

Redefining Who Belongs

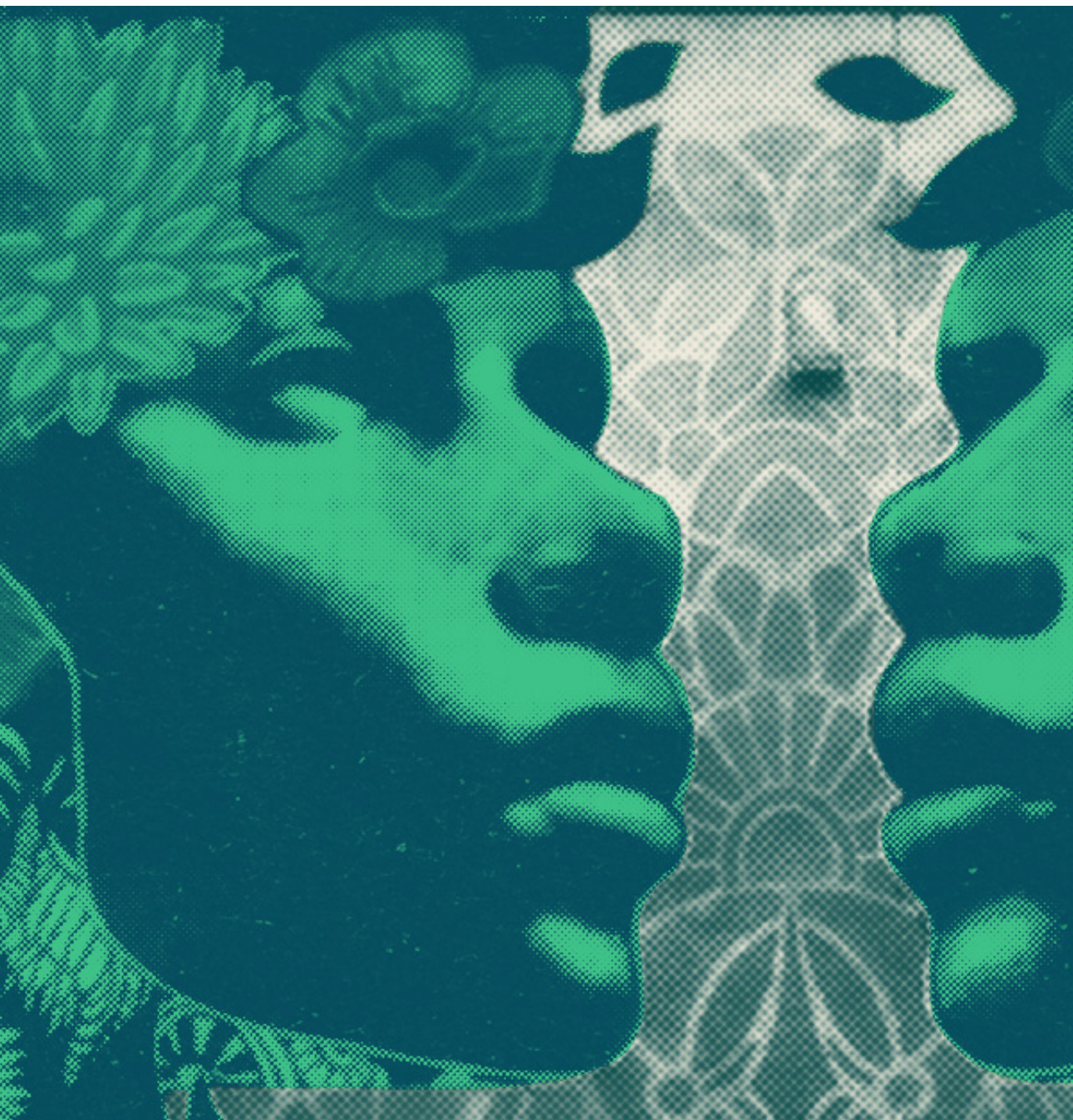
Narrative Strategy for Belonging

Olivia E. Araiza and Sara Grossman

COMMUNITY BLUEPRINT

[BELONGING.BERKELEY.EDU](https://belonging.berkeley.edu)

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This brief is published by the Othering & Belonging Institute at UC Berkeley. The Othering & Belonging Institute brings together researchers, community stakeholders, and policy-makers to identify and challenge the barriers to an inclusive, just, and sustainable society in order to create transformative change.

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A letter from **Blueprint for Belonging**

We live in unprecedented and challenging times that speak to our increased interdependence as human beings—from the COVID-19 pandemic to the uprising in defense of Black lives to the intensifying climate crisis. All of these challenges have hit California particularly hard, showing us how and why it is more important than ever to build toward a world where we all belong.

Recent acute instances of failed political leadership—particularly around the pandemic and an ongoing lack of action to protect Black lives—have shone a bright light on questions essential to our future as a country: Who are we? Who are we becoming? Who must we become if we are to create a different world where everyone belongs?

We founded Blueprint for Belonging to answer these fundamental questions. It was a radical proposition in 2015 to say that we must build a big “we” out of our tighter-knit, smaller “we” identities. Still more ambitious was to make it a “we” that doesn’t dismiss our individual and community identities, and one that doesn’t turn away from or sidestep dynamics like anti-Black racism and immigrant resentment that splinter a broad-based social contract. Racial dynamics impact everything from voter turnout to views on tax reform to support for a Muslim travel ban or border wall. It was radical to say that fear of the other and racial anxiety cross race lines, operate within communities of color, and can get in the way of addressing economic inequality. We proposed that the embedded racist and white-supremacist metanarrative that shapes this country—and that is deployed again and again, *strategically*—needed to be confronted head-on with a narrative strategy that the project calls “Redefining Who Belongs.”

Through this project, we create and use narrative strategies to address the growing racialized inequality we see in California that pits the state’s progressive promise against a harsh, unjust reality. Our work is in service to and in partnership with community organizations and movements working tirelessly across the state to achieve a bold, inclusive vision for a California we believe is necessary and possible.

Everything we do at Blueprint for Belonging is rooted in love and justice. We lift up love because relationships matter. The most effective movements toward transformative change are those which engage in sustained relationship building to develop and advance a strategic narrative of belonging. We lift up justice because we must fight for a social contract where everyone belongs and has a genuine opportunity at achieving and living a new California dream that centers our health and Mother Earth as inextricably intertwined.

We hope this community blueprint can be a resource to bolster our collective efforts by growing our capacity and connections to create a California where we all belong.

In peace and love,

Olivia E. Araiza, Josh Clark, Gerald Lenoir, Miriam Magaña Lopez, and Eli Moore

Glossary of Terms

Belonging

More than just being seen or feeling included, belonging entails having a voice and the opportunity to use it to make demands upon society and political institutions. Belonging is more than having access; it is about the power to co-create the structures that shape a community.

Breaking

The production or perpetuation of an “us” versus “them” dichotomy. Language or actions may break individuals, coalitions, or particular communities to prevent them from feeling connected to a particular group or issue—creating others who are turned inward into isolation or simply away. Breaking perpetuates oppressive systems such as extreme isolation, civic exclusion, toxic politics, and systemic racism.

Bridging

A project aimed at crossing identity-based lines. To bridge involves two or more groups coming together across acknowledged lines of difference in a way that both affirms their distinct identities and creates a new, more expansive identity. Bridging addresses tensions or “breaking” dynamics that sustain division in order to develop a new “we” that is not only more inclusive, but cohesive, durable, and consistent with bringing about belonging and greater social justice. The new “we” that results need not agree on everything, or even very much, but its members should have a shared empathy and lasting stake in one another. Bridging rejects all strict “us” versus “them” framings, but without erasing what is different and unique in each party.

Communications

These are the strategies, tools, and tactics by which public stories, narratives, and messaging are created and shared. Communications tools include public platforms like radio, television, print, and digital media.

Cultural power and cultural strategies

A community’s visibility, recognition, and impact in society. Cultural power includes the influence and impact of community voices and leaders who share a specific cultural perspective. Cultural strategies are used to grow a community’s cultural power by centering community members’ leadership, voices, storytelling, practices, and knowledge so that their experiences shape society.

Dominant narratives

Prominent public stories, plots, and ways of organizing knowledge about history and society that shape how people make sense of their worlds, and the position and potential of themselves and others. As “dominant” narratives, they are far-reaching, mainstreamed, and often unconscious or taken as common sense.

Messaging

Tools for storytelling and story sharing are used for messaging, including communications assets such as talking points, sound bites, frameworks for debate, and thought pieces. Messaging takes narrative and formulates it into bite-sized pieces that translate well to various communications platforms.

Narrative

The set of stories, real or imagined, and repertoire of plotlines that organize and underpin our ways of understanding and making sense of social, economic, and political dynamics and our and others' relationships to them. Narratives shape how we process new information and experiences and set both boundaries and possibilities for who we are and who we are becoming.

Narrative infrastructure

The resources, networks, and tools available to develop, create, implement, and distribute narrative and storytelling so that it reaches public audiences, including key target constituencies whose support organizers require to bring about lasting social transformation. Elements of narrative infrastructure can include research and analysis, staffing, training, publications, curriculum, or digital media tools. To be impactful, the infrastructure is diverse across movements, sectors, and strategies; has the convening and agenda-setting space to create alignment; and is looking both internally and externally to the movement to set markers for strategy and goals. Communities, movements, and organizations vary in the depth and heft of their narrative infrastructure.

Othering

A set of dynamics, processes, and structures that engender marginality and persistent inequality across any of the full range of human differences based on group identities. In opposition to belonging, othering is a frame that captures the many forms of prejudice and persistent marginality such as race, gender, sexuality, religion, income, and disability. The term also explains and analyzes a set of common policies and practices that engender othering.

Strategic narrative

A strategic narrative conveys core values, an analysis, and a vision rather than detailing a set of policies. While the exact words may vary, the underlying values are durable across time. Because narratives fuel policies and culture, strategic narratives have the power to change public debate, shift attitudes, and redefine society. While strategic narrative can underpin specific messages or talking points, it is much more than a messaging guide. Strategic narrative has implications for what policy agendas are pursued, field and alignment strategy, *and* communications.

Theory of change

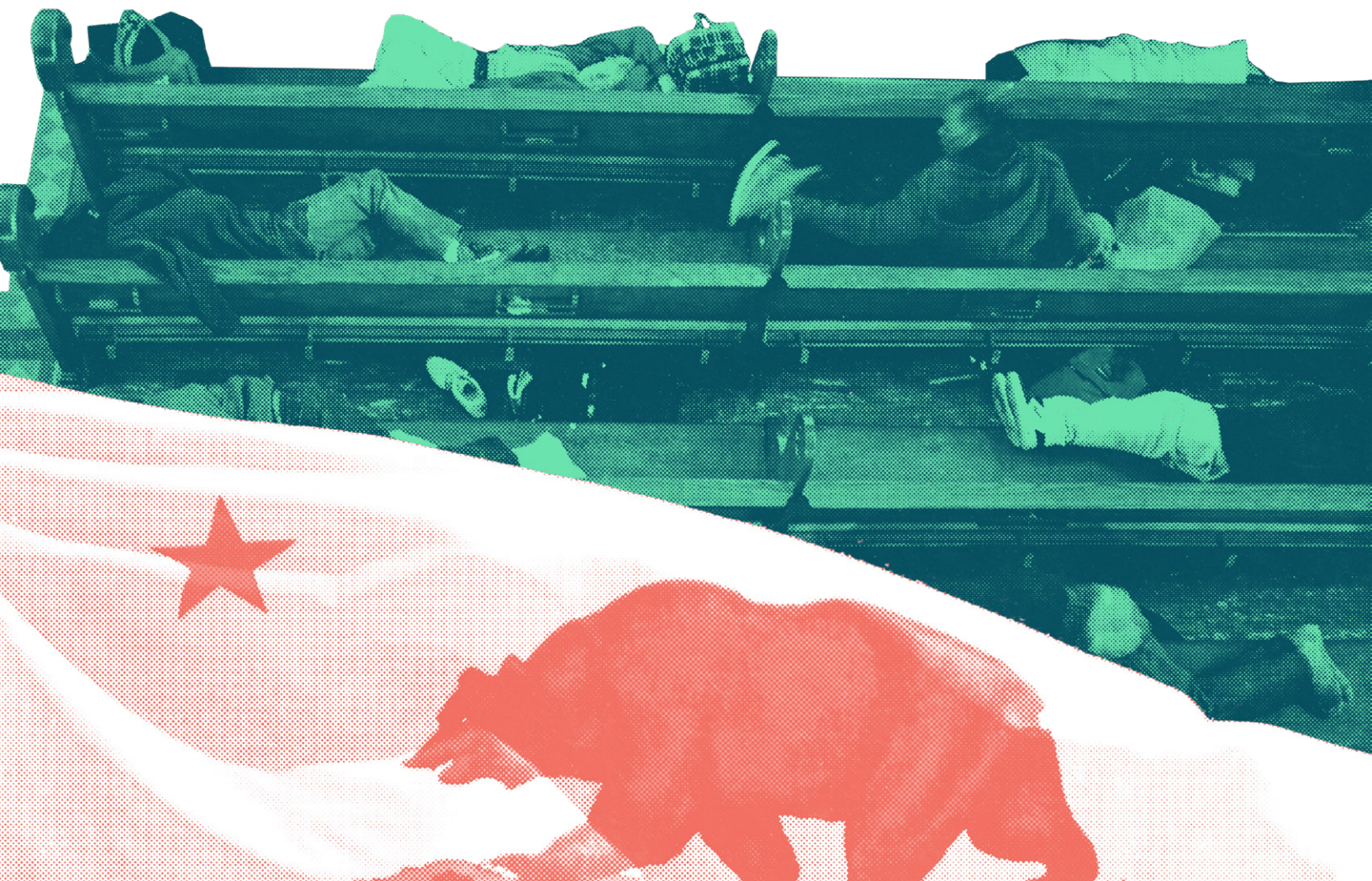
A process to determine a long-term goal, map out the steps and conditions needed to meet that goal, and set indicators that signal progress toward the goal. A theory of change also refers to a written narrative that explains the logic of change toward a goal.

Setting the Scene

Where We Find Ourselves Today

FROM ITS INCEPTION, the idea of the California dream has served as a potent draw for countless seekers of opportunity, advancement, and personal expression. Public policy scholar Christopher Witko has described this dream, in contrast to the more individualist American dream, as predicated on social goods like “quality schools, lush parks, and good roads, and even less tangible things like respect for civil rights.”¹ Indeed, California has long been associated with values like open-mindedness and progress, as well as freedom, creativity, and innovation—all backed by a strong public sphere that recognized the value of government investment in communities, infrastructure, and business.

Still, although the state built a leading public education system and passed a number of bipartisan civil-rights policies in the 1950s and ‘60s, it was also **the backdrop for the rise of major conservative figures and ideologies in the decades that followed**, such as Barry Goldwater,² Ronald Reagan, and the beginnings of today’s anti-immigration movement. Today, the enduring reputation of the California dream has perhaps outlasted its reality. The state suffers from some of the highest levels of inequality in the nation and enormous social challenges including **a host of racial inequalities**³ and urban poverty so extreme that a United Nations expert on housing described it as a **“violation of multiple human rights.”**⁴





CALIFORNIA REPUBLIC

Perhaps most intriguing, however, is that—despite Californians’ reputation for progressivism—the state’s voters have in recent decades rejected many of the forward-thinking policies to address the state’s social and economic ills.⁵ This reality is driven by stronger campaigns or argumentation on the part of those who oppose these measures. The default attitudes and beliefs of too many Californians tend to distrust any message that says government or policy can be a force for positive change in their lives. In some cases, even our own messages inadvertently reinforce this distrust when, in seeking to reach voters “where they’re at,” we skirt past uncomfortable subjects that must be confronted if we are to win the long-term fight for equity and justice.

In fact, Californians of all backgrounds share much in common with Americans in general, including a national mythology of individualist achievement, meritocracy, and exceptional self-reliance, resourcefulness, and hard work as what make the country uniquely “great.” Contained within this dominant political narrative is a notion of freedom that has become deeply and increasingly bound up in distrust toward government⁶—the unsurprising result of decades of political attacks on the idea of government itself, assaults which **often strategically used fears around race and immigration to connect government with “handouts to undeserving minorities.”**⁷ For some groups, particularly people of color or those of other marginalized identities, this distrust toward government is understandably rooted in a deep sense of exclusion and abandonment, the result of lived experiences and real government failures to protect and support out-groups.

Still, we know that if progressives are to win transformative change in the long run, we will not do so by achieving piecemeal policy victories for individual target groups. Rather, victory will be in the shifting of Californians’ dominant narrative about themselves and the kind of society they want, from one rooted in values and beliefs that are individualistic, mistrusting, and cynical, to one grounded in our inherent interconnectedness, shared responsibility to each other, and collective capacity to effect change.

Movement actors fighting today for a range of economic and racial justice causes must begin to undertake the long-term work of shifting the dominant narrative. Indeed, it is sometimes difficult to convince even those sympathetic to the idea of fighting inequality that more public resources are needed for vulnerable communities. This is due to the reach of the dominant, underlying individualist narrative, as well as a sense of fatalism about the collective ability of those who have so long been denied justice and inclusion to enact their power at the highest levels.

The purpose of this brief is to understand how movement actors can create and put forth new salient strategic narratives that address underlying dominant beliefs while offering an alternative story line that fosters the political and economic victories we want to see. In the pages that follow, we offer a short blueprint for creating a strategic narrative on belonging, relevant for a range of causes or issue areas, with examples from projects by Blueprint for Belonging and our partner networks. A strategic narrative is not meant to be a story for a single campaign, but rather one that will underpin many different activities and tactics for attitude and behavior change in the long term.

How to Operationalize a Strategic Narrative for Belonging



Photograph by Pacita Rudder,
from a 99Rootz "Grow Your Vote" workshop
for the Cultural Strategy Ambassadors Program

Key Learnings and Case Studies

Belonging narratives

must address the structural drivers of racial inequality and center the role of government in remedying these inequalities

AMONG ACTIVISTS, ORGANIZERS, and communications strategists, it's no secret that "naming and shaming" is a widely accepted strategy within traditional campaigning. And it's popular because it often works. By arousing a burst of passion (anger, sadness, outrage, and so on), this form of organizing can undoubtedly motivate ordinary people to respond online, get involved, and in some cases even achieve real results.

But this tactic falls short when it neglects to clarify *why* unjust outcomes occur in the first place (i.e., which systems or policies facilitate them), allowing target constituents to oversimplify the root cause and thereby fostering the false belief that the defeat or penance of a singular, often individualized enemy will solve a social injustice. Indeed, such a lack of structural analysis anchoring a strategic narrative can create misdirection. This will ultimately stand in the way of achieving long-term and sustainable transformative change, which requires the dismantling and reconstructing of larger systems—not just the introduction of new policies, programs, or people.

A strategic narrative of belonging is therefore rooted in an analysis of systems, clearly identifying the ways that structures—maintained by common beliefs and values—organize our lives, privileging some at the expense of many others.

Central to that analysis is not one individual, company, or bad actor, but systems themselves—embodied in

our government that, for better or worse, facilitates the rules structuring society, from laws, regulations, and taxation to "who gets what, when, and how." To be clear, this is not to suggest that a strategic narrative should simply place the blame on government—an approach that can be just as damaging as narratives that fail to center structures. Rather, strategic narrative must both convey the importance of government in its diagnosis of how injustices are reinforced and *also identify it as the site where those injustices are remedied*. It's not, in other words, about one billionaire not paying taxes, but rather a system that allows billionaires to avoid paying their fair share. Concurrently, it's also not just about one failure of government, but *why government has been set up to fail*. Is it a lack of public funding? A problem of public values? Or a lack of public education around an issue?

It's important to remember that there has long been a regressive movement in the United States working diligently to attack and incapacitate government. Often it has operated through strategic uses of racism to suggest that the public sphere offers "handouts" to those who don't work hard or are otherwise "undeserving"—coded to refer to communities of color. At the same time, progressives have failed to defend the role of government in their own narratives over the last few decades, perhaps out of an effort to acknowledge public disappointment at real government failures and mistakes. But the ultimate outcome of

this is to cede the narrative turf around government to those who would seek to weaken and starve its mechanisms for fighting inequality and injustice.

The failure to defend the central role of government in facilitating racial and economic justice has ultimately hastened the popular acceptance of a narrative around government and the social good that says: the right size of government is “small”; government’s main role is to expedite economic growth; its programs and services are inefficient, inherently wasteful, and contrary to individual self-reliance; and therefore public goods should not be funded.

California’s public structures today reflect this dominant narrative. They are underfunded, undervalued, and thereby undermined. And the state’s communities of color most of all bear the brunt of underinvestment, furthering existing racialized inequalities and reinforcing othering. The COVID-19 pandemic, like no other recent crisis, has laid bare this reality.

Ultimately, while the dominant narrative naturalizes the idea that the regulatory and “social welfare” functions of government need to be ever smaller—serving the interests of the wealthy—a belonging narrative says that government must be and do *better*, to benefit each and all of us. We can only further belonging at the structural level by centering structures in the analyses we put forward, with government visible as an object and instrument of change in our strategic narratives. In the end, we need the massive capacity and reach of government to resolve and address any of the major failures we’re facing—from housing to climate—and it’s in our best interest to find a new narrative that centers government’s role in delivering belonging. We must recognize that government is only as good as the ideologies that underpin it, the people who run it, and the narratives that interpret its role to the public.

The many authors of the Blueprint for Belonging papers series include scholars across disciplines, civil rights leaders, faith-based leaders, and leading thinkers.

The Blueprint for Belonging launched with a project that sought to understand the day’s leading drivers of inequality, the sources of breaking between and among groups, and the narratives that sustain them. With essays by Color of Change’s Rashad Robinson; Perception Institute’s Rachel Godsil; University of California, Berkeley, legal scholar Ian Haney López; and other leading thinkers, this series sought to diagnose sources of inequality and injustice, but more importantly to put forth realizable strategies for building narrative change to help transform them. This series helped fulfill one part of the narrative development process: to develop a shared analysis across movements and the organizations that make them up. This step needs to be cared for and brought up to date periodically as major events change the course toward belonging.

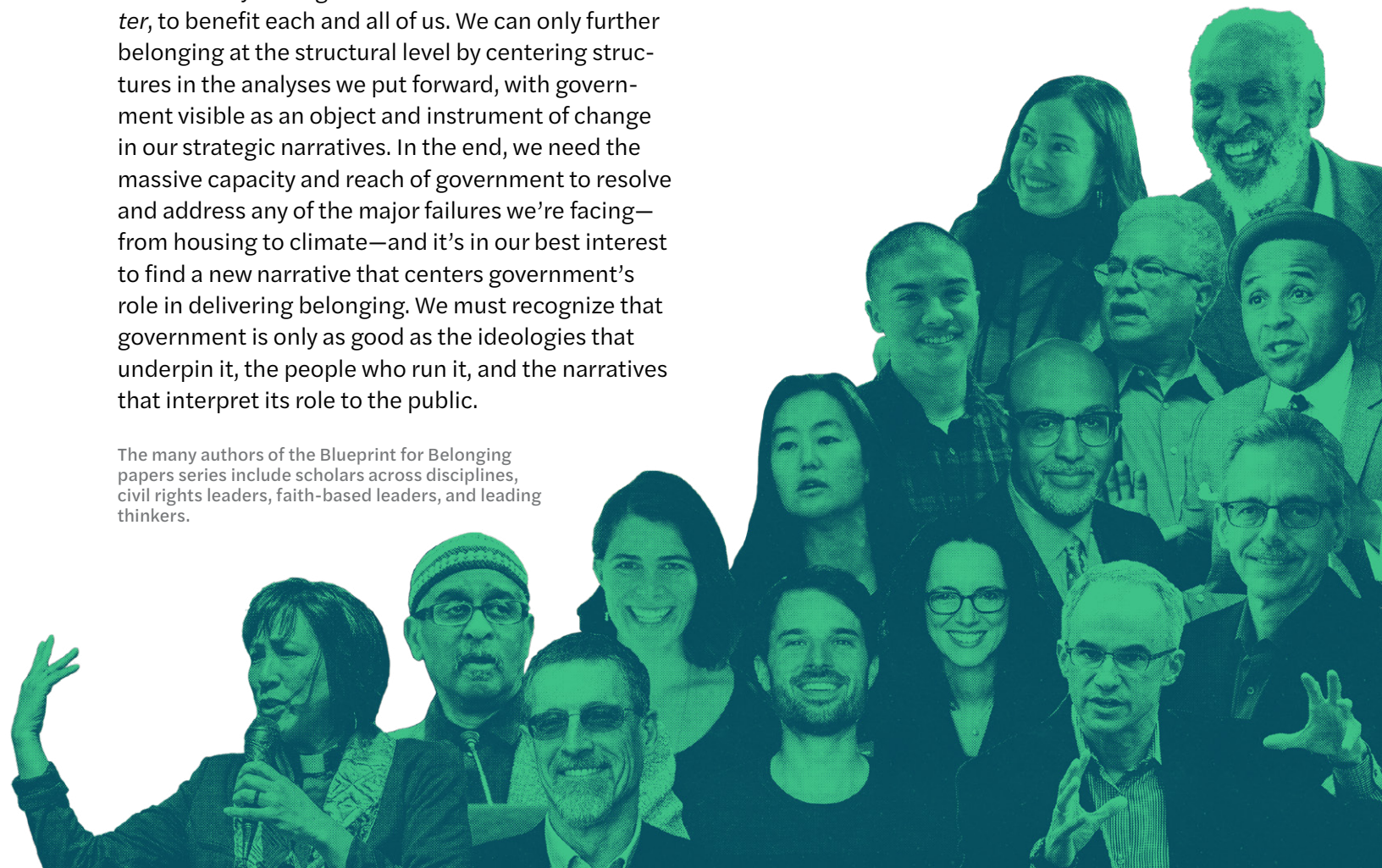


READ ESSAYS

Blueprint for Belonging Papers

A series of essays on inequality, identity, and narrative in California

► belonging.berkeley.edu/blueprint-belonging-papers



Address, don't ignore,

the fears, anxieties, and uncomfortable beliefs of key constituencies, particularly where anti-Black racism and immigrant resentment are present

OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS, much attention has been given to privilege—the phrase “check your privilege” is well-known to most Americans by now. While this has certainly helped make more people, particularly white Americans, aware of racial and economic inequality, it has also centered white privilege in the larger discourse around racial justice at the expense of scrutiny toward other significant barriers to belonging. Structural racism, as discussed in the previous section, is one such under-scrutinized barrier. But another, perhaps less comfortable one, is the presence of othering, anxiety, perceived competition, and, in particular, anti-Black racist attitudes within many of the communities in which we work.

Our recent research in Riverside, San Bernardino, and Orange counties in Southern California, for example, reveals that substantial minorities of Latinx and Asian American respondents agree with statements extolling individualist, anti-immigrant “bootstrap” narratives, and decline to sympathize with challenges faced by many immigrants. The surveys also show that older members of these communities are just as likely as whites to reject the idea that Black Americans still suffer from the continuing impacts of enslavement, discrimination, and systemic oppression.⁸

Similarly, a significant share of older African Americans believe the idea that they are in competition with Latinxs for good jobs, such that a benefit to

one group comes at a cost to the other. Nearly half of those fifty and older hold this idea, compared to just 28 percent of African Americans under age fifty. While we uncovered several promising signs for solidarity across Black, Latinx, and Asian American communities in Southern California as well,⁹ results like these expose vulnerabilities to politics of division that cannot be ignored in political advocacy contexts and movement building more generally.

To be clear, this is not an indictment of communities of color. Like most widely held beliefs and attitudes, white supremacy—particularly when manifested as anti-Black or anti-immigrant biases—is “in the air that we breathe” and propagated by the systems which organize our lives. Yet we will not fully tackle othering on a wide scale unless we also address its manifestation within the communities in which we work, and this means acknowledging uncomfortable beliefs within our narrative frameworks.

Too often we jump quickly to stories that depict a harmonious progressive community that crosses race, gender, class, ability, and other lines without acknowledging persistent anti-Black, anti-immigrant, sexist, ableist, or related othering sentiments. In doing so, we can inadvertently ignore profound pain and suffering, and thereby “break” with our brothers and sisters who are, for example, Black or immigrant. This type of breaking stands in the way of

the coalition building and trust-based partnerships that are necessary for successful movement work. A seemingly multiracial effort to address an issue like structural inequality is at risk of failing if these underlying tensions are not addressed.

Of course, merely being aware of threats of breakage does not necessarily translate to utility within a strategic narrative. Our ongoing work in Southern California's Inland Empire (Riverside and San Bernardino counties) can offer a blueprint for how a strategic narrative for belonging that acknowledges breaking might look.

The narrative we developed with movement partner Inland Empowerment involved starting with a place

of solidarity by centering a shared place-based identification ("in x community, we know that..."). The narrative then offers a structural analysis of the problem by highlighting the unjust extraction of wealth by corporations in the region, and then goes on to call out narratives that rely on racial scapegoating to explain unequal economic outcomes ("Some people try to explain why we're struggling by pointing to people of other races—saying immigrants take our jobs, or Black people don't work hard enough. But that's not right and we know it."). The roadmap linked below on the following page offers a more in-depth look at this narrative and how it addresses breaking between groups while working to foster civic engagement and hope for a better and brighter future.

CASE STUDY

PICO California puts bridging into action

Our partnership with PICO California is perhaps the ultimate example of an organization openly engaging with uncomfortable attitudes between and among identity groups—and, by doing so, helping build stronger bridges between groups and individuals fighting for racial justice. To strengthen its political advocacy efforts in 2019, PICO California launched over one hundred bridging and belonging circles, engaging Californians from across faith, race, economic, and social backgrounds.

The circles initially met with resistance as participants felt distrust toward one another, particularly when those with more marginalized identities found themselves in an intimate circle with people from

more privileged identities. As the months went on and the relationships within the circles deepened, participants began to express the deeply spiritual experience they were sharing, ultimately serving to build real trust between disparate groups and strengthen the larger movement working toward a shared progressive vision.

According to PICO leadership, the workshops around bridging and belonging have helped them develop a powerful narrative that grounds major new initiatives, including an effort to advance police accountability in communities of color in fourteen California

Rev. Ben McBride, co-director of PICO California, leads a march against the detention and separation of immigrant families by I.C.E.

Photograph courtesy of PICO California.



“White supremacy is ‘in the air that we breathe’ and propagated by the systems which organize our lives.”

cities. The concept of belonging allowed community organizers and participants to connect themselves to a reference point that can guide the way toward collective justice and liberation in relation to multiple issue areas, whether or not they arrived already familiar with a particular issue or even an analysis around race and equity. PICO California co-director Rev. Ben McBride reflected that “this [belonging] frame led us to create new kinds of practices and design spaces that were about building shared humanity, bridging across differences, and then creating new structures.”

PICO’s adoption of bridging is significant because it is a departure from—and calls for critical reflection upon—certain long-standing approaches to organizing. First, to center bridging implies choosing to decline emphasis on villains, common enemies, or simply what “we” are against—an approach that is reliant on othering and breaking. Also, bridging involves explicitly affirming the unique and distinct identities that each person brings, whereas many organizing efforts prefer to ignore difference among constituents, under the misguided idea that difference is bad for unity. This problem exists even in

some current narrative strategies. Even if the goal is to be inclusive and progressive, a narrative that stops at shallow “shout outs” to each identity group will fail to capture and “call in” the diversity of Black and other communities of color into its collective “we.”

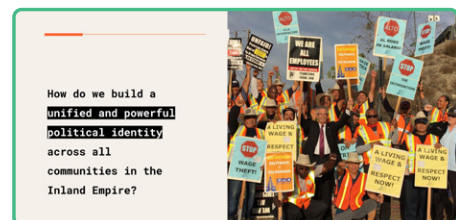
PICO is consciously seeking a new way of organizing in which intersectional experiences of pain, anxiety, and fears are acknowledged, addressed, and used to fortify intergroup relationships for stronger coalitions and longer-term community wins.



VIEW PRESENTATION

Inland Empire Narrative Roadmap

► belonging.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/2021-10/B4B_inlandempire_roadmap.pdf



PICO California developed belonging circles in order to overcome divisions within and among communities. Belonging circles bring members of different communities together to bridge across their differences. These sessions help members of the community understand their interconnection and to build trust with one another.

Seen here, members of *La Asociación Latino-Musulmana de Norte América* and of the Indonesian Muslim community in Los Angeles participate in a belonging circle.

Photo courtesy of PICO California.



Spotlight the possibilities of cross-group collective power

DESPITE THE REALITY of intra- and inter-group tensions, our research has also found significant indicators of nascent solidarity and potential for strengthened connections between and among identity groups. This was particularly evident when it came to recognition across communities of color of one another's under-representation in politics. In our research in the Inland Empire, for example, more than half of Latinxs and half of Black Americans said that the other group has “too little” influence on California politics. Indeed, we discovered a “widespread sense of solidarity within these groups to the extent to which all communities of color are squeezed out by whites’ occupation of political space. It is not only their own groups that Black and Latinx residents see as deserving more influence, but one another’s as well.”¹⁰

Furthermore, both our survey of the Inland Empire as well as our survey of California in 2017 found that members of the Latinx and Black communities were more likely to say that their main competition for jobs was with whites—not one another.

These results suggest that there are existing foundations and perceived commonalities in which to ground cross-group bridging and power building. The need is to build narratives that center a resonant vision of an encompassing “we” with agency and ability to make change. While we want to avoid putting forth uncomplicated, and ultimately unconvincing, story lines in which everyone simply “comes together and gets along,” we can acknowledge tensions between and among groups while also lifting up the *enormous potential* of the collective in fighting for justice. Indeed, a strong narrative for belonging must undertake the double movement of both meeting target constituents where they are in terms of what “rings true” with their identities and experi-

ences, while also figuring out how to stretch them to open up to collective action they may not otherwise have taken. We don’t draw attention to cleavages only to keep attention there, which would be disempowering. Instead, we expose and name them as our collective charge to overcome; when we do that, we can achieve nearly anything.

The outcome of this process should be the building of durable bridges between different identity groups. To be clear, bridging is not about “saming”—that is, subsuming or erasing existing smaller “we” identities as we create a bigger “we.” Bridging creates a space that’s larger than the sum of its parts, that honors and affirms the multiple identities that individuals and groups have and bring to the table, but *also* values what can only come about when we extend who we are beyond our own identity group(s) and build something bigger. And that is the possibility of the collective that we want to spotlight in a strategic narrative for belonging.

“We can acknowledge tensions between and among groups while also lifting up the **enormous potential** of the collective in fighting for justice.”

CASE STUDY

Can You See It?

In the lead-up to the 2020 election, we partnered with California Calls on *Can You See It?*, a Writers Guild Award-nominated digital short that calls on Californians—particularly young voters of color—to exercise their civic power to address the state’s major structural inequalities. The story line centrally follows a young Latina woman biking through her neighborhood imagining all the ways her community could benefit from greater resources. While the storyline is simple and the message clear (our communities could have everything they need if corporations paid their fair share), the video concludes with a call for solidarity: “We know where we come from and all that we accomplish, together ... We have the power of we, and together we are more powerful than any corporation.”

For more information, [read this blog explicating the analysis](#) behind the narrative.

CASE STUDY

We Are California

Similarly, Blueprint for Belonging partnered with California Calls before the 2018 midterm elections for a get-out-the-vote video entitled *We Are California*. This digital short called out numerous tropes often used to denigrate young people (e.g., they’re disconnected, confused, and don’t know about love), juxtaposing them against images demonstrating the contrary. It concludes by affirming “We’re the future—and it doesn’t matter what they say. It matters what we say.”



WATCH VIDEO

Can You See It?

► belonging.berkeley.edu/can-you-see-it



WATCH VIDEO

We Are California

► belonging.berkeley.edu/blueprint-belonging-videos



Collage of stills from the two videos described above. Both shorts demonstrate the richness — both present and potential — of California’s diverse communities.



Sharpen insights

and test assumptions about key constituencies through qualitative research

IT IS UNDENIABLE THAT RESEARCH is, in many ways, already at the heart of traditional organizing. Going door-to-door, talking to community members, and listening to voices that are often left out or excluded are fundamental elements of community organizing and also all key components of solid qualitative research. And yet, these invaluable means of building local knowledge are different when structured by the goals of organizing versus with intentional research. If carried out only in the organizing context of moving people to particular forms of action, they can miss or fail to register some of the ideas and narratives circulating in communities, especially if those conflict with organizers' objectives or are otherwise uncomfortable or unlikely to be disclosed.

Therefore, a key takeaway for building a narrative strategy for belonging is to engage with aligned external researchers to create collaborative processes for designing, carrying out, and making meaning of findings from qualitative research. The research practices utilized should afford the opportunity to grapple with the unfiltered voices of community members who have been hard for organizers to reach or engage. Value comes from bringing their views—expressed in long-form—into contact and tension with organizers' established ideas about the community and where it is on issues of concern. Especially where organizers have worked on an issue or with a certain community for years, an intentional and open-ended approach to eliciting community members' thoughts and stories—and digging deeply into

them, to listen and understand, without a persuasion agenda—can be potentially transformative.

“There is also a rich tradition of research methods grounded in egalitarian relationships, collaboration, and shared political projects.”

Whatever the context, rigorous research in collaboration with external partners rounds out our picture of communities and constituencies by bringing both new tools and a fresh view. Notably, this approach puts on pause longer-term goals of convincing or moving participants to action. It is meant to approximate the kinds of conversations that could happen within the community or constituency “naturally,” and therefore must be structured to facilitate comfort, openness, and candor. Only then will participants feel safe to speak in a way that reveals often latent attitudes or underlying assumptions that shape their thinking. This opens a unique window

into beliefs and narratives circulating in the wider community and can surface those that may be quietly impeding long-term organizing success.

We know that this recommendation may receive pushback, and with good reason. Pollsters, research firms, and indeed researchers affiliated with universities have too often entered communities as mere extractors—taking what they need to achieve their own professional goals, without accountability or obligations to those whom they study. But there is also a rich tradition of research methods grounded in egalitarian relationships, collaboration, and shared political projects. From our own work, we know that it is possible for external scholars and movement actors to work together in true partnership and respect for the value and complementarity of the respective knowledge and tools each brings. When achieved, the resulting relationships can be the foundations for getting to the types of insights that take our strategies for building power with the communities we serve to the next level.

We stress the value of sophisticated qualitative approaches to narrative research—including methods like focus groups, staged encounters, observation, and interviews—because these offer particularly deep understandings of constituencies, yet are often overlooked or considered unnecessary even in projects that pursue extremely expensive polling and message-testing research. But when properly understood and applied, qualitative methods “get under the hood” of quantitative data to illuminate not just *what* people’s opinions are, but how they arrived at them, what holds them together, and how they might be undone. And this information is at the core of not only identifying individual elements of a new narrative, but also what the narrative strategy as a whole should be aiming to achieve.¹¹ What are the beliefs that people hold; in what kinds of stories, experiences, or assumptions are they lodged; and how can we craft alternative narratives that reroute them toward taking action consistent with the society we want to create?

CASE STUDY

Attitudes toward government responsibility

An exemplary case of how this looks is our own work analyzing attitudes toward, and conceptions of, government and the public sphere. For the past few decades, the dominant narrative on government in the United States has been that it should be as small as possible—refraining from regulation, leaving economic dynamics to “market forces,” and staying as much as possible out of people’s lives. This narrative comes with caveats of course, since “smallness” has not included decreases to the US military presence nor its militarized policing and mass incarceration system. Still, the ideas that government is incompetent, inefficient, and wasteful, and its role in the economy and society should therefore be minimal, has become widespread and often unquestioned.

Though pushed concertedly by conservative movement actors, and built around racist dog-whistle messages about “big government” benefiting urban communities and people of color, this anti-government narrative has found a foothold in communities of color. We know this because we have heard it in research designed with partner organizations to “go deep” with the constituencies that they recognize should be “with them,” but are not. Our research finds that even though support for more public services is higher across communities of color in California than among whites, the ideas that such services are inefficient, cater to bad work ethics, and are prone to abuse and wastefulness are very much in circulation in Latinx and some Asian American communities.

“We need to articulate a narrative that can reclaim the public good role of government.”

These ideas are very often driven by anti-Black and anti-immigrant sentiments—even where they show up in communities of color. Across racial and partisan identities, Californians' scores on anti-Black and anti-immigrant resentment batteries are the best predictors of whether they favor cutting government programs: more resentment, less support for public service. There may be fewer people overall among communities of color that fall in this group, but there are enough to make a difference for getting to progressive reform.

Even more common is a dynamic in which Latinx, Asian, and to a lesser extent Black Californians believe that corporations or the wealthy are not paying their fair share in taxes, but believe it would make no difference if we changed laws to make them pay more. Conventionally it is assumed that such ambivalence about increasing taxes on corporations and the wealthy, especially among low- to middle-income earners, is due either to their belief that they may someday be rich (i.e., the prospect of upward mobility) or their fear that companies will leave the state, taking jobs with them. But when we listened to dozens of members of communities of color in inland Southern California, these concerns were not what came up.

Far more common were beliefs that, even if tax laws were changed, (1) the moderately better-off would pay more, but not the truly rich and powerful; (2) corporations would still be provided with loopholes and opportunities for workarounds; (3) if there were not enough loopholes, corporations and the rich would simply break tax laws, and not be held accountable; and (4) even if new revenue was generated, it would never find its way to benefiting “communities or people like me.”¹²

These findings are quite distinct from what we are told to believe about low- and middle-income people's hesitancy toward supporting progressive tax reforms. And they point to very different narrative strategy needs. Without deep multi-method research that was defined, designed, and carried out through collaboration across research and civic and community groups, we might have continued on the basis of the wrong needs—correcting for the wrong problems.

To conclude, the research tells us several things important for organizing work:

- 1. That simple addition of more people of color at the ballot box won't necessarily result in progressive measures passing or progressive candidates winning.** We need to articulate a narrative that can reclaim the public good role of government, recognizing that securing many of our big aspirations means using our power to mobilize it. The right leadership, driven by strong civic engagement and accountability to communities, can steer it toward realizing this role.
- 2. That narratives and other strategies that address anti-Black and anti-immigrant sentiment will not only create stronger cross-group relations, but will also chip away at deep, strategically implanted prejudices** that fuel resentment of efforts to address poverty and inequality. Reducing racism and xenophobia means removing a barrier to addressing inequality—and this is true with respect to *both* whites and people of color.
- 3. That racist tropes like the “welfare queen” or the “lazy immigrant” who takes advantage of government programs are so pervasive that they can be found in all communities—including those against which the tropes are targeted. People and organizations building power in communities of color must remain attentive and vigilant to new formulations of these and other dog whistles in their own communities.**
- 4. That people in chronically under-represented and underserved communities may support a reform proposal's end result but still fail to back it if they don't trust that government will get the goods.** This is partially due to the widely held belief that government is inextricably entangled with economic elites and corporations, and beholden to their interests. **Here, overcoming cynicism and motivating civic action is not about making the case for what is “right” or “fair,” but convincing constituents that there is a viable way to work together to make government get us there.**

It's not just what the story is, but who tells it:

why culture-makers are important allies in narrative change

IN THE PRIOR SECTIONS, we've laid out a few of the basic elements of developing a strategic narrative for belonging, including centering structural analyses, acknowledging breaking between and among community groups, lifting up points of potential for collective solidarity, and engaging the expertise of external researchers to question our assumptions and expand knowledge. However, the various components of a narrative make up only one part of the success of that narrative. Narratives and stories alone are not enough: just as important are how the narrative is told and by whom. Artists and culture-makers are perhaps the ultimate bridge between politics and society at large, serving as “cultural translators” who simplify, contextualize, and signal importance to distinct constituencies, particularly when the “idea bazaar” is already so congested.

As the Culture Group writes, “Politics is where some of the people are some of the time. Culture is where most of the people are most of the time.” And it is through culture—popular music, cultural lore, and neighborhood graffiti—that people form their perception of the world.

While traditional social change communications is largely one way—“Here’s our message/argument/ask”—politically informed artistic and creative work is often relational or experiential. It is also deeply personal, encouraging individuals to interpret a work from their own vantage points, identities, backgrounds, and cultural sensibilities. For that reason, it

can often be a more potent way to change or engage individuals’ worldviews and consciousness. Indeed, artists and culture-makers engage social justice issues through a different lens than more analytical political or community organizers, opening different paths toward our vision that may have been overlooked or not yet imagined. They play the critical role of exercising the “envisioning muscle” of movements that inspires our work and allows us to see beyond the limits of political calculations. Perhaps most importantly, arts and culture offers us the opportunity to bridge with those who are different, encouraging us to inhabit the viewpoint and perspective of others and consider new ways of seeing.

The question for practitioners, then, is *how to engage with artists and culture-makers in a way that informs our analysis, shapes our organizing strategies, and creates cultural expressions of our strategic narratives?*

In an ideal world, this engagement would begin at the beginning, when we first ask ourselves who should be at the table when developing a narrative strategy. While artists and cultural actors have a long history of working in partnership with and in support of social movements, they are often viewed as an “extra”—only coming in to actualize predetermined narrative strategies or concepts and help us “get the message out.” But artists, cultural actors, and other creatives should be brought into the narrative development process from the beginning and valued for their unique perspectives and cultural expertise that goes

beyond the purely analytic logic typifying movement strategy work. Artists can help fill in our own blind spots as organizers, as we make decisions and strategize based on surveys, research, interviews, and countless discussions with peers. This outside vantage point is critical not only for offering alternative perspectives, but also for helping us imagine different ways our narratives might be interpreted and understood, disseminated, and transformed.

CASE STUDY

Power California

Power California's Cultural Strategy Ambassadors Program exemplifies how cultural strategy can increase impact. In the lead-up to the 2018 mid-term elections, this Othering & Belonging Institute (OBI)-initiated project fueled young immigrant artists' electoral organizing to get out the vote (GOTV) and foster a culture of voting across the region.

Power California is a state-wide multiracial civic engagement organization with twenty-five members collaborating to build movements of young people in communities of color to lead voter education and mobilization. Through its Cultural Strategy Ambassadors Program, three member organizations nominated two ambassadors, young leaders, and artists to use visual art, dance, and community conversation to mobilize under-represented Californian communities as voters. These ambassadors' creative cultural approaches turned community conversation, self-reflection, and self-representation into art that fueled GOTV efforts among new voters in California's Central Valley, Orange County, and San Diego.

At 99Rootz in Fresno, artist Jazz Diaz and dancer Yenedit Valencia collaborated as ambassadors to activate young people from immigrant, refugee, and farmworker families. Diaz made paper by hand, embedding in it the seeds of flowers that grow on both sides of the US-Mexico border. Diaz and Valencia then activated young voters in workshops that combined printmaking, note writing, and traditional Oaxaqueño dance. Over forty young participants came to the workshop, first intrigued by the arts and then exposed

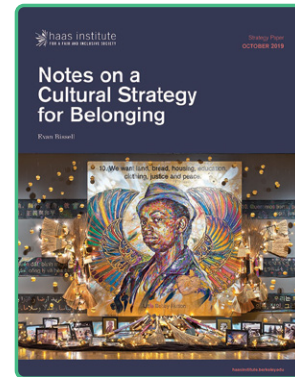


READ REPORT

Notes on a Cultural Strategy for Belonging

This report outlines a strategy centering the leadership, voices, storytelling, practices, and knowledge of people and communities who are marginalized. It offers resources, case studies, and a workshop module for cultural strategies that are rooted in the othering & belonging framework as well as activism and organizing.

► belonging.berkeley.edu/notesonaculturalstrategy



to ideas about identity and voting, writing their visions of a more inclusive Central Valley onto the seed paper. 99Rootz members then distributed these few hundred notes to voters in door-to-door voter canvassing.

Diaz and Valencia's workshops created a narrative of belonging that celebrated the cultural roots of many low-propensity voters in the Central Valley, connecting local culture and identity with broader civic engagement. The workshops also spurred some young people not yet voting age to build their voter identity.

In Orange County, ambassadors Jesus Santana and Alba Piedra led a workshop prompting participants to create flags that envisioned a just and equitable California. The workshop sparked discussion of flag symbolism and how flags reflect land and identity. Santana and Piedra created this project thinking about the loss of land and histories of identity shift in California—from Native American removal to the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo to gentrification today. They also wanted to engage young people who are too often ignored within the conservative Orange County electorate.

Santana and Piedra's flag-making workshops prompted youth to combine political education, prompting reflecting on the relationship of identity, land, and citizenship and connecting these ideas to claim belonging in Santa Ana through voting, which inspired them to educate participants about the local 2018 midterms. Workshop attendees' flags were then turned into voter information pamphlets that young members of Resilience Orange County distributed through GOTV canvassing. Young canvassers also asked residents to display the flags in their windows and homes.

Taking local voter mobilization to the next step, ambassadors Yacub Hussein and Haadi Mohamed collaborated with Partnership for the Advancement of New Americans (PANA) to get community members to the polls. Located in a majority Black African neighborhood in San Diego, PANA works to build a visible and powerful refugee electorate. A major challenge toward this end has been a lack of transportation to and from the polls for refugee voters.

Hussein and Mohamed created a voting van offering free rides to the polls. To visualize empowerment and history, the brightly colored vans were decorated with the words "I'm Voting" in Somali, Arabic, Mandarin, Swahili, Vietnamese, Spanish, and English. The van's rear window donned an image of the ocean shore, visualizing the forced, voluntary, and other kinds of migration history of so many who call California home. Other images on the van's windows recalled multiracial movements over history: southern civil-rights movement freedom riders, marchers led by Cesar E. Chavez and Coretta Scott King for workers' rights in California, and recent City Heights protests for expanded citizenship, multilingual access at a local hospital, and living wage efforts.

In collaboration with PANA, Hussein and Mohamed drove neighbors to the polls who otherwise could not have gotten there. As the colorful van picked up and dropped off voters, people in the streets of San Diego got a glimpse of diverse communities and histories, long invisible in the conversation about voting.

These three efforts of the Power California Cultural Strategy Ambassadors Program expanded crucial 2018 GOTV efforts. The GOTV campaigns were rooted in narrative and cultural strategies, which enabled them to:

- **reflect** the culture, perspectives, and power of diverse demographics within California
- **stoke** new voters' self-understanding, civic duty, and community purpose
- **disrupt** long-held narratives that American voters are primarily white and middle-class, and center themselves as ambassadors and their neighbors and their communities as part of a voter identity
- **challenge** histories of political exclusion of voters of color, bringing more new voters to the polls in a historic midterm election turnout

And it worked. California saw a historic increase in young voters of color, with large turnout gains in Orange County and other locales in which the project took place.

Youth activists at 99Rootz draw from a rich legacy of civil rights leaders and labor organizers — including Coretta Scott King and Cesar Chavez, pictured at right.

Group photograph by the Latino Community Foundation.



Don't go it alone,

narratives do not take hold in isolation

SO OFTEN, writes Rachel Weidinger of the Narrative Initiative, those in the advocacy sector look only at how their single campaign is doing, turning “allied efforts into separate projects with distinct goals, stories and metrics.” She argues that instead, a strategic narrative “must be made of many voices to be durable.”

Weidinger calls this approach a “polyvocal narrative strategy,” where many voices are given the power to shift and sustain narrative change. She explains that durable narrative change is woven within networks and structures and held by many voices. “A narrative flows through a society when many people share their stories in their own words. People come to embody, live in, and own a narrative. Using polyvocal approaches at every stage is what makes winning possible.”

Indeed, while movement actors often collaborate on shared communications strategies or messaging plans for a single campaign, powerful narratives that achieve lasting change are only made possible when groups align themselves on both a *long-term, multi-campaign* narrative strategy. This includes an approach that purposely engages many voices, messengers, and mediums in disseminating that narrative—over and over and over again.

Color of Change’s Rashad Robinson expounded on this concept in a 2018 article for OBI:

True infrastructure with respect to narrative is not about maintaining a list-serve for comms staff to align on rapid response talking points and create more press releases or circulating more PowerPoint decks ... Narrative infrastructure is singularly about equipping a tight network of people organizing on the ground and working within various sectors to develop strategic and powerful narrative ideas,

and then, against the odds of the imbalanced resources stacked against us, immerse people in a sustained series of narrative experiences required to enduringly change hearts, minds, behaviors and relationships.

To achieve that, Robinson writes:

We need actual human beings serving as our main vehicle for achieving narrative change—people equipped, talented, motivated and networked to effectively spread new and compelling stories throughout their networks and sub-cultures, as well as spreading the values and thought models they contain, in order to move those ideas into a “normative” position in society. Without people in “narrative motion” we cannot achieve narrative change. We must remember that a few big clouds do not water the earth below them—millions of drops of rain do the watering.

While communications plans, messaging guides, TV commercials, and targeted ads may—at best—constitute “a few big clouds,” we can hardly expect our gardens to grow from that alone. Rather, we need to intentionally create space to both align on a long-term narrative strategy and continue that work across coalitions, hubs, and partnerships—both within the social change sector and beyond it—to *allow that narrative to be disseminated by many voices and across many mediums*.

As Robinson writes: “We cannot let ourselves get lost in the clouds. We must ensure we are raining down on our culture and our narrative environment with the voices and actions of real people, in order to nourish that environment and facilitate the growth of the ideas we want to flourish in it.”

Still, unless movement actors fully identify and understand the factors that are already shaping people's attitudes and meta world views—and do this within local contexts with an eye on the broader dynamics shaping othering—an amplified, polyvocal narrative alone won't necessarily shift hearts and minds. The narrative will land with those who are already “there,” but not necessarily move those who

are wrestling with ambivalent views, or who are on “the other side” but persuadable. Thus, it's important to only plan for a polyvocal narrative distribution strategy *after* a deeper analysis of existing narratives and beliefs has been conducted and addressed.

“People come to embody, live in, and own a narrative.”

CASE STUDY

Rise Up for Justice Narrative Hub

In the run-up to the 2020 election, OBI dramatically expanded its work to support civic participation among under-represented groups with its Rise Up for Justice Narrative Hub, which brought together OBI researchers with digital creatives and some of the leading Black- and Latinx-led power-building organizations across the country to align across a strategic GOTV narrative and oversee the production of digital narrative products. The organizations involved in the Hub included Black Voters Matters Fund, One Fair Wage, Service Employees International Union, Coalición de Derechos Humanos, Workers Center for Racial Justice, MOSES, and other movement organizations. Partners for the subsequent 2021 Georgia runoff election included Black Alliance for Just Immigration and Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Atlanta.

The 2020 elections came on the heels of a historically high-turnout midterm in 2018. The Narrative Hub sought to support the many grassroots and movement-based organizations building on that momentum, and, perhaps most importantly, ensure that these organizations were aligned on narrative strategy in their GOTV efforts—and part of our efforts to co-produce it with outside creators.

The 2020 election season proved much more challenging than in normal circumstances. The COVID-19 pandemic posed steep challenges for reaching historically underrepresented communities like Black

and Latinx voters. Not only had the pandemic hit these communities particularly hard, but the risk of transmission also limited civic organizations' ability to use the best approach to activating inconsistent voters from these communities—face-to-face, multi-touch relational organizing. These considerations were the backdrop against which OBI and its civic partners made the strategic decision to form the Narrative Hub, with a focus on meeting the digital-organizing demands of the moment.

The Narrative Hub developed public service announcement videos, social media content, radio scripts, and strategic messaging to amplify GOTV campaigns by partner organizations. Messaging throughout all of our campaigns was informed by our narrative research, which we had aligned across our partnership network in the months and years leading up to the 2020 election.

Perhaps most importantly, we ran ads and organic posts from organizations and individuals who were local to the various markets we were working to reach, as these brands had built high levels of community recognition and trust, but that spoke to the larger narrative we were putting forth, which was that “we belong”: despite the obstacles before us and our grievances with various systems, we can and will turn out to vote as one of many steps toward our aspirations.



RISE UP FOR JUSTICE

A NARRATIVE HUB FROM THE OTHERING AND BELONGING INSTITUTE

RISE UP FOR JUSTICE NARRATIVE PROJECT SAMPLES



#TrustBlackWomen

This video and associated graphic stills tell the story of Sandy Wilson, an African American elderly retired postal worker in Wisconsin, who offered insight into how the post office works and why voters can trust the postal service to securely deliver ballots.



[WATCH VIDEO](#)
[#TrustBlackWomen PSA](#)



Hey _____!

Social media video shorts for Georgia, Michigan, Nevada, North Carolina, and Wisconsin. This digital short featured young Black people dancing their way to a mailbox to submit their mail-in ballots. The message: October is voting month (and voting is fun). This short was distributed by local partners in different states as well as by micro-influencers with audiences in target regions.



[WATCH VIDEO](#)
[Hey Michigan! PSA](#)



Super Voter video campaign

Disseminated via paid ads through the Black Voters Matters Fund brand, this GOTV video played on a Halloween theme, suggesting viewers be a “super voter” rather than a superhero. Launched nine days prior to election day in five key states, Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, North Carolina, and Wisconsin, the video was viewed 1.6 million times reaching over 310,000 people with a frequency of five views each.



[WATCH VIDEO](#)
[Super Voters PSA](#)



Spanish-language GOTV ads

Working with Make the Road NV, video testimonials were created in English and Spanish with real Latinx voters sharing why they are voting—whether for themselves, their families, or for those who cannot. Thanks to the high relatability of real people featured, the Nevada ads saw the highest click-through rates (CTRs) across all OBI ad campaigns, with the top video ad scoring a very high 3 percent CTR.



[WATCH VIDEO AND VIEW IMAGES](#)
[Multilingual ads in Nevada](#)

Conclusion

WHILE NARRATIVE CHANGE WORK has swept across our movements and is now widely recognized to be an important strategic imperative—deserving of dedicated staff, time, budget, and partnerships—the demands for shaping our collective future are growing. That is in part because the impacts of a fractured society are outpacing our movements’ capacity. Toxic polarization is dividing our country to a level of instability not seen in generations; it is also shaping how we build and use our power.

For enduring, radical change, we need more than policy wins. The false choice of “you’re either with us or against us” may get us to 50 percent plus

one some of the time, but it will not create transformational change that is lasting and capable of addressing our greatest existential threats. We need strategies that can build new political and social identities that match the scale, spread, and depth of the challenges we face.

The extent to which we can bridge will shape the relevance and potential of our collective movements, and with it, our collective future.

We hope that these principles for practice help shape more powerful strategies for transforming the dominant narrative to one where all are seen and belong.



Photograph courtesy of the Center for Cultural Power

KEY FINDINGS

ONE

Belonging narratives must address the structural drivers of racial inequality and center the role of government in remedying these social and economic inequalities. Transforming the ideological opposition to effective government and structural change requires directly naming these biases and reclaiming a vision for government and the economy.

TWO

Address, don't ignore the fears, anxieties, and uncomfortable beliefs of key constituencies, particularly where anti-Black racism and immigrant resentment are present.

THREE

Spotlight the possibilities of cross-group collective power. Building authentic, durable bridges across communities creates new possibilities for a more just future. Invest in building a shared vision for the future that can be made possible through deep collaboration.

FOUR

Sharpen insights and test assumptions about key constituencies through qualitative research. Building capacity and taking time to do critical qualitative research guided by principled partnerships and shared values can reveal powerful new pathways.

FIVE

It's not just what the story is, but who tells it and how it connects about key constituencies through qualitative research. Building capacity and taking time to do critical qualitative research guided by principled partnerships and shared values can reveal powerful new pathways.

SIX

Don't go it alone: narratives do not take hold in isolation. Organized infrastructure across communities, issues, and geographies is essential for strategic narrative change.

Endnotes

- 1 Christopher Witko, “The California Legislature and the Decline of Majority Rule,” in *Remaking California: Reclaiming the Public Good*, ed. R. J. Lustig (Berkeley: Heyday, 2014), 60–77.
- 2 Though Goldwater was from Arizona, many see his victory in the 1964 California Republican primary election as having ensured his place as a major force in the trajectory of the party.
- 3 Sarah Bohn, Magnus Lofstrom, and Lynette Ubois, “Racial Disparities Are Widespread in California,” Public Policy Institute of California, December 7, 2020, <https://www.ppic.org/blog/racial-disparities-are-widespread-in-california/>.
- 4 Greg Rosalsky, “How California Homelessness Became a Crisis,” NPR, June 8, 2021, <https://www.npr.org/sections/money/2021/06/08/1003982733/squalor-behind-the-golden-gate-confronting-californias-homelessness-crisis?t=1624455594399>.
- 5 Most recently, California voters rejected a measure to reverse a long-standing ban on affirmative action, declined to increase corporate property taxes, and passed a measure to allow ride-sharing companies to avoid classifying drivers as employees.
- 6 “Public Trust in Government: 1958–2021,” Pew Research Center, May 28, 2021, <https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2021/05/17/public-trust-in-government-1958-2021/>.
- 7 Ian Haney López, *Dog Whistle Politics: How Coded Racial Appeals Have Reinvented Racism and Wrecked the Middle Class* (Oxford: New York: Oxford University Press, 2014).
- 8 Joshua Clark and Olivia Araiza, “Margins in Movement: Toward Belonging in the Inland Empire of Southern California,” Othering & Belonging Institute, University of California, Berkeley, 2021 (forthcoming), Part III.
- 9 Ibid.
- 10 Ibid.
- 11 The cost of contracting with private firms or consultants to plan and facilitate qualitative research can be substantial, so commitments from foundations to fund this type of research is critical. An approach in which the research partner trains non-profit staff to carry out interviews or focus groups can be effective and efficient.
- 12 See further Joshua Clark, Cristina Mora, and Tianna Paschel, “Will Corporations Pay Their Share? Race, Distrust, and California’s Tax-Confidence Gap,” Othering & Belonging Institute, University of California, Berkeley, May 1, 2020, <https://belonging.berkeley.edu/will-corporations-pay-their-share>; and Clark and Araiza, “Margins in Movement,” Part IV.

The Othering & Belonging Institute brings together researchers, community stakeholders, and policy-makers to identify and challenge the barriers to an inclusive, just, and sustainable society in order to create transformative change.