

# Change the Narrative, Change the World

## How Immigrant Representation on Television is Moving Audiences to Action

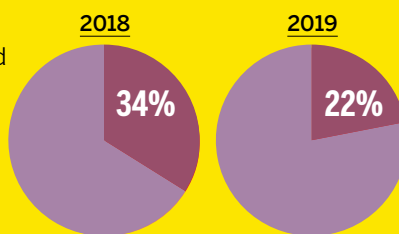
The second study from Define American and USC's Norman Lear Center finds that immigration storylines on shows like *Orange Is The New Black*, *Superstore* and *Madam Secretary* foster more inclusive attitudes and can move viewers to action.

### CHANGING THE NARRATIVE

We analyzed 97 episodes of 59 scripted TV series featuring immigrant characters or immigration-related storylines that aired between August 2018 and July 2019. What we found reflects a significant shift in the industry, but with much more work to be done around authentic storylines and greater representation of multidimensional immigrant characters. For example...

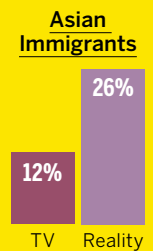
#### Fewer immigrants were associated with a crime on TV than in 2019 ↓ – but far more than in reality.

In 2018, 34% of immigrants were in some way associated with a crime; in 2019, this dropped to 22%. In reality, immigrants commit less crime than native-born Americans.



#### Asian and Black immigrants and other marginalized communities continue to be underrepresented on TV.

For the second straight year, specific at-risk immigrant communities were largely invisible, including those with disabilities, transgender immigrants, and undocumented Black immigrants. Asian/Pacific Islander (API) representation on TV declined from 2018, though they comprise more than a quarter of immigrants in the U.S.



### CHANGING THE WORLD

We also surveyed viewers of three TV shows that featured prominent immigration storylines in their 2018-2019 seasons to measure their impact.

**TV shows with nuanced immigrant characters and immigration storylines can shift attitudes and inspire people to real-life action.**



#### Watching *Superstore* (NBC) showed increased action around:

- talking to a friend (48%) vs. those that didn't see it (32%)
- writing a social media post (20% vs. 11%)
- attending a community event (7% vs. 2%)



#### Watching *Orange Is the New Black* (Netflix) showed increased action around:

- commenting on social media (17% vs. 7%)
- seeking more information (41% vs. 32%)



#### Watching *Madam Secretary* (CBS) showed increased action around:

- attending a rally (15% vs. 3%)
- signing a petition (26% vs. 15%)
- going to a community event (12% vs. 2%)

### CHANGING HOLLYWOOD

By harnessing the power of entertainment, we can engage audience members, empower them to take action on immigration, and inspire a cultural redefinition of what it means to be American.

#### Involve immigrants in the process.

Hire more immigrant writers and consult with immigrant communities.

#### Tell untold stories.

Seek out compelling stories about under-represented immigrant communities: those who are LGBTQ+, older, disabled, and Black & undocumented.

#### Transcend stereotypes.

Broaden immigration issues beyond the U.S.-Mexico border by including stories from across the U.S. about the challenges faced by all immigrants and exploring backstories for regular or recurring immigrant characters.