#PopJustice:
Social Justice and the Promise of Pop Culture Strategies

To access the full *#PopJustice* report series, go to:
www.popjustice.org
www.unboundphilanthropy.org/pop-culture-social-change
or www.nathancummings.org

This Executive Brief launches the release of the six volume *#PopJustice* report series directed and produced by Liz Manne Strategy and funded by Unbound Philanthropy and the Nathan Cummings Foundation. The report's primary audience is the philanthropic sector, but it also has valuable findings, insights, and case studies for social change advocates, cultural change strategists, and entertainment industry insiders who are interested in learning about the promise of popular culture (or pop culture) strategies for advancing social justice goals.

The research was based on two hypotheses: 1) Popular culture can be an effective instrument for positive social change; and 2) Popular culture can be leveraged in the effort to counter stereotypes and improve attitudes and behavior toward immigrants and people of color. The research resoundingly affirmed both, demonstrated the need for significant intervention, and advises that the time is now.

This brief aims to support the report series' launch and was written by Learning for Action, a social sector consulting group that works with Unbound Philanthropy as a learning and evaluation partner. Significant portions of the report summary below were taken directly from the volumes with permission of its authors and funders.

#BlackLivesMatter. *I Am Cait. Inside Amy Schumer. Straight Outta Compton. Hamilton.* Throughout 2015, pop culture was like an injection of hi-octane fuel into the engine of public discourse about institutional racism, gender identity, immigration, pay equity, and other issues of social justice. Art and culture have been forces for social and political change for centuries, but in a hyper-connected world where practically anyone, anywhere, can join in the conversation, pop culture is changing and influencing public opinion at a rate never seen before. This velocity makes this an exciting and incredibly promising moment for all of us working for a more equitable and just society.

The six volume *#PopJustice* report series charts a strategic course for the use of pop culture strategies to achieve goals in social change philanthropy. It is informed by decades of practice, investment, and thinking at the nexus of art, culture, media, and social change. Historically, the philanthropic sector and social change advocates have underinvested in entertainment and pop culture interventions as a strategy to create change. This underinvestment has in part fueled the perception that philanthropy has limited ability to change the

highly resourced entertainment industry, and because the field is nascent investments are made in other, proven methods for achieving change. *#PopJustice* makes the case that because influencing and leveraging pop culture are keystones to social change, pop culture strategies deserve significant attention and thoughtful financial investment, and fertile ground awaits.

THE TIME IS NOW

While a single episode of *Empire* will reach more people than an entire season of ballet—16.7 million viewers tuned into the 2015 season finale—the majority of funding for Arts and Culture is focused on "benchmark" arts (symphony, opera, theater, ballet, and art museums) and traditional arts and culture (indigenous and historic arts of cultural expression)—basically everything *other* than pop culture. As of 2012, philanthropic investment in Arts and Culture in the United States represented only 9% of total investments. Although current funding classification systems do not track the intersection of pop culture and social justice as an investment area, it is safe to assume it is a very small amount.

However, the small amount of work at this intersection is making waves. Advocates inside and outside the entertainment industry who have worked hard for years are now seeing results that harness the power of pop culture for social change. Not only is there evidence to suggest that investment in this intersection is strategic and essential for large-scale impact, it is also particularly timely as entertainment platforms become more diversified, accessible, and pluralistic.

Diversity (and the lack thereof)—on-screen and behind the scenes—is dominating headlines and does not appear to be losing steam. For the second year in a row, there were no major Oscar nominations of people of color, with the noteworthy yet singular exceptions of Alejandro Iñárritu and Alfonso Cuarón, two Mexican filmmakers who won best director awards and whose ascendency to the top table is particularly significant against the backdrop of underrepresentation of Latinos in Hollywood. Ninety-four percent of the voting members of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences are white and 77% are male; black members make up about 2% and Latinos less than 2%. Despite the election of Cheryl Boone Isaacs as the Academy's first African-American president in 2013, change in the industry is slow to occur as the root causes are complex and without quick fixes. The call for more diversity throughout the industry persists and is getting louder.

To augment this conversation, *The New York Times* recently published the article, "Why 'Diverse TV' Matters: It's Better TV. Discuss," highlighting that the small screen has an important edge as a more inclusive medium. "TV audiences for everything are smaller now, which means networks aren't programming each show for an imagined audience of tens of millions of white people. On top of that, there are younger viewers for whom diversity—racial, religious, sexual—is their world. That audience wants authenticity; advertisers want that audience." Shows such as *Empire, Jane the Virgin, The Mindy Project, Scandal, Grey's Anatomy, Master of None,* and *Orange is the New Black* are only a few examples of popular shows with diverse casts and complex cultural narratives that reflect the richness of communities in the US today.

Beyonce's release of the new single and video *Formation* lit up all forms of media channels and underscores the ability of pop culture to ignite complex conversations about race, privilege, and power to millions of people overnight.

These changes are also the result of advocacy networks—such as the National Hispanic Media Coalition, Asian Americans Advancing Justice, American Indians in Film and Television, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and GLAAD, to name just a few—that have been working tirelessly to successfully increase representation and new narratives on the small screen. These efforts are gaining the traction they deserve and the time is ripe to deepen and expand strategic partnerships across creatives, advocates, and industry institutions.

The recent watershed win of legalized marriage for same-sex couples on the federal level is a major inspiration for the role pop culture can play in moving the needle on critical issues. LGBT rights advocates can conclusively draw ties between the appearance of television shows like *Will and Grace* and *Modern Family* to changing the cultural and political climate around the acceptance of LGBT people. Matt Foreman, former Executive Director of the National LGBTQ Task Force notes, "We would not have gotten marriage equality but for popular culture." Addressing racial and ethnic inequities are an even greater challenge, but this success provides important lessons in the powerful role pop culture plays in catalyzing major cultural shifts.

And, opportunities abound: With the rapidly evolving social media environment, making a mark through pop culture is no longer relegated to Hollywood. YouTube videos made in someone's living room can become an overnight sensation, 140 characters of one tweet and comments on Facebook
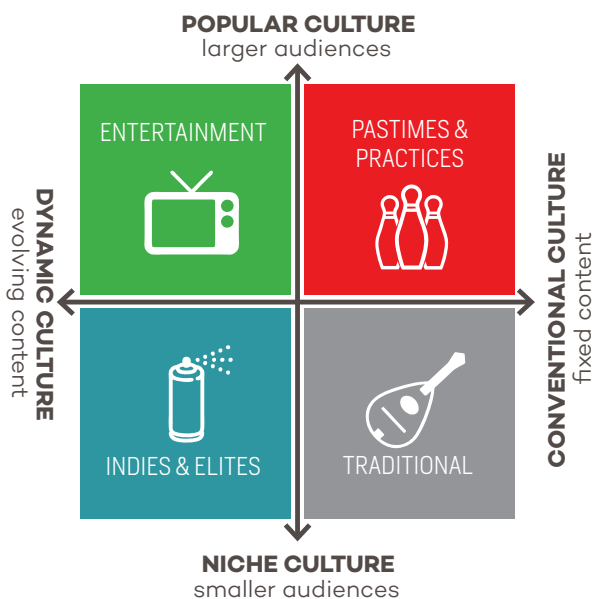
can elevate or degrade an issue around the world, and the popularity and influence of comic books and video games continue to grow. All of these provide ripe spaces for engaging advocacy agendas, harnessing creativity, and influencing narratives for social change.

#*PopJustice* provides a deeper understanding of pop culture and the industries that fuel it, shines a light on underlying systemic issues that require investment, and elevates case studies where strategic approaches with industry insiders, creatives, advocates, and philanthropic partners are successfully creating real change.

WHAT POP CULTURE IS (AND WHAT IT ISN'T)

In #*PopJustice, Volume 1: Social Justice and the Promise of Pop Culture Strategies*, the authors characterize pop culture (or "popular culture" in academic terms) by three key attributes: 1) the ability to sustain and perpetuate itself (endurance); 2) broad endorsement and active participation in its creation (agency); and 3) the ability to hold the attention of large groups of people (scale). While pop culture is often mislabeled as "mainstream culture," the report makes an important distinction that mainstream culture is associated with an assimilation to the status quo, rooted in histories of oppression. Report authors share, "Our challenge, then, is to engage culture to shift and change what is mainstream, what is considered normal and conventional. We are looking to create opportunities not to assimilate to a conventional norm, but rather to reconceive of what is normal and imbue the new normal with power."

POPULAR CULTURE
larger audiences

DYNAMIC CULTURE
evolving content

ENTERTAINMENT

PASTIMES & PRACTICES

CONVENTIONAL CULTURE
fixed content

INDIES & ELITES

TRADITIONAL

NICHE CULTURE
smaller audiences

Culture is created across a broad spectrum of activities, some of which are more aligned with pop culture attributes than others. The #*PopJustice* report maps culture using a matrix clustering arts and culture into quadrants divided by two main axes defined by audience size and content flexibility (see below). Using these attributes, everything above the middle line qualifies as pop culture. These activities enjoy large audiences and willing participants, and are often associated with massive commercial industries. Pop culture is split between two main clusters: 1) Entertainment (Hollywood movies, commercial TV, hit music, video games, celebrity culture, social media, advertising, fashion, blockbuster books, and Broadway); and 2) Pastimes & Practices (hobbies and recreation like bowling, hunting, fishing, gambling, spectator sports, churchgoing, and traditional "Americana" fare like car culture, fast food, amusement parks, and state fairs).

The clusters below the middle line are arenas with smaller audiences. They function within a variety of economic constructs, but none mass market. They are classified together as *niche* culture, as opposed to pop culture. The borders between the boxes are porous and there are examples such as *Hamilton*, which began in nonprofit theater and became a Broadway sensation, or the #BlackLivesMatter movement which sprung from a single activist via Twitter, that demonstrate how what started out as niche has the potential to rise above the line.

While every aspect of the culture matrix is of significant interest, as well as potential relevance to social justice advocates, the report and investment recommendations are focused primarily on the Entertainment segment. Conventional Arts and Culture funding nearly always falls below the line in niche culture arenas. The report illuminates the need and promise to fund *above* the line, and highlights examples of successful models that influence and leverage the entertainment industry or nurture niche opportunities that can cross over to pop culture status. Entertainment stands out because it enjoys huge audiences, its forms and content are dynamic and ever–changing, and relatively small numbers of people can have enormous influence. For these reasons, the authors argue that Entertainment provides the most influential opportunities for intervention aimed at creating a "new normal."

EMOTION, EMPATHY, AND STORYTELLING SHIFT PERCEPTIONS

#PopJustice, Volume 3: Pop Culture, Perceptions, and Social Change provides an extensive literature review done in collaboration with the Perception Institute indicating that, indeed, pop culture is a powerful instrument for influencing public opinion. There is overwhelming research demonstrating that pop culture can create and perpetuate negative stereotypes when that's what it is portraying. For example, a 2012 study conducted by the National Hispanic Media Coalition investigated the link between the stereotypical roles of Latinos in TV and film and negative Latino stereotypes. These data and other supporting research indicate that what people experience through pop culture can create or reinforce negative perceptions.

This research suggests that if pop culture created and provided positive representations of marginalized groups, perceptions would follow suit. While the tactic of positive interventions is nascent, authors shared an informative set of research that speaks to positive shifts in perception. Key drivers for positive social change are emotion, empathy, and storytelling.

Entertainment content is designed to trigger emotions within the audience and research shows that emotions are more likely to engender empathy than other forms of communication.[1] As such, pop culture can serve as a vehicle to increase empathy across racial and ethnic lines, particularly within communities where opportunities for cross-cultural interaction are rare. Studies show that interpersonal interactions between diverse performance actors serve as a form of "indirect" contact for the audience. When these forms of contact are positive,[2] or occur with likable, authentic or esteemed members of a non-dominant group,[3] they improve people's attitudes towards the non-dominant group.

Many of the examples of the social value of pop culture come from "entertainment education"—media with an entrenched educational message, which aims to alter the audience's attitudes and behaviors in a positive way through character development and narrative storytelling. A prominent US-based example is *Sesame Street;* globally, televnovelas—or soap operas with social change plot lines—and other forms of entertainment education have been used to shift attitudes related to issues such as women's empowerment, economic development, and domestic violence.[4] Entertainment education has been successful, researchers conclude, because it relies upon a storytelling approach. In fact, the narrative nature of most forms of pop culture is the critical characteristic for affecting change in the minds and behaviors of the audience.

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>
> (#)Authors
> PopJustice Report

Increasing viewers' empathy alone, however, does not necessarily translate into behavioral change or policy action. Research in this field is developing, but will benefit from deeper investment. Thought leaders and practitioners in the field of social impact media (many of whom focus on documentaries, not pop culture) are in active dialogue seeking to identify the most effective mechanisms to measure and assess social impact. The specific pathways through which particular forms of culture or particular stories will alter perceptions remain unclear. Monica Gil of Multi-Cultural Growth and Strategy at Nielsen shares, "We need to look to neuroscience to understand exactly how we can move the needle. Knowing how many people have watched isn't enough anymore, we need to know how they perceived and experienced what they watched."

For pop culture to achieve its potential as a vehicle for positive social change, more rigorous evaluation is needed to identify and test the effectiveness of specific strategies and content and to understand the underlying reasons for their effectiveness. Report authors strongly advocate maximizing the utility and efficiency of such evaluations by providing creatives and producers incentives for knowledge building and information sharing, and establishing baselines from which future impacts can be measured.

LEVERAGING ENTERTAINMENT PLATFORMS FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

The intersection of pop culture and social justice reveals a large and influential network of entertainment platforms and players. Report authors analyzed the entertainment industry to identify potential levers for social change. Below is a brief summary of *#PopJustice, Volume 4: Understanding the Entertainment Industry*, highlighting some of their findings and recommendations.

ENTERTAINMENT PLATFORMS
Major entertainment platforms range from traditional film, television, and music, to 21st century digital media like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. While often overlooked, video games and comic books have massive loyal and active audiences, and advertising also can have a significant effect.

Film and Television:

Diversity is sorely lacking throughout the film and television industries—in front of the camera, behind the camera, and in executive suites; although television has revealed itself as a more successful and innovative channel than film to represent diverse voices, as indicated earlier. While virtually every publicly-held entertainment company has a diversity program, hiring remains largely influenced by personal networks, limiting the entry and ascent of diverse voices and leaders.

While investing in conventional film and television production would be cost prohibitive and outside of the expertise of the philanthropic community, it should not give up on non-production interventions that get to the root of systemic change (e.g., advocating for better hiring amongst executives and creatives; more representative writers, directors, and casting; influencing and providing expertise for new content creation, and leveraging content of positive work).

Additionally, technology and declining production costs, new distribution/consumption paths, and diversifying audiences are beginning to undercut the role of mainstream film and TV studios, making it possible for those traditionally marginalized to break through to the public. *Halal in the Family* is an inspiring example that is shared as a case study in the next section.

Music:

Music has gone digital: combined income from all digital music products is now over twice that of conventional physical products. Affordable consumer technology and proliferating digital platforms have made it much easier for unknown artists to reach and build an audience. As ever, the music business is people-driven, and relies on interpersonal relations both on the business side and for audience-building. Identifying the target audience and tailoring messages to an insider's perspective is critical, as is having inside knowledge on the tastemakers, producers, and executives of that genre.

Celebrity:

High-profile personalities can draw a spotlight from brief photo ops, to appearing at a Congressional hearing; they can communicate directly with fans, act as role models, and raise and donate money or in-kind value (such as license

> In this climate, much like musicians and artists during the civil rights and Black Power movements, hip-hop artists are in a unique position to help shape a new culture. Will they challenge the inner workings of the music industry? Will they change the content of their music? In this environment more than ever before, they have a chance to impact an entire generation.
>
> #Talib Kweli, musician

rights to a song for a PSA). The best engagement with high-profile artists is to partner with them from the beginning of campaign planning. Many are gifted creative and strategic partners, and come to the issues with passion and relevant personal experience. Some high-profile artists retain political or philanthropic advisors; otherwise, access is through other types of gatekeepers like publicists, agents, and managers.

Social Media:

Social media is vastly different from the more traditional entertainment industries; cultures, demographics, and intents vary radically across social media platforms and each has its own mores, customs, and quirks. Be it Reddit, Twitter, or Facebook, influence on these platforms is not dictated by a content gatekeeper, but through the popular endorsement of individuals in the subculture—they both drive and create the content. Notably, in proportionate terms, the most popular forms of social media in America are most used by African Americans and Latinos, and are one of the prime vehicles for giving voice to groups who would be otherwise underrepresented—as the case of #BlackLivesMatter shows.

Video Games:

Video games are in the mainstream: over 59% of Americans play video games on personal computers, mobile phones, tablets, and proprietary devices. Children are growing up playing video games, and video games are becoming a popular education tool because the fun of gameplay can foster

> What will ultimately bring change to TV is greater diversity in all aspects of the industry—actors, writers, executives, producers, crew, etc. So I think what justice advocates can do is pressure the industry to hire and train more diverse artists, in all areas of creation and production. What we really need are more writers, directors, and actors who understand both what it means to belong to these diverse communities and have the craft and experience to create great TV.
>
> #David Henry Hwang
> Tony-Award winning playwright and screenwriter

engagement and enhance learning. However, many video games severely lack diverse protagonists and some perpetuate misogyny and racism. While cause–based video games have been developed, they are generally considered less fun to play and mostly appeal to converted audiences. Because game development is expensive, social justice advocates would benefit from partnering with game companies to create cause–based games that will have mainstream appeal or work to infuse social justice values into commercial games.

Comic Books and Graphic Novels:
Unlike conventional fiction and nonfiction books, sales of comic books and graphic novels are on the rise. People grow up with comic books, and comic books are the basis of some of our most popular movie franchises and television series. A growing number of diverse authors, presenting diverse characters and perspectives, are shaping the narratives to which many young people are exposed. *Black Panther*, the first black superhero in mainstream American comics and recently resurrected, and *Ms. Marvel*, a hit series featuring a Muslim teenager, are two powerful examples.

Advertising:
Advertising is a multi–billion dollar industry and a major player in pop culture. When a television ad makes a specific point about diversity, it makes news and sometimes generates controversy, as with Coca Cola's multilingual "America the Beautiful" ad shown during the 2015 Super Bowl. Online advertising is increasingly sophisticated and ubiquitous. For example, Google has its own advertising service and dominates the online market. With its ability to track users' activities, Google can tailor ads to each individual's personal interests and experiences online. This has created a powerful advertising tool and a potential space for influence, as well as a model to learn how to move people from thought to action.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT:
INSPIRING EXAMPLES FROM THE FIELD

#PopJustice offers numerous examples of inspiring approaches and partnerships demonstrating that harnessing pop culture for change is possible. All leveraged the potential of their platforms, harnessed collaborations with players inside and outside the industry, delivered professional content, and were intentional about their impact goals. Five that demonstrate the diversity of goals and celebrate big achievements are summarized on the next two pages.

DOMESTIC WORKERS TAKE ADVANTAGE OF *THE HELP*

Outside advocates leverage box office success

In 2011, Disney released *The Help*, a feature film telling the story of two African–American domestic workers living in Jackson, Mississippi, in 1963 at the height of the Civil Rights Movement.

The National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA) saw an opportunity. Working with a culture change strategy designer, Bridgit Antoinette Evans, it decided to use the attention generated by this film to shine a light on NDWA's members, the often–invisible women who care for our families yet are excluded from minimum wage laws and denied basic legal protections.

NDWA identified domestic workers and provided media training for an Entertainment Tonight interview and was able to engage film co–star and Oscar winner, Octavia Spencer, and other Hollywood stars as advocates for domestic workers. Actress and comedian Amy Poehler appeared in a video supporting the California Domestic Workers Bill of Rights, viewed nearly 40,000 times. The bill passed in 2013.

Its experience with *The Help* led NDWA to employ cultural strategies for its other national campaigns. Caring Across Generations, which advocates for home care workers leveraged YouTube video interviews. We Belong Together, which advocates for undocumented immigrant women and their families, engaged popular actors and models to share family immigration stories on social media with their millions of followers.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT:
INSPIRING EXAMPLES FROM THE FIELD
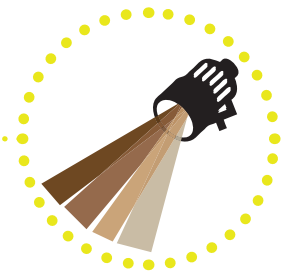
HALAL IN THE FAMILY BRINGS MUSLIMS HOME

Small(er) players with anti-bias focus make big waves

In April 2015, Aasif Mandvi, a seven-year correspondent on *The Daily Show*, launched the first American sitcom about a Muslim family, *Halal in the Family* (a riff off of the 1970's *All in the Family*). Initially watched by only thousands, it became an enormous success and its following has increased to hundreds of thousands.

The idea for the show originated from *The Qu'osby Show* sketch on *The Daily Show*. This sketch stimulated a collaboration with Moore + Associates, a creative agency specializing in developing culture-shifting campaigns, to realize Mandvi's vision of developing a web series to combat anti-Muslim bias. An Advisory Council of advocacy groups was formed, including Muslim Advocates and Center for New Community, and seed funding from Unbound Philanthropy and the Ford Foundation was secured.

The team focused on three goals: 1) raise awareness; 2) shift behavior and bias; and 3) support advocates and allies. They did this through creating high-quality content, ensuring it covered Muslim experiences authentically, elevating existing campaigns to combat bias, leveraging media interest to expand viewership, and measuring its impact.

The series has over 600,000 views, 600 million media impressions, and 100 separate pieces of media coverage. Evaluation findings from the Perception Institute are encouraging: viewers of *Halal* were more likely to want to learn more about anti-Muslim bias and to support anti-discrimination legislation after they watched an episode.

MTV REDUCES TEEN PREGNANCY

Big hitter takes on big issue with expert support

In 2007, after the high-profile teen pregnancy of Britney Spears' sister and the box office success of *Juno* telling the story of a pregnant teen, MTV decided to produce a real-life TV show to create meaningful dialogue about the topic.

MTV executives knew this topic needed to be handled carefully and brought on the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy to act as a key advisor in its development and throughout the show's five seasons. The organization had collaborated with MTV in the past, knew the former MTV CEO well, and had a history of working in the entertainment industry to help create meaningful content about teen pregnancy. *16 and Pregnant* was an hour-long reality series following a unique pregnant teen each week, providing an intimate and nuanced view of being pregnant.

Before *16 and Pregnant* aired in 2009, teen birth rates had been declining 2–3% annually. From 2009 to 2014, teen birth rates declined by almost 10% per year. While other factors also influenced this decline, the National Bureau of Economic Research, a well-respected research think tank, published a study correlating the positive impact of *16 and Pregnant* to the reduction of teen pregnancy.

While not specifically related to diversity representation, this example demonstrates the scale of impact possible when working with a financial and distribution powerhouse.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT:
INSPIRING EXAMPLES FROM THE FIELD

FRESH OFF THE BOAT MAKES IT BIG

Diverse leaders produce fresh, hit shows

In February 2015, Fresh Off the Boat premiered on ABC to an audience of 7.94 million viewers. The sitcom was a hit; the last network television show to star an Asian family was 20 years earlier and only lasted one season. Fresh Off the Boat tells the story of three generations of a Chinese American family living under one roof based on the popular memoir by restaurateur, chef, and food personality Eddie Huang.

Huang's book attracted the attention of TV executives inside established entertainment industry circles while ABC was developing a slate of shows produced by and starring people of color. Paul Lee, the former president of ABC Entertainment Group, has been partly responsible for this trend and felt a kinship to Fresh Off the Boat, sharing, "I watch Fresh Off the Boat, and I am that family."

This more inclusive programming emphasis was bolstered by a coalition of Asian Americans Advancing Justice (AAJC), National Hispanic Media Coalition (NHMC), and the NAACP that meet twice a year with networks. Groups like the Asian Pacific American Media Coalition (APAMC) meet annually with Fox, NBC, CBS, and ABC to push for greater and better representation of Asian Americans in network programming. The ascension of Paul Lee from ABC Family to president of ABC Entertainment Group was exactly the kind of hiring decision these advocacy groups have been calling for and the results are paying off.

As of December 2015, Fresh Off the Boat is ABC's fifth most popular family sitcom and was the second most popular comedy premiere in the winter of 2015, drawing almost 8 million viewers.

HARRY POTTER CASTS A SPELL ON SLAVE LABOR

Avid fans force media empire to choose Fair Trade

In 2005, fans of the *Harry Potter* series created the nonprofit Harry Potter Alliance (HPA), which now has 250 chapters around the world and provides a way for hundreds of thousands of fans to live the values of the series.

In 2010, the organization launched the "Deathly Hallow's Campaign" designed to mobilize fans to take on seven "real-life horcruxes," inspired by Harry and his friends' effort to destroy physical manifestations of evil.

Through a member's advocacy, HPA researched and discovered that the popular chocolate frogs being sold by Warner Brothers, the corporate distributors of the *Harry Potter* brand, were unethically sourced. On Halloween 2010, they launched the "Not In Harry's Name" campaign and demanded Warner Brothers use fair trade chocolate.

The Not in Harry's Name campaign utilized four tactics: 1) It leveraged the release of the *Deathly Hallows* films to draw attention to modern day horcruxes like child slavery; 2) It partnered with other nonprofits, Free2Work and Walk Free, as expert resources and to galvanize their constituencies; 3) It made a case for the campaign using "insider" fan language; and 4) It got the backing of J.K. Rowling, the series' author and John Green, another young adult fiction writer with a huge following.

The campaign was a huge success. After four years, Warner Brothers agreed to the demand which set a precedent for other popular brands with merchandise of dubious origins, and gave activists a template to follow.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STRATEGIC INVESTMENTS TO MOVE THE NEEDLE

Drawing on their experience, research, and interviews across the industry, and collection of best practices and case studies, the *#PopJustice* authors developed an integrated set of strategies for funders to support embedding social justice approaches into the spotlight across the entire entertainment industry. They are intended to create opportunities for new voices and stories to be shared, support outside advocates to develop strategic partnerships, and value reflection and

learning along the way. Based on focus area or expertise, some funders will be more interested in one strategy than another; others will want to fund across all five. Because the pop culture strategy field is emerging, authors recommend investing in experiments to generate more data on what are the most effective levers for change. There are no set formulas for success; trial and error paves the pathway of this promising new field of pop culture strategy.

Below you will see a brief description and example for each strategy. *#PopJustice, Volume 1: Social Justice and the Promise of Pop Culture Strategies* contains more robust descriptions and many more examples.

TRAINING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Provide support, training, information, and development to a variety of individuals and entities within pop culture industries (at various stages of their careers) to foster the growth of social justice values and knowledge within institutions and networks.

EXAMPLE: A collaboration with studio and guild diversity officers to provide information to members and employees on cutting-edge thinking about diversity and inclusion, including trainings on unconscious phenomena like implicit bias and racial anxiety, providing information to increase awareness, and tools to improve behavior and outcomes.

ORGANIZING AND NETWORKING

Create opportunities for cultural strategists, philanthropy, social justice advocates, and socially-minded creative professionals in all relevant sectors (film and TV, music, video games, and more) to come together to explore and build this emerging field.

EXAMPLE: Fund well-networked cultural strategists and organizers to work with nonprofit organizations, campaigns, and movements to build effective partnerships with pop culture artists and the entertainment industry. The National Domestic Workers Alliance depended on these expert collaborations.

CONTENT DEVELOPMENT AND PRODUCTION

Invest in web and digital format content production (not big industry or documentaries) to lower costs, shorten time production, and facilitate prototyping. Invest in social justice advocates and institutions to be expert advisors for writers, producers, actors, and other industry players.

EXAMPLE: Fund a new web-produced program that entertains while combating bias. (*Halal in the Family* received crucial philanthropic dollars for its development and generated almost 600 million media impressions.)

DISSEMINATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Leverage existing or newly released pop culture trends and content to expand social justice audiences and engagement.

EXAMPLE: Support the development of learning materials, virtual and real world discussion forums, and events tied to the release of content relevant to social justice. The Harry Potter Alliance leveraged insider value and language for their successful campaign.

RESEARCH, MONITORING, AND EVALUATION

Maximize the utility and efficiency of evaluations, provide incentives for knowledge building and information sharing, and establish baselines from which future impacts can be measured.

EXAMPLE: Support the development, dissemination, and use of a popular culture content baseline typology that: codes content within each relevant entertainment industry; identifies the associations and images of various identity groups being propagated; identifies the driving forces behind more authentic and representative portrayals; and develops measures for understanding the effects of these portrayals.

LEARN MORE. TAKE ACTION.

(1) Learn more by reading these three seminal pieces.

The six volume #*PopJustice* report series (outlined at the right) provides the navigational tools to understand and dive into this new arena for philanthropic investment.

The Culture Group's _Making Waves: A Guide to Cultural Strategy_ explains the concept of cultural strategy: how it works and why it matters. This reference guide is available to advocacy organizations, foundations, organizers, and artist activists who want to effectively integrate these practices into their social change work.

Spoiler Alert: How Progressives Will Break Through With Pop Culture by Tracy Van Slyke describes the Culture Change Triad model and the three major strategic investment points into pop culture and creative activism: connecting to culture, how we are transporting our stories, and creating networks and working partnerships with creatives to achieve transformative social change.

(2) Contribute to the #PopJustice collaborative fund.

With the release of this report, Unbound Philanthropy, the Nathan Cummings Foundation, and the Ford Foundation announce a partnership to develop a collaborative fund to coordinate and expand investment in work that leverages pop culture to advance social justice goals.

(3) Experiment with funding on your own.

Fund any of the activities described in the five areas of recommendation in the #PopJustice report: a) training and career development; b) organizing and networking; c) content development and production; d) dissemination and engagement; and e) research, monitoring, and evaluation.

For more information about the pooled fund and to stay informed of other opportunities to learn more and take action, contact us at: PopCulture@unboundphilanthropy.org
We'd love to hear from you.

WHAT YOU CAN FIND IN THE #*POPJUSTICE* REPORT

VOLUME 1
Social Justice and the Promise of Pop Culture Strategies
Report overview, major recommendations, and funding strategies

VOLUME 2
Mapping the Players
Prospective grantees and partners already doing relevant work inside and outside the industry

VOLUME 3
Pop Culture, Perceptions, and Social Change (A Research Review)
Evidence–based research on the role of popular culture influencing stereotypes and perceptions

VOLUME 4
Understanding the Entertainment Industry
Analysis of how film, TV, celebrity business, social media, and video games industries work

VOLUME 5
Creative Voices & Professional Perspectives
Points of view from professionals on the front lines of pop culture and social change

VOLUME 6
Economic Data & Foundation Grantmaking
Data reflecting major entertainment industries and philanthropic trends

The entire #*PopJustice* report series can be found at:
www.popjustice.org
www.unboundphilanthropy.org/pop-culture-social–change
and www.nathancummings.org

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#PopJustice, Volume 1: Social Justice and the Promise of Pop Culture Strategies
by Liz Manne, Rachel D. Godsil, Mik Moore, Meredith Osborne, Joseph Phelan
with Thelma Adams, Michael Ahn, Brian Sheppard

#PopJustice, Volume 2: Mapping the Players Organizations and Practitioners at the Intersection of Popular Culture and Social Justice
by Liz Manne, Joseph Phelan
with Betsy Fagin, Ashley Weatherspoon

#PopJustice, Volume 3: Pop Culture, Perceptions, and Social Change (A Research Review)
by Rachel D. Godsil, Jessica MacFarlane, Brian Sheppard
in association with Perception Institute

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Specific annotations in text:
[1] Zillman, D. (1995). *Mechanisms of emotional involvement with drama, Poetics, 23*(1–2), 1–188; Zillman, D., & Brosius, H. B. (2000). *Exemplification in communication: The influence of case reports on the perceptions of issues*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
[2] Murrar, S. & Brauer, M. (2015). *Entertainment-Education effectively reduces prejudice.* Unpublished Manuscript.
[3] Tukachinsky, R., Mastro, D., & Yarchi, M. (2015). *Documenting Portrayals of Race/Ethnicity on Primetime Television over a 20 Year Span and Their Association with National Level Racial/Ethnic Attitudes*. Journal of Social Issues, 71(1), 17–38.
[4] Murrar, S. & Brauer, M. (2015). *Entertainment-Education effectively reduces prejudice*. Unpublished Manuscript.

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