularly crop up in the world of cultural strategy. Some key terms you will see in this guide include:

Art—If you think we're going to try to define "art," you're crazier than we are.*

Artist—This is a catch-all term we use for creators in any and ALL creative mediums, from poster makers to comedians and from game developers to musicians. Alternate terms include "creatives," "cultural workers," and "culture makers."

Cultural Organizer—A community organizer who brings together artists to collaborate on projects, build power, and pursue common goals. Their work may include forging cultural collaborations to support creative campaigns, bolstering the role and influence of the arts within social movements and organizations, or building power among artists as a sector in order to advocate for their interests within the progressive movement as a whole. Cultural Organizers are often practicing artists themselves.

Cultural Organizing—A practice that fuses arts, culture, and political organizing. Cultural organizing seeks to organize politically engaged artists together into networks of collaboration, and form intentional, cohesive partnerships between artists and like-minded advocacy organizations, funders, and political campaigns. Cultural organizing builds the power and capacity of artists as a community, both as skilled workers whose labor has value and as essential partners in the progressive movement.

Cultural Producer—A professional facilitator who is bilingual in art and advocacy. Since it's a growing field, there are different terms in use—impact producer, outreach or engagement strategist—but whatever the title, she or he can help you develop your plan, connect the right artists with the right campaigns, and take the lead in fostering effective cultural collaborations.

Cultural Strategy—The goal of integrating arts and culture into a comprehensive plan designed to shift public sentiment and forge a new collective consensus around a social problem or issue. Cultural strategy is an umbrella term and fuses the work of producers and organizers, and includes key activities such as long-term planning, campaign design, and communications and dissemination strategies.

Organizing—The practice of bringing together human, material, and financial resources with the goals of (1) changing social, cultural, and/or political reality; and (2) building the power that makes such changes easier to achieve.

Social Change—A qualitative shift in a society's attitudes, policies, and laws with regard to particular values (equality, justice, diversity, tolerance) and issues (immigration, climate change, gun violence, racial or economic justice).†

There are some related terms, too. While we don't generally use them, you may run across them in your work in arts and social change, so we include them here for your reference.

Citizen Artist—An artist who maintains an identity as an artist and a citizen, whose art exercises political expression. (It's a controversial term because the word "citizen" can be interpreted as discriminatory, and obviously we don't exclude non-citizens or prison inmates from the rolls of creative activists exercising their rights as artists and members of the body politic.)

Creative Activism—The making and dissemination of creative work that addresses, depicts, or reflects a particular social problem or issue.

Propaganda—Propaganda was famously defined in 1928 by Edward Bernays, Sigmund Freud's nephew and the pioneering spin doctor, as "the conscious and intelligent manipulation of the organized habits and opinions of the masses." Bernays propagandized on behalf of his corporate and political benefactors. But progressive artists like George Orwell, Dorothea Lange, and W.E.B. Du Bois also believed all art was propaganda. Today, the word is used ideologically and pejoratively, as a way to dis the work of one's political opponents.

Public Art—Any artwork that is expressly created to engage the public and is displayed, performed, or otherwise presented in public places.

Social Practice—A term, mostly used in the art world, applying to a wide array of artistic disciplines and practices that are grounded in a social context and involve the engagement, participation, or collaboration of the public. While these practices may include activist and social change art, it's not a requirement.

Working with artists can inject vitality, courage, and innovation into our progressive work. Why?
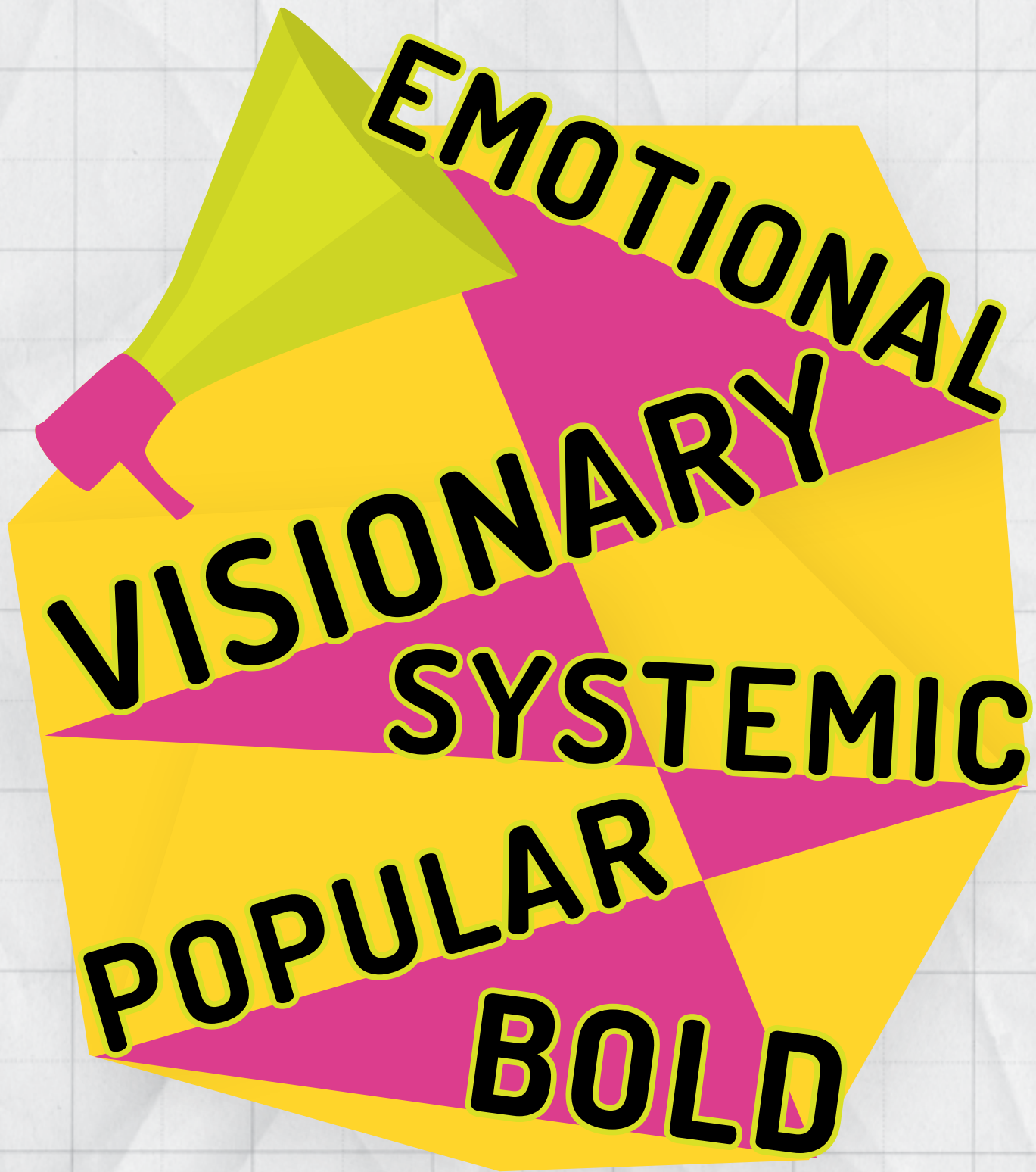
WHY ARTISTS?

Because artists tend to think differently than most people and are willing to challenge the status quo head on. And we need them to. We want them to.

Because art thinks **BIG**, and can inspire people to action on a deeper level, or larger scale.

How are artists' voices different from those of policy makers, academics, or professional organizers? Art is...

EMOTIONAL: Art connects with people's emotions and opens them up to new possibilities. A white paper full of facts and figures isn't going to reach people on a gut level. Art can elicit anger, outrage, sadness, curiosity, or compassion—all of which are needed in order to humanize issues of injustice.

VISIONARY: Art can help make goals once regarded as impossible suddenly appear concrete, achievable, even inevitable. It can give us a clear, tangible picture of our ideals, so we know what we're fighting for.

SYSTEMIC: Art doesn't just ask for incremental reforms or seek to change what is "politically feasible," it often challenges systems of power at the most fundamental level. As a result, art helps chart the final destination, not just a single step ahead.

POPULAR: Art can make complex policy ideas or reams of incomprehensible data suddenly accessible and easy to understand. Think of how Occupy Wall Street summed up imposingly dense economic theory about income inequality with the single meme "We Are The 99%."

And let's not forget:

BOLD: Art isn't about caution. It tends toward the bold, the courageous, and the outrageous. Artists can come out and say the controversial but necessary things that most politicians or organizations can't, or won't.

EMOTIONAL
VISIONARY
SYSTEMIC
POPULAR
BOLD

THE BIG TENT OF ARTS AND CULTURE

Before we move on to our examples of cultural change, let's look at the diverse disciplines and activities that fall under the banner of arts and culture. At The Culture Group, ours is a "big tent" approach where there is something for everybody:

Established arts and entertainment like Film, Television, Music, Visual Art, Theater, Comedy, Dance, Photography, Literature.

Emerging forms like Digital Arts, Projection, and New Media (including Social Media and Video Games).

The big tent of culture also includes social and leisure activities and hobbies like Sewing and Scrabble, Hiking and Hunting, Food and Fashion, Gardening, Tattoos, and Shopping.

And, of course, Faith is a big part of culture, too.

You might have noticed that politics isn't included in our big tent. That's because most people give a tiny fraction of their daily attention to politics and current events.* The world of traditional news and politics is not where they generally choose to be. People are working and going to school and taking care of their families. When they have down time, they're spending it in the big tent of arts and culture on the next page. They're watching *Saturday Night Live*, not Sunday morning political talks shows; playing Fantasy Football, not Fantasy Congress.

Did You Know?

Fantasy Sports is HUGE. What began around 1980 with a few ardent baseball fans is now a thriving business that generates more than $3 billion annually in total revenues. Today, fantasy sports participation tops 33 million people ages 12 and older in the United States and Canada.[1] It's global, too, with fantasy leagues for soccer, cricket, and other sports. As for Fantasy Congress...believe it or not, this is a real thing. Or it *was* a real thing.

The **video game** industry is catching up to the movie industry (an $87 billion global industry), bringing in $76 billion globally, and is predicted to reach $82 billion globally in 2017.[2] Kids are spending far more time playing video games, too. In 2009, 8-18 year olds were spending 1 hour and 13 minutes a day playing video games, up from 49 minutes in 2004 and more than four times the 25 minutes a day spent watching movies.[3]

*A Pew study showed that, in 2010, individuals spent ten minutes a day reading the newspaper and thirteen minutes a day reading news online.[4]

It boils down to this:

Politics is where some of the people are some of the time. Culture is where most of the people are most of the time.

VALUES AND ISSUES

(Not intended to be a complete, last-word roll call!)

Economic Justice
Family
Gun Safety
LGBTQI
Health Care
Rights
Immigration
Freedom
Voting
Human
Climate
Equality
Trafficking
Peace
Justice
Poverty
Campaign Finance
Arts
Opportunity
Racism
Gender
Diversity
Incarceration
Environment
Labor
Rape
Humanitarian
Education
Disarmament
Reproductive Rights

Cultural Strategy: The Long (Term) and Short (Term) of It

So far, our discussion has revolved around cultural strategy as a powerful asset in achieving systemic, transformational change—the type of tectonic shifts in beliefs that led to successes in the long fights for civil rights and marriage equality, for example.

Cultural strategy makes sense for short-term goals as well. A campaign for a political candidate or a legislative overhaul will be that much better and more resonant if creative activity is integrated early on. And a creative concept (or image) created for an immediate purpose can continue to work its magic long into the future. For example, Black is Beautiful was a term and movement in the U.S. in the 1960s that later took hold internationally. The movement began as a way to reject the notion that blackness was somehow inferior to whiteness and to reverse the resulting damage by embracing and celebrating blackness, proudly stating for all to hear that BLACK IS BEAUTIFUL.

Favianna Rodriguez was inspired by this movement when she conceived the artwork for 2013's immigration reform campaign. She created an image of a monarch butterfly, a symbol that's long been invoked in migrant circles, integrating it with the phrase "Migration is Beautiful." (See migrationisbeautiful.com, a collaboration of The Culture Group, Air Traffic Control, and CultureStr/ke.) The artwork is useful in today's battle for reform and could also help in the long term to remove the stigma of immigration and reinforce the idea that every human should be able to move freely.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CULTURE WARS

The conservative right wing has long recognized the significance of culture in shifting a society's values and behaviors, and has invested considerable resources to attack and discredit artists and culture makers. While the Left has largely taken arts and culture for granted, the Right spent most of the 20th Century developing theories and refining strategies for the age of mass entertainment and culture.

An early conservative salvo was launched in 1938, when the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) was established under the chairmanship of right-wing Texas Democrat Martin Dies Jr. Dies had turned against President Roosevelt and the New Deal, and he quickly set about discrediting a major New Deal agency, the Works Progress Administration (WPA). In August 1938, HUAC opened hearings on Communist infiltration of the WPA's Federal Theater Project,* which presented theater "free, adult, and uncensored" all over the country. One of the cherry-picked witnesses condemned the Federal Theater Project for performing "pro-union plays, plays referring to Negro discrimination, and anti-Fascist plays."[5] Congress cut off funding for the Federal Theater Project the following year. Meanwhile, Dies also took aim at movie industry progressives, denouncing the high-profile Hollywood Anti-Nazi League as a Communist front organization. That attack fizzled. The film community fought back, and HUAC investigators' evidence was literally laughable.†

HUAC came roaring back after World War II with a new chairman, J. Thomas Parnell, and a Red-baiting atmosphere ripe for exploitation. In 1947, HUAC convened hearings into Communist propaganda and infiltration in Hollywood, ushering in a period of fear and wholesale character assassination that paved the way for Senator Joe McCarthy's 1950s accusations about Communists in the State Department. While McCarthy focused on the U.S. government, HUAC continued its attacks on the entertainment industry (movies, theater, music, radio), and the resulting blacklist devastated countless lives and careers before finally petering out in the mid-60s.

*The Federal Theater Project also housed the nationwide Negro Theater Project, the brainchild of African-American actress and Harlem theater veteran Rose McClendon. McClendon served alongside John Houseman as co-director of the Federal Theater Project in Harlem, which staged the likes of *Swing Mikado*, W.E.B. Du Bois's *Haiti*, and Orson Welles's Shakespearean adaptation *Voodoo Macbeth*, set in Haiti.

†Investigators maintained that movie stars, including 10-year-old Shirley Temple, had been tricked into supporting Communist organizations. This, because Shirley signed an anniversary greeting to Ce Soir, a Paris newspaper ostensibly owned by Communists.

In the 1970s, religious conservatives began to emerge as a political force, and by the end of the decade the culture wars were being fought on new fronts. In 1980, the incoming Reagan Administration considered a plan to abolish the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).[6] While saner heads ultimately prevailed,* the NEA has been a punching bag for religious, social, and political conservatives ever since. In the spring of 1989, the right-wing American Family Association mounted an all-out attack on the NEA for supporting exhibits that included "immoral, anti-Christian" photography by Andres Serrano and Robert Mapplethorpe. (Lost in most accounts of the culture wars is the fact that the overwhelming majority of artists targeted by the Right were queer, women, and/or of color.) Notwithstanding the histrionics of Senators Jesse Helms and Al D'Amato (who decried Serrano's work as "a deplorable, despicable display of vulgarity"), efforts to defund the NEA failed.

Conservatives began a new attack on arts and culture with 1994's Contract with America. They called for the elimination of the NEA, the National Endowment for the Humanities,

*The NEA was saved by a presidential advisory committee that advocated for government investment in the arts. Among those on the committee was Charlton Heston.

They Built That

In a now-famous 1971 confidential memo to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, attorney, and future U.S. Supreme Court Judge Lewis Powell, declared, "The American economic system is under broad attack." Between tough new government regulations, consumer groups, and capitalism being under fire from all corners, business was on the ropes. If the free enterprise system was going to survive, the business elite had to band together, fight back hard, and invest in the long war ahead. Powell urged business to use media to counterattack and take its case to the public.

Cut to 40-some years later. The conservative movement has run with Powell's media insights, arguably going beyond anything he might have imagined. Rush Limbaugh is the country's #1 talk radio host with at least 14 million listeners weekly; #2 is Sean Hannity, with 13.25 million.[7] In 2012, Fox News† notched its 11th consecutive year as the #1 cable news network, with over 2 million nightly prime time viewers.[8]
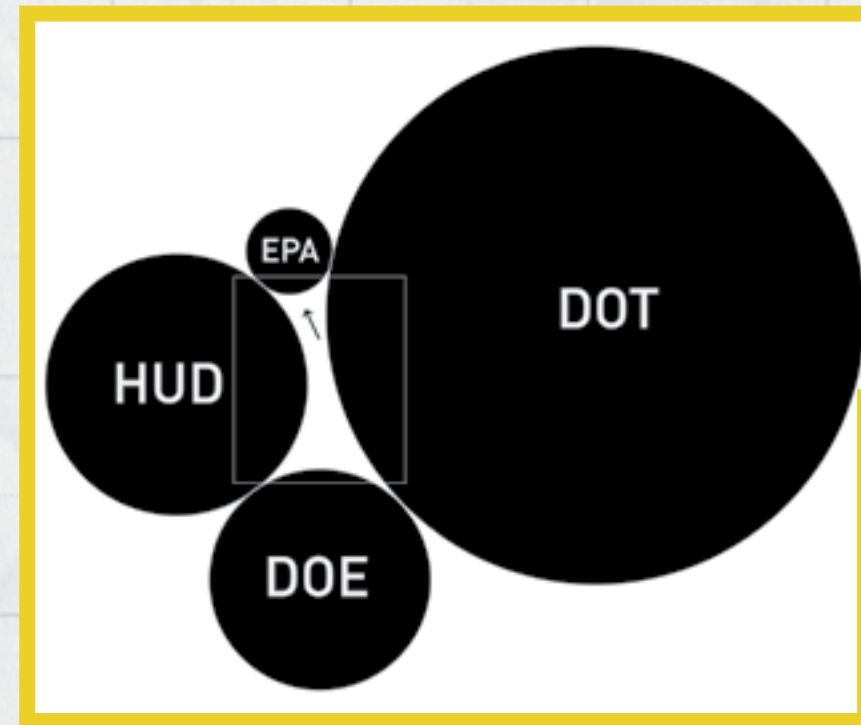
†Fact: Rupert Murdoch, Chairman and CEO of Fox News' parent company Newscorp, became an American citizen in 1985, thus becoming legally eligible to own an American television network. (Maybe that's why he's a conservative who is actually in favor of comprehensive immigration reform.)

and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (which had earned conservatives' undying hostility by bringing the world *Sesame Street*, with its multicultural cast and culture of inclusion). House Speaker Newt Gingrich led the charge to kill the agencies; though the effort failed, there were significant cutbacks, in particular to direct artists grants. During the 2012 presidential campaign, when asked about specific cuts he'd be willing to make to the federal budget, Republican candidate Mitt Romney famously called for the elimination of Big Bird—a barely coded appeal to conservatives. The Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank, articulates its position in "Ten Good Reasons to Eliminate Funding for the NEA," which condemns the agency for promoting "the worst excesses of multiculturalism and political correctness, subsidizing art that demeans the values of ordinary Americans."

For decades, conservatives have had the battlefield largely to themselves—and they don't mind framing it in those terms. In a seminal 1992 speech at the Republican National Convention, presidential candidate Pat Buchanan put it bluntly, "There is a religious war going on in our country for the soul of America. It is a cultural war, as critical to the kind of nation we will one day be as was the Cold War itself." Conservatives come well prepared to this war, having invested heavily in their own centers of cultural production, be it AM radio programming, evangelical churches, or their own film industry and creationist museums (see "They Built That").

The question is: are progressives willing to invest as seriously in building our own cultural infrastructure?

Art Works

Investment in the arts is not just about artists, arts organizations, and lovers of the arts; it also makes good economic sense. The NEA has found that each dollar invested generates $26 in economic activity.[9] Not a bad return on investment, right? Further, it's been shown that the nonprofit arts industry employs 4.13 million people in the U.S. and generates $135.2 billion in economic activity.[10] Despite all this, the U.S. military's marching bands have nearly twice the budget that the NEA does. (Not that the Marine Band isn't awesome, because it is!) *

The NEA Budget is that teeny tiny dot in comparison to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to the left, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) above, the Department of Transportation (DOT) to the right, and the Department of Energy (DOE) below. (We don't have enough room to show the Department of Defense budget.) Despite its miniscule budget—around 0.000044 of the federal government's $3.5 trillion budget—it is once again on the Congressional budget hit list.

*Fact: The U.S. Army is the oldest and largest employer of musicians in the world. There are assignments all over the world, and the benefits are impressive (lots of financial assistance for education). Also, the Department of Defense has made an electronic bugle available for purchase, so "Taps" can be played at military funerals when a live bugler is not available.
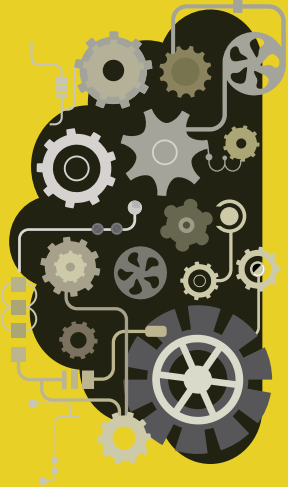
Did You Know???

Research in psychology, political science, and, most recently, neuroscience has shown that liberals and conservatives really do have different styles of thinking. Over the past 50 years, studies by psychologists have consistently found that people who identify as politically liberal are more open to new experiences and ideas, and more open to ambiguity, change and conflict; people who identify as politically conservative think in a more rigid and deterministic way, and value predictable stability and order. In two major studies, one published in 2007[11] and the other in 2011,[12] neuroscientists found evidence to support those conclusions by studying the two areas of the brain corresponding to those cognitive styles.

We don't want to be irresponsible and say that genetics are political destiny. There is a certain nature/nurture, chicken/egg aspect to this research that can't be resolved. BUT given their receptiveness to new experiences, cultures, and ideas, it might explain why people in the creative professions—television, movies, music, media—tend toward progressive beliefs. So perhaps it's only "natural" for progressive organizations to forge a closer partnership with artists and culture makers!

More fun in neuroscience: Biologists determined that music activates the part of the brain that governs optimism, making it a powerful antidote to the long and sometimes difficult work of change making.[13] Scientists have also found neurochemical evidence that emotion plays a powerful role in voters' decision-making process—far more so than a rational discussion of issues.[14] When a politician speaks, the areas of the brain that regulate emotion respond much more strongly than the areas that regulate reasoning, and if a statement contradicts a voter's positive feelings about a candidate, the reasoning sector might not turn on at all. This is why psychology professor and political consultant Drew Westen argues that Democrats are wrong to count on facts and figures to carry the day and, instead, should focus on issue-related anecdotes and stories that stir voters' emotions.

GREAT MOMENTS IN SOCIAL CHANGE

Before we look at our examples, we want to be clear about a couple of things:

1. We are not claiming *causality* with these examples, but we are pointing out a lot of correlation between moments of cultural significance and changes in politics, policy, and public opinion. Some cultural interventions were deliberately taken with political goals in mind, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech, for example. But many other milestones were the chance results of ordinary or pragmatic decision-making, such as Jackie Robinson's integration of major league baseball. Cultural strategy aims to create the paradigm-shifting moments, rather than leave them to chance.

2. This guidebook doesn't address evaluation methodology and impact metrics at all. Instead we refer you to a report called "Culture Matters: Understanding Cultural Strategy and Measuring Cultural Impact" that you can download from The Culture Group's website. We also recommend Animating Democracy, which has done extensive work on the subject. (See RESOURCES in the back of this guide.)

We've deliberately cast a wide net with our examples because cultural points of impact exist in every type of issue or group. So while you'll find detailed looks at progressive benchmarks like civil rights, you'll also see examples from farther afield: public health and safety, international crises, even the political right wing.

Okay, let's get our history on!

As you're going through these, ask yourself what really stands out in your memory: the cultural events or the political events?

CIVIL RIGHTS

National Archives

Marian Anderson becomes first African American to perform with the New York Metropolitan Opera.*

1955

Ray Charles cancels a performance at the Bell Auditorium in Augusta, Georgia, when he learns the venue will be segregated. He was fined for breach of contract, paid the fine, and never played Augusta again until it was desegregated.

1961

National Archives

Martin Luther King Jr. delivers the "I Have a Dream" speech at the March on Washington. Sam Cooke records "A Change is Gonna Come."

1963

Sidney Poitier becomes first African American to win Academy Award® for Best Actor (for his performance in *Lilies of the Field*).

1964

Jackie Robinson integrates Major League Baseball. He is named Rookie of the Year in his debut season with the Brooklyn Dodgers.

1947

National Archives

Ralph Ellison's seminal novel *The Invisible Man* wins the National Book Award.

1953

1964

President Johnson signs the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination of all kinds based on race, color, religion, or national origin. The law also provides the federal government with the powers to enforce desegregation.

1965

Congress passes the Voting Rights Act. Literacy tests, poll taxes, and other such requirements that were used to restrict black voting are made illegal.

1960

Ruby Bridges becomes the first African-American child to attend William Frantz Elementary School in New Orleans, LA.

Culture

Politics

1954

The Supreme Court issues landmark ruling in Brown v. Board of Education, unanimously agreeing that segregation in public schools is unconstitutional.

1957

Arkansas Governor Orval Faubus blocks nine African-American students from entering a newly integrated school in Little Rock. President Eisenhower sends federal troops to intervene.

1948

U.S. Army announces that the Army will be desegregated.

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* In 1939, the Daughters of the American Revolution refuses to allow African-American opera singer Marian Anderson to perform at their national headquarters in Washington D.C. DAR member Eleanor Roosevelt resigns in protest, and helps organize a performance by Anderson on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial for an integrated audience of 75,000.

MARRIAGE EQUALITY

Macklemore's "Same Love" music video in support of Washington's Referendum 74 on gay marriage debuts on YouTube. Ref 74 passes. (As of August 2013, "Same Love" has been seen 64 million times.)

© Andrew Stephenson for The Come Up Show

2012

NBA Washington Wizards player Jason Collins comes out in a cover article in *Sports Illustrated*. He is the first active male professional athlete in a major North American sport to come out as gay.*

2013

GLAAD, established in 1985, meets with *The New York Times* and convinces the paper to change its editorial policy to use the word "gay" instead of "homosexual."

Ellen DeGeneres comes out on *Oprah* and follows up by having her character come out on her TV show *Ellen*.

© ronpaulrevolt2008

The Laramie Project, a play about the aftermath of the murder of Matthew Shepard in Laramie, Wyoming, premieres.

2000

1997

1987

Culture

Politics

2013

Supreme Court strikes down Section 3 of DOMA and returns Prop 8 to the lower courts, allowing same-sex marriage to resume in California. U.S. Military begins providing health care, housing, and other benefits to same-sex spouses of members of the military.

2011

1993's Don't Ask Don't Tell policy is repealed and the Department of Defense modifies its regulations accordingly.

2009

President Obama signs the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Act into law, expanding the existing federal hate crime law.

© iStockphoto

2008

California voters approve Proposition 8, making same-sex marriage in California illegal.

2004

Massachusetts becomes the first state to legalize gay marriage. The Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court finds the prohibition of gay marriage unconstitutional because it denies dignity and equality of all individuals.

Commune Design

MANIFEST EQUALITY

1996

President Clinton signs the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) into law.

*Several other male professional athletes came out publicly in 2012 and 2013, including retired NFL players Wade Davis and Kwame Harris, WWE Superstar Darren Young, and boxer Orlando Cruz. They were years behind their lesbian sisters: tennis superstars Billie Jean King and Martina Navratilova came out in 1981.

VIETNAM WAR

Culture

Politics

National Archives

Joan Baez leads 600 protesters in an antiwar demonstration in San Francisco.

1964

Boxing champion Muhammad Ali is drafted by the U.S. Army, but refuses to be inducted. Stripped of his heavyweight title and convicted of draft evasion, he is sentenced to five years in prison (later successfully appealed), fined $10,000, and banned from boxing for three years.

1967

Library of Congress

Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) organizes 15,000-25,000 people in D.C. in a march to protest bombings in Vietnam.

1965

Walter Cronkite tells viewers that he is "more certain than ever that the bloody experience of Vietnam is to end in a stalemate." Afterward, it is reported that President Johnson said, "If I've lost Cronkite, I've lost Middle America."

1968

© iStockphoto

Four students are shot and killed at a May 4th protest at Kent State. Soon after, Neil Young writes the seminal protest song "Ohio," which is recorded by Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young and released as a single in June.

1970

Vietnam Veterans throw away more than 700 medals on the steps of the Capitol building in protest of the war.

1971

1973

Nixon announces that the U.S. will withdraw troops from Vietnam.

1964

In a televised address, President Johnson tells the country that the USS Maddox came under two North Vietnamese attacks in the Gulf of Tonkin. A few days later, Congress approves the Gulf of Tonkin resolution, increasing Johnson's power to engage the U.S. military in Vietnam without a declared war. It passes almost unanimously.

1963

President John F. Kennedy is assassinated. At the time of his death, there are 16,000 U.S. troops in Vietnam.

1968

The North Vietnamese and the Viet Cong launch the Tet Offensive, a series of surprise attacks on the South Vietnamese, the U.S., and their allies. 45,267 are killed.

1969

The first truthful accounts of the Mai Lai Massacre appear in American media, nearly 18 months after U.S. Army soldiers raped, tortured, and executed hundreds of unarmed villagers in the Quang Ngai Province in South Vietnam.

1971

In Senate testimony, John Kerry calls for a withdrawal of U.S. troops from Vietnam saying, "How do you ask a man to be the last man to die in Vietnam? How do you ask a man to be the last man to die for a mistake?"

DREAMers

The undocumented-led and -created group Dreamers Adrift launches the first episode of *Undocumented & Awkward*, using humor to shed light on their experience.

© Steve Pavey

Two members of the National Immigrant Youth Alliance intentionally infiltrate Broward Transitional Center. They record as much of the experience as possible, including telephone calls which are featured on an episode of *This American Life* called "The One Thing You're Not Supposed to Do."

The Culture Group

migration is beautiful

Migration is Beautiful initiative launches; over 100 members of the creative community speak out for humane immigration reform.

November 2011

May 2013

In response to the proposal of H.R. 4437, which among other things would make being undocumented a felony, millions march in rallies in Chicago, Los Angeles, Dallas, Washington, D.C., and New York.

March – May 2006

UNDOCUMENTED AND UNAFRAID!
© Julio Salgado

National Coming Out of the Shadows Day is created by the Immigrant Youth Justice League. The "Undocumented, Unafraid" slogan begins to take hold.

March 10, 2010

Jose Antonio Vargas, Pulitzer Prize-winning writer, comes out publicly about his immigration status in *The New York Times* in a story called "My Life as an Undocumented Immigrant."

June 2011

July 2012

June 2012

President Obama announces the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program as a temporary and partial solution, while Congress is stalling, providing 2-year work permits to many who entered the U.S before the age of 16.

December 2010

The House passes the DREAM Act, 216 to 198. The DREAM Act fails in the Senate.

August 2001

The DREAM Act or "Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act" is introduced.

June 2007

The Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act of 2007 (including DREAM Act) dies in the Senate after a failed vote for cloture.

March 2009

The DREAM Act is reintroduced, co-sponsored by 128 representatives and 39 senators.

Public Opinion: In October 2007, shortly after the failure of a comprehensive immigration reform bill (which included the DREAM Act), public polling showed 59% of voters were opposed to the DREAM Act.[17] By December 2010, the numbers had nearly flipped, with 54% of Americans now in support of the DREAM Act.[18]

CIGARETTE SMOKING

Culture

Politics

The Entertainment Industry Council (EIC) is formed with a mission "to bring the power and influence of the entertainment industry to bear on health and social issues." EIC is instrumental in making changes in the way smoking is depicted in TV and movies.

1983
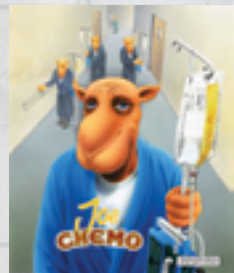
© Adbusters

"Joe Camel" first appears in Camel advertisements.* In 1996, *Adbusters* launches "Joe Chemo," a camel who wishes he'd never smoked.

1987

Courtesy: California Department of Public Health

Bob, I've got emphysema.

I miss my lung, Bob.

Asher and Partners' billboards play off of the Marlboro cowboy.

1998

The Truth® campaign is launched, using bold, shocking, fact-based ads to educate teens about tobacco's impact. In their "Body Bags" ad, 1200 body bags were piled on the street in front of a major tobacco company's headquarters to represent the 1200 people who die from tobacco every day.

2000

The Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) creates a new policy for movie ratings related to cigarette smoking. Those instances of smoking that "glamorize smoking or movies that feature pervasive smoking outside of an historic or other mitigating context may receive a higher rating."

2007

The top 25 movies have an average of 0.23 scenes that involve smoking (compared to 3.5 in 1990).

2007

2008

Smoke Free Illinois Law bans smoking in nearly all public places in Illinois.

2011

© John Gillooly/PEI

New York Mayor Mike Bloomberg signs a law banning smoking in parks, beaches, and specific highly populated areas like Times Square.

1970

The Public Health Cigarette Smoking Act bans cigarette ads on TV and radio.

1995

Smoking is banned in almost all enclosed workplaces, like restaurants and bars, in California.

1997

Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement states cigarettes can no longer be advertised outdoors on billboards or public transportation (in 46 states) and can no longer target youth or use cartoons like Joe Camel.

2003

New York City bans smoking in bars, restaurants, and private clubs.

OBAMA 2008

Public Opinion: In 1958, just 37% of Americans said that they would vote for a hypothetical black president. That number did not go over 50% until 1965. By 1999, 95% of Americans said they would vote for a black president. In 2008, they actually did.[22]

Bruce Springsteen endorses Obama in *Rolling Stone*.

HOPE

Shepard Fairey releases 350 screen printed "Progress" posters of Barack Obama. Later Fairey releases the same image with the word "HOPE" and the Obama campaign logo.
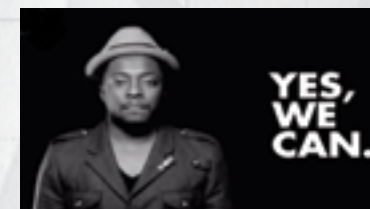
Will.i.am's "Yes We Can" video is released on YouTube. By February 22, the video has been played 22 million times on various YouTube channels and 4 million times on dipdive.com.

YES, WE CAN.

April 2008

February 2008

January 2008

The music video "I Got a Crush on Obama" hits *YouTube*. The video has been seen over 26 million times and was named as one of *Newsweek*'s top ten memes of the decade.

Oprah Winfrey joins Obama on the campaign trail for a series of rallies starting in Des Moines, Iowa. Nearly 30,000 people come to see the pair in Columbia, South Carolina.

June 2007

December 2007

Culture

Politics

January 2009

June 2008

Obama wins the Montana primary, and has enough delegates to be considered the presumptive Democratic nominee.

May 2008

Obama wins North Carolina.

Barack Obama is inaugurated as the 44th President of the United States.

February 2007

Obama officially announces his candidacy.

January 2008

Obama wins the Iowa primary. Five days later, he loses to Hillary Clinton in New Hampshire.

August 2008

Obama chooses Joe Biden as a running mate and is officially nominated as the Democratic Party's presidential candidate at the party's national convention in Denver.

#OCCUPYWALLSTREET: INCOME INEQUALITY

CHANGE IN SHARE OF INCOME
vs. 1979, after taxes

150%
120%
90%
60%
30%
0%
-30%

'79 '83 '87 '91 '95 '99 '03 '07

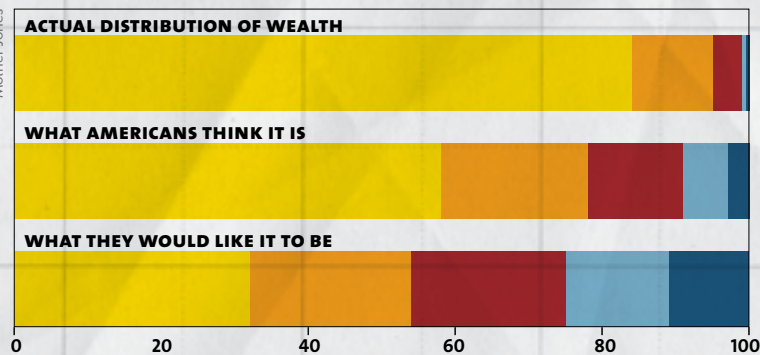2007 dollars. Source: Congressional Budget Office
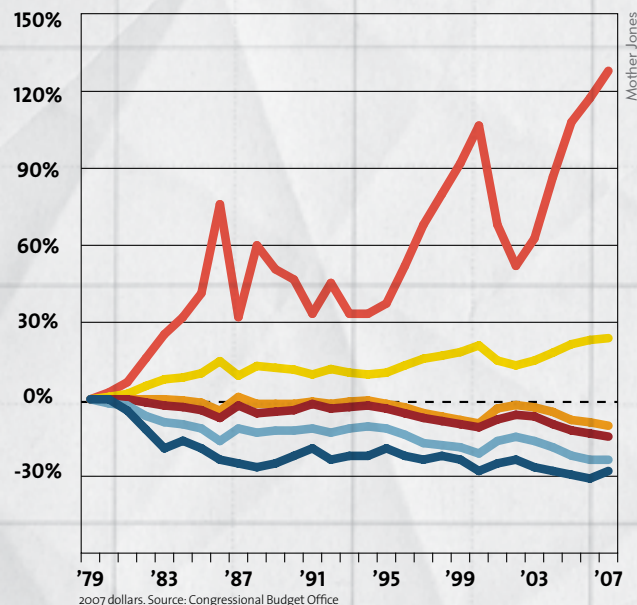
Mother Jones

OUT OF BALANCE

A Harvard business prof and a behavioral economist recently asked more than 5,000 Americans how they thought wealth is distributed in the United States. Most thought that it's more balanced than it actually is. Asked to choose their ideal distribution of wealth, 92% picked one that was even more equitable.

top 20%
second 20%
third 20%
fourth 20%
bottom 20%

ACTUAL DISTRIBUTION OF WEALTH

WHAT AMERICANS THINK IT IS

WHAT THEY WOULD LIKE IT TO BE

0   20   40   60   80   100

Source: Michael I. Norton, Harvard Business School; Dan Ariely, Duke University

Mother Jones

GAINS AND LOSSES, 2007–2009

Wall Street profits
+720%

Unemployment rate
+102%

Americans' home equity
-35%

Sources: New York State Comptroller, Federal Reserve, Bureau of Labor Statistics

Mother Jones

News Mentions of "Income Inequality" Jan 2011 – Nov 2012

4000
3500
3000
2500
2000
1500
1000
500

NOV 11 FORCED REMOVAL BEGINS

SEP 17 OCCUPY BEGINS

FALL 2012 NEW NORMAL

Jan 11 Feb 11 Mar 11 Apr 11 May 11 Jun 11 Jul 11 Aug 11 Sep 11 Oct 11 Nov 11 Dec 11 Jan 12 Feb 12 Mar 12 Apr 12 May 12 Jun 12 Jul 12 Aug 12 Sep 12 Oct 12 Nov 12

Source: LexisNexis Academic Database, All News (English)

Mainstream media mentions of terms such as "income inequality," "greed," and "richest one percent" suddenly spike dramatically.

Then, in the summer of 2011, a poster image launched by *Adbusters* magazine of a ballerina on top of the iconic *Wall Street Charging Bull** sculpture by Arturo Di Modica began circulating across the internet with a simple, surreal proposition:

#OccupyWallStreet September 17th. Bring Tent.

On September 17, 2011, protesters begin physically occupying Zucotti Park. With Tents. The first shared piece of infrastructure put into place is a library. Protesters spawn a host of "working groups," the largest of which (with over 500 members) is Arts & Culture. Meanwhile, a Tumblr blog named "We Are The 99%" (featuring the personal stories of people affected by the economic crisis) attracts hundreds of entries and is widely shared. The meme spreads to signs, banners, and media across the nation. The Occupy Movement generates an explosion of arts and cultural production around issues of economic justice unseen in a generation. Occupy Wall Street groups like Occupy Design and Occupy Posters create an arsenal of imagery, while an international hacker network calling itself Anonymous releases a steady stream of online videos articulating the grievances of the Occupy Movement using the cinematic conventions of movie previews. These are all massively shared through social media and cited in mainstream media.

*The Occupy Wall Street poster proved a highly successful meme, though *Adbusters* failed to credit artist Arturo Di Modica who created the *Wall Street Charging Bull* sculpture, which has its own guerrilla history. In December of 1989, in the middle of the night, the sculptor placed the three ton bronze bull in front of the New York Stock Exchange as a Christmas gift to the people of New York, but without obtaining a permit. It was quickly seized and impounded by police. Public outcry ensued and *Charging Bull* was soon reinstalled by the city's Department of Parks and Recreation in Bowling Green, two blocks south of the stock exchange, where it remains a popular tourist attraction.

CLOONEY AND DARFUR

In 2003, the "Darfur Conflict" began in the Darfur region of Sudan. George Clooney, a long-time activist and humanitarian, learned about the conflict and spoke at a Save Darfur rally in 2006 to raise awareness about the ongoing genocide and atrocities occurring thousands of miles away. He took his advocacy a step further and embarked on a campaign that included filming documentaries, meeting with President Obama, appealing to foreign dignitaries and governments, speaking before the United Nations, teaming up with well-known activist John Prendergast, and getting arrested for civil disobedience outside the Sudanese Embassy. Clooney's activities have helped lead to mass protests, divestment from Sudan, international condemnations of the Sudanese government, and widespread awareness of the plight of the people in Darfur. Along with several of his *Ocean's Eleven* co-stars, Clooney helped establish the Not On Our Watch Project NGO, which raises awareness about human rights violations and provides resources for ending mass atrocities worldwide.

Shut Up And Sing

At a White House luncheon on juvenile delinquency in 1968, singer/actress Eartha Kitt condemned the Vietnam War, linking it to the widespread youth rebellion. "You send the best of this country off to be shot and maimed... They don't want to go to school because they're going to be snatched off from their mothers to be shot in Vietnam."

Her comments brought First Lady Lady Bird Johnson to tears, and after the public heard about her outburst, Kitt experienced a massive backlash. Angry op-ed pieces popped up in newspapers all over the country, denouncing her as a Communist. She began receiving hate mail, and the CIA kept a close eye on her. Nightclub owners and producers cancelled her contracts. For many years she couldn't get gigs in the U.S. and resorted to lengthy tours in Europe. Her virtual exile lasted until 1974, when she performed at Carnegie Hall, and in 1978 Jimmy Carter invited her back to the White House.

Decades later, in 2003, the Dixie Chicks experienced a similar backlash after lead singer Natalie Maines spoke out against the looming Iraq War and George W. Bush during a concert performance in London. The backlash did not, however, stop the Dixie Chicks from mounting two successful tours in 2003 and 2004. Media coverage of Maines's off-the-cuff comments shed light on the expanding role of musicians in the political process, helping musician-activists to overcome the "shut up and sing" hurdle that many, including Eartha Kitt, faced in previous decades.

SMOKEY BEAR

Smokey Bear (aka Smokey the Bear or just Smokey) was created in 1944 by the United States Forest Service, the National Association of State Foresters, and the Ad Council with the intention of educating the public about the danger of human-caused forest fires. The original slogan was "Care will prevent 9 out of 10 forest fires." In 1947, the slogan was changed to "Remember, Only YOU...Can Prevent Forest Fires." Smokey became a staple in American popular culture in the 1950s, when a live black bear cub was found after a forest fire in New Mexico and became the living symbol of Smokey Bear. In 1952, songwriters Steve Nelson and Jack Rollins put the 'the' between "Smokey" and "Bear," which is why most people think Smokey has a middle name. The Smokey Bear public service campaign has helped reduce the number of acres burned from over 20 million annually in the 1940s to less than 7 million acres today.

CITIZENS UNITED

In 1988, the nonprofit organization Citizens United was founded with financial support from the Koch brothers. Citizens United uses marketing, television advertising, and documentaries to fulfill its mission of "restoring our government to citizens' control." In January 2008, the organization's film *Hillary: The Movie* was set to air on cable TV before the Democratic primaries. However, airing of the film was blocked by the federal government because it was considered "electioneering communication." Eventually the case Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission reached the Supreme Court, which ruled that parts of the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act (also known as the McCain-Feingold Act) were unconstitutional. This Supreme Court ruling has been a political game changer, allowing corporations, unions, and other special interest groups to spend unlimited funds advocating for the election or defeat of candidates.

FACT: Polls done in February 2010 revealed that 80% of Americans opposed the Supreme Court's ruling on Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission.[23]

ARMADILLO & THE WAR IN AFGHANISTAN

In May 2010, *Armadillo*, a Danish documentary about the war in Afghanistan, was released, unleashing a media, political, and box office firestorm in its home country. The documentary portrayed the brutality of the war in Afghanistan and the changes in the soldiers themselves as they experienced warfare, dispelling any myths that the war was just one of peacekeeping and rebuilding. *Armadillo* had an estimated global audience of more than 2.6 million, it garnered more than 3,000 Danish news reports and articles (more than any previous Danish film), screenings were requested by the Minister of Defense, the General Secretariat of NATO, and various Danish Embassies, and became part the Danish National Curriculum for high schoolers. *Armadillo* is a stunning example of a documentary causing—yes, causing—major political and cultural shifts. It was integral to shifting public opinion in Denmark about the war—by November, two-thirds of the country thought that withdrawal plans had to be implemented—and to the Danish government's decision to withdraw all troops from Afghanistan.[24]

LIVESTRONG

Famous athletes are among the most recognizable and visible individuals on the planet. Just as Magic Johnson brought widespread awareness to HIV/AIDS, Lance Armstrong quickly became the face, voice, and icon for men fighting cancer in a time when "cancer" was associated with breast cancer and the famous pink ribbons. Despite the allegations of doping and having his medals and titles revoked, Armstrong's public battle with cancer brought much needed awareness to cancer and its effects on patients and survivors. The trademark LIVE**STRONG** wristbands and Foundation he founded raised more than $500 million to support people affected by cancer, allowing LIVE**STRONG** to quickly rise to become a staple of advocacy for patient-centered care and free cancer support worldwide.

CHARLTON HESTON & THE NRA

Charlton Heston, an Academy Award®-winning actor from films like *Ben-Hur* and *The Ten Commandments*, was an outspoken political activist for many years, first supporting Democratic candidates and eventually moving to support conservatives when Nixon was up for election in 1972. Heston was named president of the National Rifle Association (NRA) in 1998 and famously declared at a convention in 2000, while holding a rifle above his head, "I want to say those fighting words for everyone within the sound of my voice to hear and to heed, and especially for you, Mr. Gore: 'From my cold, dead hands!'" The scene was satirized in 2013 by Jim Carrey, to much controversy, when Carrey's frustration with gun control in the U.S. led him to mock the comedy show "Hee-Haw," singing "Charlton Heston movies are no longer in demand, and his immortal soul may lay forever in the sand. The angels wouldn't take him up to heaven like he planned, because they couldn't pry the gun from his cold dead hand," and "It takes a cold dead hand to decide to pull the trigger. It takes a cold dead heart, as near as I can figure."

TIBETAN FREEDOM CONCERTS

In the 1990s, artists and activists jointly created the Tibetan Freedom Concerts, a new kind of benefit event designed to raise awareness rather than money. The series of concerts combined the ability of musicians to attract, inspire, and engage new audiences—particularly young people—with the knowledge and expertise of activists and experts from the Tibet movement who knew the issues. This potent combination of art and activism embraced the historic power of young people to make change and leveraged the new awareness and commitment to Tibet into the existing movement. In this way, the concerts were a true partnership and very effective: the shows raised $5 million, brought together 325,000 people from 1996 to 1999, had a worldwide online audience of over 6 million, and grew audience engagement in the concert's call to action from 30% in the first year to over 80% by 1998. The series helped re-energize, expand, and mobilize a movement, as seen in the expansion of Students for a Free Tibet, which grew from 30 student chapters before the first concert to 300 chapters in the three months that followed; today the organization has 650 chapters.[25]

ARTISTS UNITED AGAINST APARTHEID

In 1985, former E Street Band member Steven Van Zandt wrote "Sun City," a blistering protest song that took aim at the South African government's brutal apartheid system. It was named for Sun City, an extravagant whites-only recreation and entertainment resort that paid huge appearance fees to musical artists who were willing to ignore the ongoing cultural boycott of South Africa. To increase the song's impact, Van Zandt asked artists from rock, jazz, hip-hop, and salsa to contribute. So many artists responded that multiple versions were recorded, featuring the likes of Pete Townsend, Miles Davis, Run-D.M.C., Bonnie Raitt, Herbie Hancock, and Bruce Springsteen. All pledged never to play Sun City. "Sun City" wasn't a Top 40 hit. It had a rap, still scary to Top 40 in the 1980s; plus it overtly criticized President Reagan's South Africa policy. But MTV and other cable outlets more than made up for that, and were enormously effective in raising public awareness, particularly among young people. There were frequent airings of the innovative "Sun City" video, which featured all the performers and pointedly intercut footage of current repression in South Africa and 1960s coverage of America's civil rights battles, as well as a documentary on the making of the record.

Hey, I Know You!

Rare is the organization or campaign that wouldn't like to collaborate with a celebrity or, as we generally call them, a high-profile artist or cultural figure. And there's no doubt a famous face can help create movement around an issue, particularly when they're smart and committed. In many respects, working with such a person is no different than working with an artist who isn't a household name. The same **13 Key Principles for Working with Artists** (see next page) apply: include them in the process, provide them with information, communicate clearly, and so on.

Still, there are some things that can be different with people who are household names. It's not a trivial matter for such artists to align themselves with a cause: they have a lot to lose (see "Shut Up and Sing") and their managers and/or agents may not want them to take political stands. If they do sign on, know that their schedules are more complicated, and it's likely they'll have limited time to give you. Then, there's also a budget question: high-profile artists may very well donate their time, but you should plan to pick up travel expenses and related expenses for the people who work with them. Don't forget there are lots of people working behind the scenes: camera people, editors, makeup artists, and other members of the 99%.

One note of caution, courtesy of our friend Mik Moore: remember that celebrity is no guarantee of success. (There are enough high budget, star-filled Hollywood flops out there to prove that point.)

13 KEY PRINCIPLES FOR WORKING WITH ARTISTS

The following principles are designed to help organizations and organizers build an equitable, respectful, and effective partnership with an artist or culture maker; a relationship that is rewarding and inspiring for all parties involved.

1. INVOLVE ARTISTS FROM THE BEGINNING.

Engage artists from the very beginning of your process, not at the last minute or after a campaign or event is fully planned. Give them time to immerse themselves in the issue and create something of real quality. Who knows, by engaging them earlier they may also offer a game-changing idea that dramatically enhances the plan itself—you might end up building your entire campaign around a great song, video game, or work of art. Art amplifies our struggle best when it is not merely used as decoration, but as part of the foundation of any plan or action. (And as with any relationship, clear and open communication is key, from the beginning and throughout the process.)

2. FIND THE RIGHT ARTIST.

Although this may seem like an obvious point, it is crucially important to partner with artists who have an authentic connection to the issues you are working on. Do your research! Also, think about your target audience. Who are you trying to reach? Is there an artist who is a natural fit for your audience? Think about demographics and identity as you search for the right creative partner.

3. SUPPLY INFORMATION.

Provide the artist with raw materials to become well versed in the issue, and get inspired: a breakdown of the issue, a few talking points, key facts, and the values and principles that motivate your work. Don't assume the artist will know everything you know about the topic, so put them in close dialogue with people knowledgeable in other areas, like people who are affected by the broken policies or academics who've done extensive research. Some artists like to immerse themselves in research and become an expert on an issue and others prefer just enough material to develop a basic working knowledge. We have generally found that providing artists with information around strategies and stories helps them be more creative and effective than loading them up on facts and figures.

4. MATCH THE MEDIUM.

Try not to choose artistic mediums because they are cool or trendy. Concentrate on the art forms that best suit the campaign you're working on. For example, comedy allows for the safe exploration of taboo subjects, while film and TV offer opportunities to tell stories that create empathy and understanding.

5. CONSIDER WORKING WITH A CULTURAL PRODUCER.

Cultural producers are bilingual in art and advocacy. They are professionals who will understand your needs and goals, match you up with the right types of creators, and help you develop and manage the partnership. They can help you assess what is already happening culturally around your issue. She or he also has the connections and know-how to help you access—and effectively work with—high-profile artists and cultural figures.

6. GET ORGANIZATIONAL BUY-IN.

Make sure your organization is fully on board with integrating arts and culture into your work, and that everyone understands that the project(s) will require an investment of staff time, budget, and other organizational resources. Also consider hosting a creative fellow, or creating a staff position, to focus on integrating cultural strategies into your organization's work.

7. LET THE ARTIST LEAD IN THE CREATIVE.

The artist should always be the lead when it comes to creative matters. Trust the artist's intuition, and remember they are the experts in their area: reaching people emotionally and unleashing the public's power and willingness to act. They need the flexibility and authority over the final product to make sure it works as effective art, music, or storytelling first. Nobody wants to hear political comedy if it's not actually funny, or a political song that's painful to listen to, so be sure not to compromise the art in order to force the message. If it works as art, then the message it carries will travel further.

8. PAY THE ARTIST.

Artists are skilled laborers. They have years of professional training, so pay them appropriately (with actual money, not just "exposure"). Also, be sure to allocate for related costs like supplies, production, and insurance. Artists should not be asked to work for free or reduced rates, unless you and your colleagues are doing the same.

9. CREDIT ARTISTS.

Make sure to credit artists wherever their work is featured. It's not just their proper due; it also can imbue the work with greater authenticity. It tells the audience the work was created by an actual human being who genuinely cares about the issue. Also, be judicious in the size and placement of organizational logos as they can distract from the work and undermine its authenticity.

10. BE CLEAR ABOUT OWNERSHIP.

Artists own their creations by default, so a licensing agreement is the proper business and legal framework to use (as opposed to a work-for-hire contractor's agreement). As the owner, the artist is free to repurpose his or her work, but if you want exclusive rights to the work you can negotiate with the artist and pay a higher fee.

11. UNDERSTAND THIS WORK TAKES TIME.

Be prepared to invest in a long-term process of learning the best way to work with creators. It may take time and experimentation to get it right, but the organizations that take this process seriously will find that they are able to consistently produce great results, and that culture can dramatically amplify and transform the work they do.

12. HAVE A ROLLOUT PLAN.

Have a plan ready to disseminate the art or cultural product in the public realm. You should have a plan and the budget for distribution and promotion, including a press strategy and a social media strategy—maybe even an advertising budget—and all the personnel and resources you'll need to implement the plans. And make sure to plan that outreach strategy in partnership with the artist.

13. DON'T TRY THIS AT HOME.

Creating an effective, powerful work of art is not easy. Artists who do it are able to because they have spent years honing their craft. Trying to do it yourself might not produce the best results. Be willing to invest in real talent.

FOR ARTISTS

Smart cultural strategy means you have an equal and early seat at the table when organizations begin planning for a particular project or campaign. If the organizations are doing their part right (And hopefully the "13 Key Principles" in the previous section will help them do just that!), you should be in a situation where you can lead the creative charge, do your best work, and be an effective, fully-engaged advocate for an issue you care about.

You may have had prior experience working with organizations on a political or social issue or campaign. It may or may not have been a happy collaboration. But our hope is that everyone involved can aim for—and achieve—an engaged, empowering, effective, and long-term relationship that produces potent, affecting work.

With that in mind, we've put together a couple of notes specifically for artists that we hope will help you in your work with advocacy groups, political campaigns, philanthropic foundations, and the like.

Starting with the **13 Key Principles for Working With Artists** in the previous section, here are some things you can do to ensure the organizations are doing their part in treating you like the skilled professionals you are.

1. Please help them remember that they need to PAY you fairly for your labor, CREDIT you appropriately, and ensure there is clarity over OWNERSHIP (and not assume your creative work belongs to them).

2. We also recommend you try not to agree to do things at the LAST MINUTE or when you haven't been involved from early on. Try not to allow your process to get rushed or shortchanged. Your work can get compromised, and you can get frustrated fast.

3. Help them understand they are your collaborator, and must do their part if they want the final work to be effective. This means providing you with any RAW MATERIALS you need to get inspired, like their core arguments, key information, or connections to researchers and people who have been directly affected. They also should have a proper plan for the ROLLOUT of your creative efforts once completed.

A couple of other things to think about:

4. Most advocacy groups are 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations, and as such they have to live by certain legal and financial rules—they are accountable to their funders, the IRS, and their board of directors in ways that can limit their willingness to court risk and controversy. Sometimes those limitations are fine, but for some projects and for some artists, they're not OK. Try and understand what the restrictions might be early on in the process, and if you aren't comfortable with those restraints, then you may not want to work with them.

5. People in these organizations have different expertise, histories, talents, and strategies for social change than you—sometimes worse, sometimes better, mostly just different. Either way, they have a lot of information that can be useful to you. And just like it's important that you lead in the creative process, unless you are an expert on the issues, you might want to take their lead on the policy front.

6. People who work in advocacy organizations or in public policy usually have no idea how an artist's creative process works. It can be hard not to get disheartened by that, but try and patiently explain how you do what you do. Sometimes you may need to be very clear about things that seem incredibly obvious to you. If you're really having trouble understanding one another, you may want to get a cultural producer involved, someone who can help with the translation and advocate for your interests.

7. Finally, it's important for all parties involved to operate in good faith with one another. There should be enough clarity from the beginning to ensure that everyone is in agreement about goals, responsibilities, and deadlines. You're a professional. So you do your part—and if they don't do theirs, it's your right to call them on it and ensure that everyone is operating with mutual respect.

THE "EARTH" WITHOUT "ART" IS JUST "EH"

THE NUTS AND BOLTS OF MAKING IT HAPPEN

Now we get to the "how" of cultural organizing, where we break down specific steps in the process. Things get started by asking the big picture questions laid out in the STRATEGY section below. This is the thinking phase of the process, a necessary step to ensure there is clarity and agreement on where you are headed—and why—and what resources you have available to work with. The TACTICS section then walks through the action phase, with specific recommendations for planning, execution, and evaluation.

STRATEGY

What is your goal?

Are your objectives micro (campaign driven) or macro (values driven)? Are you interested in raising awareness? Exposing broken policies? Changing conversations and attitudes? Changing legislation? Raising money? Recruiting volunteers? Getting out the vote? (It is best to pick just one of these as your goal.)

Why is it important?

When doing cultural organizing, be crystal clear about why you're doing this sort of work. Ensure that objectives and goals are laid out at the beginning and kept front of mind throughout. Ask everyone involved, why does this work matter?

Who are you trying to reach?

Be specific about the individuals whose hearts and minds (or actions) this work is meant to shift. Are there hardcore supporters, and softer "persuadables"? Some key considerations: age, gender, race, geographic location, language, behaviors, and political affiliation. Also you'll need to consider what your target audience spends their time doing, where, and with whom—i.e., culture.

Who's on the team?

Who is invested in this partnership? Consider all of the individuals and organizations working on any aspect, big or small, that add human resources to this effort. What expertise, strengths, and available time do they bring to the table?
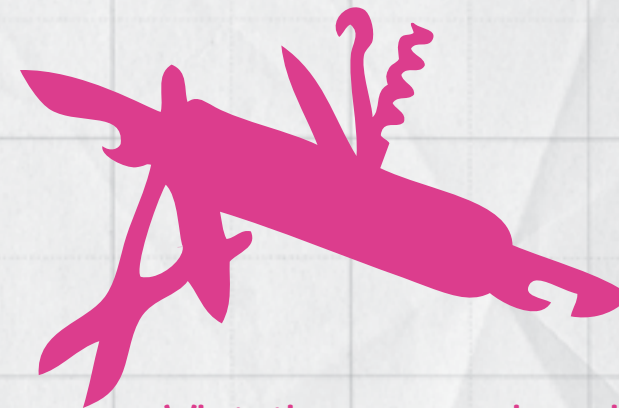
What other resources do you have to work with?

Before digging into this work, make sure the organizations involved understand and are invested in cultural organizing. When there is buy-in from all parties, get a clear idea of the available financial resources and start thinking about how those resources will be allocated. Also, take into consideration any outside expertise, material, or other resources that might be available to the effort.

What's the time frame?

How much time do you have for this project? Twenty years? Twenty weeks? Twenty days? Is there a specific deadline or launch date that it's tied to? Is there a hard date (like Election Day or a conference) or is it a moving target (like a Congressional vote)?

How are decisions made?

Who has authority on this project? Is there one person who has the last word, or will decisions get made by majority rule or consensus?

Are there limitations?

Sometimes organizations and campaigns have restrictions because of their charter, legal structure, religious affiliation, or values, for example. What are those restrictions, and could they affect or limit a creative process? Try and be clear about what's out of bounds.

Is there a downside?

Is there a risk of unintended consequences? Are there some serious risks like worker safety or arrests? What happens if it's a serious failure? Can a loss nonetheless be seen as a success? If not, can failure be tolerated and chalked up to a great learning experience? Was it just a waste of time and money...or is there a possibility that someone or some organization might get really hurt in terms of reputation?

What does success look like?

Do you know what you'd be happy with in terms of outputs or outcomes or metrics? Do you have a plan in place to evaluate the work (while it's in process as well as after the fact)?

TACTICS

Okay, now that you have your strategy set, and a broad idea of what you're aiming for, it's time to get into the specifics of making it happen.

Engage a Cultural Producer

It might be a good idea to engage a Cultural Producer or—as they're sometimes called in the social impact documentary space—an Impact Producer...especially if you're new to cultural organizing. Here's an added bonus: there might be someone out there who is an authentic expert or influencer in the particular community or audience you're aiming to engage. (See RESOURCES for organizations that might help you find someone who can help.)

The message, the messenger, and the medium

Since you've done the big thinking and you're super clear on your goals, target audience, budget, and time frame, now you get to do the fun part and start planning your creative intervention. What are you trying to say? What's the medium or creative vehicle that you think will be most effective? Who do you need to bring onto the team to help with the design and ideation? An artist, a football player, a chef? Remember: some mediums work better than others for certain purposes. Another reminder: let the artist lead in the creative process and bring them in at the earliest possible time so they are partners in developing the concept.

Establish roles and responsibilities for the project

It's really important to have clarity over roles, responsibilities, and authority. Who is doing what? Who has responsibility or approval over specific aspects of the project? Be clear about deliverables and expectations from the start to minimize surprises along the way. The Culture Group has found "MOCHA"s (a Management Center model that stands for Manager/Owner/Consulted/Helper/Approval, see managementcenter.org/resources for more info) to be an effective way to ensure clarity over tasks and governance. Please note: it's particularly important to designate someone as the project manager in order to keep things moving along.

Identify your budget and resources

This includes your financial budget, human resources, available expertise, and more. When budgeting, be realistic about costs by having an honest and clear conversation with any consultants or artists involved. Don't just take into account consulting or artist fees but also additional expenses including supplies, travel reimbursement, and other necessary resources.

Create a timeline

Have an honest conversation about turnaround time with any writers, designers, or consultants working on this effort. If you're making a video, for example, you'll want to know how much time is required for production and editing, and how quickly feedback can be gathered and integrated. Once you understand how your team members work, start from the date that the final product needs to be completed and create a timeline that clearly details deadlines and responsibilities that will get you to the finish line.

Create a dissemination plan

How do you plan to market and distribute your cultural product? Through what channels? Who is responsible? Remember that if you're planning on buying TV ads or online ads that has to be part of your budget. If you're planning on disseminating through earned media and social media, you've got to make sure you've budgeted for a PR agency, maybe a digital agency, too. And you'll need to know who you've got available to be spokespeople (or validators), whether it's on the Rachel Maddow show or on Twitter. (And just a reminder: when you're bringing something out to the world, it's important to remember to properly credit any creative contributors.)

Now the time has come to make it happen!

And by "it," we don't just mean execution, we mean planning. We know, planning can seem like busy work, but it is essential to making sure that your team runs like a well-oiled machine. Devoting time upfront to planning will make it much more likely that the project will deliver on its goals (not to mention that it's likely to make the process more harmonious for all involved).

Reporting

Don't hold off on reporting until the final grant report is due! While your project is in process, do check-ins at key milestones so that you can shift gears or rethink strategies if necessary. Reporting after the project is over on key indicators of success is an essential part of the process for the whole team and can be motivating for team members to get a concrete idea of the impact they've had. It's also an opportunity to reflect and thank the team for the work that they've devoted so much time to.

Post Mortem

You're not done yet...once the project is completed, the team should convene to discuss what worked, what didn't, why, and how you'll change the process for future cultural organizing. How did you originally define success? What specific metrics, goals, and outcomes did you set for your team, and how did you stack up?

Keep in mind, this section is by no means the be-all and end-all for a guide to effective cultural organizing and partnerships. Many friends and colleagues have developed incredible resources for this sort of work and might be particularly well suited for a specific type of engagement. See RESOURCES in the back of this guide.

REVIEW WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED

OUR NOTES:

WHY? Culture is the field on which change occurs. Public sentiment is gathered and swayed through cultural means. Political change is the lagging indicator demonstrating that cultural change has already arrived at new coordinates. By forming integrated partnerships with artists and cultural figures, the progressive movement can access the cultural waves that capture and persuade public hearts and minds, and can lay the foundation for systemic, enduring change.

WHAT? Cultural strategy gets the progressive movement closer to its goals by making arts and cultural expression central to advocacy work and political campaigns.

WHO? Artists and cultural workers from across the spectrum can introduce the different voices and unique energy needed to make social change happen in a big way. Consult with cultural producers who can help find and facilitate a partnership with your progressive counterpart in the world of arts and culture.

WHERE? Everywhere! Anywhere!

WHEN? As soon as possible—now!

HOW? With an organized, deliberate, and respectful approach. Bottom line: cultural strategy is about partnership, respect... and creativity.

YOUR NOTES HERE:

WHY?

WHAT?

WHO?

WHERE?

WHEN?

HOW?

GOOD-BYE

Well, that about wraps up **Making Waves: A Guide to Cultural Strategy**.

We hope that we've provided you with food for thought, and maybe even some "aha" moments.

We are really excited to share our work and ideas with you and others who believe in the incredible power of art and culture. Thank you for sharing this guide and its ideas with your colleagues and friends. We hope it will help spark new ideas, effective practices, and great work.

Don't forget to let us hear about your experiences in the field! Email us at theculturegrouporg@gmail.com.

Above all, we hope that we've left you fired up about cultural strategy and all it can achieve in the fight for a more equal, just, and sustainable society.

Your friends,

The Culture Group
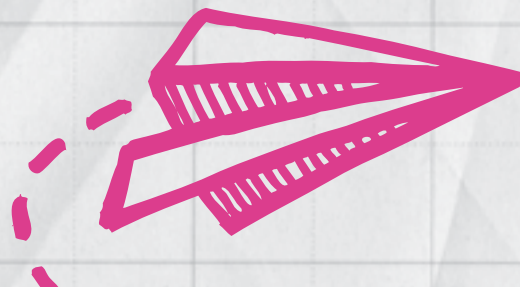
ABOUT THE CULTURE GROUP

The Culture Group is a collaboration of social change experts and creative producers who joined together formally in 2010 to advance progressive change through expansive, strategic, and values–driven cultural organizing. The Culture Group facilitates the coordination of cultural producers and artists, progressive organizers, and thought leaders in cultural campaigns; research and evaluation; and the overall promotion of the value of cultural strategies in making change.

The Culture Group's projects and collaborations include "Culture Matters," a report on cultural impact and evaluation; "Culture Before Politics," an article in *The American Prospect* by Jeff Chang and Brian Komar, about cultural strategy; the Artists' Statement on Immigration Reform and MigrationisBeautiful.com; a get out the vote initiative called #GoVote that collected and distributed over 200 creative images with the hashtag #GoVote; and Art is my Occupation, which directs support to artists and cultural workers dedicated to advancing the 99%. More can be found at The Culture Group's website, theculturegroup.org.

The Culture Group is:

Jeff Chang is the Executive Director of the Institute for Diversity in the Arts at Stanford University, co-founder of CultureStr/ke, *Colorlines* magazine, and SoleSides Records as well as an award-winning author. (cantstopwontstop.com)

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Ian Inaba is a filmmaker, organizer, and new media expert. He is also the Executive Director of Citizen Engagement Laboratory, an organization that uses digital media and technology to amplify the voices of underrepresented constituencies, particularly people of color and youth. (engagementlab.org)

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Liz Manne is a strategist, producer, and change agent providing senior advisory services to companies, nonprofit organizations, and independent media-makers. She specializes in management consulting, campaign strategy, and cultural strategy for social change. (lizmanne.com)
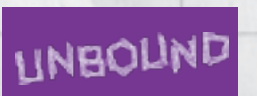
Erin Potts is the Executive Director of Air Traffic Control, a nonprofit that provides support and strategy to cultural leaders creating change. (atctower.net)

Favianna Rodriguez is an artist and new media organizer. She is co-founder of CultureStr/ke, which cultivates collaborations between cultural workers and organizers to build public support for migrant rights, and co-founder of Presente.org, an organization dedicated to the political empowerment of Latinos. (culturestrike.net) (favianna.com) (presente.org)

Yosi Sergant is the founder of TaskForce, a pro-social marketing and public relations shop that engages leaders of the creative community to raise awareness and build momentum for organizations tackling our world's most pressing challenges. (taskforce.pr)

Jessy Tolkan works as the Global Director of Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Development for two multinational automakers, focusing on creating massive shifts in the auto industry with an eye towards ensuring a more sustainable planet. She has spent the last decade as an activist and movement leader working to build progressive change in the United States.

WITH DEEPEST THANKS FOR THEIR GENEROUS SUPPORT:

THE Arca FOUNDATION

compton foundation

FORDFOUNDATION

GENERAL SERVICE FOUNDATION

the McKay FOUNDATION

THE NATHAN CUMMINGS FOUNDATION

OPEN SOCIETY FOUNDATIONS

UNBOUND

RESOURCES

The Culture Group's Official Partners are:

Air Traffic Control (www.atctower.net)

American Values Institute (www.americanvaluesinstitute.org)

Citizen Engagement Lab (engagementlab.org)

CultureStr/ke (culturestrike.net)

TaskForce (taskforce.pr)

Additional resources to help you with your work in cultural strategy:

Active Voice (www.activevoice.net)

Air Traffic Control Tower's Sample Organization Questionnaire
(www.atctower.net)

Americans for the Arts (www.americansforthearts.org)

Animating Democracy (www.animatingdemocracy.org)

Arabella Advisors Questions for Musicians Evaluating New Opportunities
(www.atctower.net)

Arts and Democracy (www.artsanddemocracy.org)

Beautiful Trouble (www.beautifultrouble.org)

BritDoc (www.britdoc.org)

Color of Change (www.colorofchange.org)

Creative Action Network (www.thecreativeactionnetwork.com)

Creative Capital (www.creative-capital.org)

Creative Change (www.opportunityagenda.org/creativechange)

Creative Time (www.creativetime.org)

"Culture Before Politics" (www.prospect.org/article/culture-politics)

Fuel Change (www.fuelchange.net)

GLAAD (www.glaad.org)

Good Pitch (www.britdoc.org)

Harmony Institute (www.harmony-institute.org)

Hip Hop Caucus (www.hiphopcaucus.org)

Moore + Associates (www.mooreandassociates.co)

National Coalition Against Censorship (www.ncac.org)

National Endowment for the Arts (www.arts.gov)

Presente (www.presente.org)

Schlep Labs (www.thegreatschlep.com)

The Culture of Possibility: Art, Artists & the Future by Arlene Goldbard
(www.arlenegoldbard.com)

The Management Center's "Assigning Responsibilities"
(www.managementcenter.org)

The Prenups (www.theprenups.org)

The Progressive Revolution: How the Best in America Came to Be
by Michael Lux (progressivestrategies.net)

Working Films (www.workingfilms.org)

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ARTISTS SAY THE DARNDEST THINGS

"They always say time changes things, but you actually have to change them yourself."
Andy Warhol

"George Bush doesn't care about black people."
Kanye West, during a Hurricane Katrina benefit concert televised on ABC on September 2, 2005. He apologized for the remark in 2010.

"I'd very much like to anally probe @govwalker each time he needs to make an 'informed decision.' "
Sarah Silverman, after Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker signed a bill requiring women to undergo an ultrasound before an abortion; in a statement, Gov. Walker said the bill "improves a woman's ability to make an informed choice."

"Motherf✳ckers will read a book that's one third elvish, but put two sentences in Spanish and they [white people] think we're taking over."
Junot Diaz (Just to be clear, Diaz is not dissing The Lord of the Rings, a major and beloved influence.)

"Just so you know, we're on the good side with y'all. We do not want this war, this violence, and we're ashamed that the President of the United States is from Texas."
Natalie Maines, The Dixie Chicks

"We Indians really should be better liars, considering how often we've been lied to."
Sherman Alexie

"Suppose you were an idiot, and suppose you were a member of Congress; but I repeat myself."
Mark Twain

"I can assure you that gay people getting married will have zero effect on your life. They won't come into your house and steal your children. They won't magically turn you into a lustful c✳ckmonster."
Chris Kluwe, Minnesota Vikings punter, in an open letter to Maryland State Delegate Emmett C. Burns Jr., who tried to get Baltimore Ravens owner Steve Bisciotti to muzzle the team's gay marriage supporter Brendon Ayanbadejo

"I hate Sarah Palin. I would never vote for her. I hate her politics. But I kinda want to f✳ck her. I know, it's wrong. It's unholy."
Margaret Cho

"Paul Ryan's love of Rage Against the Machine is amusing, because he is the embodiment of the machine that our music has been raging against for two decades."
Tom Morello, guitarist for the band Rage Against the Machine