

**GOLD, Social Responsibility Award**

**Campaign Title:** *Rising*

**Year the campaign took place:** 2018



**Brand:** Love Has No Labels

**Creative Agency:** R/GA

**Media Company/Agency:**

**Research Company:**

**Additional Affiliated Companies:**

**Summary of the marketing challenge, methodology, insight discovered, creative execution and business impact.**

**Marketing Challenge:** Bias and discrimination are two of the most pressing issues facing our nation today. Yet most Americans say they believe in equality and consider themselves to be unprejudiced. How do

we get people who don't see themselves as part of the problem to recognize their implicit bias and actively come together to live inclusively?

**Methodology:** Through qualitative research, we uncovered a key cultural moment when people come together – disasters. Disasters have one of the most uniquely unifying effects on people. *Rising* builds on the Love Has No Labels campaign strategy of leveraging the cultural zeitgeist and elements of surprise.

**Creative:** Inspired by true events coming out of a year marred by natural disaster (hurricanes, mudslides, wildfires, etc.), Love Has No Labels launched an original short film, *Rising* (directed by Game of Thrones director David Nutter with screen writer Lena Waithe) to tell the story of a diverse neighborhood that comes together to survive rising flood water, challenging Americans to consider “Why does it take a disaster to bring us together?”

**Business Impact:** *Rising* has amassed over 21 million views. A continuous tracking study shows statistically significant shifts in behaviors and attitudes towards bias and inclusion since *Rising* launched in November 2018. Millions more Americans believe they have the power to create a more inclusive world.

## CONSUMER INSIGHT

Disasters yield incredible stories of people setting aside differences. Why does it take a disaster for us to come together?

## MARKETING CHALLENGE

Bias and discrimination are some of the most pressing issues facing our nation today. Hate crimes continue to rise. Many groups feel increasingly marginalized and unsafe.

Most Americans believe in equality (89%). However, most don't see themselves as part of the problem of bias and discrimination -- 85% consider themselves to be unprejudiced.

The marketing challenge is getting people who don't see themselves as part of the problem to recognize that they can be part of the solution by actively coming together and taking inclusive actions.

## **METHODOLOGY**

**Using a qualitative research approach rooted in therapeutic principles, we explored themes of identity, bias and inclusion with a range of adults:**

- Research was conducted in markets with complicated and deeply ingrained relationships to bias and discrimination
- We spoke with supporters and "armchair supporters" – those who claim to believe in diversity and inclusion, but don't realize they're undermining through their own implicit bias and inaction
- A mix of small groups and 1-on-1 interviews helped illuminate group effects on the topic of bias and discrimination
- Respondents were varied in terms of race, ethnicity, age, sexuality, gender, education, and socioeconomic status

We heard that bias was uncomfortable for many to confront -- prompting feelings of guilt and sadness. **There was a vague sense of wanting to be better, but no actionable idea of how to achieve this.**

Examples of inclusiveness that participants had personally experienced were few and far between. Sadly, moments of catastrophe emerged as the most common example. These harrowing moments allowed people to see others' raw humanity – bypassing typical behavior and inviting connection.

To explore this further, we spoke with academics who study the community effects of natural disaster:

- Disasters peel away the norms, obligations and responsibilities that prevent us from acting inclusively every day.
- Disasters are equalizers – they affect people regardless of their background.

**Our strategy was to encourage action by helping people to act inclusively every day, rather than waiting for disaster to strike.**

## **CREATIVE EXECUTION**

In keeping with the campaign’s strategy and research showing that disasters have a uniquely unifying effect on people, we created a film telling the story of a diverse neighborhood coming together in the immediate aftermath of a storm.

Between 2017 and 2018, the U.S. was devastated by tragedy and disaster. The 2017 hurricane season was the most expensive in U.S. history following landfall by hurricanes Harvey, Maria, and Irma. Mudslides and wildfires affected the west coast. Maryland flooded after torrential rain, and Hurricane Florence devastated the Carolinas.

*Rising*, directed by David Nutter (Game of Thrones) with screen writers Lena Waithe (Master of None, The Chi) and Azia Squire encourages viewers to reflect on their own implicit bias by raising the question, “Why does it take a disaster to bring us together?”

The film’s closing montage also features photos of real disaster survivors coming together across perceived differences, grounding it in real stories. The film concludes with the call to action to “come together at [lovehasnolabels.com](http://lovehasnolabels.com)” where viewers can learn more about the small actions they can take to create a more inclusive world.

After releasing the film and posing the question to the public, Love Has No Labels answered with an online documentary series developed in partnership with Courageous Studios and Facebook Creative Shop that



explores our inherent desire for human connection and capacity to love. Award-winning storyteller Jay Shetty hosts the series and explores why it takes a disaster to bring us together through real stories of inclusion told firsthand.

## **BUSINESS RESULTS/LESSONS LEARNED**

Our objectives were:

- To generate broad awareness of *Rising* by amassing as many views of the film as possible
- Drive further awareness of the Love Has No Labels brand
- Increase the number of adults in the U.S. who feel they have the power to create a more inclusive environment.

*Rising* and the online docuseries have amassed 21 million and 6 million views respectively.

Since *Rising's* launch, Love Has No Labels has seen its highest levels to date for brand awareness:

- 32% of adults were aware of Love Has No labels in the month after *Rising* launched (December 2018, up from 26% in November 2018)
- More than 1 in 4 adults (26%) are aware of the campaign materials.

A continuous tracking study shows statistically significant shifts in behaviors and attitudes towards bias and inclusion since *Rising* launched in November 2018. As of February 2019:

- 42% → 45% increase in those who said supporting diversity and acceptance around race, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion and disability is very important.
- 38% → 42% strongly agree there are things they can do to create a more accepting and inclusive environment.