



# Social Justice Documentary DESIGNING FOR IMPACT

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# INTRODUCTION

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People come in as participants in a media project and leave recognizing themselves as members of a public—a group of people commonly affected by an issue. They have found each other and exchanged information on an issue in which they all see themselves as having a stake. In some cases, they take action based on this transformative act of communication.

This is the core function of public media 2.0 for a very simple reason: Publics are the element that keeps democracies democratic.

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Jessica Clark and  
Patricia Aufderheide  
*Public Media 2.0: Dynamic,  
Engaged Publics*

This working paper aims to synthesize current efforts to develop comparable evaluation methods for social issue documentary films. Authored by two researchers who have been jointly documenting the field's transformation over the past five years, this paper offers a framework for planning and evaluating the impact of these films in a networked media environment.

Tracking impact has become increasingly complex as platforms and content streams proliferate, and campaigns evolve over several years. A single piece of media can now spread across a variety of screens—a theater, a university classroom, the Web, home televisions, a mobile phone and more. Each screening carries with it different expectations, different measurement schemes, and different potential publics—i.e., groups of users for whom the film and related campaigns serve as a catalyst for debate—as well as advocates who seize upon the film as a hub for action. Cheaper production and distribution tools, new channels, and increasingly skillful and networked users are challenging previous assumptions about how social documentaries reach users, and offering powerful but vexing opportunities for collaboration and organizing.

The transition from 1.0 to 2.0 opens opportunities for documentarians to fulfill and expand their missions—not only informing individuals and leading public conversation but also building community cohesion and participation. Documentaries travel differently in this new media ecosystem, and they can also play a role in shaping its development.

As a result, evaluating such efforts requires a deep understanding of the mission and intended audiences for each project, and both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. Given the quick-shifting digital terrain, mobile and documentary producers are operating in a rapid prototyping mode, experimenting with and refining a variety of distribution, outreach, and networking techniques. This makes it difficult to develop comparative assessment frameworks, instead refocusing evaluators' attention on whether project goals were met, appropriate publics engaged, and unexpected publics pulled into the mix of discussion and action.

Such new discoveries are leading filmmakers in directions they could not have predicted at the start of their projects—creative opportunities that lead to innovations in narrative form and the shift from filmmaking to other modes of communication. Successes and failures alike drive such strategic shifts—finding a fortuitous partner, or an angle or clip that goes viral, or sinking

money into a web site that ends up yielding little interaction. Documentarians are becoming more nimble, adopting research and planning methods that more closely resemble those associated with fields such as product design, agile software development, and community organizing.

Drawing insights from the design thinking field—a user-focused creation process that has emerged from the commercial design field and is now being applied to create and improve social sector projects—this working paper examines state-of-the art methodologies for strategic design and evaluation of documentaries. The report’s recommendations are informed by lessons from six case studies of representative films:

- A Lion in the House,
- The Line,
- Lioness,
- Not in Our Town,
- Out in the Silence, and
- State of Fear.

These are all award-winning projects featuring compelling documentary films at the center of multiplatform strategic outreach campaigns. All have been screened in traditional broadcast and/or film festival settings, as well as venues designed to engage publics and mobilize advocates relevant to the issue being addressed. These producers utilize a variety of technologies and both online and offline organizing tactics. At their most powerful, they catalyze and support issue-based networks that connect individuals with relevant organizations and empower participants not only to learn about and discuss shared problems, but to organize for action and respond to breaking developments. In this way, documentaries feed both social movements and the broader public sphere.

Finally, the report offers a model framework that encompasses planning, circulation, engagement and mobilization, which we hope others will use, critique and refine.

# EVALUATING DOCUMENTARY

## THE STATE OF THE FIELD

### WHY NOW?

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Documentary film projects have increasingly become core elements of social issue campaigns. Telling deep human stories about complex societal problems, they serve as catalysts for organizing, network-building and civic action. In an environment of information overload and polarized sparring, social issue documentaries provide quality content that can be used to engage members of the public as citizens rather than merely media consumers. As a result, they have gained in visibility, influence and number over the past decade.

But despite the box-office and critical success of high-profile examples such as *An Inconvenient Truth* or *Supersize Me*, the social impacts of such expensive, long-range projects have been hit-or-miss. As a result, investors and filmmakers are asking tough questions about how best to plan for and assess the impact of such films and related engagement strategies, and to create models and standards for a dynamic field.

Questions about how, when and why to fund documentary projects have become increasingly pressing as demands for media funding increase. Public broadcasting, long a source of support for documentary filmmakers, is now not only under threat of cuts from political opponents, but stretched to the limit by demands to produce content for multiple platforms. The decline of commercial journalism business models is also driving up funding and investment requests for a new generation of nonprofit news startups. Only a limited number of foundations invest in media projects at all, and according to the 2010 report from Grantmakers in Film + Electronic Media, *Funding Media, Strengthening Democracy*, those funders are now barraged with proposals to support not only content production, but related policy and infrastructure projects.

At the same time, many continue to seek ways to counter a national “civic recession” marked by declining rates of voting, participation in public meetings and volunteerism. NGOs, government agencies, and others are increasingly interested in funding documentary films in conjunction with their programs. Such films are no longer independent artifacts, but components of strategic campaigns with specific agendas.

These transformations are taking place in a media landscape where commercial and noncommercial boundaries blur; some social issue filmmakers are not

**Our media habits are threads in our cultural tapestries, not stand-alone features; their impact on our beliefs and actions are sometimes impossible to separate from other parts of our experience. Laboratory conditions do not bear much similarity to people's lived experience with media. Social scientists depend on a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches... in the hopes that the limitations of each can be supplemented by the other.**

Patricia Aufderheide  
*In the Battle for Reality*

only seeking foundation support, but attracting investors and developing marketing plans. They are operating in an environment of philanthropic entrepreneurship, enjoined to track their double bottom lines—the first denoting profit; the second social good.

In tandem with funders and investors, documentary filmmakers have a crucial role to play in defining the goals, outcomes and evolution of their projects. Research-based strategic design does not have to remain the province of commercial manufacturers, marketers and public relations firms. Instead, the most resourceful documentary producers are finding ways to harness the new streams of data offered by online and mobile platforms to track user behavior: sites visited, petitions signed, letters sent, networks joined, rants recorded. Emerging search and “sentiment” tools are able to track a story or meme as it travels across the Web, picking up velocity and influence and morphing as it goes.

This volatile and expanding universe of information can be both a boon and a morass. Determining the impact of a mission-driven media project—one designed primarily to drive social outcomes rather than to entertain or yield profit—can't just be a numbers game. Quantitative metrics such as audience size and sales figures are imperfect indicators of how a media project changed minds or inspired participation.

Instead, the accounts of impact that resonate are those that show how media can further the mission in question. Documentary filmmakers are learning not to just tell the story within their film, but to dynamically communicate the power and progress of the project to stakeholders.

## CURRENT METHODS

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Standards have previously been established for assessing and giving official recognition to technical and artistic excellence in the field of documentary film, as well as depth and accuracy of reporting, and educational uses. Similarly, methods have evolved to track financial returns on documentary distribution, including ticket and DVD sales, licensing and broadcast revenues, though such figures usually do not include the in-kind contributions and unpaid labor that most documentary films require.

Currently, there are myriad tools available for collecting basic social media and digital distribution statistics. Commercial media companies deploy surveys and other well-tested instruments for gathering and analyzing quantitative data including audience size, demographics, screenings, sales revenues, media coverage, etc. At the same time, Google Analytics and other tools provide unparalleled information about individual and social patterns of activity and engagement. Such quantitative measures are important to noncommercial

media as well; tools specifically tailored to collate and analyze comparative metrics for the social documentary sector—such as a dashboard currently under development by the Bay Area Video Coalition (BAVC)—have begun to emerge. However, it is more complex to interpret the significance of such data and pair it with qualitative analysis that reveals social rather than financial return on investment.

Qualitative evaluation is taking place unevenly across the social documentary sector. At its best, rigorous qualitative analysis gathers and synthesizes anecdotes into trends and outcomes, and harnesses the storytelling skills of media producers to reveal the resonance and power of their productions. Producers and funders may track the film or campaign's influence—how it contributes to changing individual behavior or opinion, shifting debate on a key issue, informing organizational or governmental policy, or serving as an educational resource. Such methods include content analysis of online and offline coverage, participation and dialogue; field observations of use of the film and associated campaigns; and visualizations of emerging issue- or community-based networks along with other rising methods.

What is needed now is a more standardized methodological approach that combines the strengths of both types of analysis in order to allow for more consistent assessment of the social impacts of documentary film. Standards for conducting such “mixed methods” research have not yet stabilized sufficiently to gauge either the circulation or influence of such films within public debate or their effectiveness in supporting social change goals. The shifting dynamics of communication—including the rise of a 24-7 opinion culture, the increasing power and speed of short-form video and microblogging, and the growth of niche networks dedicated to particular issues or publics—provide both new opportunities and an unsettling fragmentation of the mass audience.

Some consensus, however, is beginning to emerge. Center for Social Media researchers, including the authors of this report, have been tracking such projects and reporting on associated methods for a number of years. A handful of foundations, such as the Fledgling Fund, the Knight Foundation and the Channel 4 BRITDOC Foundation have also taken the lead in this inquiry by issuing key publications and assessments. They are joined by commercial producers such as Participant Films, public funders such as the BBC, and social justice film initiatives tied to documentary film festivals. Along the way, these efforts have surfaced numerous evaluation tools and methods, and agreement has begun to emerge around a set of evaluation categories. Current impact assessment initiatives generally agree that:

- the primary goals of social issue media projects are to inform, engage, and motivate publics,
- open and accessible media is the *sine qua non* of healthy democratic life, and

More cutting-edge research on documentaries and features will enable independents to prove that films can make a difference. Film-makers who learn how others have achieved social impact will be empowered to make films that can truly change the world

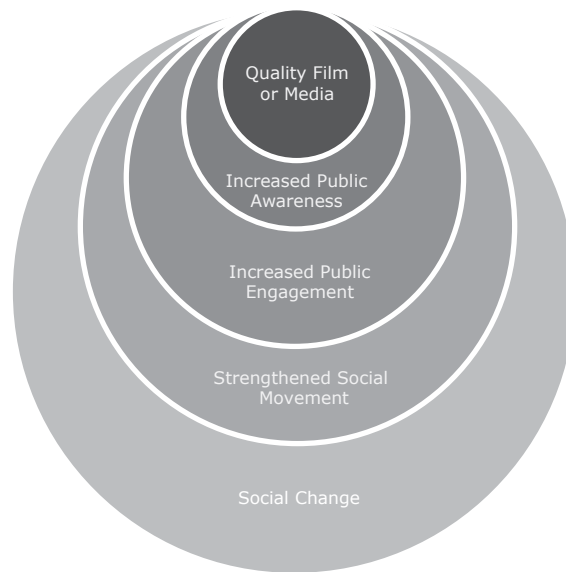
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Peter Broderick,  
*The Distribution Bulletin*



- providing relevant and trusted quality content, and strengthening the capacity of individuals to engage with that information is a unique and necessary public service.

Visualization is playing a key role in various analyses, as stakeholders struggle to understand and synthesize the dynamics of impact. For example, the Fledgling fund has developed a series of insightful graphics modeling the impact of social issue documentaries, and an analysis of the documentary *End of the Line* supported by the Channel 4 BRITDOC and Esmée Fairbairn foundations used a number of infographics to capture different aspects of the film's influence on both individuals and corporations.



Fledgling fund's influential 2008 report, *Assessing Creative Media's Social Impact*, introduced this visualization of the impact process, which has since been used to evaluate a variety of social documentary campaigns.

© Copyright The Fledgling Fund 2008

These reports offer parallel categories of qualitative impact measurement for social documentary, including **evidence of quality, increased public awareness, meaningful partnerships, increased public engagement, and collective action**. They also generally agree on the need for both qualitative and quantitative assessment of impact.

Common quantitative metrics that are tracked include:

- numbers and diversity of viewers across platforms, streams, and opinions
- sales and paid screenings
- investment by foundations and individual donors
- numbers of users engaged, both on social media platforms and in offline settings
- mentions of the film across traditional and online media

Qualitative approaches focus on the degree to which a film contributes to a healthy participatory civic life. They may assess the impact of the film as demonstrated by:

- evidence of newly engaged and diverse viewers, as demonstrated by online and in-person responses
- the amplification and reframing of an issue in media coverage and public discourse
- reported activities after viewing—such as voting, partnerships, events, training, and behavioral changes
- the creative capacity of a film to generate identification, connection, and controversy
- mobilization for action around issues
- entry of the film or campaign into policy- and decision-making circles
- legislative and/or policy impact
- the nature and durability of partnerships around an issue
- creative initiatives that contribute to community-building
- relationships formed across boundaries of ethnic, class, generational, racial or religious difference

The methods that evaluators use, and the questions they seek to answer, often differ according to the stated goals of the films. This can be confusing for those hoping to find a single yardstick against which impact can be measured. However, as our analysis of the case studies below suggest, given enough examples it is possible to begin identifying common goals and related evaluation categories.

## MISSING LINKS

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This growing consensus about how discrete documentary projects should be assessed misses a few key dynamics, however. These include:

- The value of incorporating user-focused research at each phase of a social documentary's rollout
- The challenges of assessing such films as hubs for networked advocacy and awareness-building
- The role key films and campaigns are playing as models for this transforming field

Qualitative research methods enable the design team to develop deep empathy for people they are designing for, to question assumptions, and to inspire new solutions. At the early stages of the process, research is generative—used to inspire imagination and inform intuition about new opportunities and ideas. In later phases, these methods can be evaluative—used to learn quickly about people’s response to ideas and proposed solutions.

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*Human Centered Design  
Toolkit, 2nd Edition*

## *Strategic Design for Documentaries*

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Much like product design, social issue documentary filmmaking now takes place in an unstable environment, influenced by new technologies, changing economic realities, and, increasingly, feedback from users. Each filmmaker must grapple with defining the lifecycle of a project while maintaining the flexibility to respond to emerging opportunities and shifts in the media landscape. This means deciding at key moments whether to enter new partnerships, adopt newly available platforms, engage new audiences, or reconsider long-term goals—as well as how to fund and staff expanded activities. Evaluation can play a key role at each juncture, but needs to be understood as central to impact.

Understanding the process of filmmaking in this way requires new mental models and new approaches to craft. Documentarians can take inspiration from successful efforts by other types of creators to incorporate evaluation into the lifecycle of production—and to reconceptualize production as ongoing and iterative service rather than one-time creation.

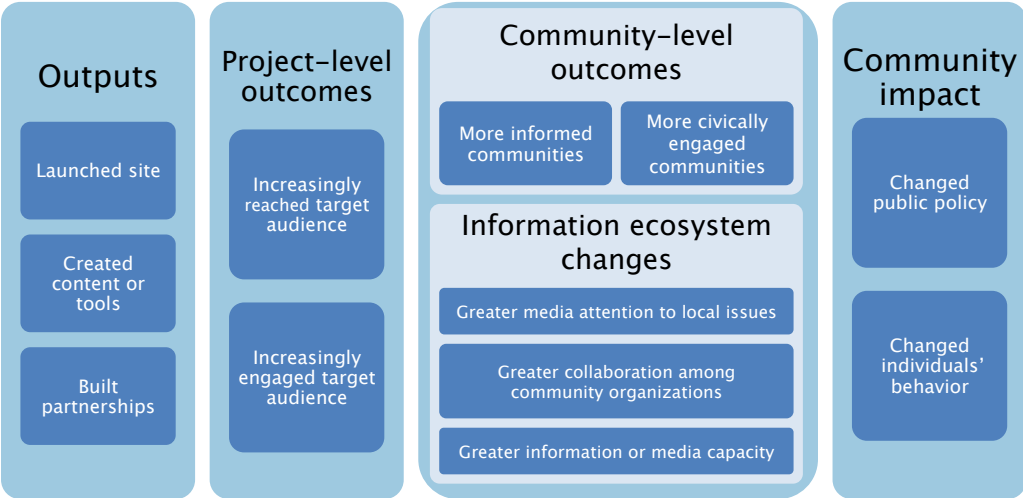
Now in use for more than a decade by corporations, educational institutions, nonprofits and others, “design thinking” offers an alternative approach that can help documentary makers think about how research and evaluation will increase the impact of their projects. Pioneered by design firm IDEO, this approach conceptualizes production as human-centered, iterative, and solution-focused. The design thinking process shares many values with documentary practice—it is centered on storytelling, and anthropological approaches to culture and craft.

As reimaged for social issue documentary, design thinking steps might include:

- *Define the project’s brief*—design thinking aims to identify new solutions. What problem does the film solve?
- *Design with users*—design thinking is user-centered. Surveys, interviews and observation before production can help to reveal how users will put a documentary project to work in policy, education and civic settings.
- *Build the production team*—design thinking is multidisciplinary, and so is filmmaking. Documentary filmmakers must think collaboratively; involve users, stakeholders, researchers, developers at each stage.
- *Prototype*—design thinking is iterative. Filmmakers should road test storyboards, short videos, campaigns with users to think through how their campaign and platforms will help them meet their mission.
- *Understand limits*—design thinking includes a keen awareness of constraints. Doc makers should consider the desirability, feasibility, and viability of their film or campaign, and how long each phase will take.
- *Evaluate, and then iterate*—design thinking relies on both qualitative and quantitative measures to determine if a design solution is working, or should be retooled.

In addition to a helpful framework, the design thinking field offers a number of useful tools for brainstorming, conducting user-focused research, low-cost, and hands-on prototyping of not just products but interactive processes. (See the resources section in Appendix IV for related references.)

A similar logic is evident in parallel efforts to pair strategic design with evaluation for media producers. For example, in 2011, the Knight Foundation published *IMPACT: A Practical Guide to Evaluating Community Information Projects*, which offers producers of multiplatform local news projects a step-by-step guide to impact assessment, including instructions for identifying mission and goals, understanding the project’s “theory of change,” identifying target audiences and stakeholders, refining the purpose and key questions for evaluation, tracking metrics and outcomes, and communicating evaluation findings. The report also provides a helpful rubric for identifying the project’s “logic model” —including resources, key outputs, activities, and short- and long-term outcomes.



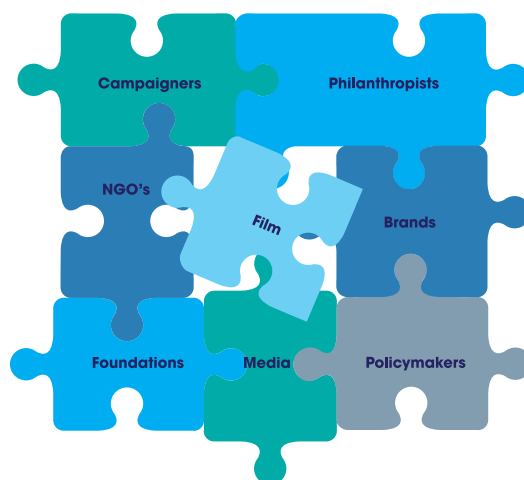
The Knight Foundation’s *Impact: A Practical Guide for Evaluating Community Information Projects* offers a framework for local online news outlets to plan and evaluate their projects.

*Assessment of Documentaries’ Role in Network-Building and Field-Building*

Impact evaluations are often conducted on a project-by-project basis, with a focus on how films affect individuals or civic outcomes. However, more attention is now being paid to the ecosystem in which such films operate—and how different support organizations and allies can help films reinforce or connect with larger movements, or invent new capacities within the field of documentary production. Methods of tracking this kind of impact may include gathering evidence of effective collaborations between the filmmakers and advocacy or civil society organizations; knowledge-sharing among users and stakeholders that is prompted or supported by the filmmakers; the uptake and adaptation of shared practices, spaces, and tools, as well as the leveraging of resources.



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Channel 4 BRITDOC Foundation

Both outreach organization Active Voice, and the BRITDOC foundation—which commissioned *End of the Line* case study—are examining the broader ecosystem of organizations that surround social issue documentaries.

Networks of advocates and stakeholders can form both online and offline, with face-to-face activities serving to build and strengthen bonds and deepen both understanding and activism. Active Voice, an outreach organization specializing in social change media strategies, is testing a model “Ecosystem of Change” to evaluate the impact of social issue media within this context of funders, stakeholders, filmmakers, policy-shapers and advocates.

High-impact social documentary projects stand to serve as incubators for media practices on rising platforms—laboratories in which users have the opportunity to develop shared rules and methods for civic dialogue, information exchange, or community-building. Tracking the uptake, evolution, and replication of such models helps to build templates that enable filmmakers and stakeholders to emulate successful initiatives and learn from failures. Creating shared categories of assessment and transparent processes for sharing outcomes can be a powerful tool for transforming the impact of projects across the field. Such efforts are documented in a 2009 report by FSG Social Impact Advisors, *Breakthroughs in Shared Measurement and Social Impact*, which highlights efforts to standardize evaluation processes and categories in the nonprofit sector. Researchers in adjacent fields are also examining innovative networking models—for example, the Monitor Institute’s 2011 report, *Connected Citizens: The Power, Peril and Potential of Networks* examines a variety of “network-centric” advocacy and media campaigns; the 2010 book *The Networked Nonprofit: Connecting With Social Media To Drive Change* examines how advocacy and community organizations are combining social media with offline organizing to build and deploy social capital.

## CASE STUDIES

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In order to test both established and rising evaluation methods against real-world examples, we have conducted six multi-year case studies of successful documentary films with robust engagement campaigns. The common objective of these films is to produce positive social change through strategic media projects with documentary films at the core. All of these award-winning multiplatform projects were intended to create public awareness and frame civic discourse, engaged stakeholders and partners early and expanded these relationships as opportunities arose, were broadcast and/or shown in festivals; and produced resources for long-term use by educators, advocates or policymakers.

Our assessment methods included content analysis, tracking of offline and online responses to the films and associated campaigns, and interviews with filmmakers and funders. This research was complicated by the fact that standard evaluation methods do not yet exist, and filmmakers are not currently systematically collecting impact data. Filmmakers and funders alike found the process of assembling the case studies informative in and of itself, as they lacked appropriate protocols.

Have the films produced social changes, and if so, what kind? In order to find out, we collected data related to the following impact categories (see Appendix I for our evaluation framework). This process in turn helped to determine how and whether the films had fulfilled their intended social mission:

- **Quality**—*Associated goals*: Produce a high-quality film that is relevant, factually sound, aesthetically striking, and technically sophisticated.
- **Reach**—*Associated goals*: Reach broad audiences, target key stakeholders and publics.
- **Engagement**—*Associated goals*: Encourage interaction with the film beyond simple viewership to stimulate learning, debate and action.
- **Influence**—*Associated goals*: Make an issue visible or change the frame in which it is publicly discussed, for the purpose of reaching influentials, changing practice and policy, rectifying injustices, and surfacing solutions.
- **Network building**—*Associated goals*: Create infrastructure to foster new coalitions, connect publics, advocates and institutions via shared tools, platforms, and standards.

The longer case studies are below, in Appendix II. Below is a comparison of the six films, and associated takeaways.

FILM	MAKERS	SUBJECT	ISSUES	TARGETS	GOALS
<b>A LION IN THE HOUSE</b> 225 minutes 2006	Steven Bognar and Julia Reichert	Racially and economically diverse young people with cancer, their families and caregivers	Health care equity, Survivorship, Pediatric, end-of-life care	General public, Health care professionals, Service organizations	Collaborations among caregivers, educators, families, young people, etc.
<b>IMPACT</b> Launched with a two-night PBS broadcast, the project became a node for expanded collaborative local/regional/national services network and professional training resources.					
<b>LIONESS</b> 83 minutes 2008	Daria Sommers and Meg McLagan	U.S. military women in combat	Gender equity	General public, Military personnel, Advocates, Policy makers	Legislation, policy change
<b>IMPACT</b> The film became a tool for veterans health care and advocacy organizations. It was instrumental in the passage of the Women Veterans Healthcare Improvement Act (2010) and entered military policy deliberations about the repeal of the ban on women in combat.					
<b>NOT IN OUR TOWN</b> Multiple formats 1995-2011	Patrice O'Neill	Racial, ethnic, gender-based hate violence	Positive community response	General public, Community groups, Policymakers, Law enforcement	Demonstrate and circulate, share positive examples
<b>IMPACT</b> A multiplatform initiative, which reaches diverse audiences, highlights community-building practices that bridge differing opinions, and informs the training of educators, law enforcement officials, and civic leaders.					

FILM	MAKERS	SUBJECT	ISSUES	TARGETS	GOALS
<b>OUT IN THE SILENCE</b> 65 minutes 2009	Joe Wilson and Dean Hamer	Confronting homophobia in a small town	Gender equity	General public, Gay teens, Policy makers	Support LGBT needs in rural areas and small towns
<b>IMPACT</b> Regional broadcast and screenings grew into a national campaign. The project stimulated a national network of LGBT and civil rights support organizations serving small towns, with special focus on engaging young people.					
<b>STATE OF FEAR: THE TRUTH ABOUT TERRORISM</b> 94 minutes 2008	Pamela Yates, Paco de Onís, Peter Kinoy.	Terrorist activity and civil liberties	Civil liberties and restorative justice	General audiences in U.S., Peru and internationally; Human rights advocacy groups	Highlight the concept of transitional justice, Support human rights advocacy campaigns
<b>IMPACT</b> This multiplatform local/global project was instrumental in the Peruvian movement for restorative justice and became a resource for human rights activists internationally.					
<b>THE LINE</b> 24 minutes 2010	Nancy Schwartzman	Communication in sexual relationships	Consent and communication, Violence prevention	Young men and women, Violence prevention, professionals, Educators	Increased communication, New behaviors and practices
<b>IMPACT</b> The film and its resources circulate through festivals, campus screenings and feminist social networks internationally. Professional and educational organizations are incorporating <i>The Line</i> in violence-prevention training and orientation programs.					



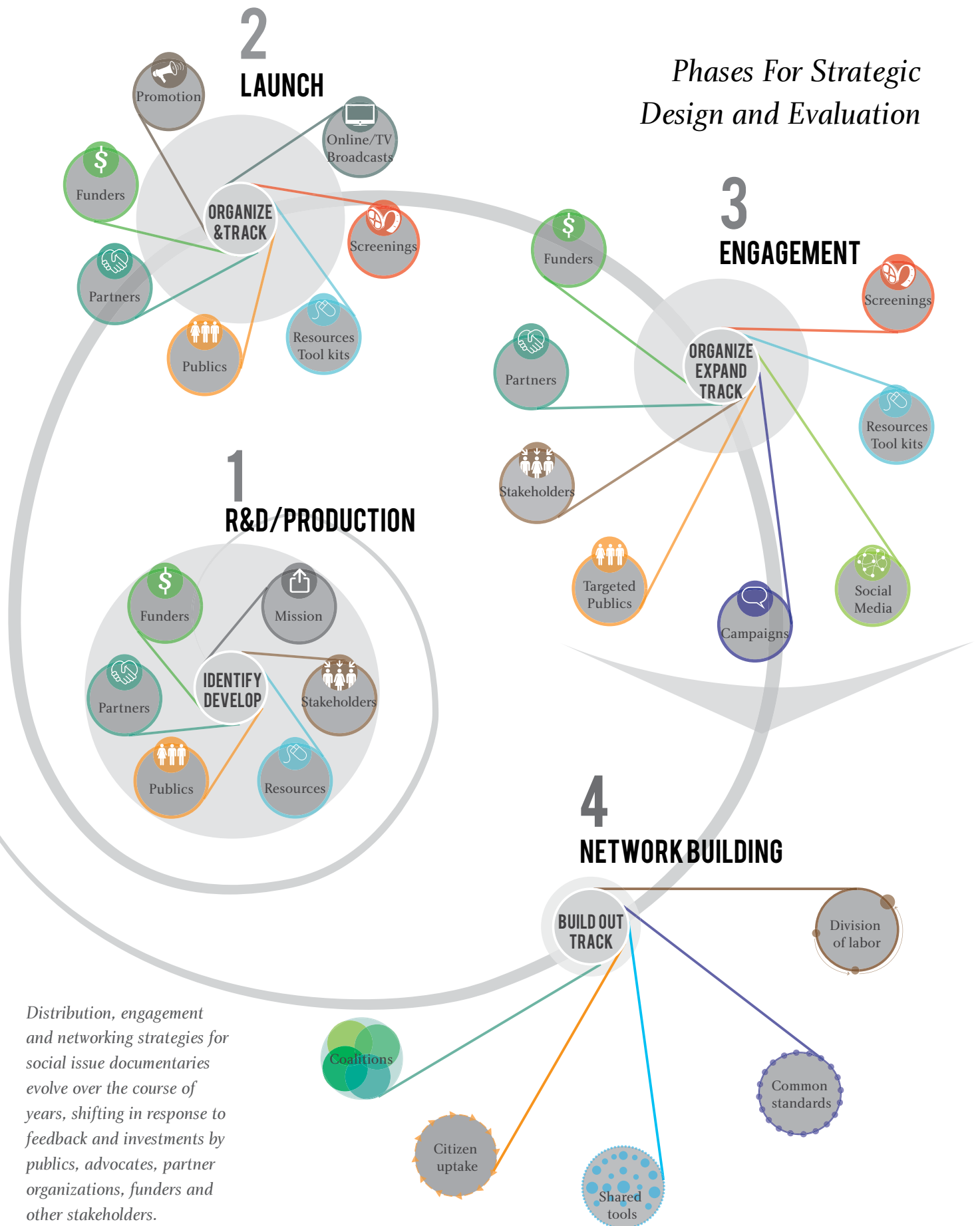
This is a diverse group of projects, spearheaded by filmmakers representing a range of experience, audiences, and issues. Nonetheless, this analysis indicates that social issue documentaries embedded in strategic campaigns evolve in four general phases: R&D/Production, Launch, Engagement and Network Building. Social documentary campaigns take at least three years to develop through their phases—sometimes much longer—as filmmakers focus their stories, expand partnerships, and identify needs. Research and evaluation are central to each of these phases; while filmmakers often see assessment as an onerous add-on, it's actually an intrinsic element for success.

As the graphic on the next page suggests, assessment processes can serve a multitude of purposes over the course of a project:

- During R&D as a tool to better understand how a film or campaign might best represent and reach intended publics;
- In early production phases, as a tool for stakeholder engagement and prototyping;
- In the launch phase, as an idea-generator for engagement and action campaigns;
- During the engagement phase, as a warning sign or beacon of new opportunities;
- Towards the tail end of distribution, when new uses, campaigns and publics might emerge and coalesce into networks, as indicated by:
  - the formation of coalitions around the issue that the film addresses
  - uptake of the film and associated campaign materials by citizens, who take it upon themselves to share, amplify or build upon the film's messages and content
  - the creation and/or circulation of shared tools, such as petitions, listservs, DIY screening instructions
  - the creation of common standards, such as a shared hashtag, shifts in professional practice, or a common vocabulary to describe the issue
  - division of labor among stakeholders and partners in distributing, publicizing, and advocating.

As the *Connected Citizens report* notes, "To grow a network is to create new relationships and deepen existing ones. This happens when people come together, online and in person, in inviting environments where there are opportunities for good things to emerge. ...Designing for serendipity means creating spaces that focus more on people and less on specific results. Such environments welcome people and make it easy to connect with others and with new ideas and resources. They are designed to optimize for good fortune, increasing the likelihood that people will bump into others sharing similar interests—or goals."

## Phases For Strategic Design and Evaluation



*Distribution, engagement and networking strategies for social issue documentaries evolve over the course of years, shifting in response to feedback and investments by publics, advocates, partner organizations, funders and other stakeholders.*

## CASE STUDY TAKEAWAYS

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### *Social issue documentaries evolve over time, in response to obstacles, opportunities, new technologies, and events*

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These case studies reveal the shift over the last fifteen years from an understanding of documentary films as sources of reliable information on hidden injustices to central nodes embedded in strategic campaigns designed to inform, motivate and engage viewers as active citizens.

Taken together, they reveal uneven adaptations to digital technologies in a transforming environment. *State of Fear*, *Not in Our Town* and *A Lion in the House*, for example, were produced by traditional longform social issue documentarians whose early films and outreach plans were limited to broadcast and non-theatrical circulation. They are now utilizing digital technologies to extend the range and variety of tools and services. *The Line*, on the other hand, was produced by a digital native who conceived her film as a networked project in a viral environment.

Audience engagement is the process of moving a film's audience from passive viewing to active involvement with the issue represented. It is what happens after audiences see the film and want to use their energy, resources, ideas, connections, or time to make a difference

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Emily Verellen, *From Distribution to Audience Engagement*

*State of Fear* demonstrates such shifts in assumptions about how documentaries can and should function as advocacy tools. The film was produced by a team whose first film on human rights violations in a Latin American country, *When the Mountains Tremble*, was made in 1985. *When the Mountains Tremble* was screened at Sundance, broadcast on PBS, and circulated on VHS to schools and advocacy organizations, establishing outreach circuits that the filmmakers have honed over time. While festivals, broadcast and non-theatrical distribution continue, *State of Fear*'s 2.0 life includes an interactive website, blogs, and the ready adoption of available technologies for human rights advocates from local to international settings.

### *Successful projects feature strategic campaigns with clearly articulated goals and target audiences*

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High-impact social documentary makers have identified agents of social change relevant to their objectives and engage stakeholders early. Working in a rapidly evolving media environment and with limited resources, successful documentary filmmakers have the capacity to respond flexibly to opportunities for partnerships, funding, tool-sharing, and coalition-building, as well as to the needs of the publics and advocates they serve.

For example, *A Lion in the House* addresses health care inequity through the lens of childhood cancer. The filmmakers engaged stakeholders early on—from national organizations to local and regional service providers. This group then expanded, as agencies like the Centers for Disease Control saw the relevance and need for services. The filmmakers created links among these groups, and produced a series of training modules adopted by professional health care providers.

### *Such films serve as laboratories for civic engagement* \_\_\_\_\_

They expand accessible circuits of circulation, serving as information hubs and providing safe spaces online and offline for discussion and debate, which may model practices for civil discourse in a polarized society. As such, they are incubators of replicable models and tools for community engagement; educational and training materials for professional groups, youth, and underserved audiences; and best practices for future makers. By succeeding, they become incubators of the content, tools, and practice that contribute to fortifying the infrastructure for media- and issue-based networks.

A film may itself become an active intervention in the events it is documenting. Useful content may mobilize advocates and fortify coalition-building. A project which has activated communities or opened vistas so great as to demand another or expanded engagement phase presents a dilemma for such filmmakers. Some identify primarily as artists or journalists; others as activists. While these mission-driven filmmakers are committed to the issues addressed by their films, some may wish to move on other topics. Questions of capacity and sustainability become key:

- Has an outreach campaign strengthened the capacity of partners with the motivation and need to continue the work?
- Is there sufficient infrastructure—in terms of tools, issue networks, field-based partnerships—in place to ensure sustainability?
- How does a particular social issue film and campaign fit into larger on-going initiatives?

### *Social issue documentaries are produced and circulated within a networked media and advocacy landscape to which they, in turn, contribute as hubs for organizing, collaboration and knowledge-sharing* \_\_\_\_\_

Social issue documentary films help to weave together both online and offline networks of publics, stakeholders, and institutions:

- The *Not in Our Town* films, which inspired spontaneous uptake in towns and cities facing hate crimes, is now a hub for resources and information-sharing about inclusive community-building and discourse across boundaries.
- *Lioness* was adopted by both military health care providers and policy advocates working for official recognition of women in combat. It was screened on Capitol Hill and was instrumental in the campaign for official recognition of women's combat service. The film and its related resources serve a network of health care providers.
- *State of Fear* filmmakers participated in campaigns from local to international. The producers developed tools and programs that strengthened Peruvian NGOs advocating for the rights of Andean Indians, and expanded the film circuits of international human rights organizations

Digital technologies can network resources to strengthen local activities and underserved populations. Many of these projects have become the nodes of national networks, functioning as gathering places where information is aggregated, shared, and adapted in local communities—providing models for screenings, town hall meetings, and community-building.

*Out in the Silence* became an agent of change in the community it was filming and slowly assembled the components of a national network of support for small towns, as it evolved from a regional project into a national initiative that has stimulated a network of urban-based LGBT advocacy organizations to serve vulnerable rural and small town people.

Successful projects are participatory and circulate on multiple platforms. Digital technologies vastly expand the reach, uses and longevity of social issue documentaries, but much of the most enduring work takes place on the ground—in community screenings, professional training, in schools, etc. It is here that engagement and community-building take place. For example, *The Line* is a digital project with an extensive 2.0 website with active blogs and linked with sites around the world. At the same time, it is screened on campuses and in bars, and has been incorporated in professional training programs.

### *These projects face three major challenges—capacity, sustainability, and funding*

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Individual projects that flourish often lack the capacity to amplify their reach and extend their services. At the same time, a filmmaker may be vexed by how to ensure that a campaign, once begun, can be sustained beyond the life of a particular film. As strategically designed projects mature and enter into a networked environment, tasks such as distribution, resource development, and marketing are not necessarily the sole responsibility of the filmmaker, but may be assumed by stakeholders, outreach specialists or issue-based networks.

While foundations and government sources remain primary principal sources of support for documentary films and outreach, many filmmakers are experimenting with new economic models. In addition to online and DVD sales and Kickstarter campaigns, some projects are drawing the interest of organizations such as Impact Partners and the Skoll Foundation, which support social entrepreneurship.

The case studies revealed how an individual media project may function as the point of formation for both *ad hoc* and more enduring networks of communication and activity among individuals and organizations. They also revealed the need for:

- a standard visual vocabulary for depicting the dynamics of outreach and engagement, both offline and online— how films travel, grow networks of people and organizations, and create “ripple effects” that contribute to notable outcomes; and
- longitudinal analysis with sample timelines for metrics and models—key markers, including dates of related platform innovations are needed to track the life-cycle of a social issue documentary project over time, including duration, reach and impact.

Below, in Appendix I we offer a skeleton framework of strategic processes and data collection categories that we hope will serve as a discussion platform for makers and funders concerned with impact evaluation. The template is intended to specify what kind of evidence should be gathered over the course of the project in order to reveal impact and make visible the dynamics of engagement and network-building in order to inform strategic design at each phase. It is also intended to serve as a baseline for standardizing mixed methods data collection across multiple projects so as to strengthen the field of social documentary production.

Appendix III offers some initial efforts to visualize the formation of networks around media projects, developed collaboratively by the report’s co-author, Jessica Clark.

Clark developed the first set of graphics in conjunction with Tracy Van Slyke, for their 2010 book, *Beyond the Echo Chamber: Reshaping Politics Through Networked Progressive Media*. The second spread, which examines the ripple effect of the multiplatform documentary *Mapping Main Street*, was developed in conjunction with Sue Schardt of the Association of Independents in Radio for a report titled *Spreading the Zing: Reimagining Public Media Through the Makers Quest 2.0*. They are intended to suggest how the dynamics of various social issue documentaries might be modeled and visualized over time.

# APPENDIX I

## HOW SHOULD FUNDERS AND FILMMAKERS INTEGRATE STRATEGIC DESIGN AND EVALUATION?

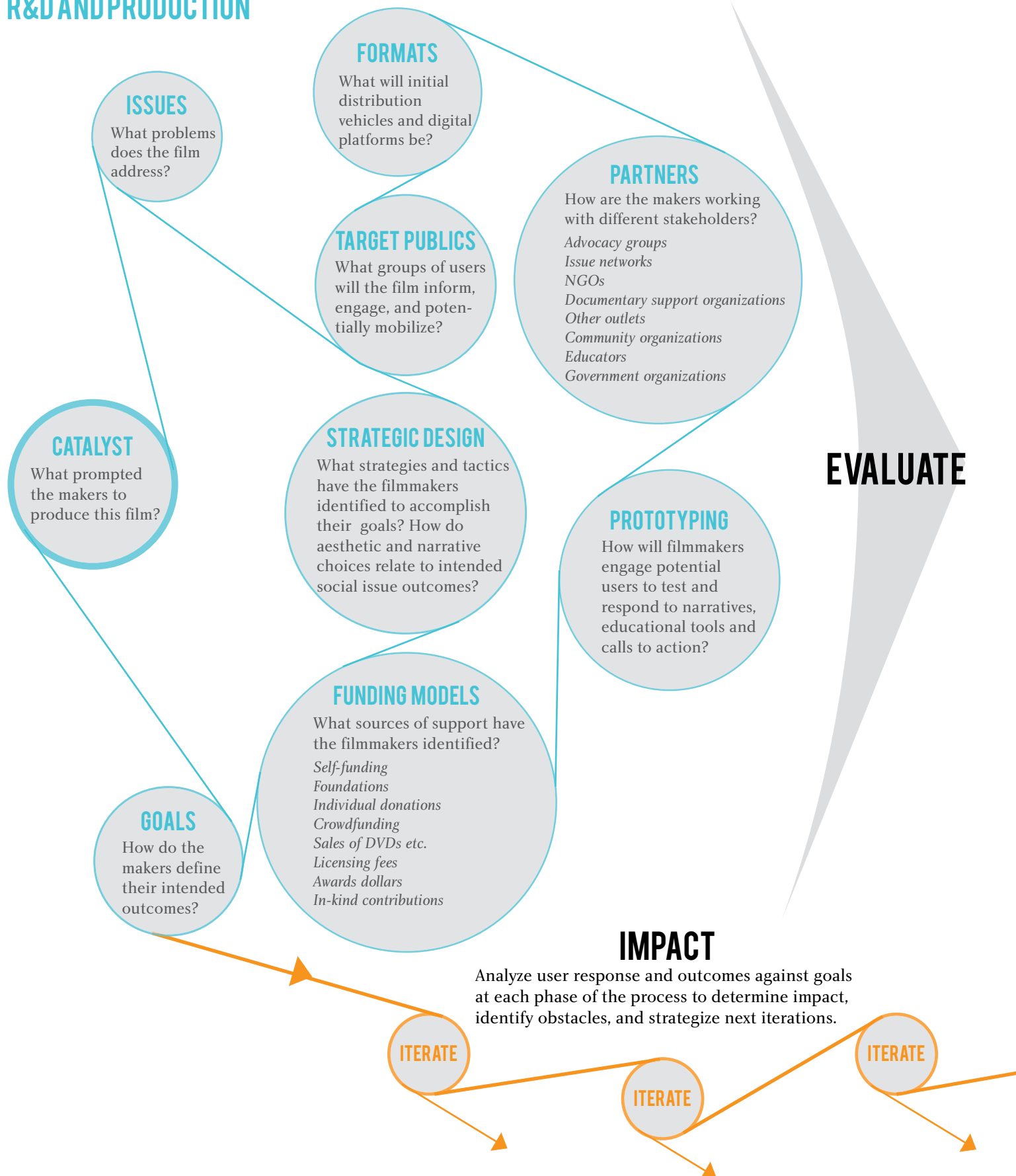
### *A sample process*

- Define your mission.
- Define your agents of social change and stakeholders.
- Define, research, and connect with your project's potential publics and associated advocates. Most filmmakers have a general idea of their target audiences, which they tend to reach through partners, advocacy organizations, or other intermediaries. From this base add more diverse audiences and users, including those who represent races, ages and even ideological positions outside of the expected audiences for the film in order to gauge the film's potential for stirring debate and speaking beyond the choir.
- Define, research, and connect with your project's potential networks from the start of the project; be open to new opportunities.
- That research will help you to choose and develop appropriate platforms and engagement strategies, and diversify users. Match your evaluation plan to those choices and your mission.
- Track and evaluate responses to the film and campaign using data collection categories below.
- Evaluate at each phase, and iterate as results suggest.
- Tell the story of your project not only to funders and stakeholders, but to users.

Feedback Capture Grid, from the *D.School Bootcamp Bootleg*, which offers tools and strategies for design thinking.



## R&D AND PRODUCTION





# Strategic Design for Social Issue Documentaries

## PROJECT ROLLOUT

### QUALITY

#### Associated goals

Producing high-quality film that is relevant, factually sound, aesthetically striking, and technically sophisticated.

#### Collect evidence of

- \* National/international broadcast
- \* Major reviews by critics
- \* Markers of approval from influential members of documentary ecology
- \* Festival selections
- \* Awards

### ENGAGEMENT

#### Associated goals

Encourage interaction with the film beyond simple viewership.

#### Collect evidence of

- \* Breadth and quality of both online and offline conversation
- \* Details of targeted screenings and associated discussions, panels, etc
- \* Social media usage
- \* Creation of associated content by users
- \* Responses to calls to action
- \* Creation and distribution of associated toolkits
- \* Redistribution by users

### REACH

#### Associated goals

Reaching the broadest possible audience, targeting key stakeholders and publics.

#### Collect quantitative measures of

- \* Broadcast
- \* Theatrical distribution
- \* Screenings
- \* Sales of DVDs
- \* Streaming media

### INFLUENCE

#### Associated goals

Making an issue visible or changing the frame in which it is publicly discussed, to reach influentials, change practice and policy, and surface solutions.

#### Collect evidence of

- \* Use of film in advocacy or policy settings
- \* Spread of frame introduced by film—occurrence of key terms, shift in discussion among publics
- \* Mentions of film by key stakeholders or opponents
- \* Accelerated pace of press/online mentions
- \* Significant reporting on related issues that references film as a catalyst or turning point
- \* Reports by users of increased awareness, associated behavior or attitude shifts
- \* Copycat projects—replicating topic, aesthetics, message, approach

### NETWORK BUILDING

#### Associated goals

Creation of online /offline infrastructure that uses the film as a platform for connecting publics, advocates and institutions concerned with the issue at hand.

#### Collect evidence of

- Use of film by existing advocacy and stakeholder networks organized around particular issues, institutions, or goals
- \* Responses to intentional creation of issue networks by filmmakers, and continued use of those networks
- \* Creation of linking devices—hashtags, maps, etc.—that help users track the film & campaign across multiple contexts
- \* Unique collaborations between organizations prompted by use of the film
- \* Repeated collaboration among organizations, signifying strengthening of network ties

ITERATE

# APPENDIX II

## A LION IN THE HOUSE

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*Producers/directors*

Steven Bognar and Julia Reichert

225 minutes, 2006.

[www.pbs.org/independentlens/lioninthehouse](http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/lioninthehouse); [www.survivoralert.org](http://www.survivoralert.org); [www.mylion.org](http://www.mylion.org)

### Overview

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*A Lion in the House* is a four-hour documentary series that follows five racially and economically diverse young people, along with their families and caregivers, over six years as they confront pediatric hematological cancer and the after-effects of treatment at Cincinnati Children's Hospital. The series, which identifies health care professionals as key agents of social change, is the centerpiece of a strategic campaign conceived as part of a social movement for equitable and inclusive health care.

The film was broadcast nationally over two nights on the public television series *Independent Lens*, accompanied by a national, regional and local outreach campaign that brought together service providers, local television stations, and partner organizations. Conceived as a “convener of publics” including health care professionals, families, and health educators, the project has become a resource for a network of professionals and advocates. It has demonstrated how a compelling narrative and well-organized campaign can give visibility to a difficult subject and mobilize a network of support.

### Formats

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*A Lion in the House* is a four-hour documentary series available through Orange Frazer Press ([www.orangefrazer.com](http://www.orangefrazer.com)). The campaign also includes a series of training modules for health care professionals distributed on DVD by Aquarius Health Care Media ([www.aquariusproductions.com/lion/](http://www.aquariusproductions.com/lion/)).

### Issues

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The project highlights underrepresented aspects of childhood cancer care, including

- class and racial health disparities;
- survivorship; and
- pediatric end-of-life bereavement care.

## Catalyst

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Dr. Robert Arceci, Chief Medical Oncologist at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, approached veteran independent filmmakers Steven Bogner and Julia Reichert about making a documentary film about the human experiences of health care providers, families and children dealing with childhood cancer. The purpose was to bring a painful and rarely-discussed subject into public awareness and contribute to holistic, inclusive health care for this population.

## Goals

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The primary objectives were to:

- make childhood cancer and its impact on diverse families and health care providers visible to a general public;
- trigger discussion and actions leading to improved care and stronger support systems, especially for families faced with social and economic challenges; and
- foster collaborations among caregivers, educators, media professionals, families and young people.

## Target Publics

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*A Lion in the House* was designed for general audiences on public television, as well as:

- healthcare professionals, identified as key agents of social change;
- organizations providing services to underserved communities; and
- patients and their families.

## Strategic Design

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Reichert and Bogner produce films in a collaborative process with partners who help them establish clear goals, identify audiences, and develop effective strategies for diverse audiences and users. In the case of *A Lion in the House*, they:

- established credibility by associating with trusted organizations;
- created a federated structure by working on national, regional and local levels with non-profit organizations that have many chapters, public television stations, educators, and community-based service producers; and
- identified professional organizations with the capacity to carry the work forward.

*A Lion in the House* was intended for television broadcast, festivals, educational distribution, and community screenings. It is the centerpiece of a strategic national, regional, and local outreach campaign that engages a network of

partner organizations and provides resources, educational tools, and websites, including special sites targeted to young adult survivors and youth-based community service projects. The series was broadcast on *Independent Lens* over two consecutive nights in two-hour segments.

A related series of educational modules on survivorship, end-of-life care, school issues, sibling stories, nurse/patient/family relationships, and spirituality are included in for-credit curricula for health care professionals. (At present only the “Survivorship” module is available for Continuing Medical Education credit.)

### Partners

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- American Academy of Pediatrics, an organization of 60, 000 pediatricians seeking to improve childhood healthcare: [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org)
- Association of Oncology Social Work, a nonprofit organization providing psychosocial services to individuals with cancer and their loved ones: [www.aosw.org](http://www.aosw.org)
- Children’s Cause for Cancer Advocacy, an organization seeking to expand research and treatment options for childhood cancer: [www.childrenscause.org](http://www.childrenscause.org)
- Intercultural Cancer Council, an organization seeking to relieve the unequal burden of cancer for minorities: <http://iccnetwork.org>
- Lance Armstrong Foundation (LAF), which provides forums and resources for individuals fighting cancer: [www.livestrong.org](http://www.livestrong.org)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which provides information concerning health: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

### Funding Model

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Reichert and Bognar’s mission-driven work is supported primarily by foundations, government agencies, and non-profit organizations. The budget for *A Lion in the House* was 2.6 million dollars (\$1.3 million for production and \$1.3 million for outreach).

Principal production and outreach funding for *Lion* was provided by ITVS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), and the Lance Armstrong Foundation (LAF). Sales of institutional DVDs and training modules have grossed approximately \$16,825.

### Obstacles & Responses

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**Topic:** This is a painful and disturbing topic.

**Response:** The filmmakers helped to make the topic accessible through compelling human stories with uncertain outcomes, marked by love and courage.

**Partners:** Most partner organizations that agreed to bring outreach programs to young people did not know how to reach those populations effectively.

**Response:** The filmmakers recognized the need to carefully evaluate the capacity of partners.

**Training:** Many health care and social service professionals are inadequately prepared to meet the complex needs of young cancer patients and their families.

**Response:** The *Lion* project responded by bringing the film to professional conferences, producing curriculum and training modules, and enabling local public TV stations to convene local and regional health care and social service providers in conjunction with broadcast.

**Diversity:** The homogeneity of partner organizations was contrary to one of the project's main goals.

**Response:** The filmmakers identified partners committed to inclusion and requiring diverse representation in national, regional and local initiatives.

**Sustainability:** The filmmakers sought to establish the principles and tools of the project firmly enough so that its work could continue after they had gone on to make films on other topics related to social justice.

**Response:** Strong institutional partners such as the Centers for Disease Control, the Lance Armstrong Foundation, and the Children's Hospice and Palliative Care Coalition have the capacity to carry the work forward.

**Creative control:** For Reichert and Bognar, like many independent filmmakers, creative control of their work is a *sine qua non*. Some of the organizations that provided media funding for this project expected to have strong creative input into content and style.

**Response:** Reichert and Bognar responded to such claims over content and style with patience, as well as with thoughtful discussion, rough-cut screenings and collaborative opportunities.

## Impact

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### Summary

*A Lion in the House* was a response to two perceived problems: (1) lack of public awareness of the nature and challenges of pediatric cancer, and (2) health care inequities.

The film project stimulated organizations such as the Centers for Disease Control and hospice care providers to address the needs of pediatric cancer patients, their families, and health care providers. By dramatizing human experiences and providing trusted resources, the project catalyzed advocates to share information, form new partnerships and expanded their services.

The five years of filming and seven years of outreach indicate how social issue documentaries and their campaigns evolve over time, in response to opportunities and challenges.

### **Evidence of Quality**

*A Lion in the House* premiered at the 2006 Sundance Film Festival. It was broadcast on PBS's *Independent Lens* on June 21 and 22, 2006, and subsequently earned a Primetime Emmy Award. Film critics chose it as one of the top ten documentaries of 2006.

The film travelled the international film festival circuit (New Zealand, Canada, the International Documentary Film Festival in Amsterdam, BritDoc, etc.) and received multiple honors, including:

- Best Documentary Nominee, Film Independents' Spirit Awards
- Special Jury Prize, Full Frame Documentary Film Festival
- Audience Award, Toronto Hot Docs Film Festival

### **Reach**

*A Lion in the House* reached two million viewers through its PBS broadcast in June 2006. In addition, there have been approximately 10 purchases of the full institutional DVD and approximately 60 purchases of individual modules.

Reichert and Bognar call themselves “conveners” who pull together a variety of collaborators, from well-funded national organizations to regional and local community-based service providers.

### **Engagement**

Reichert and Bognar engaged health care professionals by producing clips for specialized audiences and participating in hundreds of conferences, meetings, and symposia over seven years; distributing free DVDs; and introducing training modules into professional education.

ITVS provided a resource-rich website that drew 100,000 hits immediately following broadcast. The ITVS Community Engagement Campaign and Community Media Productions, Inc. together organized strategic outreach, including ITVS-hosted community screenings, and grants to local public TV stations that became trusted hubs for community health care and service providers and members of the public.

Between April and June 2006, PBS's website for *A Lion In the House* ([www.pbs.org/independentlens/lioninthehouse](http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/lioninthehouse)) received 3,525,412 page views and 1,581,880 unique views, and ITVS's website ([www.itvs.org/outreach/lioninthehouse](http://www.itvs.org/outreach/lioninthehouse)) received 69,001 page views. In addition, 20,796 resources, including an annotated list of national resource organizations, information about cancer health disparities, and a community service opportunity for youth groups were downloaded.

### **Influence**

So far, *A Lion in the House* has advanced palliative and hospice care for young people with cancer and put the needs of young cancer patients and their families on the agendas of the CDC, LAF, and palliative care givers.

In addition, *A Lion in the House* modules are now embedded in the curriculum of the End-of-Life Nursing Education Consortium (ELNEC).

### **Network Building**

An overarching goal of the project was to fortify a holistic, inclusive health care system that responds to psychological and spiritual needs, as well as medical issues. This was achieved by:

- bringing representatives of national organizations of health care professionals, service providers and support groups together under the aegis of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for the first time, thus articulating a field of childhood cancer treatment;
- creating national, regional, and local coalitions of health care and service providers through a strategic outreach plan; and
- producing education modules for health care professionals.

Professional organizations such as the American Academy of Pediatrics, Association of Oncology Social Work, and Children's Cause for Cancer Advocacy became stakeholders, as they were drawn into the process of shaping the film and its uses. They later provided an informal outreach network through local and regional members.

Production and outreach are interwoven activities that ensure stakeholder engagement and contribute to the usefulness of the film. Co-producer ITVS provided funding and conducted an extensive outreach campaign. The Intercultural Cancer Council, which shares the filmmakers' concern with socio-economic inequities in health care, was a key partner. Two other early partners, the Lance Armstrong Foundation and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, supported the production and distribution of the series and professional-training modules. Later partnerships extended outreach to Spanish-speaking communities, youth service organizations, and health care ministries.

## THE LINE

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*Producer/Director*

Nancy Schwartzman.

24 minutes, 2009.

[www.wherisyourline.org](http://www.wherisyourline.org)

### Overview

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This “pro-sex, anti-sexual violence” project from producer/director Nancy Schwartzman addresses the need for communication among young people in a highly sexualized and increasingly permissive society. An extensive outreach campaign centered around a 30-minute film based on one young woman’s experience provides language, information, context and spaces for articulating terms for mutually respectful relationships.

The campaign, which is aimed at men as well as women, asks users to engage the question, “Where is your line?” The film has been screened on college campuses, at festivals internationally, and by professional organizations. The resources provided by the project and the conversations it generates circulate virally through feminist social networks internationally. This is an example of how a social issue documentary that employs digital tools for knowledge-sharing and community-building can inspire social change on the most intimate, personal levels.

Professional and educational organizations are incorporating *The Line* and its resources in violence-prevention training and orientation programs.

### Formats

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*The Line* is a 24-minute documentary accompanied by a website. It is available both through streaming and on DVD. It utilizes a variety of social networking platforms including Twitter, Facebook, and Tumblr.

### Issues

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*The Line* addresses issues of:

- consent and communication in sexual relationships;
- violence prevention; and
- gender equality.

### Catalyst

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The project was triggered by the director’s personal traumatic experience and her decision to use this experience as a springboard to open a universal



conversation about a common but rarely discussed reality, and to counter mainstream media's misrepresentations of sex and sexual assault.

## Goals

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The principal aims were:

- to frame and spark public conversation around sexual health and consent, in language that is accessible to people from diverse backgrounds and perspectives and includes a wide spectrum of violence, coercion, and assault;
- to contribute to an emerging movement with the capacity to promote open discussion and effective, positive responses;
- to embed *The Line* in college campus programming; and
- to create accessible viral media with multiple points of access.

## Target Publics

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*The Line* was designed to reach general audiences in the U.S. and internationally, but it was rejected by television programmers for its explicit content.

Specific targeted audiences were:

- young women and college-age students;
- mentors, teachers, administrators, and advisors;
- violence prevention professionals; and
- young men and women activists.

## Strategic Design

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The film was produced in tandem with an outreach campaign that explores universal questions of trust, respect and communication in sexual relationships, through the lens of one young woman's story. Composed of interviews, verité footage, and reenactments, the film invites discussion about the terms of intimate relationships and personal safety in a changing social environment.

*The Line* was designed for distribution in educational and community settings, and for use by activists addressing complex issues surrounding healthy sexual relationships. DVD and digital download distribution is handled by the Media Education Foundation. *The Line* Campaign, [www.whereisyourline.org](http://www.whereisyourline.org), is a hub for information and exchange that features a study guide, resource list, newsletter, and group blog, and uses several social networking platforms including Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, YouTube, and Tumblr.

The strategic campaign took shape during a lengthy production process, during which Schwartzman worked with groups responding to gender violence. This allowed her to participate in the culture of the young people who would be her primary audience and to identify the networks through which the film and campaign would travel.

The content and style of the film (an intense personal drama with MTV-style editing) invites young people to identify with the story and share their own experiences, especially in face-to-face environments. Meanwhile, the campaign provides digital platforms and resources for safe discussion and social networking.

The strategic launch of the film through international film festival circuits was intended to give the film visibility and credibility, and highlighted the universality of its issues and cross-cultural reach. At the same time, campus screenings and discussions demonstrated the effectiveness of the project to administrators and students with the capacity to embed *The Line* in their anti-gender violence programs. Finally, partnerships were formed in order to promote and amplify the message of the film, expand outreach to new groups, and conduct training programs, as well as to provide incubation sites for replicable workshops.

## Partners

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Two key goals were to broaden the spectrum of organizations that recognize the relevance of *The Line* to their agendas, and to demonstrate the importance of men's involvement in violence prevention. Significant partners include:

- Men Can Stop Rape, an organization seeking to educate men to prevent violence against women: [www.mencanstoprape.org](http://www.mencanstoprape.org)
- Hollaback, an international group seeking to end street harassment: [www.ihollaback.org](http://www.ihollaback.org)
- Planned Parenthood NYC, which provides reproductive and sexual health services: [www.plannedparenthood.org/nyc/](http://www.plannedparenthood.org/nyc/)
- The Pixel Project, which seeks to end violence against women through the use of social media: [www.thepixelproject.net](http://www.thepixelproject.net)
- National Sexual Violence Resource Center, which provides information, resources, and services for all types of sexual violence: [www.nsivrc.org](http://www.nsivrc.org)
- AEquitas, The Prosecutors Resource on Violence Against Women, which seeks to improve safety of victims and accountability of perpetrators of violence: [www.aequitasresource.org](http://www.aequitasresource.org)

## Funding Model

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The funding model consisted of grants, donations, and DVD sales. The total budget was \$159,000; production and outreach were \$85,000 and \$74,000

respectively. Major funders include the Fledgling Fund (\$72,000) and the Playboy Foundation (\$2,000). Production was also supported by individual donations (\$24,000), fees for work-in-progress screenings and campus appearances, and DVD sales (\$15,000 from January 2010 to January 2011), as well as unpaid labor and out-of-pocket-expenses.

As *The Line* evolves into a full-fledged campaign, Schwartzman plans to create an independent 501(c)(3), which will be better able to attract and deploy the funding necessary to build scalable, replicable programs.

## Obstacles & Responses

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*The Line*, an intervention in a highly sexualized cultural environment, was challenged by its treatment of a difficult subject and entrenched attitudes, as well as difficulties with achieving sustainability.

**The subject:** The filmmaker faced general denial of the prevalence of sexual violence, mass media exclusion of “explicit content,” a lack of rules for social networking sites, and resistance from national fraternities and sororities.

**Response:** The film is offered on many platforms, from screenings in bars and college classes to streaming and DVD distribution, contextualized with discussion questions and other resources. Schwartzman established rules for civil conversation, and personally edits the site’s blog to shape productive discourse. Schwartzman is now fostering a relationship with a receptive national fraternity organization.

**Sustainability:** A project that represents the vision of a single person must develop practices and financial resources to ensure its growth and survival.

**Response:** Schwartzman is training a group of blog editors; conducts workshops to embed *The Line*’s methods into college orientation programs, Planned Parenthood staff training, etc.; and encourages feminist organizations to understand the potential power and reach of media to advance their agendas.

To generate more substantial funding support, *The Line* — branded and with a well-crafted message that establishes its identity and credibility — will be pitched to future funders as an organizing initiative, rather than an individual event-based film.

## Impact

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### Summary

*The Line* Campaign is an example of strategic outreach conceived in a digital environment and designed for both active face-to-face and online participation. It is actively participating in a global movement to:

- expand the spectrum of activities identified as sexually violent;

- develop strategies for responding to those activities; and
- engage institutions with the capacity to incorporate and amplify the language and tools of the campaign.

The project reaches target audiences through on-the-ground events, mainly for young adults, and online through well-established international digital feminist circuits. It is too early in this first year of experimentation to gather useful metrics or patterns of use.

Lessons learned early in the campaign are informing plans to stabilize and sustain the project by strengthening partnerships and encouraging adoption of the project by fraternities, reproductive health organizations, and other groups that serve sexually active young adults.

### Evidence of Quality

*The Line* has been accepted as a trusted resource by activists, educational institutions, and advocacy organizations.

- *The Line* was the official selection of the Flying Broom International Women's Film Festival, Ankara, Turkey; UC Davis Feminist Film Festival; International Women's Film and Arts Festival, Toronto; Filmmor International Women's Film Festival, Istanbul; International Women's Film Festival, Israel.
- It was cited as a model audience engagement project in the Fledgling Fund report, *From Distribution to Audience Engagement — Social Change Through Film* (2010).
- It was accepted as a training tool by Planned Parenthood and anti-violence activists.
- It was introduced by AEquitas at meetings in Monrovia and the Carter Presidential Center.
- [Whereisyourline.org](http://Whereisyourline.org) has been named one of the top 50 blogs for women's issues.
- *The Line* is listed among the Top 20 Feminist Twitter Feeds, as well as 80 Great Twitter Feeds for Tracking Human Rights.
- Nancy Schwartzman is an invited speaker on college campuses and at conferences, forums, and cultural centers in the U.S. and abroad.

### Reach

*The Line* campaign has provided platforms for discussion across cultures and differences of opinion, online and on the ground, from military anti-sexual violence programs and Muslim women's conferences to Facebook.

Because the film has been distributed through non-traditional channels, evidence of its reach is reflected primarily in its use by partner sites and online fans.

- Hollaback ([www.ihollaback.org](http://www.ihollaback.org)), a global organization focusing on street harassment, will launch a series of screenings in 18 cities including

Melbourne, Philadelphia, Prague and Atlanta.

- 590 DVDs were sold by Media Educational Foundation between January 2010 and March 2011. Washington State Coalition against violence recently purchased 66 kits, which include a study guide, DVD, tool kit and stickers, at \$2500.

## Engagement

*The Line's* message and tools are amplified by packaging and marketing through national organizations; the participation of young people is fueled by social networking, especially Twitter and the feminist blogosphere. Digital tools also stimulate meet-ups, conferences, and other on-the-ground gatherings.

- Twitter is the campaign's main source of news-sharing and activist engagement, with 2,221 active followers including activists, bloggers, journalists, and NGOs. Tweets may drive traffic to the website, as was the case of a blogger whose witty Superbowl tweet produced a large spike in activity.
- Facebook, with 1,321 fans, is useful primarily for sharing blog posts, announcing events, and highlighting notable comments.
- [Whereisyourline.org](http://Whereisyourline.org) is a daily blog that registers 4,900 visitors monthly (77% are new visitors), and has an active group of ten contributing bloggers. Since launching in September 2009, the site has registered a 524% increase in traffic, and a 100% increase since February 2010. In January 2011, 3,626 visitors were from the US, followed by Canada (178), UK (157), India (137), and Australia, Germany Pakistan and Turkey. According to Google Analytics, 56% of traffic was generated by referring sites, 20% from search engines, and 24% was direct traffic. Reblogs appear on [Feministing.com](http://Feministing.com), Jezebel.com, [Bust.com](http://Bust.com), MTV.com, the Fledgling Fund blog, and others.
- Pixel tweets resources countering violence against women globally.

## Influence

Schwartzman describes herself as “a mentor, a voice,” rather than a leader of the “sex positive” anti-violence movement. Her strategy for making an impact in a noisy media environment is to establish a distinctive “voice” and attitude, and to court the blogosphere by attracting “smart, sharp, opinionated” people.

*The Line* has been covered by print media (*Ms. Magazine*, Jezebel, etc.) and blog posts (*Bust.com*, MTV.com, etc.). Internationally, it inspired “The Line Campaign” of Australian Government and the UK anti-violence movement’s “Where is your line?” video.

## Network Building

*The Line* campaign provides trusted content, platforms and tools for a digital network of the feminist anti-violence movement, and has modeled bridge-building initiatives across cultures. It strengthens a growing movement by introducing language and tools accessible to people of diverse backgrounds and providing replicable training models to professional organizations.

As noted above, Schwartzman has worked with a variety of existing networks to amplify the film and related issues. For example:

- Men Can Stop Rape expands reach to Department of Justice and the U.S. Navy.
- Planned Parenthood NYC responds to politically conservative efforts to narrowly construe “rape” by redefining sexual assault. It will incorporate *The Line* in events on issues of consent, violence prevention, and empowerment to establish boundaries. The goal is to create a replicable model for such events.
- National Sexual Violence Resource Center links *The Line* to an extensive database and with women’s and sexual violence centers.

## LIONESSE

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*Producers/Directors*

**Meg McLagan and Daria Sommers**

83 minutes, 2008.

[www.lionesthefilm.com](http://www.lionesthefilm.com); [www.pbs.org/independentlens/lioness](http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/lioness)

### Overview

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*Lioness* is a feature-length documentary film that dramatizes the increasing role of U.S. women in combat, despite an official policy banning such assignments. This unrecognized service effectively deprives women combat veterans of benefits granted to men. The film points to the need for military programs and policies that support appropriate professional recognition, training, and health care for women.

*Lioness* is the centerpiece of a strategic campaign organized in partnership with ITVS, veteran advocacy organizations, and departments of veteran services. It has produced a range of activities over three years, from family screenings on military bases to testimony before Congressional committees. A PBS national Veterans Day broadcast (2008) reached broad audiences and framed the story as one of gender equity. In partnership with veteran advocacy organizations that have active legislative agendas, *Lioness* was screened on Capitol Hill before an audience of legislators, staff members, and advocates, and was instrumental in the legislative campaign that resulted in the passage of the Women Veterans Healthcare Improvement Act (2010).

For veteran services organizations nationwide, *Lioness* has become a tool for training military and civilian health care providers, treating PTSD, and otherwise responding to the needs of returning women combat veterans. The film, which was screened by military policy makers, may have also played a role in a recent recommendation by the Department of Defense to repeal the ban on women in combat.

### Formats

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Two companion websites accompanied the 2008 PBS broadcast ([www.lionesthefilm](http://www.lionesthefilm) and [www.pbs.org/independentlens/lioness](http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/lioness)), providing background material, blogs, and DVD sales information. The film is also available through Docurama, iTunes and Amazon.

### Issues

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*Lioness* highlights the expanding role of women in a volatile military context where combat lines are often unclear, and the need for gender equity in the military, including:

- appropriate professional recognition;
- adequate training and health care;
- legislation; and
- policy changes.

## Catalyst

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In 2005, two documentary filmmakers, journalist Daria Sommers and cultural anthropologist Meg McLagan, noted the underreported presence of women in combat in Iraq. Co-director Meg McLagan says, “We wanted to create a space within the national cultural dialogue for these women’s voices to be heard.”

## Goals

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The initial goals were to:

- frame the issue for the press as one of gender equity;
- inform crucial debates across civilian/military boundaries; and
- support the emerging network of grassroots and national organizations advocating for services, support, and recognition for active duty women and female veterans.

## Target Publics

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In addition to general public audiences, *Lioness* targeted:

- military families, women soldiers, and veterans;
- advocates for policy change;
- opinion and policy makers; and
- health care professionals.

## Strategic Design

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*Lioness* is composed of interviews, verité footage, diary entries, and archival materials. A long-form documentary, *Lioness* focuses on five female soldiers who were sent to Iraq in 2003 as support troops and, while assigned to search and pacify women and children, were drawn into direct ground combat, in violation of Department of Defense (DOD) policy. The women speak out about what they experienced, both on the frontlines and when they returned home as members of the first generation of American combat veterans who, because of their officially unacknowledged status, found themselves denied the recognition and combat-related benefits received by their male counterparts. The film was designed for public broadcast, community screenings and educational distribution, as well as for use by health care professionals and policy makers.



In addition to increasing the visibility of women combat veterans, the filmmakers wanted to transcend differences of opinion about war and women in combat by focusing discussion on gender equity. Having no military background themselves, they drew on the advice of women veterans and formed partnerships with military advocacy groups and veteran service organizations. They developed an “inside-outside” campaign with military and non-military partnerships.

The plan was to leverage the film festival launch and national broadcast with events, panels and publicity. Partnerships with veteran service organizations fostered stakeholder buy-in and expanded the potential audience. A staged roll-out and publicity campaign organized by ITVS, which led up to a Veterans Day broadcast, reached public audiences and opinion-makers at festivals, community screenings, and conferences. With clear goals, the film was positioned to engage professional groups and policy makers.

## Partners

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Partnerships were essential to the success of this film, which was designed to reach across boundaries of opinion. Key partners included:

- Center for Women Veterans which monitor's and coordinates healthcare and benefit services for women veterans: [www.va.gov/womenvet/](http://www.va.gov/womenvet/)
- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, the government department in charge of services, healthcare, and benefits for U.S. veterans: [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov)
- Disabled American Veterans, which provides services for disabled veterans: [www.dav.org](http://www.dav.org)
- ITVS Community Cinema program, which provides free screenings of *Independent Lens* documentaries: [www.itvs.org/engagement](http://www.itvs.org/engagement)

## Funding Models

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The filmmakers developed a multifaceted economic model composed of grants, investments, and sales revenues, coupled with a hybrid distribution plan that combined screenings to targeted audiences with broadcast and multiplatform sales on sliding price scales. The total budget was \$570,000—\$460,000 for the film, and \$110,000 for outreach.

Early funding from Chicken & Egg Pictures and the Fledgling Fund was followed by continuing production and outreach support, which allowed for flexible response to an emerging advocacy network. Other funders included The Sundance Documentary Fund, Rockefeller Family & Associates, The Open Society Foundations, New York State Council on the Arts, and private investors. An investment by Impact Partners was repaid before broadcast from sales revenues, which grew in excess of \$100,000 (largely due to institutional bulk purchases by VA facilities and sales at screening events).

The ITVS broadcast strand *Independent Lens* bought broadcast rights and contributed “invisible capital” including branding, promotion, website, resource materials, outreach planning, community screenings, and support for the Capitol Hill screening.

## Obstacles & Responses

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As civilians making a film about an unpopular war, the filmmakers faced several challenges.

**Access:** Gaining access to military subjects and earning their trust, especially on a gender-sensitive issue.

**Response:** The filmmakers avoided pre-judgments and patiently listened to subjects.

**Public:** Engaging a public weary of an unpopular war and with mixed feelings about women in combat.

**Response:** The filmmakers worked to tell stories that dramatize the human experience of war.

**Common Ground:** Finding common ground between parties opposed to the war in principle and those actively involved in supporting military policies.

**Response:** The filmmakers employed strategic messaging that focused on personal stories emphasizing the need for health care and equity for men and women veterans.

## Impact

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### Summary

The *Lioness* campaign has raised public awareness about an important public issue, catalyzed action by advocates, and contributed to Congressional deliberations. Its direct impact is seen in the areas of health care, legislation, and policy.

Carefully strategized public broadcasts, nontheatrical screenings, and strategic partnerships put the issue on the public agenda and reached targeted public, military, professional, and legislative audiences. The film became part of successful legislative initiatives, including the Women Veterans Healthcare Improvement Act (2010). It is a resource for a growing network of organizations and military health care providers, and supports improved services and recognition for servicewomen returning from Iraq and Afghanistan.

### Evidence of quality

*Lioness* has been recognized by diverse constituencies, including:

- Official selection: Human Rights Watch (London) and Tribeca Film Festivals
- Full Frame Festival, Center for Documentary Filmmaker Award

- GI Film Festival. Military Families Award
- National PBS broadcast on *Independent Lens*

## Reach

*Lioness* reached a wide audience through televised broadcasts (including a rebroadcast in 2009), DVD sales, screenings, and online engagement, including:

- Broadcast: 215 stations, approximately 800,000 viewers
- 4,500 DVDs sold, mainly to professional organizations
- 50 ITVS community screenings
- 80 local nontheatrical screenings
- 15 festival screenings
- Screenings for legislators, staffers, and policy-makers
- 55,000 web visits; 119,505 page views, 78% new visits
- In addition, health care providers in veterans' facilities use *Lioness* as an educational resource in almost every state.

## Engagement

The filmmakers also created a media package with material tailored around themes of family, resilience, and post-traumatic stress disorder, which has been approved by the Department of Defense's Center of Excellence (DCoE) as an educational and clinical tool for military and civilian health care workers.

The project has been part of approximately 20 professional conferences and workshops.

- A *Lioness* screening at the National Summit of Women Veterans Issues resulted in the purchase of 400 DVDs by Veterans Administration (VA) health care providers for use as an educational and therapeutic tool for post-combat care in VA facilities. *Lioness* was then introduced into a network of state-based veteran service programs.
- In North Carolina, *Lioness* was the centerpiece of nine behavioral health training workshops for non-VA doctors serving gender specific needs of rural women veterans returning from Iraq and Iran, were held across North Carolina in 2010 AHEC. This Department of Defense/VA/state initiative was in collaboration with the Citizen Soldier Support Program.
- In New Mexico, *Lioness* was included in the New Mexico Department of Veterans Services special outreach project to Native American and Hispanic women veterans.

The film is also widely used by advocates for gender equity in the military. For example:

- The Center for Women Veterans, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs helped organize the screening on Capitol Hill and facilitated the adoption of the film as a clinical tool in VA hospital and clinics.

- Disabled American Veterans was a primary partner in support of Senator Patty Murray's Women Veterans Health Services Act, signed by President Obama in 2010.
- The film was screened at the Gender Justice Conference, Center for the Rule of Law at West Point, attended by 500 graduating cadets who will deploy to Iraq and Afghanistan.

### Influence

The *Lioness* project successfully placed the issue of gender equality for military women on the public agenda through media coverage/broadcast and advocacy networks.

- **Media coverage** After a *New York Times* article about the film appeared late in 2007, the filmmakers were asked to produce a Valentine's Day video op-ed for the *Times* website in advance of broadcast. At the time of broadcast, extensive coverage in national and local press outlets, highly favorable reviews, and radio and television appearances by the filmmakers and women in the film humanized the issue, established the film's credibility, and brought the issue to diverse audiences.
- **Advocacy networks** Links with legislators, military personnel, and activists brought the film to the attention of influentials. The film played a role in Congressional deliberations on military policies. In March 2009, Disabled American Veterans and ITVS, together with the filmmakers, organized a standing-room only screening and press conference on Capitol Hill. *Lioness* was cited in hearings related to documentation of combat service, women's health care, and training; women who appeared in the film were invited to testify.

### Policy Impact

*Lioness* was directly referenced in the 2010 National Defense Authorization Act concerning training and documentation of women's combat service. While this recommendation was not adopted, it represented formal acknowledgment of women's participation in combat and laid the groundwork for future discussion.

It was also:

- influential in hearings on the Women Veterans Healthcare Improvement Act and the Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act (2010).
- echoed in the Military Leadership Diversity Commission draft report which states that current combat exclusion policies do not reflect the realities of contemporary warfare and keep women out of key assignments that lead to career advancement.

In March 2011, the Pentagon Commission recommended that the Department of Defense eliminate policies excluding women from combat, as well as other "barriers and inconsistencies."

**Network building**

The film project has served as a point of connection and collaboration for a growing network of groups advocating for appropriate training, health care, and benefits for servicewomen. Related events have brought together members of Congress, advocacy groups, and government agencies under the rubric of gender equity, an issue which is supported by many in the military establishment.

It has strengthened the military health care network by hosting a series of screenings sponsored by the Department of Defense, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and Women Veterans Strategic Healthcare; by providing useful training materials; and by linking state-based organizations with national resources. For example, the film connected the director of New Mexico Department of Veteran Services with the Director of Clinical Education and Training at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in D.C. Together they have held outreach workshops around New Mexico, using the media package.

## NOT IN OUR TOWN

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*Producer/director*

Patrice O'Neill (The Working Group, 1995-2011)

[www.niot.org](http://www.niot.org); [www.nios.org](http://www.nios.org); [www.pbs.org/niot](http://www.pbs.org/niot)

### Overview

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Not in Our Town (NIOT), a project of The Working Group, is a multi-platform strategic media campaign that documents and supports positive community responses to hate violence. Centered on storytelling, the project encompasses 45 documentary films, social networking, and additional resources for community engagement.

NIOT began in 1995 with a PBS special broadcast of *Not in Our Town I*, a 30-minute documentary about the creative ways in which citizens, elected officials, civic leaders, and faith groups in Billings, Montana responded to white supremacist threats and developed a durable model for an inclusive community. The Billings model inspired adaptations in schools, workplaces, and cities across the United States, and evolved into a national movement with NIOT as the hub.

The project's systemic influence on civic behaviors and practices in response to hate violence is growing, as the NIOT model is adapted in hundreds of cities, towns, schools, and workplaces and informs the training of educators, law enforcement officials, and civic leaders, as well as high school curricula. *Not In Our Town III: Light in the Darkness* is scheduled for national PBS broadcast in September 2011.

### Formats

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*Not in Our Town I* (1995) is a 27-minute documentary; *Not in Our Town II* (1996) and *Light in the Darkness* are each 56 minutes. All three films have been broadcast on PBS. The project includes 45 videos of varying lengths, available on DVD and streaming. In addition, NIOT's website ([www.niot.org](http://www.niot.org)) has recently been redesigned to embrace web 2.0 features.

### Issues

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NIOT, which originally focused on positive community responses to white supremacist threats, currently embraces a variety of issues, including:

- gay, lesbian, and transgender violence;
- bullying in schools;
- anti-immigrant crimes; and
- violence based on ethnicity and race.

## Catalyst

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In 1994, The Working Group (TWG) crew went to Billings, Montana to film a story about how union members contributed to the response to a series of racist and anti-Semitic attacks in their local community. Their story was featured in a Labor Day special for public television stations. TWG producers returned to Billings to capture the larger story of the community response to hate crimes, and created a half-hour film called *Not In Our Town*, which was presented to PBS in 1995. The *Not In Our Town* broadcast in December 1995 was accompanied by a national community outreach campaign in partnership with the Institute for Alternative Journalism and Benton Foundation. Many features of that campaign, including grassroots screenings, town hall meetings, local coalition-building, and press coverage, became hallmarks of NIOT strategic outreach.

*Not in Our Town II* (PBS, 1996) highlighted six communities among the many—from Bloomington, Illinois to Medford, Oregon—that had spontaneously adopted the Billings model. These broadcasts inspired an *ad hoc* movement of hundreds of communities across the U.S., coordinated informally by The Working Group's NIOT project.

## Goals

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NIOT identifies tolerance and citizen engagement as core values of American life. The primary goal is to expand the capacity of local communities to respond to hate crimes and create safer, more inclusive environments for all residents, by:

- creating public awareness of hate violence;
- providing positive anti-hate violence models and resources; and
- building infrastructure for a sustainable anti-hate violence network.

## Target Publics

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PBS broadcasts reach a broad general public. NIOT resources are specifically designed for:

- community leaders;
- elected officials;
- law enforcement; and
- teachers, teenagers and school children.

## Strategic Design

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The 1995 PBS broadcast of *Not in Our Town I* inspired spontaneous adaptations of the Billings model in diverse places across the country. The 1996 PBS

broadcast of *NIOT II*, which documented six of these projects and their outcomes, spawned an *ad hoc* movement of hundreds of communities, with NIOT at the hub.

The NIOT project provides stories and resources to support positive local responses to hate violence. Its strategies have evolved over fifteen years, in response to technological opportunities and the needs of the communities it serves. It has developed distinctive narrative strategies and resources to maximize the power of its storytelling, and to inspire and circulate grassroots models through national circuits.

- **Narrative strategies:** NIOT documentaries invite and frame public discussion, and foster engagement. These empathetic stories, which invite personal identification and offering many viewpoints, successfully refocus typical crime reporting. They highlight the positive responses of “ordinary people,” visibly identify the responsible role of public officials, and dramatize moments of transformative change.
- **Resources:** Films are accompanied by toolkits with resources for using media effectively, involving city officials, and staging public events. Emphasis is placed on incorporating successful efforts, such as school initiatives and police training, into civic culture and creating durable structures to support them. NIOT.org is a cross-platform participatory storytelling and resource-sharing website featuring blogs, media streaming, an interactive map, and practical resources which (along with outreach across Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and other social media outlets) supports a growing network. A special section of the site, NIOS.org (Not in Our School), serves students, teachers, and youth leaders.
- **Media strategies:** NIOT is often asked to film in communities dealing with hate violence. The presence of the film crew may affect local events by making a community conscious of its efforts. In some cases, NIOT staff works with local newspapers to reframe reporting on hate speech in ways that contribute to public conversation. NIOT.org invites user-generated content, including video, which is streamed and available on YouTube. NIOT stories, including short videos and user-generated uploads are circulated on multiple platforms, from print media to an interactive website to YouTube, providing local efforts with sharable content and the strength of a national network.

## Partners

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NIOT partnerships expand the circulation and adaption of NIOT models and tools, and form the basis of a potentially durable infrastructure for anti-hate violence initiatives. A partial list includes:

- **Media organizations:** PBS, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), Public Insight Network/American Public Media, National Center for Media Engagement, Bay Area Film and Video Coalition, Link Media, AlterNet, and more.
- **Social justice advocacy organizations:** ACLU, Southern Poverty Law Center, Anti-Defamation League, Amnesty International, AFL-CIO, Parents, Families



and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG), Welcoming America, National Hispanic Media Coalition, Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN), state human rights commissions, and more.

- **Civic and Government Organizations:** YWCA, National League of Cities, American Library Association, Department of Justice Community Oriented Policing Service
- **Education:** Facing History and Ourselves, Teaching Tolerance, AFT, NEA, National Association of Middle Schools

## Funding Model

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NIOT.org is a project of The Working Group, a 501(c)(3) organization. Grants from foundations are its primary source of financial support.

Major funders include the Nathan Cummings Foundation, Einhorn Family Charitable Trust, Corporation for Public Broadcasting, PBS, the Walter and Elise Haas Fund, Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund, Righteous Persons Foundation, and the California Council for the Humanities.

## Obstacles & Responses

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NIOT faces one pervasive challenge in all of its projects.

**Maintaining civil discourse:** Social networking sites are vulnerable to hate language that blocks productive conversation.

**Response:** NIOT retains the right to control, delete comments, and ban users who violate its content policies. It will not publish anonymous, vulgar or slanderous comments, hate speech, or personal attacks. NIOT policies apply to NIOT.org and all NIOT social media pages.

NIOT also faces three long-term challenges:

**Capacity building:** The advantage of *ad-hoc* networks is their flexibility and adaptability; the downside is the difficulty of knowledge- and capacity-building for long-term durability. As NIOT, chronically under-resourced and understaffed, became the *de facto* coordinator and resource provider for a growing anti-hate violence movement, it was strained to provide adequate services, or to adopt and deploy rapidly changing technologies.

**Response:** NIOT.org, an interactive website, was designed as a response to these obstacles. It formalizes the organization's role as a coordinator of a largely self-organizing network and its capacity to maintain the site. NIOT.org is now in its second phase of development and is poised to integrate mobile interactivity into the site. The nascent National Public Lightpath is a fiber optic network linking libraries, schools, and government agencies where NIOT's digital tools and high resolution videos will be made available to universities and non-profit organizations as an active application.

**Sustainability:** NIOT, which raises funds on a project-by-project basis, lacks the resources for sustainable long-term planning.

**Response:** Organizers plan to raise awareness of the value of its work in the philanthropic community to attract high-worth donors and to create mechanisms for community and network contributions.

**Evaluation mechanisms:** An increasingly complex interactive network across platforms requires appropriate quantitative and qualitative measures of evaluation.

**Response:** Bay Area Video Coalition (BAVC) and NIOT are developing an impact dashboard which will help the project track reach, influence, and responses.

## Impact

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### Summary

*Not in Our Town* encapsulates the evolution of social issue documentary films from empathetic stories of social inequity, seen mainly on public television and in schools, to its present position at the center of cross-platform participatory strategic campaigns that are adapted and used by NGOs, communities, and other stakeholders.

In a time of rampant bullying among teenagers and hate crimes against immigrants, gays, lesbians, and transgendered individuals, NIOT's strategies dampen violence and provide positive models. Intergenerational relationships and youth leadership are growing rapidly, with the help of a new initiative, Not In Our School (NIOS.org). Overall, the NIOT project demonstrates how grassroots models for community action, spontaneously adapted and developed, may become the basis for a sustainable national knowledge-sharing network and virtual community that strengthens the social fabric and civic life.

### Evidence of Quality

Since 1995, *Not in Our Town* documentaries and educational materials have been trusted resources for civic governments and officials, faith groups, social justice advocates, educators, and NGOs. In addition to PBS broadcasts linked with local station initiatives, NIOT has inspired a curriculum developed by Facing History and Ourselves, and been featured as a model by the California Council for the Humanities and other funders. On a local level, the appearance of NIOT crews in times of crisis often validates the work of local leaders and citizens and provides a mirror in which a community sees itself.

### Reach

The NIOT approach is reaching its original target audiences: the general public, communities contending with hate violence, and public officials. It is also extending internationally.

- NIOT PBS broadcasts typically draw approximately one million viewers.
- The project has been invited by groups in Hungary, Germany, Czech Republic, Northern Ireland, Russia, and South Africa.
- NIOT.org, which launched early in 2011, had received over 90,000 visits by May, totaling nearly 250,000 page views from visitors of 160 countries, including the US, Canada, UK, India, South Africa, Australia, China, Germany, the Philippines and New Zealand in its first six months.
- NIOT.org homepage traffic is concentrated on general usable information. The project's forty-five video titles and the Not in Our School page draw the most specific searches. There has been an increase of 25% in new visitors to NIOT.org, largely due to the introduction of the Not in Our School initiative. A significant number of hits arrive via Twitter (with 640 followers).

### Engagement

- Attorneys General in West Virginia and Arizona have incorporated NIOT resources into law enforcement training.
- NIOT is included in a Facing History and Ourselves (FHO) curriculum, reaching high school students throughout the U.S. and abroad. It is also included in FHO's travelling exhibition, Choosing to Participate. The teaching organization Facing History and Ourselves and sites like Care2.com, which include NIOT content, also drive traffic. Commentary is most active on Facebook, where readers often share NIOT blog entries with their own communities (6,500 fans) and YouTube, which has registered over 380,000 views of NIOT videos.
- A NIOT.org TWG-produced video feature, "Gunn High School Sings Away Hate" went viral when Ellen DeGeneres tweeted about it. This video alone has had more than 227,000 views. Videos about actions in response to the Westboro Baptist Church have been consistently popular, and have been used in communities where Rev. Phelps' group appears. Patrice O'Neill reports, "When the WBC threatened to picket the funerals of the Tucson shooting victims in January, and the local community wanted to create angel costumes to shield the grieving from WBC protestors, our film *Angels Turn Their Back on Hate* became the most popular on NIOT's YouTube channel. NIOT collected these videos on a single page ([www.niot.org/niot-video/responsetohategroups](http://www.niot.org/niot-video/responsetohategroups)), which received 2,500 unique views in three months. Similarly, when bullying became national news, views of *Students Teach Students to Stand Up to Bullying* nearly doubled in views."

### Influence

NIOT projects are grounded in national and local partnerships that contribute to an infrastructure for sustainable networks that strengthen civic engagement. NIOT films and resources are used as in training programs by human relations councils, police departments and community organizations. In 1997, for example, the West Virginia Attorney General and the West Virginia Human Rights Commission announced a "Not In Our Town, Not In Our State" campaign, calling "communities of this state to take a stand against hate and intolerance and to act collectively, creatively and decisively against hate and intolerance."

Since NIOT.org was launched in April 2010, it has been featured in places as diverse as the Huffington Post, *O: the Oprah Magazine*, and ThinkMTV. The ripple effect of NIOT was evident in 2010, when Huntington, West Virginia responded to the threat of a Klan rally with a NIOT-style “Unity Day” celebrating the town’s diversity.

### **Network Building**

NIOT has become an incubator for new spaces and practices of media for anti-hate crime initiatives and inclusive civic participation, which have been widely adapted and shared in communities and institutions throughout the country, now reaching to Northern Ireland, the Ukraine, and South Africa.

NIOT projects are grounded in national and local partnerships that contribute to an infrastructure for sustainable networks that strengthen civic engagement. These partnerships are strategically positioned to foster the circulation and adaption of NIOT models and tools. Digital technologies speed communication and community participation, as they strengthen local projects with the power of networking. NIOT.org, for example, anchors an emerging network of local initiatives.

## OUT IN THE SILENCE

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*Producers/Directors*

Joe Wilson/Dean Hamer

65 min, 2009

The Out in the Silence Campaign for Fairness and Equality in Rural and Small Town America

[wpsu.org/outinthesilence](http://wpsu.org/outinthesilence)

### Overview

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*Out in the Silence* is a feature-length documentary film that shows how the citizens of a small, conservative town in western Pennsylvania confronted homophobia within the boundaries of religion and tradition. An active outreach campaign designed to reach small towns and rural communities nationwide accompanied regional and national PBS broadcasts and festival screenings. The film and campaign, which have fortified a national network of LGBT and civil rights, support organizations reaching underserved communities with special focus on engaging young people.

### Formats

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*Out in the Silence* has had regional and national public television broadcast. It is distributed on DVD through major stores such as Sears and Wal-Mart and via SnagFilms and Hulu streaming.

### Issues

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*Out in the Silence* addresses both behavioral and policy issues, including:

- homophobic attitudes fostered by the religious right;
- bullying in schools;
- legal protection of GLBT residents of rural America;
- anti-discrimination policies that do not include sexual preference; and
- fostering dialogue across boundaries of differing opinions.

### Catalyst

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When Joe Wilson placed an announcement of his wedding to Dean Hamer in his hometown paper, the *Oil City (PA) Derrick*, it triggered hate mail, but also a plea from the desperate mother of CJ, a bullied gay teenager. Her letter drew the filmmakers back to Wilson's hometown, where they found a vocal homophobic group, but also open-minded citizens and allies. The story centers on CJ and ultimately successful efforts by the ACLU to institute

diversity training in local schools, as well as a local pastor who questions his assumptions about same-sex marriage. It portrays local citizens, gay and straight, as traditional values are challenged by lived experience.

## Goals

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The strategic campaign had clear goals which enabled the filmmakers to move effectively into a national initiative. The original goals of the project were to:

- create awareness and raise visibility of gay and lesbian people in small towns and rural areas;
- foster open dialogue and build bridges across differing opinions; and
- create face-to-face opportunities for small-town people to convene, connect and mobilize around shared issues.

The campaign evolved to include:

- forging alliances with advocates and activists locally and nationally;
- influencing state and local policies and legislation;
- making schools safe and accessible; and
- strengthening coalitions across identity lines.

## Target Publics

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Regional and national PBS broadcasts reached general audiences. The campaign is designed to reach specific groups as well, including:

- LGBT people and their communities;
- rural communities and small towns; and
- LGBT advocates.

## Strategic Design

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*Out in the Silence* is a longform documentary that focuses on a teenage boy and his mother; the pastor of a conservative Christian church; a “family values” zealot; and a lesbian couple establishing a cultural center in a dying downtown. Co-producer Dean Hamer comments, “The project began with activism (the wedding picture) and documented activism. It became part of the life of the town.”

The Oil City experience evolved into a Pennsylvania-based strategic outreach campaign, which in turn shaped a national campaign tailored to reach small towns and rural areas underserved by national urban-based organizations. The campaign, which frames the issues in terms of human rights and social justice, operates by:

- working with local allies to identify safe spaces (such as libraries) to organize town-hall style gatherings and other events;
- funding space rental fees and local newspaper ads; and
- providing an event planning kit with a discussion guide and templates for press releases and posters.

The filmmakers identified a need to coordinate the resources of national organizations and make them available to communities generally overlooked by urban-based groups. For example, the Philadelphia-based Pennsylvania ACLU brought a successful lawsuit on behalf of CJ, leading to a compulsory diversity-training program in the school. This experience inspired the creation of a Pittsburgh office, serving the western part of the state. Facebook and other social networking tools are used synergistically; they help to connect grassroots activists with such groups as the ACLU, Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG), and the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network (GLSEN).

## Partners

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The campaign provides materials and support to partners selected for their capacity to reach new audiences and carry the work forward.

### Pennsylvania-based:

- ACLU of Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania chapter of the ACLU seeking to protect the rights and liberties of all citizens: [www.aclupa.org](http://www.aclupa.org)
- Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission: [www.phrc.state.pa.us](http://www.phrc.state.pa.us)

### National:

- Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network (GLSEN), a national organization focused on educating students to insure a safe environment: [www.glsen.org](http://www.glsen.org)
- Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG), a national organization which seeks to support through education and advocacy: [community.pflag.org](http://community.pflag.org)
- Center for Rural Strategies, which seeks to improve economic and social conditions in rural America through the use of media: [www.ruralstrategies.org](http://www.ruralstrategies.org)
- Equality Federation, a **national alliance of state-based lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender advocacy organizations**: [www.equalityfederation.org](http://www.equalityfederation.org)
- Campus Progress, a national organization that seeks to help youth get access to resources for social and political change: [www.campusprogress.org](http://www.campusprogress.org)

## Funding Model

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The filmmakers initiated the project with personal funds, and later received funding from the Pennsylvania Public Television Network, which opened up possibilities for funding from other organizations. The budget was \$500,000 (\$180,000 for production; \$320,000 for outreach).

The Center for Independent Documentary is the main fiscal sponsor. Other major funders include the Pennsylvania Public Television Network, Sundance Institute Documentary Fund, Wyncote Foundation, James H. Bryson Fund/The Philadelphia Foundation, New Tudor Foundation, and Columbia Foundation.

## *Obstacles & Responses*

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**The subject:** Introducing a controversial topic in a traditional small town venue challenged the filmmakers to create a fair and balanced portrait of the town while maintaining a clear point of view.

**Response:** The solution was to present an array of opinions from individuals on a spectrum, from the homophobic to the questioning to the embattled.

**Uninformed attitudes:** Derogatory attitudes toward rural and small town America by urban gay activists combined with a general assumption—based on popular culture—that gay rights have essentially been secured.

**Response:** These were met with strategically planned partnerships, events and information.

**Networking:** It was difficult to coordinate a national campaign in the absence of an organized network of support organizations. The filmmakers, who aimed to bring the needs of small towns and rural communities to national attention, found that urban-based national organizations lacked the impetus, resources, and/or knowledge.

**Response:** The filmmakers' strategy was to create partnerships with local, regional and national organizations and to provide resource materials for collaborative town-hall events with state and local civil rights, community and faith groups and leaders.

## *Impact*

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### **Summary**

The project highlights the power of film and community screenings to stimulate discussion and action across differing opinions and the capacity of ordinary citizens to lead positive social change. The focus on rural areas and small towns has helped to make homophobia and bullying a visible and accessible issue in areas where LGBT information and opportunities for conversation across difference are rare. At the same time, *Out in the Silence* has activated and fortified gay and lesbian advocacy organizations, expanding their focus beyond urban populations. It has shown how community-based screenings and initiatives can contribute to the formation of national networks, which, in turn, strengthen local efforts.

### **Evidence of quality**

In addition to PBS national broadcast, *Out in the Silence* was screened at over 30 film festivals. Honors include:



- **Mid-Atlantic Emmy Award** for Outstanding Achievement in Documentary (2010)
- Official selection, NY Human Rights Watch International Festival
- Invited screenings: Council on Foundations, Equality Forum Global LGBT Summit, National Association for Multicultural Education, World Bank

Positive reviews appeared in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, *The Nation*, and many small town newspapers.

### **Reach**

*Out in the Silence* reached a large audience through televised broadcasts, DVD sales, online streaming and community events.

- National (PBS, 2010) and Regional (Pennsylvania KPSU, 2009) broadcasts reached over 1 million viewers.
- Approximately 7,000 copies of the DVD were sold.
- The website *What the Buck?* Registered over 40,000 hits for an extract of the film.
- Over 300 community and school events have taken place.

The distributor, Garden Thieves Pictures, placed *Out in the Silence* for free streaming on Hulu and SnagFilms, specifically to make it accessible to teenagers more comfortable with viewing the film privately on their computers. It is also available via Comcast on Demand, iTunes and Amazon; DVDs are available at Wal-Mart, Sears and other big stores. Gross revenues, primarily from Amazon sales, are estimated at \$140,000 (7,000 copies at \$20 a piece).

Screenings have been held in every county in Pennsylvania and are now being expanded nationally to small towns and rural areas with little LGBT support in Oregon, California, Texas, South Dakota and other states. The film is part of the Human Rights Watch Traveling Festival.

### **Engagement**

*Out in the Silence* is a community-building project. For Wilson and Hamer, face-to-face personal contact is the key to social change. They primarily focus on:

- town hall-style meetings that draw a cross-section of participants;
- social networking as a way to empower local communities by connecting them with each other and with national resources; and
- partnerships, such as the one with the Gay/Straight Alliance, to promote inclusive activities in schools.

Web-streaming, youth-oriented events and social networking tools are designed to engage young people. In 2010 *What the Buck?*, a popular on-line

gay-oriented celebrity cable show featured the film in a five-minute segment. A longer piece on the show's website drew 40,000 hits and drove traffic to the *Out in the Silence* website. As of early 2011, the website has 5,000 members and registers approximately 30,000 postings per month, but is considered to have much greater capacity. Developing the website and digital tools is a priority for the next phase of the project.

### **Influence**

The campaign has contributed to initiatives for legal protection and public policy changes:

- In Oil City, the ACLU lawsuit resulted in court-ordered compulsory diversity training in schools.
- A local campaign persuaded a state legislator to withdraw her support for an anti-same sex marriage amendment under consideration by her committee.
- The film has also has been enlisted in a state-wide movement to add LGBT protection to state and local anti-discrimination ordinances, a legislative campaign for employment non-discrimination, and marriage equality and safe schools bills.

In addition, the filmmakers have appeared on NPR and ABC-TV affiliates, and routinely receive local media coverage.

### **Network Building**

The *Out in the Silence* project is building the capacity of an emerging network of national organizations linked with grassroots activists. It has helped to mobilize LGBT coalitions and grassroots initiatives by providing strong content, trusted resources, tested strategies, and fostering informal relationships.

The filmmakers distribute DVDs to organizations, such as the Gay/Straight Alliance, which agree to organize events—thus enlisting allies in expanding the reach of the film. Some national organizations have adopted the film into their programs. GLSEN, for example, organized two hundred youth-led screenings in schools and colleges In April 2010, in observance of the Day of Silence in places as diverse as Alaska, Mississippi, Indiana, and New York. The recently launched national campaign has thus far collaborated with partners in Oregon, South Dakota, Texas, South Carolina, and Ohio.

The campaign has been slow to maximize digital opportunities, but a virtual community of local activist leaders is forming around Facebook and email. A core group of followers has begun to post out to their own lists with, in Hamer's words, "huge catalytic effects," increasing audiences and web hits.

## STATE OF FEAR: THE TRUTH ABOUT TERRORISM

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*Producers/directors*

Pamela Yates, Paco de Onís, Peter Kinoy

94 min, 2008.

[skylightpictures.com/films/state\\_of\\_fear](http://skylightpictures.com/films/state_of_fear)

### Overview

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*State of Fear*, a project of Skylight Pictures, is a longform documentary film at the center of a multiplatform local/global strategic human rights and social justice campaign. The film dramatizes the human and social costs of a twenty-year politicized “war on terror” (1980-2000) in Peru, and its contemporary resonance in a post 9/11 world. It poses the question, “How can an open society balance demands for security with democracy?” and demonstrates the positive example of Truth and Reconciliation Commissions for restorative justice.

A local story with universal resonance, the film was launched in international human rights festival circuits and became a resource for human rights activists both internationally and in the Peruvian movement for restorative justice. It shows how a project with strategies that cross cultures and platforms can strengthen transitional justice initiatives and provide a model for social issue media makers. The film was an instrumental component of a larger campaign to bring former Peruvian president, Alberto Fujimori, to justice for crimes related to corruption and human rights abuses during his regime.

### Formats

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*State of Fear* was released in Spanish and English versions on television, and in theatrical and festival circuits. It was accompanied by websites and web 2.0 tools. The film is also available on DVD through New Day Films, iTunes and digital download.

A Quechua-language version of the film was created in order to reach Quechua-speaking Andean Indians, who suffered 70% of the casualties during this period. An accompanying website, EDMQ 2.0 ([www.edmquechua.com](http://www.edmquechua.com)) (EDMQ 2.0), is a hub for human rights activists, victims, educators, and young people.

### Issue

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*State of Fear* calls attention to the dangers that arise in democratic societies when governments manipulate fears of terrorist activity for political purposes and conceal the truth of the past. It highlights the important role of truth and reconciliation commissions in restoring justice.

## Catalyst

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Skylight Pictures (Pamela Yates, Paco de Onís, and Peter Kinoy) has produced award-winning social issue documentary films linked with social movements since 1983. In the aftermath of September 11, 2001, the filmmakers wanted to call attention to growing threats to civil liberties in the name of national security. After a meeting at the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ), the team decided to focus on the work of the newly convened Peruvian Truth and Reconciliation Commission (PTRC), which was revealing the impunity of government figures and terrorist groups within a process of restorative justice.

## Goals

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A global/local campaign was designed to reach both international and Peruvian networks and audiences. The overall goals were:

- to inspire and frame public discussion about the dangers to democracy of politicized “wars on terror;”
- to introduce the transitional justice process to audiences in the U.S. and worldwide; and
- to provide tools for human rights advocates.

In Peru, the goals were:

- to provide a counter-narrative to the “official version” presented by political figures who sought to repress the truth of past impunity;
- to publicize the findings of the PTRC;
- to provide tools for the campaign to bring ex-President Alberto Fujimori to trial; and
- to enable Andean Indians to become participants in Peruvian civil society.

## Target Publics

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*State of Fear* was designed to reach general audiences in the U.S., Peru and worldwide. In addition, the project targeted human rights advocates and Peruvian victims of terrorist activity, especially Andean Indians.

## Strategic Design

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*State of Fear* is a feature-length documentary film composed of interviews, archival film and photographs, and verité footage shot in Peru. It was designed for television broadcast, theatrical and educational distribution, and especially for use by human rights activists in Peru and globally. The EDMQ 2.0 project incorporates Twitter, photo-sharing, text messaging technology, Google maps, web streaming, and blog feeds. It also serves as an archive of video clips of

testimonials by Andean Indians, which were produced with Flip video cameras. The strategic campaign reflects the filmmakers' customary practice of working closely with advocacy organizations and human rights networks. *State of Fear* was shaped by the ICTJ partnership, as well as the filmmakers' longstanding relationships in Latin America. Yates and de Onís quickly earned the trust of the Peruvian Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which made its evidence, images and witnesses available and provided credibility in Peruvian human rights circles. Stakeholder support was built with screenings and meetings throughout the production process, as well as the filmmakers' openness to collaborations as the political situation in Peru evolved.

While the goals were clear, the strategic plan was sufficiently flexible to respond to challenges and opportunities in shifting circumstances. This was enhanced by the easy adoption of freely available appropriate technologies.

## Partners

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Skylight Pictures, which has always built outreach partnerships with activist organizations into its work, has longstanding trusted relationships with human rights organizations throughout the world, and particularly in Latin America.

The strategic campaign for *State of Fear* engaged human rights groups in Peru and internationally.

### International

- International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) is an international nonprofit organization that seeks to help societies that have had massive human rights violation create a stable trustworthy government: [ictj.org](http://ictj.org)
- Amnesty International, which seeks to end abuses of human rights: [www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org)
- Facing History and Ourselves, an organization that seeks to combat human rights abuses through education: [www.facinghistory.org/](http://www.facinghistory.org/)
- Human Rights Watch, which seeks to expose human rights abuses: [www.hrw.org](http://www.hrw.org)
- Cinema Tropical, which distributes Latin American films in the U.S. and internationally: [www.cinematropical.com](http://www.cinematropical.com)

### Peru

- PTRC, which created a final report concerning human rights abuses in Peru: [www.cverdad.org.pe/ingles/pagina01.php](http://www.cverdad.org.pe/ingles/pagina01.php)
- Toronja Comunicación, which seeks to bring social changes through the use of media: [www.toronja.pe/v2/principal.htm](http://www.toronja.pe/v2/principal.htm)
- National Human Rights Coordinator (63 human rights groups), an association of human rights groups which seeks to defend, educate, and promote human rights in Peru: [derechoshumanos.pe](http://derechoshumanos.pe)

## Funding Model

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Skylight Pictures is a non-profit organization, supported mainly by foundation grants, supplemented by television and educational sales. The \$550,000 *State of Fear* budget was supported by grants from the Ford Foundation (\$300,000), Sundance Institute Documentary Fund (\$50,000), and United States Institute of Peace (\$40,000). There were television presales totaling approximately \$150,000 to National Geographic International Channel, History Channel en Español, Sundance Channel, and multiple European stations.

As a member of New Day Films, a social issue media distribution collective, Skylight is experimenting with streaming, subscriptions, and iTunes sales, which had produced over \$100,000 by 2008.

## Obstacles & Responses

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**Lack of national visibility:** A national broadcast and launch at the Sundance Festival would have sparked the public conversation that the filmmakers anticipated. However, as the film neared competition, it faced unexpected competition from *The Fall of Fujimori*, a documentary covering much the same subject (albeit from a different perspective). *The Fall of Fujimori* was selected over *State of Fear* for both the Sundance Festival and the PBS nonfiction strand, *P.O.V.*—the two major U.S. venues for social issue documentary.

**Response:** Skylight launched the film in human rights circuits through international film festivals and conferences, and special tours in the U.S., Brazil and Europe. While *State of Fear* was finally broadcast in the U.S. on the Sundance Channel (2007), the timely opportunity for broad public debate had been lost.

**Political volatility:** The film appeared in a turbulent period in Peru, with the return and trial of ex-President Alberto Fujimori, the release of the PTRC report, and the announcement of a reparations plan for victims. In this context, politicians and the military were attempting to repress the truth of the past.

**Response:** The filmmakers worked with advocacy organizations to make the film available for television broadcast and local screenings during the extradition campaign and trial, and partnered with Peruvian NGOs to reach Andean Indian communities with screenings and access to information.

**Language:** The film was originally conceived for English- and Spanish-speaking audiences, and was released in English and Spanish-language versions. It was not accessible to Quechua-speaking Andean Indians, however, who were marginalized in Peruvian civil society and lacked information and access to mechanisms for redress.

**Response:** A Quechua-language version was produced and widely circulated through the Estado de Miedo Quechua project (EDMQ 2.0), which featured a website and platforms for civic participation.

## Impact

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### Summary

The *State of Fear* project encapsulates the transition from social issue documentary intended to inform, to storytelling as a core component of a long-term strategic transmedia campaign. The film and its accompanying resources successfully reached international audiences and fortified a network of human rights advocacy organizations during a crucial period in Peru. Finally, *State of Fear* has been an incubator of inclusive models of cross-cultural projects that function transnationally, nationally, and locally.

### Evidence of quality

*State of Fear* has received the imprimatur of professional organizations, educators, broadcasters, and human rights advocates, including:

- 2005 Official Opening Night Selection, New York Human Rights Watch International Film Festival
- 2006 Overseas Press Club Award for Best Reporting in any Medium about Latin America
- 2006 First Brazilian Human Rights Film Festival
- Henry Hampton Award for Excellence in Film & Video, Council on Foundations
- 2006 London Human Rights Watch International Film Festival (Best of Fest)
- 2006 New York premiere, Film Forum
- Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch screening circuits in Europe, US and Latin America

### Reach

*State of Fear* has circulated beyond human rights circuits:

- Theatrical screenings in 45 U.S. cities, following New York premiere
- Broadcast on the National Geographic International Channel's *No Borders* strand (2005), where it was translated into 48 languages and received in 170 million homes in 157 countries.
- Broadcast on the History Channel en Español (US) (2006)
- Broadcast on Sundance Channel (2007)
- Stalker Film Festival, Moscow (2005)

### Engagement

It has resonated with pro-democracy and restorative justice advocates:

- Russian human rights activists circulate DVDs informally.

- Nepalese pro-democracy activists translated the film and circulated 300 DVDs.
- In Colombia, the film sparked interest in a Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

The film is now embedded in human rights law courses and TRC training seminars. It has also been incorporated into high school curricula prepared by Facing History and Ourselves aiming to teach youth about the effects of hate through historical lessons.

### **Influence**

Policy-makers have incorporated the film in their programs, including:

- 2006 Human Rights Defenders Forum at the Carter Center, Atlanta, Georgia, hosted by President Jimmy Carter and UN High Commissioner for Human Rights
- Transatlantic Dialogues, a symposium at NYU Law School, hosted by Spanish Judge Baltazar Garzón
- International Criminal Court in The Hague

In Peru, *State of Fear* framed public discourse in a period of political turbulence, and provided support for the transitional justice process by:

- publicizing the findings of the PTRC;
- participating in the successful campaign to arrest and try Alberto Fujimori;
- providing a counter-narrative to official versions of the Peruvian “war on terror” within a framework of restorative justice; and
- amplifying the work of Peruvian human rights organizations.

The EDMQ 2.0 project served the Andean Indian communities, which bore the brunt of the terror but were essentially invisible Peruvian civil society. The heart of the project was [www.edmquechua.com](http://www.edmquechua.com), a multiplatform hub for human rights activists, victims, educators, and young people. This website incorporated news feeds, digital distribution and web 2.0 tools including Twitter, photo-sharing, text messaging technology, Google maps, and blog feeds. Local activists were trained to use simple Flip video cameras to document the testimonials of victims and post them online. DVDs are freely distributed and broadcast throughout the Andean region.

The film has influenced policy makers, human rights advocates, and educators in Peru and internationally:

- The Ford Foundation office in Santiago, Chile developed plans for a joint funding pool \$300,000 for documentary film production.



- *The Reckoning: The Battle for the International Criminal Court* (2009) was the first ICTJ-Skylight Pictures co-production.
- IJCentral (IJcentral.org), the centerpiece for *The Reckoning* outreach plan, is a social networking website modeled on methods and tools developed in the *State of Fear* campaign that links human rights organizations around the world.
- The film is embedded in human rights law courses, TRC training seminars, and high school curricula prepared by Facing History and Ourselves.

### Network Building

The *State of Fear* project has been an incubator for new tools, circuits, and practices that provide models for other social documentarians.

- Festival successes led to the development of new human rights media circuits as evidenced by the fact that the Human Rights Watch Traveling Festival was expanded to Eastern Europe after the London screening of *State of Fear*, and a five-city Brazilian tour was established after the screening of *State of Fear* on the opening night of the first Brazilian Human Rights Film Festival.
- EDMQ 2.0 provides an adaptable model for bringing information, technology and participatory skills to marginalized and isolated communities, offering replicable models for adapting available free technologies. These technologies have been adopted for the filmmakers' new film, *Granito*.
- Storytelling practices that incorporate video clips and web archiving contribute to building multi-vocal narratives with multiple perspectives.
- As noted above, the work of national, regional, and local human rights organizations are linked and strengthened by materials and practices developed in the case of *State of Fear*.

# APPENDIX III

## RELATED VISUALIZATIONS

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The graphics below represent earlier efforts to visualize the formation of networks around media projects, developed collaboratively by the report's co-author, Jessica Clark. These have informed the visualizations on pages 18 and 24-25 in this report. They are intended to suggest how the dynamics of various social issue documentaries might be modeled and visualized over time.

Clark developed the first set of graphics in collaboration with Tracy Van Slyke, for their 2010 book, *Beyond the Echo Chamber: Reshaping Politics Through Networked Progressive Media*—see [beyondtheecho.net](http://beyondtheecho.net) for more details.

The second spread, on pp. 72-73, examines the ripple effect of the multiplatform documentary *Mapping Main Street*. It was developed in collaboration with Sue Schardt of the Association of Independents in Radio for a report titled *Spreading the Zing: Reimagining Public Media Through the Makers Quest 2.0*.

# NETWORKED USERS

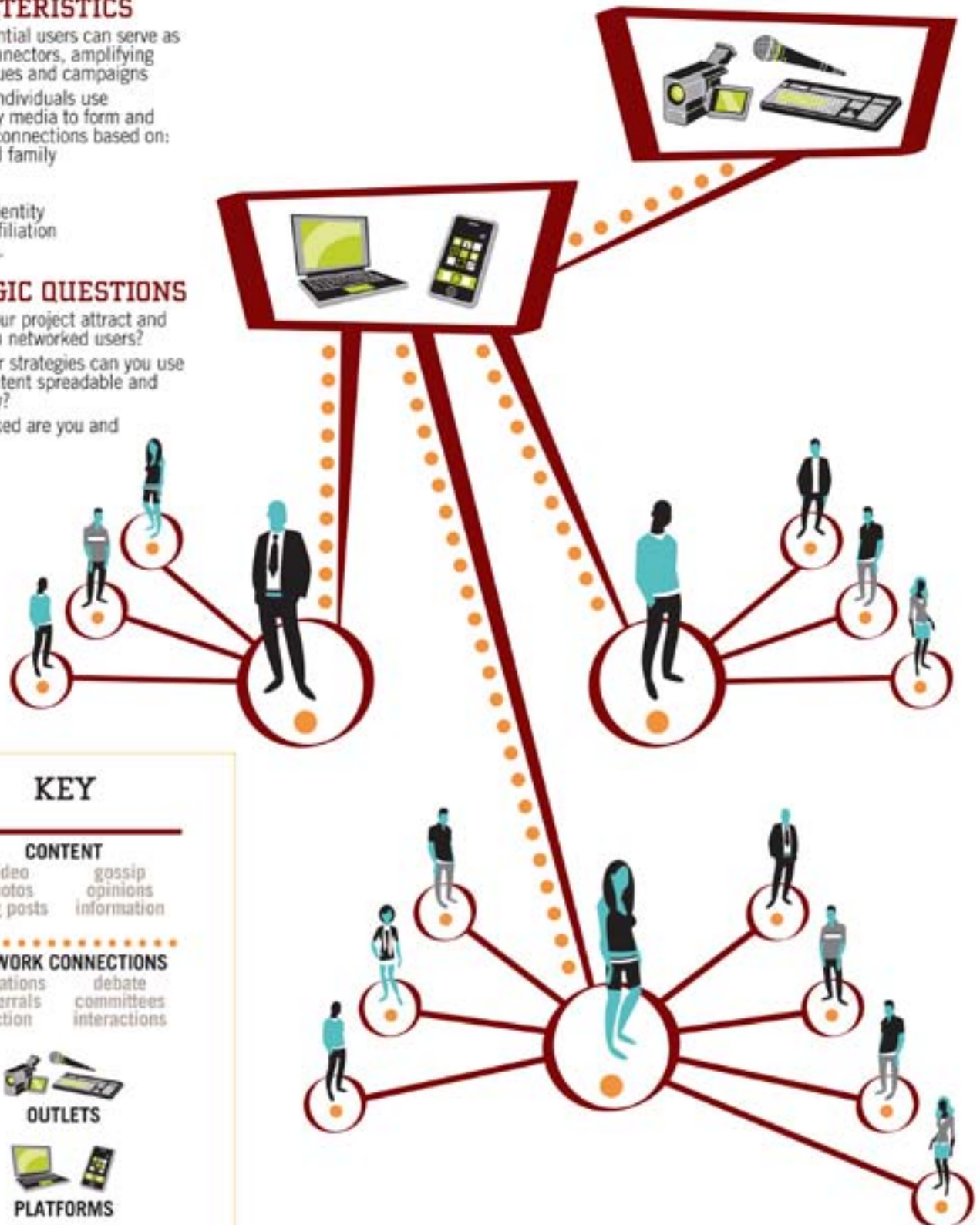
Media makers must learn to work with users who are connected to multiple networks and can distribute, amplify, and serve as ambassadors for the media producer's content.

## CHARACTERISTICS

- some influential users can serve as valuable connectors, amplifying content, issues and campaigns
- networked individuals use participatory media to form and strengthen connections based on:
  - friends and family
  - proximity
  - work
  - personal identity
  - political affiliation
  - and more...

## STRATEGIC QUESTIONS

- how does your project attract and interact with networked users?
- what tools or strategies can you use to make content spreadable and participatory?
- how networked are you and your staff?



## KEY

### CONTENT

video  
photos  
blog posts  
gossip  
opinions  
information

### NETWORK CONNECTIONS

donations  
referrals  
action  
debate  
committees  
interactions



### OUTLETS



### PLATFORMS

# SELF-ORGANIZED NETWORKS

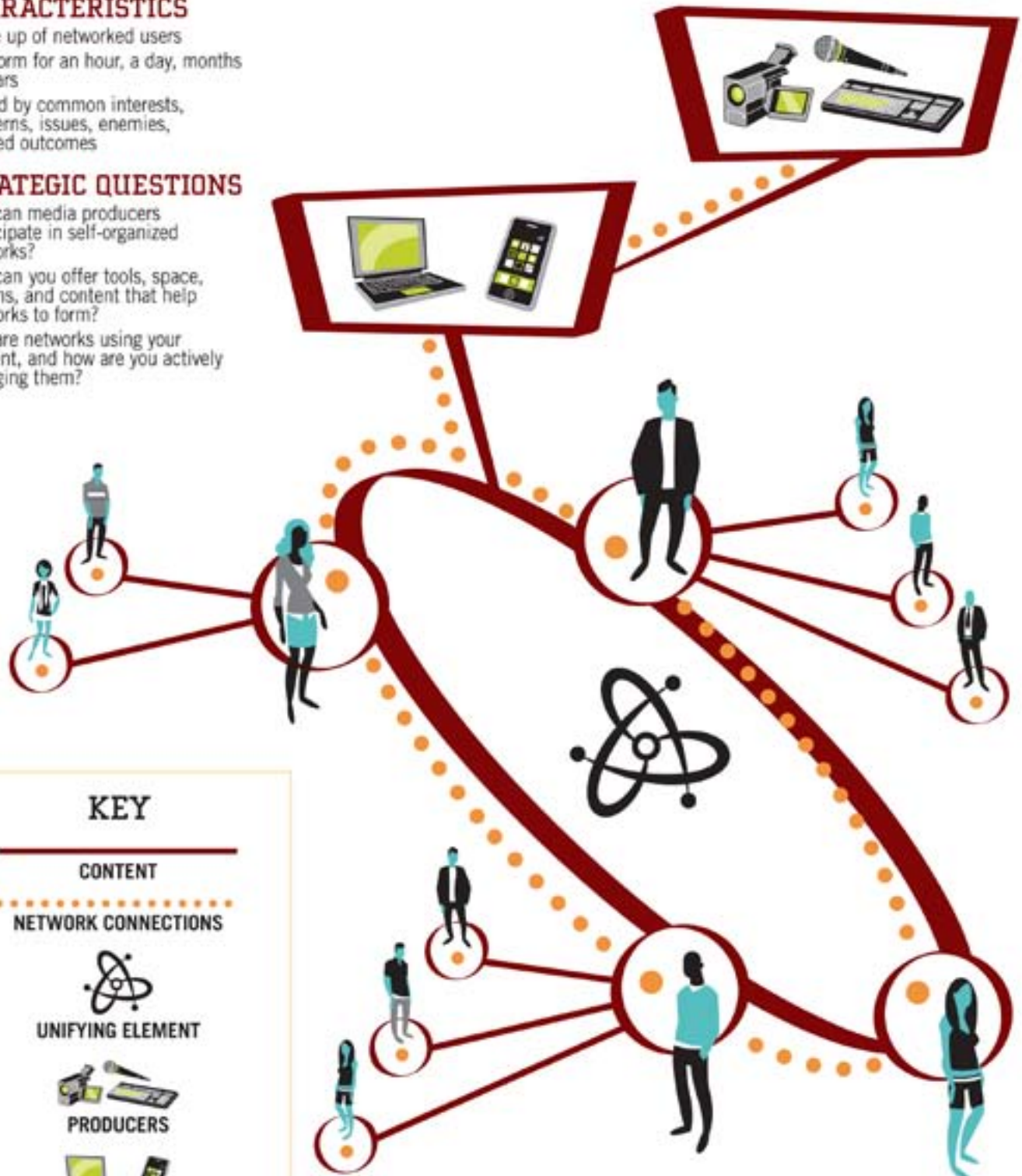
Users can work together to form ad hoc networks around unifying elements such as shared issues and/or breaking events. Media makers can tap into these networks to spread relevant content, follow breaking trends, and cover collective actions.

## CHARACTERISTICS

- made up of networked users
- can form for an hour, a day, months or years
- united by common interests, concerns, issues, enemies, desired outcomes

## STRATEGIC QUESTIONS

- how can media producers participate in self-organized networks?
- how can you offer tools, space, actions, and content that help networks to form?
- how are networks using your content, and how are you actively engaging them?



### KEY

SOLID RED LINE  
CONTENT

DOTTED RED LINE  
NETWORK CONNECTIONS



UNIFYING ELEMENT



PRODUCERS



PLATFORMS



# INSTITUTIONAL NETWORKS

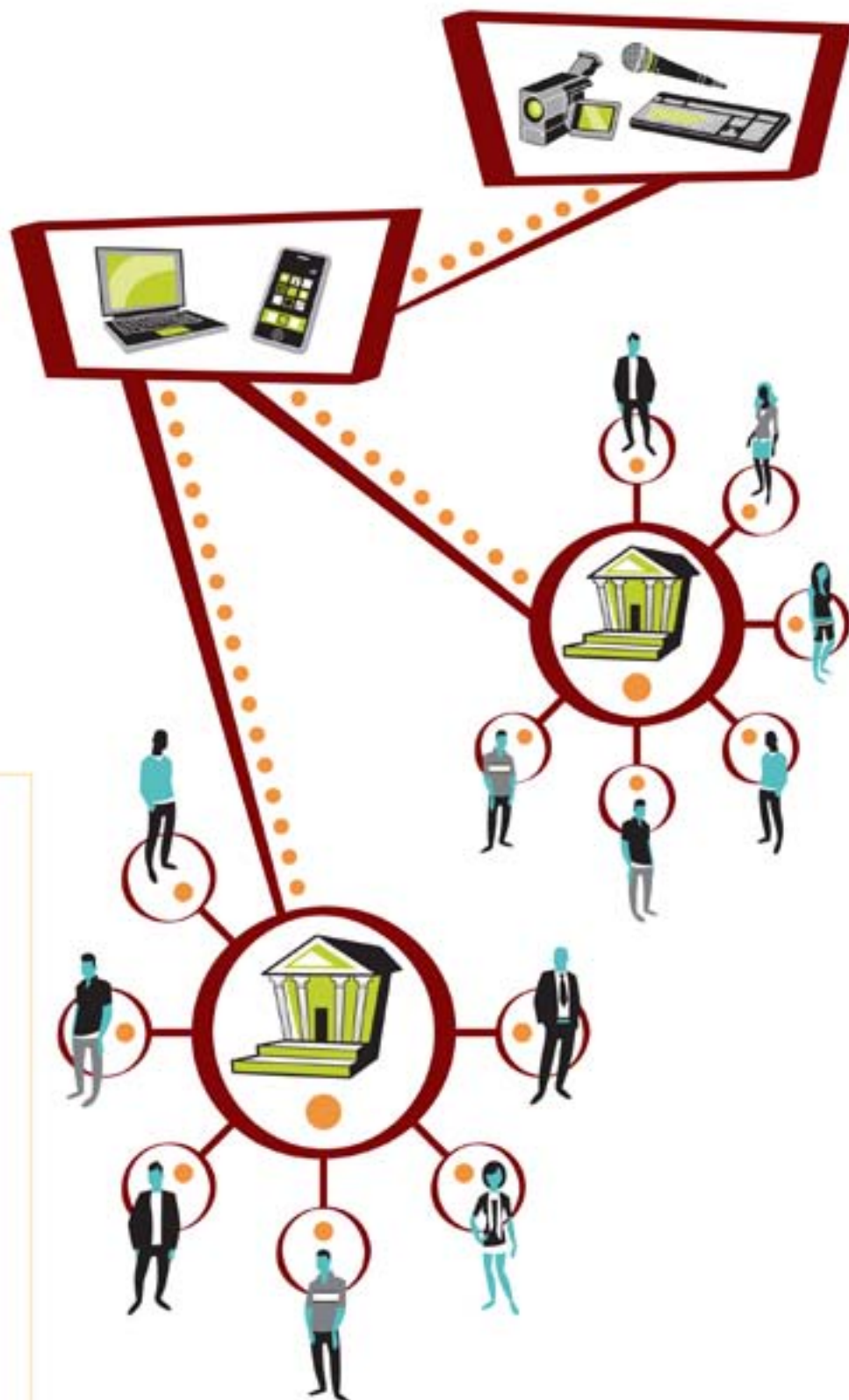
Media makers can also harness more durable networks of users – hosted or organized by institutions such as nonprofits or campaigns – to share content, offer crowdsourcing opportunities, and develop fundraising relationships.

## CHARACTERISTICS

- more formal than self-organized networks
- longer-lasting
- hosted/supported by institutions that provide:
  - organizing tools—i.e. widgets, petitions, frames, backgrounders
  - offline organizing opportunities
  - action prompts

## STRATEGIC QUESTIONS

- what institutional networks might use or host your content?
- what tools and strategies can help you to assess how networks use your work?
- how can your outlet work entice members of an institutional network to also join your network?



## KEY

### CONTENT

### NETWORK CONNECTIONS



#### INSTITUTION

nonprofits  
companies  
political parties  
advocacy groups



#### PRODUCERS



#### PLATFORMS

# NETWORKS OF INSTITUTIONS

## PART I: MEDIA NETWORKS

Media makers and outlets can form collaborative networks to jointly report on complex issues, and structure new models for innovation and revenue.

### CHARACTERISTICS

- share tools and business strategies
- work together to integrate/build upon editorial strengths
- collectively influence public discourse
- set/lead news agendas
- build relationships and advocate for sector

### STRATEGIC QUESTIONS

- what kinds of media networks can you join or create?
  - journalism
  - political
  - geographical
  - issue-based





## NETWORKS OF INSTITUTIONS

## PART II: HYBRID MODEL

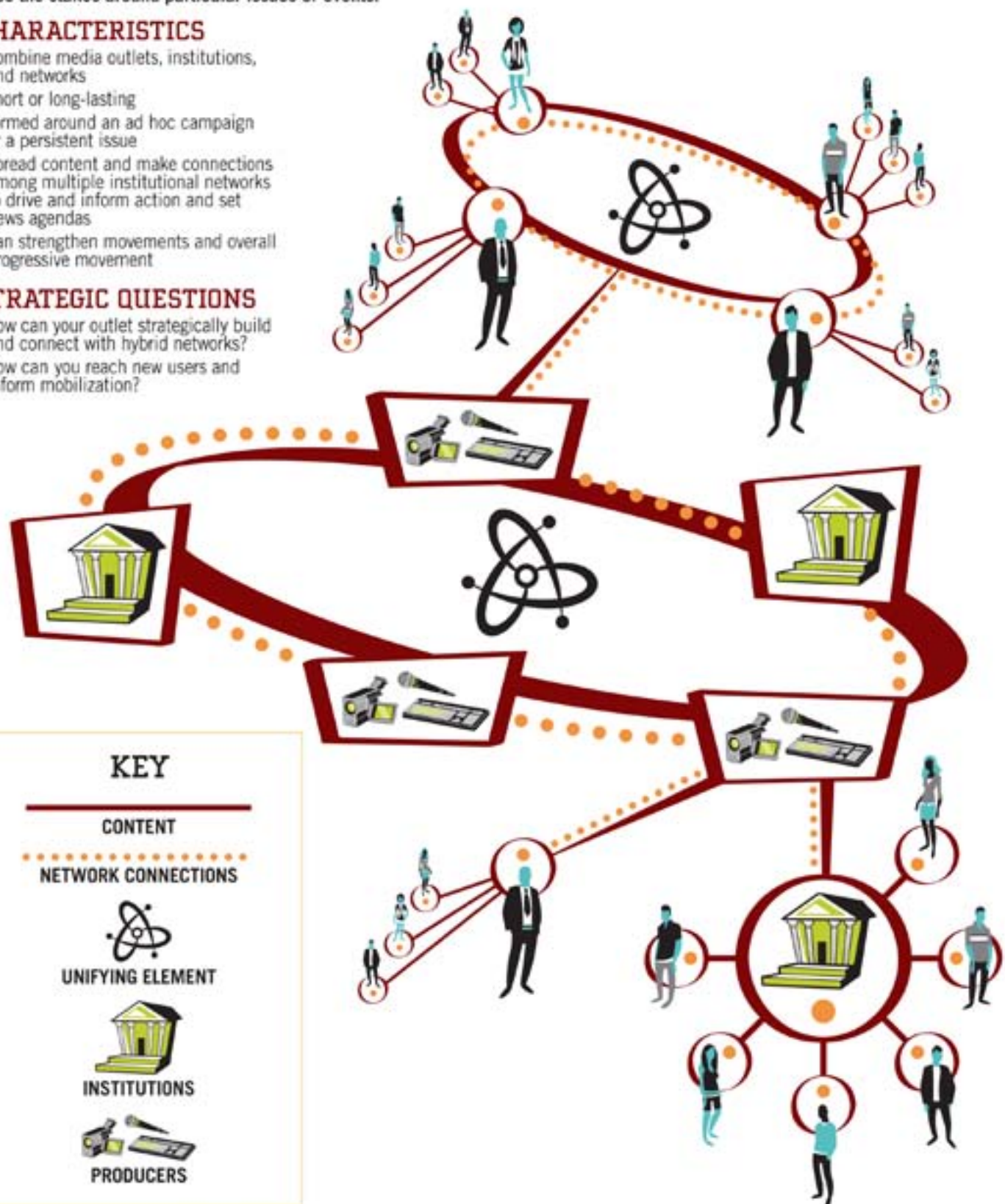
Networks that combine media outlets, nonprofits, and grassroots organizations can work together to drive traffic, build buzz, and raise the stakes around particular issues or events.

### CHARACTERISTICS

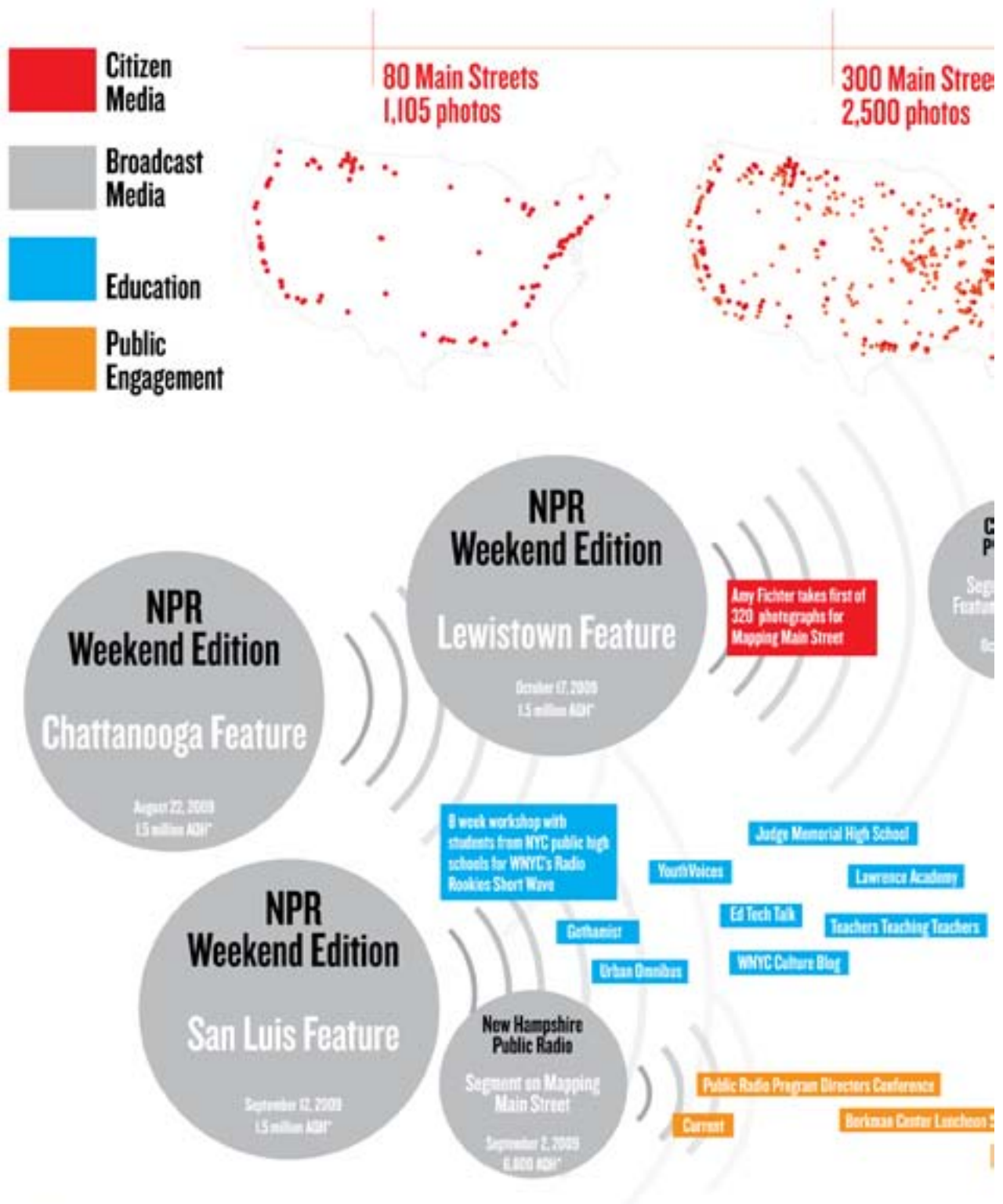
- combine media outlets, institutions, and networks
- short or long-lasting
- formed around an ad hoc campaign or a persistent issue
- spread content and make connections among multiple institutional networks to drive and inform action and set news agendas
- can strengthen movements and overall progressive movement

### STRATEGIC QUESTIONS

- how can your outlet strategically build and connect with hybrid networks?
- how can you reach new users and inform mobilization?



# The Impact of MQ2's

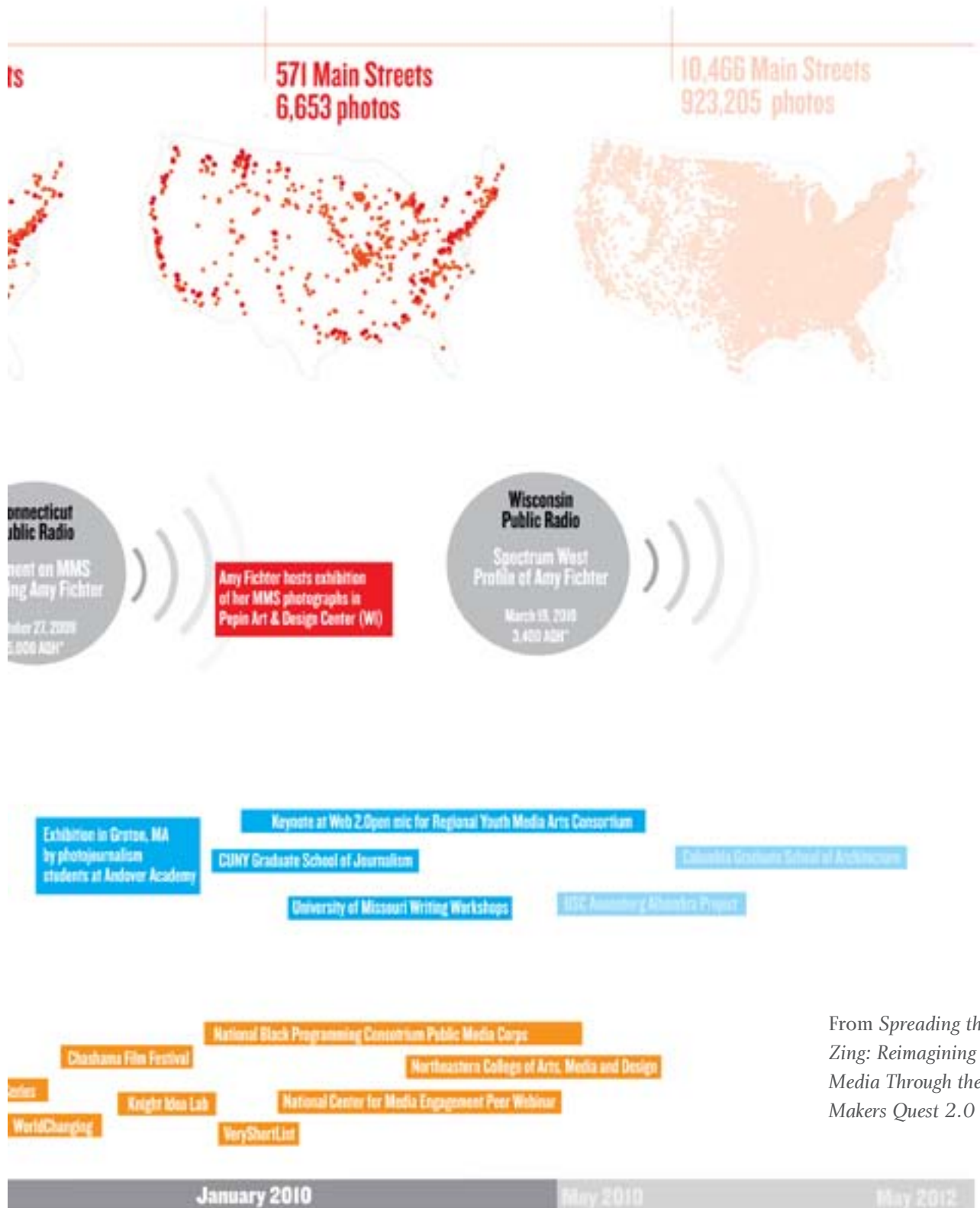


August 2009

\*Source NPR National Estimates, Spring 2009



# Mapping Main Street



From *Spreading the Zing: Reimagining Public Media Through the Makers Quest 2.0*

# APPENDIX IV

## RESOURCES

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### Documentaries and Social Impact

- \* Barbara Abrash and Patricia Aufderheide: *Documentary Funding at the Ford Foundation, 1970-2005*, Ford Foundation, 2006
- \* Patricia Aufderheide: *In the Battle for Reality: Social Documentaries in the U.S.*, Center for Social Media, 2003
- \* Diana Barrett and Sheila Leddy: *Creative Media's Social Impact*, December 2008.
- \* Peter Broderick: "Special report: How Films can Change the World", *The Distribution Bulletin, Issue # 16*, July 7, 2011.
- \* Jessica Clark and Pat Aufderheide: *Public Media 2.0: Dynamic, Engaged Publics*, The Center for Social Media, February 2009.
- \* Jessica Clark and Sue Schardt. *Spreading the Zing: Reimagining Public Media Through the Makers Quest 2.0*, Center for Social Media and the Association of Independents in Radio, May 2010.
- \* Jessica Clark and Tracy Van Slyke: *Investing in Impact: Media Summits Reveal Pressing Needs, Tools for Evaluating Public Interest Media* Center for Social Media, May 2010.
- \* *The End of the Line: A Social Impact Evaluation*, Channel 4 BRITDOC Foundation, 2011
- \* *IMPACT: A Practical Guide to Evaluating Community Information Projects*, FSG and the John and James L. Knight Foundation, February 2011.
- \* Peter B. Kaufman and Mary Albon, *Funding Media, Strengthening Democracy: Grantmaking for the 21<sup>st</sup>* Grantmakers in Film and Electronic Media, March 2010.
- \* Mark Kramer, Marcie Parkhurst, *Lalitha Vaidyanathan. Breakthroughs in Shared Measurement and Social Impact*, FSG Social Impact Advisors, July 2009.
- \* Sheila Leddy and Serena Keith: *Assessing the Impact of Good Pitch*, 2010.
- \* Meg McLagan and Daria Sommers: *Cultivating Change: Lioness Impact Report*, 2010.
- \* *Pull Focus Showcase*, Center for Social Media, 2011
- \* Emily Verellen: *From Distribution to Audience Engagement – Social Change Through Film*, The Fledgling Fund, August 2010.

## Design Thinking

- \* Bootcamp Bootleg, Institute of Design at Stanford, 2010.
- \* Tim Brown: Change by Design: How Design Thinking Transforms Organizations and Inspires Innovation, HarperCollins, September 2009.
- \* Human-Centered Design Toolkit, IDEO and The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, 2009.

## Networked Media

- \* Jessica Clark and Tracy Van Slyke: Beyond the Echo Chamber: Reshaping Politics Through Networked Progressive Media, The New Press, February 2010.
- \* Diana Searce: Connected Citizens: The Power, Potential and Peril of Networks, Monitor Institute and the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, Spring 2011.
- \* Beth Kanter and Allison Fine: The Networked Nonprofit: Connecting With Social Media to Drive Change, Jossey-Bass, June 2010.

