The 2010 Breaux Symposium

ETHNIC MEDIA

THEIR INFLUENCE ON POLITICS AND PARTICIPATION

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We'd like to thank our partners, the McCormick Foundation and New America Media for helping to make this symposium and report possible.

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About the John Breaux Symposium

> "One of the contemporary problems of governance that troubles me most is the difficulty of getting good ideas into the public discussion....Many good ideas do not find a place in civic dialog, thus limiting our ability to solve social, economic and political problems."
>
> **— Senator John Breaux**

The annual Breaux Symposium was established in 2000 as a core program of the Manship School of Mass Communication's Reilly Center for Media & Public Affairs. Its goal is to explore areas where little or no research has been conducted and to approach ideas from a fresh perspective—in other words, to turn issues on their head. Underpinning the Manship School's focus on the study of media and politics, the Breaux Symposium's central question is: How well is the public being informed, and what must be done to increase citizen awareness and constructive debate?

The inaugural symposium featured Marvin Kalb, Walter Isaacson and David Broder discussing the role of the press at the turn of the century. In the past decade symposia topics have included new models for news, the role of advocacy groups in bypassing traditional media to reach voters and redefining public opinion polling in an age of segmented marketing and personalized communication.

The 2010 Breaux Symposium, *The Influence of Ethnic Media on Politics and Participation* explored the contemporary role of ethnic media in democratic society. Drawing from the rich experiences and extensive knowledge of a group of professionals and scholars, discussion topics included ethnic media's impact on political participation and voting patterns, relationships with general audience media and digital media, how fragmentation of media affects democracy, and possible working relationships for ethnic and general audience media.

Editor's Note: The 2010 John Breaux Symposium occurred November 1 and 2, 2010 at the International House Hotel in New Orleans, Louisiana. Sergio Bendixen of Bendixen and Associates set the framework for discussion Monday evening with his key note address on the powerful presence of ethnic media in America. This report is an edited, condensed version of the discussion. The transcript editor, Carol Nunnelley is a writer, editor, project manager and journalism trainer. Her work specifically focuses on the relationship between journalists and the public and news credibility. For the full transcript of the symposium, please call 225-578-7312.

Panelist Biographies

Tom Arviso is chief executive officer of the Navajo Times Publishing Company Inc. and publisher of the *Navajo Times* newspaper in Window Rock, Ariz. Arviso was former board vice president and treasurer of the Native American Journalists Association's board of directors and is a member of the Arizona Newspapers Association's board of directors.

Sergio Bendixen, president of Bendixen and Associates, is recognized as the preeminent expert in Hispanic public opinion research in the United States and Latin America. Bendixen's proficiency originates from his unique ability to merge a diverse set of experiences in public opinion research, communications, politics, and public policy to strategically address the varied portfolios of his clients.

Angie Chuang is assistant professor of journalism at American University's School of Communication. She brings to the classroom her experience in developing one of the first regional newspaper's race and ethnicity issues beats. She oversees the partnership between the American University School of Communication and New America Media, and helped host the first Washington, D.C.-area ethnic-media awards. In spring 2008, she developed a new course called "Race, Ethnic and Community Reporting." Chuang joined the school in 2007 after a 13-year career as a reporter at *The Oregonian*, *The Hartford Courant*, and the *Los Angeles Times*.

Sandy Close, president of New American Media, began her journalism career in the mid-1960's when she worked for the *Far Eastern Economic Review* in Hong Kong and founded *Flatlands*, an inner city newspaper in Oakland, Calif. She has run Pacific News Service since 1974 and developed youth media (*YO!* and *The Beat Within*) and ethnic media (New America Media) to create more inclusive journalism. A recipient of a MacArthur Award, she also co-produced the 1996 Academy Award-winning short documentary "Breathing Lessons."

Jon Funabiki is professor of journalism at San Francisco State University. He was appointed in August 2006 to teach and to develop the Renaissance Journalism Center, a new interdisciplinary center on emerging opportunities for community, ethnic, and other forms of news media. He joined the university after an 11-year career with the Ford Foundation, one of the world's leading philanthropic institutions, where he was deputy director of the Media, Arts & Culture Unit and was responsible for the foundation's multi-million dollar grant-making strategies on news media issues.

Sallie Hughes is associate professor of journalism and interim director of the Academic Program in Latin American Studies at the University of Miami. She received her Ph.D. in Latin American Studies from Tulane University with a specialization in the politics and media of the region following a career in domestic U.S. and international journalism. As a political communication researcher, she is especially interested in understanding the relationships among effective democracy, the mass media, and the practice of journalism in Latin America, as well as new democracies elsewhere.

Bill Imada is chairman and chief executive officer of the IW Group (formerly Imada Wong Communications Group), a full-service communications firm that specializes in the growing multicultural markets in the U.S. With more than 20 years of experience in marketing, public relations, advertising, and training, Imada and his company continue to represent some of the top brands. Some of his clients include American Airlines, The Coca-Cola Company, Edison International/Southern California Edison, Farmers Insurance, Kaiser Permanente, McDonald's USA, MetLife, Pacific Gas & Electric Company, and Wal-Mart Stores.

Kenny Irby, senior faculty/Visual Journalism & Diversity at the Poynter Institute, is an integral figure in visual journalism education, known for his insightful knowledge of photographic storytelling, innovative management ideas, and steadfast ethical thinking. He founded Poynter's photojournalism program in 1995. He teaches seminars and consults in areas of photojournalism, leadership, ethics, and diversity.

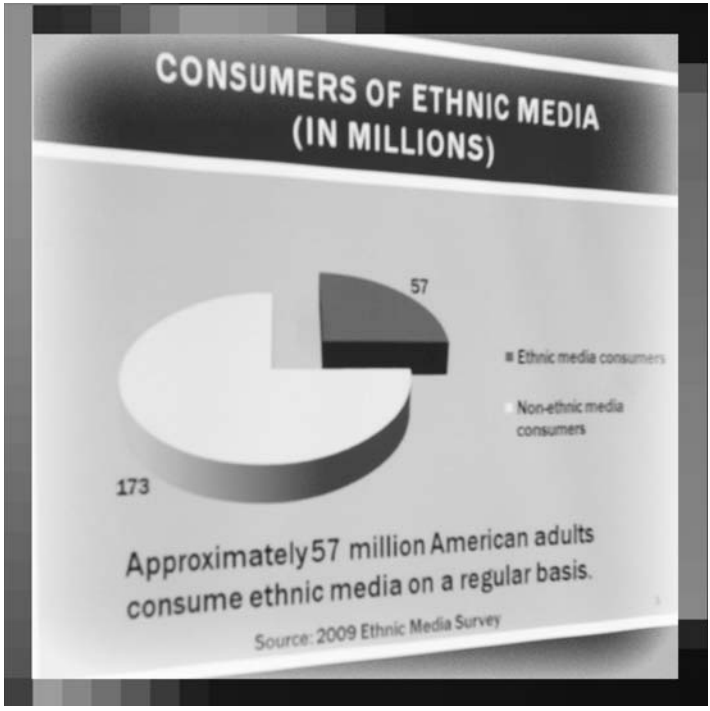
Hayg Oshagan is associate professor in the Communication Department at Wayne State University in Detroit, where he also is director of Media Arts and Studies. Oshagan's research is on the effects of the mass media. His many articles explore the ways in which the media influence perceptions and frame debates. His current work is on media representations of minorities, issues of social diversity and the role of ethnic media in society.

Federico Subervi is professor and director of the Center for the Study of Latino Media and Markets at the School of Journalism & Mass Communication, Texas State University-San Marcos. Since the early 1980s, he has been conducting research, publishing, and teaching on a broad range of issues related to the mass media and ethnic minorities, especially Latinos in the United States. One of his current projects focuses on emergency communication policies and procedures pertaining to non-English-speaking populations.

Moderators

Félix Gutiérrez is a professor at University of Southern California's Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism and professor of American Studies & Ethnicity at the University of Southern California. He has been an active ethnic media participant and researcher for more than 40 years, most recently as curator of the exhibit "Voices for Justice: 200 Years of Latino Journalism in the United States," and a member of the team producing a documentary film chronicling the history of U.S. Latino newspapers, which began in New Orleans in 1808.

John Maxwell Hamilton is LSU's executive vice chancellor and provost and former dean of the Manship School of Mass Communication. He came to LSU in 1992 after more than two decades as a journalist and public servant. Hamilton reported abroad for ABC Radio and the *Christian Science Monitor*, among other media, and was a longtime national commentator on public radio's "Marketplace." Hamilton has served in the U.S. Agency for International Development during the Carter Administration, on the staff of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, and at the World Bank.



THE 2010 JOHN BREAUX SYMPOSIUM

THE INFLUENCE OF ETHNIC MEDIA ON POLITICS AND PARTICIPATION

A SUMMARY

Why This Topic?

During the decade that ended in 2010, America's public, political, and journalism worlds began to edit their images of the country's ethnic groups and ethnic media. Attention may have been intermittent, but headlines broke through.

Univision created a Spanish-language media empire in the United States. By the 2008-2009 television season, it broadcast the fifth-most-watched network in prime time among all adults aged 18-to-49, according to Project for Excellence in Journalism's 2010 State of the News Media report.

New America Media in 2005 conducted a landmark study in 10 languages and found ethnic media regularly reached 51 million American adults, about a quarter of the U.S. adult population. The reach of Spanish-language media was almost universal in Hispanic America. By 2010, NAM listed 2,500 ethnic media organizations in its directory.

Ethnic populations continued to grow, and the Pew Research Center forecast that if trends continue, most United States population growth between 2005 and 2050 will result from immigrants arriving and their U.S.-born descendants.

More recently, a Pew Hispanic Center analysis found that Hispanic voters are nearly three times more prevalent in states that will gain congressional seats after the 2010 Census. "Latinos likely will play a larger role in national politics in coming decades," the report predicted.

Still, ethnic media and their traditions of advocacy, entrepreneurship, and community relevance face formidable challenges, long-standing and new. A 2008 study funded by McCormick Foundation on the health of ethnic media highlighted continuing worries: Most ethnic news outlets are small with few resources; advertising and investment capital are difficult to attract; government news sources are sometimes indifferent; journalism schools and professional organizations have yet to take ethnic media seriously.

The 2010 State of the News Media report found new challenges. Much ethnic population growth comes from second and third generations less likely to rely on native-language news. General-audience media sense opportunity

and have started ethnic publications. Ethnic audiences can easily reach media back home on their computers and cell phones.

Further, while development of an economic model of online outlets has clear challenges and is still a concept in the making for many ethnic media, use of an online presence and social networking sites is expanding. A 2010 study conducted by the Manship School of Mass Communication at Louisiana State University found that a growing number of ethnic media are working to expand their audiences to web-savvy audiences by producing content in multimedia format.

This juncture of expanding potential, significant hurdles and unexamined possibilities invited the choice of the 2010 Breaux Symposium topic, "The Influence of Ethnic Media on Politics and Participation."

THE 2010 DISCUSSION
IMPORTANT THEMES

Important Themes

Ethnic media's advocacy role is widely known, honored, feared—and endangered.

The black press campaigned to end racial discrimination. The Japanese-American press defended the loyalty of its community during World War II. Historic journalistic roles are a revered part of ethnic media's heritage. But government and an English-speaking majority are often suspicious, as has been the case recently with Arab-American media, and they resist influence from media in languages they don't understand. Small operations may lack money and standing to endure pressure from the powerful, within or without their communities. Media owned by large corporations may opt to avoid controversy and please a broad audience and advertisers. Popular radio and web sites may be more about conversation and entertainment than causes.

Not all ethnic media look, or act, alike.

There are the giants, like Univision. Most are small or medium-size operations, whether newspapers, radio stations or web sites. The group overall reflects traditions of advocacy, community relevance, international perspective, and entrepreneurship. But an individual publication reflects its community culture and ownership. Organizations may be passionate crusaders, preservers of community traditions and language, instructors in American survival skills, sites geared to conversation, vehicles mainly to make money—or all of these and more.

Political power remains more potential than real, but that could be changing.

The 2008 presidential campaign may have been a watershed. President Barack Obama's campaign found ways outside general-audience media and standard campaigning to reach and mobilize young and ethnic voters, especially Hispanics. Still, ethnic political power remains more solid on the local level—in Miami, for example—than in national politics. The numbers in population and audiences don't automatically drive influence. Some argue that ethnic communities and media should overtly seek that power, a challenge for individualistic organizations to find common goals and act in concert.

Information and views in ethnic media could make valuable contributions to national discourse. Ethnic audiences and media care about news of America's role in the world.

On important issues—the decision to go to war in Iraq, for example—ethnic communities bring a cosmopolitan perspective and often reach different conclusions from the general public. Until now, the content of ethnic media often has been unread, unheard or discounted by general audiences and governmental decision-makers.

Among the young, ethnicity is an asset. **But the new ethnic cool creates a changing, complicated audience for ethnic media**.

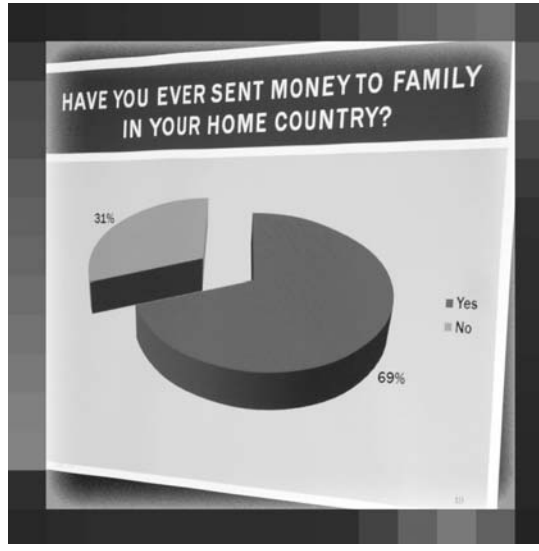
From one vantage, ethnic media worry about their appeal to the growing numbers of children and grandchildren of immigrants. They grew up speaking English and are marrying those of other ethnicities at unprecedented rates. From another view, pride in being Asian or Hispanic—or perhaps even more enthusiasm for the multi-racial ethnicity of being both—translates into a passion for identity among the young. It is a cultural Petri dish that can generate money and marketability for media that connect. Asian-focused websites have exploded in number. Hispanic media celebrate a culture that values happiness and family above wealth.

Changing technology is a thread through ethnic media's evolution.

Legacy ethnic media celebrated the "we" of their audiences long before Facebook. But they have been slow to find the money and know-how to translate that heritage into the web world. Meanwhile, Internet use among ethnic Americans and people of color has grown. Young ethnic Americans are blogging and tweeting to create their own communication channels. Native Americans living in poverty, many of them lacking electricity and running water, nonetheless are clamoring for Internet access. Plus, competitors from abroad deliver soccer scores and accounts of national crises to the laptops and cell phones of Americans.

An enduring question is money.

Most ethnic media continue to be small, to rely on advertising from small community businesses, and have few resources with which to endure hard times, navigate changing technology, play expanded journalism roles or impress national marketers. As classic advertising fades as a marketing choice, ethnic media are behind in pursuing approaches online and creating interaction with their audiences. A valuable distinction of ethnic media—its high level of trust with audiences—is not fully used. Ethnic media so far have failed to establish their relevance with national marketers. The 2010 Census aside, government does not place large slices of its substantial advertising budget in ethnic media. Like general-audience media, ethnic media are exploring alternatives for support, such as non-profit investment.



Next Steps

The Manship School of Mass Communication and Reilly Center for Media & Public Affairs at Louisiana State University look for ideas for research, collaboration and journalism service initiatives suggested by the Breaux Symposium conversation. Among the ideas from New Orleans:

- Ethnic media need to be included in university and journalism organization programs to jump-start their knowledge of new technology and critical coverage areas, such as reporting on politics and policy.
- Ethnic media could teach general-audience media about sourcing in news coverage, especially broadening reporting beyond official sources.
- A census of ethnic media now, and research that maps change over time, would add important understanding of the sector.
- Ethnic media can help fill the hole being created as general-audience media shrink. But to do that, they need income and training. Are there ways to generate that for the reporting mission?
- Also, are there ways to create the financial bases needed to support the advocacy mission of ethnic media?
- How ethnic media can gain and express power is a topic of great interest. That suggests research on approaches to that goal and the journalistic and political impact if ethnic media should succeed. It also suggests universities and others might teach political literacy for ethnic media decision-makers.
- Media literacy efforts might be revised to recommend that citizens, to be well informed, should read, watch and listen to ethnic media as well as general- audience media.

Perhaps the questions on which this discussion was originally based, likewise, provide direction for continued dialogue, analysis and research. Some were addressed specifically in the discussion; others were lost in the inevitable crunch of available time. But collectively they may offer pointers:

- How have ethnic media contributed to key historical periods for immigrant, ethnic minority and indigenous populations?
- What are ethnic media? Does the term "ethnic media" imply they are all the same? How may we discuss them and their roles in light of this kind of potential confusion?
- The growth of ethnic audiences and population trends in this country have been well documented. Numbers are important.

But beyond the impact of numbers, what audience trends are important to the ethnic media?

- In what way does (and should) immigration influence the role of ethnic media?
- Are ethnic media really needed in modern democratic society?
- Are ethnic media more influential or less influential in today's media landscape? Do they provide services inadequately fulfilled by the general-audience media?
- Do the functions of ethnic media differ from those of general-audience media?
- What is the value of ethnic media in civic discourse and the political process?
- In what ways do current trends of media economics, marketing and advertising impact the landscape of ethnic media?
- To what degree should new communication technologies influence the ethnic media? How important is it that ethnic media adopt the newer forms? What do we know about audience trends that contributes to an answer for this question?
- Is globalization changing the media landscape as we know it? Does globalization create opportunities for ethnic media? Special responsibilities?
- To what degree and for what purposes should ethnic media communicate with (and provide coverage of) each other across ethnic lines?
- To what degree should ethnic media seek to extend their reach to broader audiences?
- Should ethnic media and general-audience media collaborate? How would such collaboration be accomplished most effectively? For what purposes?
- How do ethnic media contribute to improving community life?
- What is the impact of ethnic media on civic participation and voting patterns? How important is it that ethnic media seek to stimulate voting, for example?
- Should ethnic media consciously seek to mobilize their audiences with regard to specific citizen and social needs?
- Are there specific social needs or issues for which ethnic media have special responsibilities?
- How may ethnic media take full advantage of changing national demographics?

THE CONVERSATION

THE INFLUENCE OF ETHNIC MEDIA ON POLITICS AND PARTICIPATION

The Introduction

Félix Gutiérrez: Our discussion today has three focus points. One is looking at ethnic media historically and what their roles have been. We will discuss the contemporary roles of ethnic media. We will look at the future roles as to where they're going. For those of you who know a little Spanish, it's ethnic media, *ayer*-yesterday, *hoy*-today, and *mañana*-tomorrow, and we think there will be many tomorrows.

It is important for all of us, I think, to start out with a historic value. The ethnic media have been around for many, many years, even prior to the American Revolution. Benjamin Franklin published a newspaper in German, in Pennsylvania. It's particularly significant that we are meeting here in New Orleans because New Orleans has been the crossroads of so many races, so many cultures, so many languages over the years. Ethnic media have a long and very proud tradition here in New Orleans. We are meeting only a few blocks from the site of the publication of the first Latino newspaper in the United States, which was founded in 1808.

Looking at ethnic media historically, I wonder if any of you might look back, and history can be as recent as last week or it could be 200 years ago. What do you think historically have been the key issues, key contributions of ethnic media that guide and continue to guide their roles today? What traditions are being built upon what historical roots?

There is a tendency to look at these media as other-language versions of what we see in English. We could flip that today and say, "Well, here are the ethnic media in their own rights, in their own history, in their own traditions, their own roles." What would be some key contributions?

Focus Point

The Comments

Growth of ethnic media, historic value in democratic society and trends that influence development

Hayg Oshagan: My view is that ethnic media are the mortar and glue. Having 50,000 minorities spread across the geographic area doesn't create a community unless there is something that binds them together. Seeing each other in the pages of a newspaper to me is the key factor in creating a sense of belonging to a group of people.

Sergio Bendixen: What has made the ethnic media different, especially over the last 30 years in America, is their willingness to take on an advocacy role. Even going further back than 30 years, the African-American newspapers were crucial in the battle for civil rights. Spanish-language television, especially in the nineties, was probably the major ally of new immigrants in America. If I have one concern about Asian-American media in the United States, it's their reluctance to basically take on issues and take on a whole advocacy role. That to me is what makes them very much different from other ethnic media.

Federico Subervi: I will agree with my colleagues, but then I'll ask a question, "Which ethnic media are you referring to?" If it's current Spanish-language radio, they have no role unless you live in Miami, maybe New York and Los Angeles. Otherwise, Spanish- language radio is entertaining and doing absolutely nothing else when it comes to news. In central Texas, 24 Spanish-language radio stations and not a single second, not one second, one minute of local news. What political role do they play? Absolutely none.

Television does provide information on controversies on their newscasts on occasion. When it comes to Spanish-language newspapers, we have dailies in six cities that can be a little bit more advocacy. Let's be clear that when we talk about ethnic media, which ones we are talking about. The generalities may not apply.

Kenny Irby: As we look at publications, there is a great range historically. The emergence of the black press grew out of social justice and political outcry, with publications like *Freedom Journal*. This was not only a source to connect people over cultural issues of oppression, but also as a learning instrument, as a vehicle of information that would help people understand how to navigate the language and the issues of the day. That is really important as we think about the historical purpose. It was all about advocacy. It was advocating freedom, justice, and the American way.

Angie Chuang: I would stand on what Sergio and Kenny were saying. To define advocacy not just as a voice or an opinion but also the actual content. There were stories going back to the Civil Rights Movement that weren't being covered by mainstream media. They weren't seen as a real problem until the black press in the sixties started addressing what was happening to demonstrators in the Civil Rights Movement. The fairly recent book, "The Race Beat," documents that beautifully, about how really all the northern mainstream papers were driven by the black press to finally stop ignoring these problems.

A really recent example would be that during the controversy over the so-called Ground Zero Mosque, I saw the ethnic media really address that. There wasn't a plurality or a model of opinion in the Muslim community about that. There was a commentary by a Muslim-American who said, "I don't really believe that there should be an Islamic Center here." If you read the mainstream media, you would find a totally different impression.

So I think we're still in a place where the mainstream media are not necessarily having their content influenced by ethnic media or listening to these voices as they did with the Civil Rights Movement.

Bill Imada: I think the first publications on the Asian-American community were actually pushed by banks. So Bank of America and Wells Fargo—back when Bank of America was called Bank of Italy—created Oriental Bank. Ultimately they realized that the community needed something to keep them together, something to be able to communicate with one another. So

Bank of America and Wells Fargo actually created phone books for the Chinese community. If we are to look at advocacy, the Asian media actually were involved in advocacy similar to the African-American community, focusing on how Asian-Americans can live better in the United States, what they can do about being better citizens, how they can access public services. So there was some advocacy in there.

If you look at the Japanese-American community, *The Pacific Citizen* is one of the earlier publications for the Japanese-American community, and it took some very strong positions. In fact, if you look at the logo in this publication, it's a logo of an eagle, and that eagle is facing in an opposite direction. That in itself was a political statement at the time, saying that the United States turned its back on Japanese-Americans by interning Japanese who were Americans and putting them into camps.

Félix Gutiérrez: You raised a good point on the Asian-Pacific media, which always had a dual role. The *Golden Hills News* in San Francisco in 1854 had an English-language column on the front page, every issue. An English-language column was not directed at the Chinese; it was directed to the forty-niners in calling for fair treatment. There's a double role. One is you're bringing the community together, you're a voice to the community, but you're also a voice for the community to the larger group as well.

Jon Funabiki: I think Federico's comment about understanding some of the different motivations and the different reasons for which ethnic media exist should be noted. I think that we tend to romanticize about the ethnic media, you know, they were out there, the advocates and such. I'm glad that Bill mentioned *The Pacific Citizen*. My uncle was the editor during World War II and really did stick his neck out for the Japanese-American community.

Let's face it; a lot of these ethnic media were begun by entrepreneurs. They saw a little market that they could take care of. Pure and simple, they were looking for a market to develop.

Now, it's also true that many were grateful for this. Many of them did move much more into public service, helping immi-

grants who needed to assimilate or providing a bridge to the home country, bringing in news from China or Japan or Mexico. Some did take up the mantle of advocacy, which was extremely important, and you can see examples of that in all ethnic communities throughout history. But they weren't always doing everything at the same time. Their primary function changed over time.

Tom Arviso: Especially for Native America, there is one key thing. We are actually the true storytellers. We played the role of dispelling all the myths and stereotypes of who we are. When I say that, I mean we are based in our language, our culture, based in our values and in our ethics. We tell the story of who we are as a people. We serve as a source to inform people of what we really are about, where we come from, our history, and some of the positive contributions that we're making to society, some of the problems that we have.

In Native America, the media are not as advanced to be honest, as some of the big other ethnic media. Native American media are at a stage at which we're still realizing just how important a role the media could actually play. A lot of the tribes are just now really getting into understanding what a radio station can do, what a television station can do, and what a newspaper can provide. We're educating ourselves as we go along.

Sallie Hughes: Looking at the cases of Cuban media in Miami and also Haitian media in New York, and then later in Miami, it seems to me that they played a real important role in changing these communities to ethnic communities and changing the focus of their political organization from purely politics back home to politics in the local community. In the case of the Cubans, once that change was made, and ethnic media played a huge part in that, they now control all of the major offices in Dade County and have a significant influence on U.S. politics. With the Haitian media, that's an ongoing process. It is really transnational in its political focus. I think historically over time you can see how the press, with the community, changed from exile focus to a more U. S. focus or transnational focus.

Sandy Close: To build on the two points Tom and Sallie have made. It could wind up that whole segments of the population would have no institutional memory without the storytelling of ethnic media. Sallie, to your point, it's so counter-intuitive to have mainstream institutions view ethnic media. They see ethnic media as adding or enhancing the fragmentation of the global society. You're emphasizing it's similar to the role that came home to me not long ago at an annual New Year's banquet in Millbury, Calif. Eight newly elected mayors in the South Bay, all under the age of 30 from small towns and suburbs, were Chinese-American. I don't think anybody in the bay area knew this emerging leadership existed. But, of course, the Chinese media had played a key role. The Vietnamese media in Orange County are playing a key role in building the political power base here at home.

Félix Gutiérrez: We see the ethnic media, at least in terms of people of color, all emerging in the early part of the nineteenth century between 1808 and 1854. The first Latino, the first African-American, the first Native-American and the first Asian-Pacific newspapers all started in that era. It's the same time as the growth of the petit press and the mass media. What would be the specific roles, what were the special needs that may have occasioned these ethnic media to come up? The mass media are supposed to be trying to include everybody.

Kenny Irby: It was in that period of the Nineteenth Century in which voting became the key issue of the day. The early ethnic press was very involved in not only telling the story of those who were being discriminated against, but teaching them what the process would be to actually cast their votes and participate in the democratic process.

Angie Chuang: At the turn of the century we saw this phenomenon in which immigrants were from parts of the world where appearance-wise or culturally they were harder to assimilate. There was no longer this effect that you had with immigrants from Europe, Italians, Germans, and Irish, who had their ethnic media and then would fade into the white mainstream. Then you started getting Chinese and later Latin-Americans, Japanese, from the Philippines. These populations somehow were always

seen as other or different. I think that necessitated different methods of communication that were beyond just, "Let's help this population adjust and form community and have something in the home language until we can melt into the mainstream and use the mainstream media." There was a need to fight discrimination, to have an identity that was separate from the mainstream, and I think we've seen it continue to this day.

Félix Gutiérrez: It's a dual process.

Angie Chuang: In some ways you melt and in some ways you claim or celebrate your distinctiveness.

Hayg Oshagan: I think of ethnic media as negotiators of identity, negotiating a path between new ethnic identity and a new American identity that have to somehow work with one another. I think this function has never changed, this aspect of the need for ethnic media to be able to integrate and to maintain distinctness because they care that their children remain ethnic. They care that their language in some ways continues. They care that they know what's going on in the home country. These have always been key needs of ethnic media.

It is not the key role, pushing candidates forward and creating a political base. Maybe it is for the Latino media in some places, but it is not for the German, it is not for the Polish, it is not for the Armenian, it is not for the Arab, at least in my experience. Their function is much more of this identity issue, maintaining a sense of heritage, finding ways to integrate into the mainstream and moving forward as successful citizens.

Félix Gutiérrez: If you look at the Polish, and the German, and the Italian, and the Yiddish press over the years, they've been first-generation presses. But if you relate to people of color, there seems to be a persistence or a resilience of culture and identity over the years. How are we different…people of color?

Hayg Oshagan: I don't think they are different. Over time, unless new immigrants come in and are able to revitalize the core, it's difficult

to keep a diaspora going. However, they still exist. Detroit still has a Jewish newspaper that's very active even though Jewish communities are very old. It is not a blanket statement. There are many exceptions to our thinking.

Federico Subervi: The reason for my requesting that we be cautious with the generalizations is exemplified by the conversations that we've just had. Ethnic media don't play one role or the other. They play dual roles, depending on which medium we're talking about and at what particular time of that medium.

La Opinión, the largest still-circulating daily newspaper owned by a family, is an example. It started off as an immigrant newspaper telling people about how to deal with what's going on back home while you're in exile. It is an ethnic newspaper for Mexican-Americans and other Spanish-speakers in the Los Angeles area. It still plays an informative civic role for anybody who wants to know what's going on with the Latino community in the area and, in its international pages, what's going on in Latin America, certainly Mexico. Open the advertisements and it is content on how to consume just like anybody else, but by the way, focus on our businesses. As they tell people about the elections, they're contributing to the acculturation and the political side of it. It is all of these roles at the same time, and just one newspaper.

Now, when it comes to radio, well radio has been to entertain whatever way to make money. In some places, where there is a leader, during the time that he is there the station will have an advocacy role. So I'm going back to the point that we do want to have some generalizations about our ethnic media, but we have to be cautious. One thing in common for all of them is that they're telling our perspectives.

Sergio Bendixen: Just to be very simple, I think the big difference between before and now is the power of television. You can't compare the influence of newspapers, which dominated the ethnic media in the Nineteenth Century. In Spanish-language and even the Latino media, television celebrates the Hispanic culture. That may be the most important influence in the daily lives of other Latino-Americans. African-American radio celebrates their culture, and that is a very powerful way of

contributing to their community. The most surprising result of the studies that Sandy and I have conducted in terms of ethnic media is the power of the Arab television stations. Fifty percent of the audience watched them, at the very least on a daily or weekly basis.

Sandy Close: We have yet to do a study that really documents the synergy between ethnic media and the rise of ethnic small business, but it's very clear to me without ethnic small business, ethnic media wouldn't function given the apartheid that has so long persisted in big business advertising. Small businesses wouldn't be able to grow their customer base. The businesses, whether it's real estate, whether it's telecommunications, whether it's restaurants, whether it's cosmetology, all of these businesses have thrived off of being able to afford the advertising ethnic media provide them, and vice versa.

Félix Gutiérrez: Historically, the ethnic media were mom-and-pop operations. Small businesses who advertised were also mom-and-pop operations carried to the specific communities. There's been a larger advertiser interest in certain communities.

Bill Imada: I just wanted to echo what Sandy said. There is a symbiotic relationship between ethnic media and the small business community. A vast majority of the revenues generated for print media, even for broadcast, comes from the local communities.

I also think it's important to mention that the trust factor for ethnic media among the communities they serve is significantly higher than the trust factor that exists for mass market consumers for their media. If we look across the board—Latino, African-American, Native-American, and Asian media—we're talking about anywhere from 60 percent to 90 percent trust factor on news that is reported on those media organization stations or in print because they provide information in a culturally relevant manner. Things like Katrina from an Asian point of view, or what happened with 9/11. What's happening to the Muslim community in the United States? The Asian media covered that extensively because they didn't want what happened to the Muslim community to

impact their community, and there were some lessons learned. Again, from an Asian point of view.

Lastly, I think that for print media, in particular for Asian presses, they're like the yellow pages. They have longer shelf-life than the *Los Angeles Times*, the *New York Times* or the *Wall Street Journal*. Asians tend to hold on to their media longer because they are like the yellow pages. They provide information about restaurants, legal services, funeral services, hospitals, and health care, with telephone numbers and information that they cannot find in traditional yellow pages or on the website.

Kenny Irby: The definition of ethnic media and kind of the codification grew out of the 1994 Unity gathering. Based on the Asian American Journalists Association, the National Association of Hispanic Journalists, the Native American Journalists Association, and the National Association of Black Journalists, we began to define. We now need to step back and say, "Because of the complexity with ethnic media and the range of expectations that these audiences have, how do we define a new opportunity and a new phenomenon in the democratic process as we know it."

In addition, how can we better tap into the publications that are providing media that are informational and valuable and maybe less entertaining? I'm all about saying, "Okay, let's let entertainment be entertainment and define journalistic media, and that will force us to define journalism in the Twenty-first Century better, too."

Angie Chuang: I think one of the roles the institutions and leaders play is really as a social institution, not just providing information but hosting events, becoming community leaders, providing students' scholarships. There was a publication, the *Asian Reporter* in Portland, Ore., that would do this. It would do "Most Honored Elders" every year and give people essentially these lifetime achievement awards. You can't understate what that means to a community and how that can shift the dialogue and shift the perceptions.

This newspaper was an English-language newspaper, and it

really created a pan-Asian identity in a city that had initially been defined by individual ethnic groups. It brought everybody together, gave people scholarships, gave people awards as Asian-Americans and not as Cambodian-Americans.

Hayg Oshagan: There is another facet of community leadership that is beyond the paper itself. The publisher is a community leader as an individual. These communities are made up of small groups of either business leaders or political leaders, and also the publisher of the newspaper. They handle a host of functions and issues that come up in the community. Someone is being deported or someone is being hunted by the IRS; they don't call an attorney, they don't call the local police, or the local anyone; they call the editor or publisher to help handle the issue.

Félix Gutiérrez: I would like to change the channels a little bit here. We've been talking about the positive contributions that ethnic media have made over the years to their communities and to civic participation. However, there is also another reality that ethnic media have often been seen as a threat to the established order. They've been historically treated so, through differential regulations of the Federal Communications Commission or in World War I with laws that targeted specifically the ethnic press.

The repression of the Japanese-American presses is well known. An editor was basically arrested on the day of December 7 for no reason other than the FBI showed up at his home and said, "You have to come with me." Also, you see the foreign language of broadcasting restricted by the Federal Communications Commission. In other times of stress, when the newspapers or other media have spoken out on behalf of their communities, historically they have been seen as a threat and they've been treated as a threat, having differential First Amendment rights.

Federico Subervi: There is a transition that has happened that explains why we wouldn't see that type of repression as much today. One segue from the previous section to this section is the perceived relevance that these media have, regardless of their

commercial standing or if they are advocacy or whatever. The communities who receive them perceive them as relevant. And they don't perceive the general-market media as relevant. A second factor is that the identity of ethnic audiences is not fading when we compare them to previous eons, eras, decades. That does not fade in this era of developing and heightening the value of one's national heritage, origin, identity.

Being so productive and making money in many ways have led to many of our Latino-oriented media to be owned by corporations. As owned by corporations, you're going to have less opportunity for people — politicians, lawyers, the FCC — to say, "We have to restrict it and close down your station." The channel would not be very happy; neither would NBC and General Electric.

However, it will be a debate in heightened political struggles, wars, threats that people perceive. What role are these media playing? Those voices will be muted when the ownership of these media come up and say, "Excuse me, you're threatening my profits. So calm down about closing down our Spanish-language newspaper over there, or our radio station. And in fact, don't worry, we'll just play music. We won't have any critical comments about the elections or anything like that."

Angie Chuang: I have a nice historical example. One of the most famous journalistic stories ever, Edward R. Murrow's Milo Radulovich story, was based on the reason why Lt. Milo Radulovich was being investigated by the government on suspicions of spying. Was it because he subscribed to a Serbian newspaper? The paper was actually not pro-communist; it was anti-communist. The mere fact of reading the newspaper made him suspect, and he lost his job in the Air Force because of it.

Félix Gutiérrez: It was also related to his dad. His father subscribed to the paper.

So here you have one person connected to the home, and the son is in the Air Force, maybe born in the USA. So the ethnic media are somehow suspect. They are not melting everybody.

Tom Arviso: I wanted to second what Bill said. I think, especially with native media, people have that trust factor when it comes from us. When the *Navajo Times* tells a story, we find that our people are more apt to pay attention and to listen to what we have to say versus some of the other local dailies that are nearby. That's what makes our paper thrive. That's what makes us grow.

I was talking to Jon yesterday; we were talking about circulation, how our circulation is still increasing, our readership is still growing, and it's because we have that core audience. We have the people who want the news from us versus getting it from *USA Today*, or the *Albuquerque Journal*, or the *Arizona Republic*.

You talked about examples of when we might have been a threat. I can't think of anything from a national perspective, but more from a tribal perspective. The native media now are getting more aggressive, and we have a huge problem with censorship still with Native-American news. The people that own the radio stations, the newspaper, TV stations are tribes, the tribes themselves. A lot of times, so long as they sign the checks with employees, they don't want them telling the real story. What are they doing with the money? What are they doing making these big business deals? We are more of a threat to our own people in power more than anything. There was an example when we uncovered the scandal with Peter McDonald back in the 1980s. He was making a lot of deals behind closed doors and we exposed him.

Félix Gutiérrez: He was the chief of the Navajo Nation.

Tom Arviso: He was our tribal chairman of the Navajo Nation. We exposed what he was doing, and as a result, he was actually convicted and had to serve time in prison. That is an example of how we used our resources and did something good for our people. That is an example of when we become a threat to our leaders.

Félix Gutiérrez: How was that threat dealt with by the tribal leadership?

Tom Arviso: They shut down our paper eventually. We were a daily newspaper for about three years. It was called, *The Navajo Times of*

the Day. For about three years, we printed a Monday through Friday edition. We were the first and only closest thing to a daily newspaper in Native America. When we uncovered the scandal with Peter McDonald, he actually got elected into the office of chairman. One of the first things he did when he took power was shut down our newspaper. The tribal police came one morning and told everyone to get their personal belongings and that was it. We left our office, and that was the end of the daily newspaper. He sent his own PR people, and the *Navajo Times* started back again, about two months later, as a weekly. We've been a weekly ever since, but that was what happened. He shut down the source of where the news was coming from. That was his way of silencing the media that were telling too much.

The tribe owned the newspaper at that time. The primary source of funding was still coming from Detroit, by way of loans and investments. That was his reason. He used the fact that our newspaper was losing a lot of money. But we were on an upsweep. We were starting to generate some revenue. So he put an end to that real quick. He said, "They're losing too much money here. They're a financial drain on our resources." But, really, everyone knew the story. The reason was to silence us.

Jon Funabiki: It's interesting about Tom's example. There are many examples within the ethnic media in which the internal politics of the community prevent the newspaper or radio station from covering a story, from examining both sides. Certainly, politics in the homeland, especially in the case of the Filipino-American news media, can really define news coverage. And in the Vietnamese and Cuban media. We ran across this quite directly in one of our projects. We have been sponsoring journalists to go to Vietnam to look at the legacy of Agent Orange. We had great difficulty getting Vietnamese-American newspapers and radio stations to become involved because that is such a touchy subject. At least one newspaper publisher said, "We can't touch that story because it will be dynamite, and we will get criticized, and we don't want that."

Félix Gutiérrez: Did your uncle have any experiences during World War II with the *Pacific Citizen*?

Jon Funabiki: My uncle and his wife took the *Pacific Citizen* during World War II from Los Angeles, where they were closed by the government, to Salt Lake City and ran it there throughout the war. There were lots of politics going on within the Japanese-American community at that time. Should you go along with the internment experience? Should you volunteer to go in the Army? These were all very touchy political issues. They were criticized from all sides for the kind of coverage that they did, whatever they did.

Hayg Oshagan: There is an example from post-9/11. The editor of the largest Arabic newspaper in Detroit, as the most public face of the Arab-Muslim community, became a target — not just for the FBI but also of the general population, which saw him as the representative of the community. I know the editor received death threats. People would drive by the offices slowly in a threatening manner just to intimidate him as a reaction to 9/11.

Félix Gutiérrez: The media provided expanded voice basically. People are talking about things but it gets into print, it gets on the radio, gets on TV. Then all of sudden it's a larger voice, it's a binding together in a community. You don't feel you're the only one who thinks this way.

Sandy Close: I'm not sure; maybe I'm bringing this up prematurely since we are looking at history. But raising the issue of corporate ownership in the ethnic media is important. I want to ask Sergio, since you were at Univision during the Pete Wilson time, and Univision was effectively the mobilizer of the immigrants in defense of themselves. To what extent did the corporate ownership and Univision interfere with that role?

Sergio Bendixen: In the 90s, when I guess you could characterize my commentary as somewhat outspoken, the only thing I was ever asked to change in terms of my presentations was the color of my tie.

Over the last five to ten years Univision and Telemundo have become truly controlled by the corporations that own them. Now my role has changed. Now I do a lot of work in advertising for issues, in advocacy. I usually put aside at least a week

before I'm supposed to go on the air with my ads to talk with the corporate interests about the language I'm using, the phrasing, the concepts that I'm trying to communicate. They are extremely careful about their image, and they don't want to offend anybody on Wall Street. They don't want to offend anybody on East Downing Street. They don't want to offend anybody in either of these different worlds.

Félix Gutiérrez: Can you share any examples historically, or contemporarily?

Sergio Bendixen: A few months ago, when we were doing advertising for the pro-immigrant forces and the march in Washington, D.C. In the script about coming out to the march, we had a lot of phrasing about, "Do you want to defend your interests? Do you want to confront the people that are trying to, in a sense, deport you? Do you want to make sure that you protect your interests? Come out, and march." At both television networks, they were arguing with me: "Well, why can't you be positive? Can you talk about how wonderful it is to be an American and what a great thing it is to be in the United States and about your future in this country, instead of being negative about what Hispanic immigrants are confronted with nowadays?" I was amazed at the contrast with what the '90s were like and what that says.

Bill Imada: Just imagine working on the U.S. Census account, and the team agrees to a 40 percent spend on minority and women-owned businesses, and finding out that when we're trying to spend money with the ethnic media they are owned by mass market interests.

Félix Gutiérrez: That has been a change from the mom-and-pop ownership. Large media corporations went and brought in segments that targeted publication. Ethnic audiences pop out as they grow and attract an audience for advertising, so you see NBC and other outfits moving into ethnic media ownership as it becomes more profitable or potentially more profitable. They don't care what color you are as long as there's green in your pockets and you could move it over into somebody else's pockets.

Bill Imada: I just wanted to add one thing. Going back to the previous

conversation, I think historically, and it continues to this day, there is a suspicion of ethnic media when something is published in Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, and a lot of Americans can't read it. There is this big continuing movement that this is an English-speaking country. Things should be written in English. Things should be articulated in English. So, through the years, there has always been suspicion toward ethnic media because they've been printed in languages other than English.

And there are just some little nuances. You talked about *Golden Hill News*. If you look at some of the Chinese characters that exist for that publication, a Chinese character could have multiple meanings, so "hill" could also mean "mountain." It makes more sense to me if it's called "Golden Mountain," because the Chinese, when they arrived in this country, they looked at America as "Gold Mountain." So, nuances in the language could be mistranslated by English-speaking Americans, particularly governmental agencies that are spying on the media. They will look at different texts and say, "This means something subversive," when in actuality it is something benign.

Sallie Hughes: Well, just a point that has to do with corporate power. One of the effects that you certainly hear when you do focus groups with different ethnic groups is that television news in Spanish reflects the views and information of whichever group happens to be the dominant nationality group in the market. So for national news, that's Mexico and Mexican-Americans. In Miami locally, that is Cubans and Cuban-Americans. So the groups that are not in that group and do not have that origin feel distant from that, slightly perturbed by that and don't have the level of trust that I think we agreed that ethnic media can have.

For example, Colombians complain about the portrayal of Colombia as a drug haven. And dissatisfaction with Mexican and Mexican-American music and language, and the focus on Cubans in Miami, when I'm from Nicaragua. So there are different national agendas, there are different cultural references. There are differences in language usage. We need to keep in mind this sort of nuance when we're talking about ethnic media and levels of trust.

Félix Gutiérrez: I would like to be able to give you the wrap-up, and I want to go around and ask everybody the same question.

Hayg Oshagan: I was going to say, it might be worth thinking of it as a continuum, this ownership issue. You have at one end the mom-and-pop ones and at the other end the big corporate ones, but in between there are other forms of ownership as well. There might be a point at which corporate ownership might provide actually more freedom to express and take more risks because you have some backing. *The Chronicle* in Detroit is part of a chain of six African-American papers. So that might give it enough backing to be able to take care of a controversial position. So it might be that mom and pop might be actually more risky and more conciliatory. At the other extreme, the corporate might be most averse to controversy.

Félix Gutiérrez: Once again, you've shown your capability as a leader. The question I was going to ask as we go around is, "What do we find in the past that may not exist in the present or the future, or that may change," and you've brought a good example here. I'll just go around the room, and Kenny, since you're used to getting people to talk, I'll put it up to you: What's going to be different from the past as we look to the future?

Kenny Irby: I think moving forward one of the great challenges will be something that I've often addressed in journalism groups: How do *The Defender*, *The Chronicle*, those publications in the African-American community in particular, maintain their places in their communities as relevant and meaningful. Those organizations have to continue to be that voice of the underclass, maintain those kinds of narratives that are fundamentally about authentic storytelling. I think that the challenge moving forward will be not just how to maintain relevancy but how to fund the enterprise of credible journalism, credible reporting.

Félix Gutiérrez: It appears now there are more players interested in at least looking at those audiences and these media that reach those audiences. Angie, something we've seen in the past that may be changing or may not be seen in the future?

Angie Chuang: I think what we're losing or blurring is that we could even talk about print, radio, TV as if they're finite concrete categories of any media including ethnic media. What we have to start thinking about is this online world of bloggers, social media, Twitter. I was just talking to Bill about it. He's taking part in an Asian-American Blogger's Conference. Are the people participating in that conference ethnic media? How are you going to define that? This Sunday there are several Twitter feeds that are geared toward an ethnic audience, some of them in Spanish. Are they ethnic journalists? If so, how do we incorporate them? How do we help the old media transition to that world, be a part of that dialogue, and not just have the Asian Blogger's Conference and the Asian-American newspapers, radio, TV people on this side. I think that is a big change that's coming upon us.

Félix Gutiérrez: That's across all journalism. Is it journalism or is it a bulletin board?

Bill Imada: I hope this doesn't happen. But if you look at the Japanese-American population in specific, the media are dying because their media are no longer relevant or meaningful to this shifting population. Angie and I were talking about this growth of mixed-race, mixed-culture people. I have seen so many Japanese-American papers fold in the last few years because they are no longer meaningful or relevant to the populations. As Japanese-Americans go into their fourth, fifth, and sixth generations of living in America, and as countries like Japan develop and become a lot like the United States and Western Europe in terms of aging populations, we will have fewer immigrants coming from those countries. Without that type of immigration, the media that focus on culture and relevance and meaning are going to start to fade and die. So I think in the future that's probably going to happen to a variety of different Asian communities. The Vietnamese community has already seen it happen.

Félix Gutiérrez: There have been over the years efforts to establish Pan-Asian magazines. As far as I know, none of these has been successful overall. Is there a lot of potential there?

Bill Imada: The area where Angie just talked about, new media.

Angie Chuang: AngryAsianman.com.

Bill Imada: Young people in their teens, twenties, and early thirties are creating this new space. I've already lost count at 400 Asian-American, Pan-Asian online or social media sites. That's one of the fastest growing segments of the ethnic media.

Jon Funabiki: I think what is going to be really exciting to watch is this trend of shifting and multiple identities as opposed to the singular identity, the Chinese-American or Korean-American or African-American. We all now can have, do have multiple identities and communities that we align ourselves with because of our cultural background, political leanings, passions, or whatever. Then, because of technology, we're moving from a scarcity of media to plentiful media. We have so many things to choose from. How do we define media, because on Facebook we can have any number of communities formed without a center? Hundreds and thousands of people can contribute to the formation of a community, not necessarily because there is a newspaper there or a radio station there but because the community forms.

Sandy Close: One of the things that strikes me is that we are always relegating ethnic media to a kind of antiquated, quaint status. In fact, they've been very prophetic, in being embedded in the audience, in being global/local as opposed to being purely local, in being bilingual. It's where Univision is now realizing it has to go.

When we started multi-lingual polling, we had a meeting of 12 ethnic news organizations. All committed small but important amounts of money to be able to better inform their audiences about each other. So there is an impulse for inter-racial, inter-ethnic coverage, the whole hunger to break out of their cultural silos. Well, it was tough for them to do that. But the desire to do it is what gave rise to New America Media. Otherwise, it would've just been Chinese-language associations going in for a one-buy and one-bill campaign.

So I see the relevance of ethnic media more and more to

American journalism as the direction givers, the lodestars; the only media that have a sense of "we." "We" is still in a world of blogs of 15 million eyes a very important force that I think American journalism wants and needs to know more about. How did these media keep their audiences? Are they keeping their audiences by going bilingual? Are they keeping their audiences by beginning to mirror the complexity of life of their children? The big challenge is not a mindset that is going to confine and doom ethnic media. They've broken that mindset fifteen years ago.

What could limit them is the challenge of resources, and they are way behind. They didn't get invited to Annenberg to learn about digital media for years. They do not get funding from many of the foundations to get an edge on the new Internet age. So, whether they can realize the potential that Sergio spoke about is going to be more, not less important. The need for global-local continuum of news as opposed to xenophobic parochialism in American media is going to be more, not less, important. The question is can they get the resources to integrate their work online in time to realize that potential.

Félix Gutiérrez: In looking ahead, they are also recapturing some of the past on the bilingual factor alone. The first Latino newspaper in 1808, here in New Orleans, and the first Native-American paper in 1828, *The Cherokee Phoenix*, were bilingual. It's not anything new to ethnic media. This is a tradition that is being regained.

Federico, a headline for what we may see in the future or present that is different from what we've seen in the past.

Federico Subervi: Headline: The language may change but the relevance will remain. How is that?

Félix Gutiérrez: Good.

Federico Subervi: These ethnic media will continue even in times of threats because they are profitable. In times of major, major threats, if we were to go to war with Mexico or with China, the individuals will be eliminated, meaning off the air. But the media that they participate in, if they're corporate, will remain. So

—because of the First Amendment and other issues, those ethnic media will remain. They'll be considered as valuable to get the ethnic message out. Somebody pointed out the characteristics of the ethnic audience's identity, be it as a recent arrival, as a transition, or as a multi-ethnic person or multicultural person. That identity will remain unless we all do the Michael Jackson change, or skip color and a whole bunch of other things. That's not going to happen with most communities, especially not with the Latino communities because of one particular characteristic, and it's the revolving door. Latinos are always coming in and out of this country; they are intermixed. It's by the millions, not by the thousands, so there's a need for media to address the audiences there and here and the interconnections. The third point is the relevance if it's profitable. If it weren't profitable, they wouldn't have these media. And it's profitable even if just in terms of a sense of community.

Sergio Bendixen: What's new? I would say the aggressive nature of the Latino media, the way the Latino media think. Somehow if it's Hispanic culture it is different and sometimes superior to American culture. Especially in the electronic media, especially on television, I see a lot of the soap operas and even the sports commentary making a big point: Hispanic culture is worth perfecting. There are many elements of it that actually lead to a better life than if you follow the basic direction of American culture. I didn't see that back in the eighties or the early nineties.

Félix Gutiérrez: But if you read the Chinese-American newspaper in the 1870's you would have seen someone writing articles. And he says, "Look you're coming out to civilize us. I'm coming from China. My culture is not uncivilized." It is part of all the ethnic media over the years. I think it's just kind of ebb and flow.

Hayg Oshagan: I will make two points and most of this has been mentioned. The first is that a category, ethnic media, will survive. But when you look at any single individual out there, this newspaper or that newspaper, the easy access to information today through the Internet and the blogs endangers every single

one. There is competition on its ground. There used to be only the paper, the only source for this unique information. Now you can get on line and get the home country news from a home newspaper. You don't need to look at the local paper anymore.

The second issue is that whereas ethnic media stay highly relevant to the new immigrants and to an older generation who is not as well assimilated, the second generations who were educated in American schools and grew up speaking English fluently think less of them. So their relevance depends entirely on their success in maintaining an identify that is ethnic in the coming generations.

Félix Gutiérrez: I have some students whose parents stick with the sports score coverage of soccer in Mexico. Now they just go online, and they read the local paper from their hometown, and they get all the coverage from there.

Sallie Hughes: Well, it's interesting you bring that up because one thing we haven't really discussed with a lot of emphasis is globalization. Because of new information technologies and the increasing production capacity in home countries, it seems we're seeing much more circulation in content and advertising and in ownership. We now have content coming from the regions that is written with the U.S. Hispanic in mind. They have the sort of transnational ethos that's being sought in entertainment programming so that exporters can enter the U.S. market. At the same time, we have CNN exporting content to the region. One of the important sources for advertising in Haitian media in Miami are Haitian companies around carnival time because they are trying to get the audience in the United States, which is their biggest source of income.

Félix Gutiérrez: This is a pattern we are seeing in the Asian media for several decades. I wonder how long it's going to take the Latino media to figure this out. Tom, you have to wrap up here on this phase of the conversation.

Tom Arviso: There are three things that I see changing for Native American media. The first, and I think it's really important, is more

of the tribes, the nations, the pueblos are realizing the importance and value of having a free press. More and more nations are now understanding that media play an important role in delivering information to their people and doing it in a fashion that's free of censorship.

And there is the use of the Internet. I was talking to Jon yesterday and I was telling him that forty percent of our people don't even have electricity and/or running water yet. But the need for having Internet service is incredible. There are more and more people who realize just how important and how valuable that is. People go to the schools; they go to their work. That is really where they get Internet access now. So the social media websites—Facebook, Twitter and all that—are really coming of age on the reservations. They are realizing just how important it is that the tribes should take the initiative to make that available to their people. That is a major change.

Lastly, we have more young people, more students getting into journalism, which is great. I've been beating the bushes for years trying to talk to students about going into journalism and how important it is that we have more people of our own to tell our own stories. I see that as a real positive change.

Félix Gutiérrez: Thank you, thank you. It's all been tweeted and twittered while we've been talking.

Focus Point

The Comments

The contemporary role of ethnic media and relationships with general audience media

John Hamilton: So we're going to move on to the next lap of this, and I thought I might key it up. I was going to refer to this particular faculty member but lo, she's here. Ms. Regina Lawrence put your hand up so people can see you. Regina is an expert in something called "indexing."

Basically, the idea of indexing as it is applied to the way news is covered is that we tend to attribute stories or information to people who are officials. The reason that, for example, you have the run-up to the war with Iraq, and you have so much support, is that most people who are in power are essentially agreed that the war is a good idea. Therefore, journalists can't find officials who are giving an alternate point of view. Therefore, the news is indexed to the range of views of officials.

The reason I raised this is that the indexing argument has always seemed to work when you look at mainstream media. What about ethnic media? Would it be true that ethnic media are indexed to people in power, or are they indexed to something else? In other words, can you go to ethnic media and find other perspectives on the world or on policy? The one area I know a little something about is coverage of World War II by African-American media. My reading of that is that African-American media actually had different people they talked to, different people they quoted, and different perspectives that didn't show up in the mainstream media.

Here is the question then that comes up. Are ethnic media indexed to power today or are they indexed to ethnic communities that provide information and perspectives and sources that wouldn't appear in establishment media? That is my threshold question.

Sallie Hughes: My answer, thinking of the Haitian case, the Cuban case, a little bit of the Venezuelan media case in Miami, is that they are indexed to power but it's a different power structure. It's

the power structure that's relevant to their community. So if they have local officials, they're going to them. They're also going to community leaders, and, thinking of the Haitian case, they are going to politicians in the home country. For example, in the earthquake, they were doing a lot of home country politicians, looking for the ambassador, looking for any of the people who were traveling. They were also going to community leaders. They are going to established power holders, but it's a different community than the national U.S. community.

Sergio Bendixen: Your example about the war. Last night I showed a study, a poll that had been done a year after the war with Iraq began. And there was a substantial difference between the point of view of the general audience—all Americans supported the war by a clear margin—and the point of view of Hispanics who opposed the war by more than a two-to-one margin. Hispanics were getting their information about the war from Spanish- language media. Spanish-language media at that time had been very careful to get their information, not only from the sources close to the U.S. government, but also from television networks like Al Jazeera. And what you saw on Spanish language TV was very, very different from what you saw on ABC or CNN. So in terms of that specific example, there was a huge difference.

John Hamilton: Are you saying that Spanish-language television was repackaging information from Al Jazeera and showing it?

Sergio Bendixen: Not repackaging it but using it as a source. When they decided what to put on television that night, especially in the first few months of television, they were not only looking at what CNN and ABC were showing, but they were also seeing what the Arab station was showing. And they were reporting the war, at least I think, from maybe a more objective point of view than the American stations. They therefore had an impact on the audience that was reflected in the polls.

From another point of view, going back to my days in the nineties when I was reporting on the news, I could not get any officials to give me their opinion on anything because

none of them spoke Spanish in California, or in many different cities in the United States. So there was a greater tendency to talk to people, talk to activists, to talk to non-officials and get their opinions on the air, just because when you do television, you've got to have people who speak the language that you are broadcasting.

Sandy Close: Could you cite the poll we did on weapons of mass destruction? That's just native smarts on the part of ethnic communities, as opposed to media. To some extent, the cosmopolitan nature of ethnic immigrant audiences and native minority audiences affects the content of the media. The WMD poll data are very relevant to that.

Sergio Bendixen: There was a huge difference on the weapons of mass destruction argument. It had a high level of credibility at that time among most Americans. Among ethnic voters, it had a very low level of credibility.

Sandy Close: And in fact, the respondents, especially Asians, said it was going to cost America credibility to have pushed the weapons of mass destruction argument.

John Hamilton: So, Sandy, was that because of what they read in the paper or they got through their media, or was that because they just naturally distrusted full power?

Sandy Close: Well, the way you put it, it's not an either/or. I think these are sophisticated, cosmopolitan people who are generally regarded as out-of- date and out-of- step with mainstream Americans, but are less parochial, more sophisticated than the average American. And it showed up on this WMD poll. Most of us didn't even know what WMD represented. In fact, it was Sergio who insisted on asking the question in the poll and I, as a typical consumer of American media, said, "Why include that in the poll?" And it turned out, I think, to be the most important question. What this gets to is that in a global era, as Sally was underscoring, you have an enormous resource in the presence of immigrant populations combined with ethnic-minority and racial-minority Americans who are naturally skeptical. And the immigrant populations bring a more so-

phisticated understanding of global politics to the issues of the day. The WMD question really underscored that.

Hayg Oshagan: In the mainstream media, community power is defined as maybe government and big business. It's more fractured, I think, in the ethnic communities. There exists the mainstream government, as well as big businesses, but there are also local businesses. There are local community leaders, and there are churches, synagogues and mosques and their leaders. There are, in addition, home country power sources. So a story like the war is going to have more angles to it.

Angie Chuang: I think the other aspect is that when we were entering the Iraq war, the U.S. was essentially, with the exception of the Gulf War, a country which had not been at war in a truly significant way that affected large segments of the populations for a very long time. Whereas our ethnic immigrant populations came from countries that were completely defined by war, understood the power structures and the kinds of politics that surrounded war, and so they had that skepticism. Not just because they're conspiracy theorists and they don't trust the government, but because they know how the story plays out.

And I always think back to—I traveled to Afghanistan in '04, right on the heels of the Abu Ghraib scandal. I was very, very concerned about how I would be perceived as an American in Afghanistan and I talked to the family I was staying with about that and they said, "Oh, you know what, everybody does this. The British did it when they took over Afghanistan. The Russians did it, the Mujahedeen did this, the warlords do it, the Taliban did it, and the Americans are no different. They're humans. Humans eventually have to descend into this kind of behavior because that's what war is like." And it was just this idea of we understand this, we've experienced this, and the U.S. is not special or immune to this. And I think Americans do not have that kind of experience.

John Hamilton: Okay. So let me press you, Angie, on the point of the role of the media.

Angie Chuang: I would say that ethnic populations—maybe because of their experiences, because the media in their countries have been perhaps abused or misused in much more blatant ways—have an inherent kind of dual way of reading media. That there's the apparent media, and then there's the agenda or the inner-workings. I think Americans are more idealistic, and I know this is really hugely generalizing it. It depends on what country, but I think it's almost more a way of leading into the sourcing and the indexing, rather than purely just what sources are being used.

Federico Subervi: I have not done a content analysis of the sourcing of Spanish-language media, and I don't know anybody who has in a detailed way.

Three things do temper this opinion that was found regarding Latinos. Number one, there's a history of interventions of the U.S. in Latin America that everybody who's been from any one of those Latin American countries knows about, and the interventions have not been pretty, at least for the masses. Number two, among Latinos, certainly Puerto Ricans and many Mexican-Americans and Cubans, for sure, the talk about politics is the daily bread—breakfast, lunch, dinner, and coffee in between. So there is a discussion about politics and the implications. And the implications come to the third point. A greater proportion of Hispanics have their sons and daughters in the military than proportionately for others. They're going to be out there in the front, and that's not nice. They're patriotic, but suffering and strife will come along. Having their kids out there is of worry. These three points add together to a different point of view than the general public.

John Hamilton: I want to ask another question to Tom. You're an editor of a newspaper, so you're in the middle of being a journalist. What about sourcing on your paper? I mean, have you thought about that? What do you do for sourcing? Who do you go to for sources that might make you different from mainstream white media?

Tom Arviso: We emphasize and we always push our reporters to go and talk to people on the street. We go to different parts of the

reservation to get comments because what might be a viewpoint on the eastern side of the reservation might not hold true to people on the western side of the reservation. So we always push our people to go and get comments from different people, geographically. Then, within the government, we go to different offices. We not only go to the director of a certain office; we'll go to some of the employees if we can. Of course, trying to get them to go on record a lot of times is pretty hard. As far as sources go, we try to be as diverse and we try and cover as much of the population as possible, so that we get a real, a true, reflection of what they're thinking and what the story's about.

I wanted to make a comment about when the national media come. That is a whole different issue. We encourage them to go and talk to different people. Well, a lot of times though, they'll come, and they'll talk to our tribal president. Our nation is so huge, the reservation is so big, it's about the size of West Virginia. So, you've got a lot geographically so that opinions will vary. And then in general, what might hold true for the Navajo Nation on a national topic such as gaming and casinos might be totally different from what Seminoles in Florida are thinking. So it's important that when the national media come in and they talk to Native Americans, they understand that we're similar and that we're all Native Americans, but we're different because we have different tribes, we have different land bases, we have different cultures.

When you talk about sourcing, as journalists we need to practice good journalism, and that means go out and talk to the people. Go out and seek these different opinions.

John Hamilton: So when you're editing a story and a reporter comes back, do you say, "You don't have enough kinds of sources here, voices here?"

Tom Arviso: Yes, we do. We have a tribal election going on today. A reporter had a story about a push on the eastern side of our reservation to register, to get people registered, and they were really looking at trying to get resources to get our elderly people to the polls. They were talking about candidates actually going out, picking up elderly people and bringing them to the polls. We

said, "Well, it's important that you talk to the elderly people. Do they want to get picked up? Are they going to be voting for that group?" So, we did.

Sandy Close: The fact is, throughout the ethnic media sector, the word, "access" is one of the critical concerns. Ethnic media have not had access to official sources. It's not just that the officials didn't speak Spanish. The officials didn't give the time of day. In most pressrooms, in most city halls, up until the year 2000, there were no spaces for ethnic media. It took a major effort to create space for two desks in the pressroom at City Hall in San Francisco. And it wouldn't have happened unless Willie Brown had been mayor, and we bought the desks at Cosco. So, I'm saying the access to officials has been one of the most critical examples of communication apartheid in our democracy as it's impacted ethnic media.

Kenny Irby: I think Sandy's point was a segue to what I was thinking. It's not just access into the audience and the individuals to find that authentic storytelling, but it's access to the officials and the municipalities that share perspective about reasoning and justification. We've had a series of courses at Poynter called "Finding Untold Stories" which was really about getting to the nugget of this piece of the conversation. How do we help mainstream journalists have access into the community to tell those stories on which the ethnic media have been able to build credibility? In some ways, it was to shine a mirror on the mainstream media and their hypocrisy. What they said they did and stood for wasn't happening.

I think the election in 2008 was a really good example of how Barack Obama's message got out there in ethnic media. The Obama campaign made its voice heard, represented the issues of the people who were being undercovered and who he was campaigning toward. So there's a huge opportunity out there for ethnic media to still bridge that gap. There is still a gap.

John Hamilton: I wanted to zero in on that. One thing that's changed for African-American media is that when there was a strong African-American press, African-Americans weren't allowed to work on mainstream white papers with a very few excep-

tions. Now, of course, they do. How does that change the role of the African-American press? Let me make it even a little bit more complicated by pointing out that most African-American newspapers don't make very much money. They're not doing well financially.

Kenny Irby: African-Americans brought forward the black press because of a very different and direct response in the government to discriminate. In the sixties, when America was burning, mainstream media had a response, that there was this main story that they didn't have the capacity to cover. They then went and found the African-Americans who were in janitorial staffs and less affluent positions and sent them into those communities to tell those stories. So that challenge has continued to manifest itself as African-Americans look at their role as reporters and their role as information deliverers in the democracy.

I think in the mainstream media, there's a separate dynamic that's operating from what's happening in the black press now. African-Americans are trying to bring broader intellectualization to the big issues. Most of the audience has assimilated to some form or fashion into the mainstream.

And the financial piece that you bring up John is huge. Most black press publications, particularly in print publications, are suffering greatly and are restructuring, downsizing, much like the mainstream.

There are exceptions in terms of what's referred to as African-American or black radio, that's hugely subsidized by the entertainment world with people like Yolanda Adams and Tavis Smiley and others being voices that are almost celebrities in the society, and with Oprah Winfrey being that anomaly.

The challenge is still out there, and I would counter that there are fewer African-Americans in the mainstream media today because of the cutbacks and the great strides of affirmative action. In many cases, last hired, first fired, and people of color across the board have found themselves displaced in the mainstream media organizations.

John Hamilton: So let me ask you a pointed question. Let's just say all African-American newspapers disappeared tomorrow. What difference would it make? You can answer that in any way you want, but I want to ask you in one specific way. And I ask this as just a good old fashioned journalist. What wouldn't we know, what kind of facts and information would we not know, if those newspapers were gone?

Kenny Irby: Well, we would lose a vital communication segment among a key facet of the American society. You know, that's the challenge. Most of mainstream America would say, "Hey, I wouldn't lose anything," because they are not the beneficiaries of those publications. The African-American community would be greatly impacted by the lack of authentic voice and community, the sense of community that those publications provide for its constituents.

The readership is not necessarily going down. The funding base is what's going down. It's not about subscriptions and circulation. Those publications have had advertisers in the past that wanted to invest in them and wanted to market to them. Now, advertisers have far more outlets to market cars and clothing and alcohol, and all the other things that are advertised. The African-American press is still about the financial model. Newspapers and printed publications have not made their money on their circulation. They have made their financial strides on advertising. And the advertising model, not only in ethnic media but in mainstream media, is what's upside down right now.

Angie Chuang: I just have a very quick addition to that. Kenny can chime in on this because D.C. is his hometown. I would argue that were there no black press, Washington, D.C., might be electing a different mayor today.

Sandy Close: *The Washington Informer* and *AFRO*, two leading African-American newspapers, both played very, very important roles critiquing the absence of bottom-up engagement in the education policy.

Angie Chuang: In the D.C. primary, you essentially had all the mainstream

media step behind the incumbent, who originally was supported by the black community but was seen as having betrayed them, particularly over school reform that Sandy refers to. The vote for the incumbent was almost all white, and the vote for the challenger, who had ethnic press support, was almost all black. So were the media reflecting the community, or the community reflecting the media, as John asked? You know that's a chicken or egg question, but there's definitely some significance there.

Hayg Oshagan: In Detroit, the *Michigan Chronicle* is the newspaper of record for the African-American community. *The Detroit News* and the *Detroit Free Press*, the mainstream papers, don't have anywhere near the kind of influence in the city for that leadership as the *Chronicle* does.

But there's one other aspect to it as well, I think. The mainstream media rely on the *Chronicle* for a lot of their stories, too. The mainstream media interview the editor of the *Chronicle* for what Detroit is thinking, what the political currents are, what people care about in Detroit. So that view is not just for the African-American readership in Detroit. The mainstream papers get a good deal of direction from the *Chronicle*.

Bill Imada: Coming from a corporate point of view, I know that the companies I work with rely heavily on black radio and black media for a variety of reasons. Radio covers trends, the mood of the country, and the mood of the African-American population. They look at events as a way to connect to the communities. Whenever there's a crisis at a corporation, the first person they call is someone from the black media. So if the black media were to disappear tomorrow, we would lose a very important litmus test on the mood of the country, particularly in the African-American market. I know the corporations I work with rely heavily on the ethnic media, the publishers to give them information, to give them ideas, to look at trends, look at political moods before they introduce a product or a service.

John Hamilton: Could we say that one change today from say fifty years ago is that ethnic media now are paid attention to by mainstream

media in a way that they weren't before? Could it be said that ethnic media actually are part of mainstream media, an influence in mainstream media? Would you be willing to say that?

Bill Imada: I would say that. I read *Black Enterprise*. I wouldn't know Earl Graves unless I read his publication. Not only is he doing things in the business community; he's doing these major events which help raise money for his publication. He is a key influencer, not just among African-Americans, but across the board of political people, mainstream publications, and mainstream media. They go to him if they want to get a perspective on the black American small business mindset. Also, they'll go to him as a source for blacks in investments, blacks in housing, the foreclosure issue.

Jon Funabiki: I think it's worth noting that that didn't happen automatically in this country and that there are people in this room, such as Sandy, such as Federico, working this idea that the mainstream media needed to start to pay attention to the ethnic media.

Federico Subervi: A *New York Times* headline today, well not the main headline but it is a headline: "New Political Muscle in Whatever Language." And it's about the role of Latino-oriented media and others in the current campaign. I think I'm quoted there.

But I'd like to bring another point about sources. I have one of two studies that I was part of for the National Association of Hispanic Journalists on the assessment of how ABC, CBS, NBC, and CNN covered Latinos and Latino issues. I'm going to read one brief paragraph. "Overall, 34 percent of 115 Latino stories in 2004 featured two or more identifiable Latinos as sources. Forty-six percent showed only one, and twenty percent showed none. Sixty-six percent of Latino stories featured, at best, one Latino source." That tells a difference in coverage about our community in the network news versus what I am sure happens in ethnic media.

John Hamilton: Sergio, I have a question for you. What is the impact of Hispanic media on mainstream thinking about political issues?

Sergio Bendixen: I would say through the beginning of the last decade, through

the 2000 election, it was slim and none. They didn't even know it existed in most political circles. They gave it no importance. There was very little advertising bought, very little access given to reporters. Even though the networks, Spanish-language networks, Spanish- language newspapers tried to cover, they did not do so in a very successful way. That has changed, especially since the 2008 election, which was the first time that there was some consensus in America that the Hispanic vote had been extremely important in deciding who the president was. President Obama, I would say, was able to carry at least four states because of the Hispanic vote. I think we're now moving in the direction of Spanish-language media being taken more seriously, but are they to the point where they have great influence? No.

John Hamilton: And there are really two issues, right? One issue is, are Hispanics being paid attention to because their vote is important, which means you ask how they may feel about an issue or which way they may cast a ballot? And the other question is, are you covering issues relevant to Hispanics?

Federico Subervi: We have not done the content analysis. But I would predict, based on twenty years of previous research. In terms of how *The New York Times* and the general- market news media will be covering Latino politics, there will be more stories that mention Latinos but not more that are on the issues that are relevant to Latinos.

Sergio Bendixen: I would agree with that. One of the reasons for the great success of Spanish-language media over the last thirty years is because they were relevant to not only the interest of Latin American immigrants but also the interest of Hispanics that were born in the U.S. in terms of their issues, their concerns, their problems. The mainstream coverage of Hispanic America has been very, very weak, at least over the last twenty or thirty years that I've been observing it.

John Hamilton: Are we finding that highly qualified Hispanic journalists, excellent Hispanic journalists working for Hispanic media, end up going to work for mainstream media in the way that very good African-American journalists in the fifties and

sixties ended up migrating to the *New York Times* and the *Los Angeles Times*?

Sergio Bendixen: Maybe not in as numerous ways as you saw it in the African-American community. Why? Whether you're an anchor person or reporter, you have the problem of basically migrating from the Hispanic world of journalism into all of the mainstream world bureaus. But you also have the language barrier. Many very good journalists who can write well in Spanish or be able to comment on news on television, do it very well in Spanish but cannot do it very well in English.

Félix Gutiérrez: Well, I'd agree with that. We haven't seen an out-migration. Part of it is language-based. What we have seen is an English-language presence of Latino journalists. So we've seen people have a wider presence, but not leaving a job for whatever reason. I'm sure economics is part of it, but I think another part is also you're reporting for your community to itself, not just about your community for somebody else.

Sergio Bendixen: I strongly disagree with you. I don't know an American politician that can say, "This is the Hispanic columnist or the Hispanic journalist that I follow or that I read on a consistent basis." Why? Because there aren't any. There are two or three columnists in the entire U.S., and they have very limited readerships. Whenever there's a presidential campaign I have to call the press offices to tell them who they are. And I'm running out of names. There are no influential voices from the Hispanic world in the American mainstream.

Félix Gutiérrez: I don't think it's that these people aren't speaking; it's that the general-audience media aren't listening. The general-audience media tend to look at the connection with the ethnic media and with the ethnic audiences as a one-way street. How can I use these media to get my message to this audience so they can purchase, so they can vote? They don't see it as much as a listening experience. What can I learn from them? And until they start to flip their dynamic and say, “I've got to listen more than talk,” are we going to have the kind of influence that we should have? We're present but not accounted for.

Sallie Hughes: If we're looking at the national mainstream media, I don't disagree. But if you look at different regional or local media, it's a very different situation.

Sergio Bendixen: Miami's a different world.

Sallie Hughes: Well, the *Miami Herald* is heavily populated with Hispanic journalists and just named its first Cuban-American editor, although Cubans and others have had influence in the paper for a number of years. The difference seems to be making that jump to the national market, and why is that? You can just say it's a question of market, because the political economy at the local level is going to respond to these populations, and they don't seem to respond at the national level.

Hayg Oshagan: There's an example of Bankole Thompson, the editor of the *Michigan Chronicle*. He's a good friend of mine. He's been on CNN; he's on NPR, on "Dateline" and NBC. He spoke at the Congressional Black Caucus two weeks ago. He is a personality, and he's been offered jobs, and he's turned them down. He likes to work for the *Chronicle*. He likes to be in his community. There's an authenticity, as Félix said. There's also a sense of being able to make a difference in a way that you might not be able to as a reporter on a mainstream newspaper. When I go have lunch with him, person after person comes up, shakes his hand, and tells him their story, the issue it's on. It is a different kind of a role as a reporter or editor that you cannot play as a mainstream newspaper person.

Sergio Bendixen: Let me challenge the group here, okay? There are fifty million Hispanics in America. Name me one Hispanic that you regularly see on cable news network shows, one, that you regularly see, giving their opinion about any issue. I can name you a lot of African-Americans, a lot of different ethnic groups. Name me one Hispanic. Can anybody do that?

Hayg Oshagan: One was fired for giving his opinion, on CNN.

Sallie Hughes: Who?

Félix Gutiérrez: Oh, Rick Sanchez. The late Rick Sanchez.

Tom Arviso: I'm going to talk about Native American media. Kenny brought up Unity back in 1994, when all journalists of color got together, and one of the big issues that we wanted to push was getting more minority journalists hired in mainstream media, more representation. And with Native-American media it was less than one percent in 1994. Today it's still less than one percent. So, as far as our influence with mainstream media, with Native-American media it's almost nothing.

There's not a whole lot of push by the national media unless there's some kind of tragedy or you're dealing with issues like mascots when they were trying to change the "Fighting Illini" mascot. All of a sudden, it became big news, and all of a sudden Native Americans were being quoted here and there on the mascot issue. But then it comes and goes.

Angie Chuang: But Tom, how often does a Native journalist at a mainstream publication get assigned to cover that story?

Tom Arviso: Very rarely. We have friends who've worked in the national media. They get frustrated when they're there, because they're not given the resources to go out and really do an in-depth story on an issue that might be on their reservation or at a nearby reservation, or a nearby tribe, unless, of course, it's a tragedy or something major that influences the local scene, like gaming issues.

John Hamilton: Seems to me that one of the questions this raises is to what extent does the coverage and perspective of events by ethnic media get fed back into mainstream media? So this is actually kind of an open question, isn't it, the extent to which ethnic media not only serve as a glue for the communities that they're in, but also end up enriching the conversation for all of us. Somebody like me, who cares about foreign news, I talk to people and say we should always be listening to Al Jazeera because that's a different perspective. But maybe we also ought to be looking at ethnic media in this country to understand foreign policy through their optics.

Bill Imada: People such as Mónica Lozano, publisher and CEO of *La Opinión*, and Jeff Yang, former publisher of "A." magazine and

now a consultant and writer on Asian pop for the *San Francisco Chronicle*, are trail blazers in the world of ethnic-centric media. This clearly demonstrates the power and growing clout of the ethnic media in America.

Jon Funabiki: I think the question that Jack was trying to get us to was have we reached, or will we ever reach, a real tipping point in which the political power of ethnic communities really becomes realized? I don't think we've reached that. There is a real strong cultural resistance to that influence. I'm not sure how much the ethnic media can change that.

John Hamilton: Can I follow up on that question? So how could that happen? Should that happen? How could it happen? Go another step in that discussion you just raised.

Sandy Close: We did a survey for this mid-term election asking ethnic media in California how many candidates had gone to visit their editorial rooms compared to ever before. And we found with the larger Asian-language dailies and even some of the weeklies, for the first time candidates running for office were now actually including ethnic media newsrooms as must visits. Now, that's not an academic survey, but it is an important indicator to add to this mix.

At the same time, I look at something that happened in Arizona after the passage of 1070. We convened ethnic media in Phoenix. Tom sent a message to that convening. We expected twenty ethnic media; fifty showed up. Burmese media were included in that group, as well as the African-American media. Because the tradition of a public voice was so well established, Clovis Campbell, the editor of the largest Arizona black newspaper, assumed a kind of leadership role in that convening and called on all the media to do a joint editorial, which we did do.

I've been struck over the last fifteen years, in going to Anchorage and other places you wouldn't think there were going to be ethnic media, that the gate openers were invariably black media. They have a tradition of public participation and a strong public voice and a strong commitment to multi-ethnic inclusion. So, in all of this, I keep going back to the power of

the collective voice of populations who would otherwise not be visible, even to themselves, without ethnic media, and how we're going to realize and build on that.

Bill Imada: I just have to say that the ethnic media are great about being relevant to their communities and audience. What they're not good at is becoming relevant to mass market media and to corporate people and to governmental people. So I think that's where there's a huge flaw. I do believe in an S & S approach, a little bit of sugar, a little bit of shit. The ethnic media have to be better about their messaging to political people, and frankly, they're not good at doing that. And I think I learned that the hard way. I was talking to one company for years about the importance of the Asian-American markets. Fifteen million people, it's 5 percent of the U.S. population. I said this for seven years with a straight line - Point A to Point B, straight line, the whole time.

Then I realized that my audience needed to hear that message in a different way. Instead of saying the Asian population of fifteen million people is a very important audience—I followed what the Univision people said. The Latino population in the U.S. is bigger than Canada, while the Asian population in the U.S. is bigger than Belgium, bigger than Austria, bigger than Portugal, bigger than Switzerland. As soon as I changed that message and made it more relevant to the audience I was trying to reach, then I got their attention. But I also believe that there has to be a political kind of punch to it, as well. And I think the black community has done that amazingly well with the black publishers.

Sergio Bendixen: I think one of the objectives of New America Media was to give populations that have not been heard from a voice, in terms of the national debate. I think through the polling, we were able to present it in a way that was attractive to American media and we were able to get some coverage—not as much as we would have hoped for. We were always hoping that we would ignite the interest to certain issues. Even though we got many of our polls in the major newspapers of the country, it never really generated the after-stories. But I also have to tell you, every time we did a poll, and every time we went out to

let the media know about it, it was a war to try to get them to cover it because they really did not want to. I mean, I remember the first study that we did of the Asian-American vote for the 2004 presidential election, and the guy that was in charge of polling for AP asked me straight-forward, "Why should I care? Why should we care? Why is this newsworthy, how Asian-Americans are going to vote?"

Bill Imada: Maybe the strategy is off, and you're not looking at the messengers. Maybe they're outside of our communities. Maybe there are trusted sources out there that do appeal to the political people and to the mass-market media that you need to recruit and make them your ambassadors to carry some of those messages.

Hayg Oshagan: I would add that the ethnic communities are in silos of their own, and that they aren't very well aware of each other's issues either. The loop is not just the ethnic communities to the mainstream. It's worth thinking of it as ethnic communities to each other.

In Detroit, for example, we've tried to create a common reporting pool but also have agreements between different newspapers to publish each other's editorials so that communities learn of the issues of concern. So the black newspaper, for example, has an editorial that ran in the Jewish newspaper. The Latino paper ran the editorial from the Arab newspaper. It depends on the issue that comes up. Sometimes they've agreed to come up with a common editorial, which all of them would publish in their papers and help pierce the mainstream markets. I have created a board of the publishers of Jewish, black, Arabic, Latino, and Korean media. We meet regularly, once a month. They've gotten to know each other through this process. We bring in others, as well, in the brother community, but the effort has been to raise their visibility and we've organized panel discussions on public radio, on local ABC television stations. So their issues become more visible to the mainstream, but also to each other,

Sandy Close: It's a model that's been replicated from the Bay area to the Central Valley, to Los Angeles, to Seattle, to Arizona in Phoenix, and to Michigan. So I think there's a great interest.

John Hamilton: I'm thinking back to Robert Park's famous book on ethnic media in the 1920's. I wonder if you were mapping ethnic media, you would see that there had been a kind of high point from the turn of the century through the period between the great wars, and then a leveling off, or a decline is probably a better way to put it. And now, there is a surge of ethnic media, in part, because the barriers to entry have been reduced.

Federico Subervi: I don't know the specific of mapping, but there are people who have been counting how many there are at different times and different places. If we're going to move in that direction, it would be crucial to differentiate commercial ethnic media, the ones that are business owned, and the family owned and operated, how many of those are developing. Make the difference again to the radio stations that are locally owned versus those that are now part of a chain. The generalization of ethnic media is just a challenge unless we do that.

And, in some cases, ownership could be seen as rather strange. I'll just give an example that I know of because I got interested in it. A fellow who owns Polish restaurants in Connecticut created a website with his own foreign correspondence, and it links together polls all over the country. It even has a foreign correspondent from Poland who reports for him. So there is a guy who is in the restaurant business, he's not in the news business. It's an ancillary business, but he has a large Polish clientele.

It makes a difference, more than anything else, in terms of the mission of the medium that is assessed. There are a few Mr. Smith's out there who have contributed to the development of ethnic media because they are good businesses. There are other Mr. Smiths and Mrs. Smiths who have contributed to the development of ethnic media because they value the advocacy role that's missing in the general market. So let's see what the mission is.

I'm thinking of examples in Austin. This fellow—great fellow, he's very involved in the community—finds businesses who will advertise in his newspaper, and it's an ethnic newspaper.

But the content is clipped, copied, pasted from the Internet with one story maybe local, or two. Then there is the paper published by the *Austin American Statesman* that has lots of reporters. And it does cover the cultural development of the community but limited advocacy. Then there's Mr. Alfredo Santos, who is an individual who produces the most voice-full advocacy newspaper on-line for that same community. And they're all ethnic newspapers. So which one is the advocate? The one that's serving the community for business? So let's just be clear when we do this mapping that we classify the type of institutions that we're going to assess so that we can avoid the generalization of there's more advocacy, there's less advocacy, there's more of these media, there are few of these media. Well, which ones are we talking about?

John Hamilton: I think there's also another question. How do you identify them all? I think, in the past, since they were ink on paper newspapers, you had a better chance of getting a sense of what they all were. Today, I think it's very difficult to know what all the media are. You can't see them. There's no news-stand where they're sold. They're over the air. We have ethnic media that actually originate from other countries.

Federico Subervi: Well, are they ethnic media?

John Hamilton: Well, okay, you tell me. If you're listening to one of whatever it is, 45 Iraqi television stations in the U.S. and many of them are produced in Iraq, what are you going to call that? Ethnic media or not? If you're listening in the U.S., what do you call them?

Federico Subervi: I make the distinction in my writings. And I call them ethnic-oriented. It's Latino-oriented when it is oriented toward this population, which is different from the Spanish-language media that may or may not be oriented to U.S. Latinos.

John Hamilton: I understand the distinctions. It's important to classify things, but I think it still goes back to the point. It's hard to say what's ethnic and what's transnational. They look so much alike.

Sergio Bendixen: It is not difficult at all, for ethnic Americans. We have polled now more than 5,000 of them over the last five years and asked them, "Do you watch, whether it's Hispanic, whether it's African-American, whether it's Asian-American, Native-American, Arab-American, Armenian-American, ethnic television or ethnic radio." I think with newspapers, maybe five or six percent are a little mixed up about what you mean. But African-Americans don't have any problems telling you that they listen to an African-American radio station because it has African-American content, or a magazine, or a newspaper. With Hispanics, it's a little easier, because most of it is in Spanish. So it may seem confusing to all of us who maybe look at the whole thing from a global point of view. But ethnic Americans know when they're looking, when they're watching or listening or reading something that is ethnic-oriented.

Kenny Irby: And that's also a real challenge now, how people self-identify. There was a period when the black press in America was defined, and there was this inextricable connection to slavery and disenfranchisement and being able to track your genes. Now that is much more fragmented. The current generations don't see the value and the connection in the same way. And I think that's worth studying.

John Hamilton: I want to use the last few minutes to get to the media today, how they survive and flourish. I think everyone here stipulates that ethnic media are good, useful, no matter what, they help provide a context for people to think about their identity, reinforce their identity and have an anchor for that identity, and it also helps them organize and that's politically important. We could also argue that if they were better funded, they could do more original reporting, which means from their own perspective they'd be going out looking for news and digging around for it and really enriching the fact base as well as the emotional base. So if that is so, and since they don't have a large enough advertising base to work from in most cases, what are the alternatives. Now let me throw out one. Government support for ethnic media, government subsidies? What do you all think about that?

Sandy Close: I'm in favor of government social marketing, expanding its

investment in the media in proportion to the audiences they serve. It has not done that. The twentieth largest advertiser in the United States is government in its social marketing, in its effort to communicate. If government invested as it did with the census in ethnic media in its messaging in proportion to the audiences that ethnic media serve, then ethnic media would have a much bigger resource base. It's not government investment in the media as grants; it's government advertising. Would you agree, Bill?

Bill Imada: I would agree whole-heartedly; absolutely.

Sallie Hughes: If there's at the latest count, 900,000 Haitians in this country, and 69 percent of them were born outside of the country, there are a lot of people who don't speak English. They speak Creole. Unless you're doing some advertising about public health or the census on radio in Creole, you're missing these people. Again all of our interviews with the media people say that they're not sought out by ad agencies. One newspaper was found by the Obama campaign. So I agree with you Sandy. It's not so much that you have to specifically subsidize but you do need to seek them out and, I would argue, just use a good marketing strategy because these people are clustered. So 100,000 people in Miami speak Creole. They need to be reached somehow.

Bill Imada: Without having any research to support this, I believe after Sergio presented yesterday, that there's a perception among government officials that ethnic audiences don't vote. Maybe with some exceptions, you know, Latinos and African-Americans. But Asians don't vote, Vietnamese don't vote, Koreans don't vote. I think there's a presumption out there that we don't vote and, because we don't vote, we're not that important. So I think that's part of the reason why we're not getting these significant government grants.

And I don't think advertising should be just limited to health-related issues. It should be related to a whole host of issues, including the military. To me it makes no sense for the U.S. Army not to be doing a significant amount of advertising in the Middle Eastern communities.

Sandy Close: Homeland security.

Bill Imada: Homeland security?

Sandy Close: It's a huge advertiser.

Bill Imada: Other things, it could be IRS. A variety of different things that we're not getting the dollars for and part of it is because we don't have political clout. We haven't convinced legislators and the people who are in power that this is an important audience for them to address.

Félix Gutiérrez: Well, the other source is government-required public notices, which have been a source for some ethnic media in the past. Those are government- paid announcements, laws, bills, and information. There are requirements that these notices be posted in languages other than English and then published in newspapers that reach those audiences. I don't know to what extent people read the public notices, but it's money that could come in. There is a paper just outside of Tampa where they found a way the state law works. They sent a group to Tallahassee every year to make sure that the legislation is written a certain way. So there are avenues that have not been opened.

Tom Arviso: In regards to government support for ethnic media, I second what Bill and what Sandy said. We welcome the dollars that are brought to us by way of advertising. CIA was advertising with us for a long time and, you know, we'll take it. The census was a big money maker for us. Money that comes in that form, we welcome that. However, I wouldn't like subsidies from government or any kind of handouts.

John Hamilton: Do you get money from the Navajo Nation still?

Tom Arviso: Well, that was going to be my second point. *The Navajo Times* does not get much money, no. We are self-sufficient; we've been self-sufficient now for going on about twelve years. We have a leadership base and advertising base that allows us to generate our own revenue. Therefore, we don't get any funding from the Navajo Nation. Now other tribally owned newspapers

do; that's the only way they survive, that they are subsidized by their tribe. That is where the whole censorship issue comes into play. If the tribe owns the paper then it can dictate what can and can't be printed or what can be aired on the radio.

As far as tribal government ownership, definitely that's one issue that we're trying to figure out how to deal with. How can we come to some kind of a solution through which a tribe can own a newspaper or radio station and still allow it to practice freedom of the press? That's the big issue in Indian country right now. You know, some nations have done it. Cherokee Nation in Oklahoma is okay. Comanche Nation is doing it. We're doing it but ours is because we're self-sufficient, and we don't get revenue from the tribe. Now I will say though, our corporation, the shares in our corporation, are still owned by the Navajo Nation. Our ultimate goal one day is to buy out those shares and become independent. We want to have the Navajo people buy the paper, and that's still a ways off. That's the ultimate goal.

Jon Funabiki: I have been stymied about this issue of government subsidies because it opens up such a can of worms. I agree, totally agree, that any business assistance that the government supplies to the mainstream media, such as advertising, should be applied to ethnic media, no question about it. We should acknowledge that government subsidizes mainstream media in many different ways, obviously beginning with the postal rates and such but also journals and fellowships that are funneled through the state department and through public universities. There are different ways, small business loans, that resources could be more evenly distributed to ethnic media.

But we're now in this period in which we all know this advertising model is really in shambles. The question is what's going to support solid journalistic enterprise going forward? Will it be some form of government support? Or, will the Internet come up with some magic solution to support journalism? I think increasingly philanthropies are seeing the need, the utility of supporting ethnic media as a way of providing valuable information.

John Hamilton: I'm just going to make an observation that I think government subsidy has traditionally been seen by journalists to be a can of worms. At the same time that they honored the idea in the breech by making sure the newspapers boys would actually not be held accountable of child labor laws. As a matter of fact, progressive countries have found ways to support ethnic media. The Swedes support Lapland newspapers. They realized that Laplanders are not going to have a newspaper unless they support it. And they figure it's better they have one that's government-supported than none at all. My job is to be a moderator, but I would just throw in the observation that I think we're often too hidebound on these issues.

Sergio Bendixen: I think American history teaches us that when it comes to ethnic groups, economic power follows political power. And I think the greatest problem of ethnic communities in the United States is that they are perceived to have no political power; therefore, ethnic media have no political influence; therefore why should we invest? Why should we give them any money?

Sandy Close: That's right.

Sergio Bendixen: Therefore, I think the greatest challenge for ethnic media and ethnic communities in America in this century is to figure out how to achieve political power. I think accepting government financing or subsidies would get in the way of that objective which is so important. All ethnic Americans, like all Americans, want a better standard of living, want a better life for their families. They are never going to get there unless they are perceived to have political power and unless the media that service them are considered to be influential. Anything that takes away from that is a negative to me.

Hayg Oshagan: I would add to Jon's in-between model, the non-profit model is a viable model. In some places a newspaper creates an organization attached to it that is a non-profit which can raise money as a non-profit. Philanthropic organizations can donate money. Members of the community can donate non-taxable money as well.

John Hamilton: *The Christian Science Monitor* was created as an antidote to yellow journalism by the mother church and subsidized. I'm not sure they ever made a profit, but they too had weaknesses. Like when the Lusitania sank, they only published the names of the people who lived, because they didn't like to talk about death. I once did a story on France. I did a whole story about traveling in France, and I never mentioned drinking wine.

Federico Subervi: *Latino Styl"* is one of those English-language, Latino-oriented magazines that survives with the subsidy of advertisement from the government. It is the best promoter of the armed forces for Latinos. I mean, any Latino who is a top rank in the military you see her face and salutes to the military all the time. I doubt you'll ever see in that magazine any story about the negative consequences about the military or the wounded and the maimed or anything critical. That's the other side of having this type of subsidy with any one individual major source. So my thought is it's best to have a broad- based advertising and financial foundation to avoid having to be subject to pre-censorship, self-censorship because of one major source.

John Hamilton: Okay, we're at noon. The train's going to run on time, stop on time. So, we're going to get some lunch.


RECEIVE, OR YOUR TAKE-HO
STAYED THE SAME DURIN
Hispanics 8%
White Anglos 9%
African Americans 23%
Native Americans 16%
Asian Americans 9%
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Focus Point

The Comments

Looking ahead: the role of ethnic media in politics and democratic participation

Félix Gutiérrez: We're going to head into turbulent waters now. We're going to look ahead at what we think the future could be, what the future should be and what the future would be if some things change one way or the other.

We'll talk as we go around about what the business model would be and the mission model. You know, there has to be a mission for the media. I think at one point Jon was using the term "mission-driven media" to try to define the media that are more targeted, more focused. However, the mission needs to be accompanied by some kind of business know-how or economic support from some sector. Also, where is the ethnic population going and where is it growing? I'll ask for comments on each one of these as we open this up. First, where do we see the population going?

Tom Arviso: From a Native-American perspective, I would say that you're seeing the numbers, the actual population, among Native Americans growing. But you're seeing a lot of our people going into different cultures. You know they're not just Navajo now. Now they're Navajo and Apache or they're other. They're mixing. A lot of mixed marriages, a lot of mixed relationships, and so our population in numbers is growing but actual blood quantum a lot of times it's lessening. You know, there's a push among some tribes—and it's not real open—but they try to encourage their young people to stay within the tribe. The elders sit you down at a ceremony they're having. They'll say it's good for you to marry your own; it's good for you to raise your children as Navajo and those kinds of things. However, as far as numbers go, it's growing.

On a side note: Because of gaming, because of the casinos, you're finding a lot of people who are tracing their roots now to see if or how much Indian blood they have in them, to see if they can get a piece of the pie. So they have this DNA testing thing going on now. You can go there and get tested to see if you're a member of one of the richer tribes. It might be a financial boost for you.

Félix Gutiérrez: Retro-acculturation.

Tom Arviso: There you go.

Félix Gutiérrez: Sergio, I'd like to turn to you next. We see a growth in the pan-Latino or Hispanic census category. But also we saw in the census just about every nationality you could break down. Are the numbers of people growing but also trying to identify with the smaller, more defined piece of their background?

Sergio Bendixen: Number one, I think the Hispanic population will continue to grow, and the census now estimates that by the year 2040 one-third of America will be Hispanic. California will be majority Hispanic. I think that will probably not change, the fertility rate among Hispanic immigrants and Hispanic women in general is much higher than the fertility rate among other Americans including African-Americans. So I think that it is just a matter of when the Hispanic community, the Spanish-language media, the Hispanic press can achieve their American dream.

To answer your other question, even though in the census they might identify as Mexican or Aruban or Cuban, there is very much of a Hispanic unity feeling in the United States that has been brought about not only because of the ethnic media. I think the fact that Univision and Telemondo and many other national radio stations basically transmit to the entire Hispanic nation tends to unite them. But also a lot of discrimination and racism against Hispanics started in this modern era in the 1990's with people in California. I think that has united the Hispanic community. It has a common enemy; it has a common concern, a common objective. So yes, they might think of themselves as Bolivian or Salvadorian, but there's a great feeling of unity among all Hispanics no matter what they call themselves.

Félix Gutiérrez: So you think some of the anti-Latino coverage and attitude are strengthening group identity?

Sergio Bendixen: I believe the consensus in California in the 1990's among the leadership of the Hispanic community was that they were

going to let ten or fifteen years go by. Then they were going to have a big dinner and give people a huge diploma and letter of appreciation for the way it not only unified the Hispanic community but energized it. Hispanic leaders in California have spent decades figuring out how to motivate Hispanics to become citizens, to vote and they have failed. Pete Wilson got it done in six months.

We will find out a lot tonight about just how powerful that movement is. It looks like the Arizona law will be approved in many other states. Ask Pete Wilson at the national level whether that will serve to continue this trend of uniting and energizing Hispanics in the country.

Sallie Hughes: Yes, I want to mostly agree but I want to just add one point. I think that when there is a political issue or a politician who attacks something like immigration it unites Hispanics. But I also think there are hierarchies within the Hispanic category that come out quite clearly when you're talking to them in focus groups or interviews. These are perceived and to some degree real in terms of who controls political power and economic power. Therefore, I think we would be wrong to overlook the diversity within the communities and the hierarchies of power that emerge, especially at the local level.

How does that connect to media? I would say that the main newspaper in Miami covers certain groups more than others. People, at the very least, feel strongly that it's that way. It may cause more fragmentation in the media. For example, Venezuelans in the last ten years have had the creation of twenty different media in Miami. Even Venezuelans who you would think would have a lot of similarities with the Cubans —who tend to dominate the Hispanic media in Miami—still feel the need for their own media. I agree that there's sort of a reactive formation of the pan-ethnic identity when there's somebody like Pete Wilson. But there are also a lot of hierarchies within these groups that interplay with the media and with audiences' perceptions of the media.

Félix Gutiérrez: And population size in and of itself has no direct benefit. There's no definitive translation to power based on numbers or with the economic growth.

Hayg Oshagan: I think this is a complex issue. Unless ethnicity is forced upon you through discrimination, you have to ask "What is the usefulness of maintaining an ethnic identity?" It carries a burden. I mean it has a psychological cost to it because you have to monitor multiple communities. It also has a financial cost to it. The more ethnic you remain, you might in many ways limit your potential in the mainstream community. And so I think it's a worthwhile question: A few generations down, what is the usefulness of maintaining ethnic community? You need to have the ethnic sense of identity in conjunction with the ethnic media to have the community survive. It's not very apparent to me that maintaining an ethnic identity is in and of itself a useful thing.

Around political issues or for politicized populations, I think it's easier to do. That is, Arabs, for example, can rally around certain issues with Palestine or the war in Iraq. Armenians can do it around other politicized issues. But I've seen in other populations that two or three generations down, it dissolves. A lot of the sense of identity slowly fades away as the younger generations simply become more Americanized.

Sergio Bendixen: There is a very direct answer that's become the mantra of the Spanish ethnic media of what it means to be Hispanic and why it is worthwhile protecting. It is two concepts. One is that Hispanic culture teaches you to give human relationships the greatest importance in your life. The family means more than anything else, the ability to have real friends, not on the Internet, but real friends. The ability to be close to people that you relate to on a daily basis is what makes you happy. Second is that the essence of life is to achieve happiness not success, not financial success, not career success but to actually achieve happiness. Those are two things that have nothing to do with language or what country you came from. And that is really the essence of what keeps Hispanics united.

Hayg Oshagan: That's not unique to Hispanics. It's not an identity-maintaining factor because Armenians have it too.

Sergio Bendixen: It is, in contrast to what they perceive to be the mainstream American culture, which gives very little importance to human

relationships and sacrifices happiness for financial success. So yes, I think there are other ethnicities that share those same values. But in the general culture and the cultural clash and the cultural battle that we have in this country, Hispanics don't ever give up on those things. We must protect those two basic elements of who we are. If not we will lose our ethnicity. I think those are things that are not only worth hanging onto, but those are things that will survive for many generations.

Félix Gutiérrez: Whether or not these are the defining characteristics, the point was if you're excluded, that reinforces an identity. You're saying that there are other positive elements that people may identify with their culture. Jon, I want to get back to you. You said, if I summarize you correctly, that ethnic identity is as important to me as I want it to be. Do you see this differential factor here of maybe being more important at some point to manifest an ethnic identity or racial identity and other times not; kind of a decision of active audience type of thing?

Jon Funabiki: I think that how we as individuals or how our respective communities think about our ethnic identities can vary over time and can vary with outside forces. Really, sometimes identity is thrust upon us. It can be catalyzed as in the case of Pete Wilson and the Hispanic population, or it can be tied to pop culture. I was talking to a colleague of mine who is Chinese, and we were talking about what's the hot Asian-American identity right now? You know, there were times when it used to be very chic in Manhattan to be Japanese. There are times when it's hot to be Korean or Indian because of pop culture. Your identity then be put forth strongly and is recognized more strongly by others. So, I think identity is very dynamic.

Félix Gutiérrez: Okay, that's your self identity. But do others identify you as Asian-American and think that there's some commonality between you?

Jon Funabiki: Sure, I think so.

Félix Gutiérrez: But you look more unified to the outside than you may feel on the inside.

Angie Chuang: At a Chinese-American leadership camp that I went to as an eighth or ninth grader, they made us watch a film. And they said, "Watch this film. This man was killed because they thought he was Japanese. You may think that you're Chinese, and you have nothing in common with anybody else who is Asian, but the rest of the world out there doesn't. And if you don't start uniting as Asian-Americans, nobody else, nobody else cares to know the difference. So you better develop political power and political influence as an Asian-American."

Félix Gutiérrez: Let me follow up with Bill on this. At one point, the term Asian Pacific was used with people from Tonga and the people from Japan or Korea, and it was a census bureau label. You kind of all look the same to us so therefore you must all have something in common. Then Asian-American marketers would look at it and say, "Well what do we have in common besides rice? You know one part of our diet's kind of similar, but the rest of it is different." Is there a packaging that forces people into categories that may not fit them or may not recognize the actual diversity between them?

Bill Amada: I know as marketers we tend to look at commonality first. And there are clear values that most of the Asian-Pacific communities share. Typically they are things that Latinos and African-Americans and whites also share, but it's the intensity of those connections to these cultural values. Like education, like security and health, like family and education. The most important thing in our community is making sure that people in our families don't have to suffer as previous immigrants have had to suffer. Making sure that the family is well educated so that they have an opportunity to succeed.

So I think that's probably where we might be a little different from Latinos in some respects. Because in our culture typically, and I'm generalizing a lot, but we place heavy emphasis on making sure that we get an education now. We kind of suffer now so that we can reap the benefits later, and that is heavily agreed upon in our culture. So, as a marketing person, typically we look at those commonalities first and then look at the things that make us different and unique and celebrate those.

Félix Gutiérrez: I think the highest percentage of inter-marriage is among Asians and Latinos.

Angie Chuang: But Japanese-Americans are also the most assimilated and have the most fourth and fifth generation and the fewest new immigrants of probably just about any other major ethnic group.

Félix Gutiérrez: Everybody's put into a box, and now people are checking multiple boxes.

Bill Imada: But our media are dying because of that. I mean we're fifth and sixth generation. The media are no longer relevant to our communities. But what's interesting is young people are experiencing this kind of retro-acculturation. They now want to say why am I Japanese, why am I Chinese, why am I Korean. The weirdest thing is happening in the Japanese community. We have a Buddhist celebration that's typically celebrated in the U. S. in July and August; these should all be dying. But there are Buddhist temples all around the United States and Canada. All of the sudden, there's a surge of interest in reconnecting to one's roots and being Japanese.

Félix Gutiérrez: Kenny, what advice do you have?

Kenny Irby: It takes me back to my grandmother who used to always tell me, "Define yourself, define yourself. Don't let the world define you." And there's a great proverb that says, "It's not what they call you; it's what you answer to." Therefore, I think particularly in the African-American community, there is this great transformation that's going on that is probably a part of this re-acculturation—the growth of BlackAmerica.com, the sense of seeking unity. We've been talking heavily about print organizations. There are other manifestations of media now that are creating a new consciousness. I think it is a great opportunity for ethnic media outlets and mainstream media to tie into a greater audience, broader audience and in meaningful, relevant, and important ways.

Félix Gutiérrez: Say a little bit about how this session is going to go into a question of power. How does population translate or not translate to power?

Kenny Irby: I think there's much more nebulousness over that issue right now than in history. The black press historically was able to identify its own leaders. Not only was it about creating education, but it was giving voice to its own. And historically if you go through *The Challenger*, *The Chronicle*, *The Afro*, they gave authentication to clergy who didn't have a voice but were in huge leadership positions in communities, like Martin Luther King and Jesse Jackson and others and my pastor Rev. E. W. Borrel. These were people who were quoted in the black press, were legitimized, and given an opportunity to vocalize their opinions and perspectives on life that I never saw in the *Washington Post* or the *Washington Times*. And if you would do a search in their morgues you wouldn't find them until their obituaries were written.

So I think it's very important to see how the press has given momentum, authentication, and value to segments of the culture that the mainstream media had not offered. Now I don't see that same kind of discourse and dialogue in the media publications because those individuals are quickly elevated to personality status. I mean like Roland Martin, for a good example out of Chicago. He's on CNN. He was the editor of the *Chicago Defender* for a period of time. But most folks don't see him as a journalist now; they see him as a personality.

Félix Gutiérrez: Now we're going to switch to technology.

Angie Chuang: I think what I realize is that what Hayg is saying about ethnicity being a liability and what Bill is saying about young people wanting to reclaim ethnicity are really opposite sides of the coin, and it points to something generational. I think the younger generation thinks that ethnicity is cool. And it's an older generation thing to say, "Oh, it's a liability," you have to assimilate. Now it's becoming a much more multi-racial flexible idea about ethnicity too. That you can be Japanese and black and embrace both identities is totally cool. And that makes you even cooler.

And how this links to power is that I think anybody who has watched the social network knows that coolness translates to money, translates to marketability, and translates to a way to

capture future voters, young people. I think that anyone who wants to grab onto this had better start paying attention to ethnicity and identity if they want to capture that market.

Félix Gutiérrez: It's a different reality. Ethnicity could only be used for exclusion or devaluating you when I grew up. If they put it on you, then it was only going to keep you out or keep you down. But I have to say also, as a product of the fifties, it's cool to hear you say "cool" as a positive term.

Jon Funabiki: Two things. I often find that the white students have trouble articulating a sense of identity, as opposed to the students of color for a variety of reasons. Point number two: We use the terms population, technology, and business as your three buckets; I've now started to say instead of population, "passion," because it encompasses ethnicity, culture, pop culture interests, and so forth. I say that passion is one of the primary drivers of today's media.

Federico Subervi: The question that I had that wasn't addressed the previous session is a great segue for what we're talking about right now. What happens to the second, third and fourth generations who fall outside the loop of our ethnic media? We don't know because their sense of identity may be limited given that general market media don't mention or celebrate it. So what happens to those groups? It's not just that you consider yourself Latino or Puerto Rican or Japanese or whatever. Do you feel that in your neighborhood you can express some aspect of your identity, and that it's valued? The greater you perceive that identity is valued and it's acceptable, the more you will express it. The connection with technology and power comes to the extent that we are now using Jon's term, "passion." If we have passion for these things, we will seek the medium, be it print, be it radio, or be it the website or the blog site that connects us to that.

Sergio Bendixen: I did focus groups seven or eight years ago with young Hispanics in New Jersey and New York. None of them spoke any Spanish. None of them had ever been to Latin American. They were basically young Americans, but they all felt very strongly about being Latino. I asked them why; give me some

examples. They said well they were all from Brooklyn or upper Manhattan. They said there were two pastry shops in their neighborhood. One was owned by Americans, and one was owned by Dominicans. At the American one, you know, they went in, they bought their pastry, they walked out. At the Dominican one they knew their names, they smiled at them. They asked for their mom, they gave them something to take to their grandmother. They felt like they were with their family. Then they said, "And besides that, we enjoy life more. We would never think of going to a party that was given by our American friends but all of our American friends want to come to our parties because we know how to enjoy life."

I have tested those two concepts in polls over and over and in focus groups. Those are the unifying concepts that make up this Hispanic community. That is why people who do not speak Spanish, who have never been to Latin America still feel Hispanic. That is the connection to media. That is the connection to power. That is the connection to unity.

Bill Imada: Interpublic Liebermann Research and our company commissioned a poll of over a thousand Latinos, whites, Asians and African-Americans. It reflects that these ethnic communities choose their ethnicity and are now very proud of it and are voicing that very clearly. They also value these relationships that they feel they're losing in some respects and they want to get back to that.

One thing that came out from that poll is Asian-Americans are different from their parents. They now have tremendous pride in being Asian-American or Chinese- American or Korean-American, and they actually believe that they are trendsetters and smarter than whites, blacks and Latinos. Primarily because they're online, because they adopt technology faster, they excel in school and they're graduating in larger numbers. They said, "Now we believe that we should take our place in the world because our parents weren't asserting that when they were around but we're now able to do that, and it's okay to be Asian-American."

The other thing that I think came out of that, which I think is important, is that young people are now looking for ways to

self-express because traditional media are not allowing them to do that. So blogging is huge in the Asian-American population with what we call the 1.5 generation, people who are from late teens to young adults. The reason why blogging is so important is that now the community, particularly the Asian-American community, values the opinions of the "I". They didn't value that before; they always valued the "We". And so young people say it's now okay to self-express, and the best way to self-express is doing that in blogs.

Félix Gutiérrez: Thank you, Bill, for getting us into the technology. How is power affected by technology as it relates to ethnic media or ethnic expression?

Kenny Irby: I think it's not just blogging; it's web publishing, period. When you look at full-fledged websites, not just blogging but pod casting, folks are expressing themselves and defining their own communities through visuals. The proliferation of the technology at a distribution level creates a whole new vista of possibilities for both publishing and delivery. I think the technology that hasn't been talked about and maybe is more subtle as it relates to the African-American community, is Skip Gates' research on genealogy and how we are much more intermingled than we are very different.

Félix Gutiérrez: In the global village, is everybody at their own campfires or is there an expansion?

Kenny Irby: To be conveners of conversation, to be portals, to create digital town hall spaces—that's something ethnic media can take advantage of. I think we're doing a terrible job at taking advantage of this, and the mainstream media are not doing a much better job. I think we could not only draw; we could be a part of defining the conversation, allowing a range of diverse people to contribute and using that technology in new and rich ways.

Hayg Oshagan: Right, I don't know what the answer to this is, but my question is: Does the ease of technology and the polarization of technology and the ease of broadcasting my views and my interests and my concerns and my opinions, does it weaken

the potential of political unity and political power in this and in the coming generations?

Félix Gutiérrez: And your answer is?

Hayg Oshagan: It's seems to me it would, but I don't know.

Angie Chuang: Since Kenny brought up Skip Gates, I thought it was a good time to talk about theroot.com and how it's a unique sort of hybrid. *The Washington Post* owns it. It has an academic and a sort of public commentator in the form of Skip Gates as its executive editor and founder, and he became very symbolic and controversial after theroot took hold. It has a very young black center but multicultural leadership and voices. It's not just advocating or engaging in discourse; it's having the conversation that nobody else is having in the polite public sphere. So it's talking about things like what does it mean that people perceived Alisha Keys dating a man who was still married differently than Fantasia dating a man, and why are there different models of black womanhood? Does it have to do with being light-skinned, dark-skinned, and being perceived a certain way? And it's this very esoteric conversation and not even trying to engage in the kinds of conversations that the *Afro* or the *Defender* have.

Félix Gutiérrez: Are they trying to assert power on others or just having conversation?

Sandy Close: Conversation.

Félix Gutiérrez: Talking to your own congregation.

Angie Chuang: Yeah, it is. It's about having the conversation we would have within our own, like around a party or a dinner table that the white world and the mainstream world don't get to hear. And it's a venue to have that. And it's using technology as a medium. It's funded by a major corporation that is considered very mainstream, and it has some really particular symbolic voices behind it. I'm not sure what it means in a larger scheme of things, but I'd like to throw it out there.

Félix Gutiérrez: Let's take it to the next topic then. Is it making money for the Washington Post?

Kenny Irby: Some money. It's new money, and you know he who defines the conversation has the power in this day and age. And to be the convener of the conversation gives you not only credibility with the audience but it gives you some credibility and some potential lateral power to be leveraged from the advertisers and the people who want to speak to that audience that you have.

Félix Gutiérrez: Over the long term, media have to be able to make money or have a source of income in order to continue to get these messages across. So what other models do we see coming up?

Sallie Hughes: Most of the discussion is really looking at anchored communities in the states, but there are communities that are much less anchored in the sense that they're living in Orlando. But they're still very connected to Puerto Rico, or they're living in Miami but they're much more focused on Venezuela. So if we're looking at issues of technology and power, we get to the case of an attempt by Venezuelan journalists in Miami to influence public opinion back in Venezuela. In the case of the Haitians, we get the use of media to put our state in power and to topple our state. So with those communities, technology is allowing a potentially powerful effect back in the home country.

In terms of a business model and those communities, we haven't seen it take off but we have seen, as I mentioned before, the case of media in the home country investing in the U.S. media. That's a model we've only seen a little bit of, but I think it's going to continue to grow both because of technology and because of the development of these companies which are now global powerhouses.

Félix Gutiérrez: And it raises an important point that we didn't really touch on in our last discussion on seeking influence and seeking political power. There is the tradition of the exile newspapers and exile publishers or writers coming to the U.S., using First Amendment freedom of expression here to put out publica-

tions that are really intended for a home audience or a broader distribution.

Federico Subervi: Bringing together the population characteristics, technology, business, power comes back to one word for me. It's "relevance." The group has to have some identity and some perception of being a group, but that is all interconnected with perception of relevance. The technology will come in and bring folks together, be it the old technology with the newspapers or the new technology with blogs. A big task is to identify focuses of relevance so that they will sell. Then the public will go after those messages, including politicians who have to have the relevance.

Félix Gutiérrez: Picking up on that point. Staying focused on advertising or business model, how important is the future of ethnic media tied to the ability to sell the ethnic audience to advertisers? A lot of ethnic publishers, at least the ones I talk to, don't talk so much about community as they talk about market.

Sergio Bendixen: If selling advertising was important to political power, Univision would be extremely political, and it is not important politically. Nobody cares what Univision thinks in the American political world. And they know that. They know that and they complain about it. So there's no more successful economic story in the United States than Univision, which sold for $600 million fifteen years ago, and sold for $15 billion just a couple of years ago. And they sell more advertising in most cities than anybody else, and yet they have no political power whatsoever. I think what is missing in terms of political power in America is that the ethnic media need to lead the way. I think ethnic America will not achieve political power until the ethnic media unite, get their objectives together, have one or two priorities, and then drive the process.

Bill Imada: Advertising is a dying field. There will continue to be some advertising. But in order for the ethnic media to survive they have to take the next step. What marketers are now doing and demanding is engagement with consumers. So if there are media that do not help companies and corporations and governmental entities engage the consumer in meaningful

ways, then they're not going to survive. This might be tactical, but one way would be to do what the corporations are doing, pulling together the mommy bloggers. Why doesn't "Univision" or the *Sentinel* or any of these other publications create their own mommy blogger groups, to give people a litmus test to what's happening in the black community, the Latino community, the Asian community, to test the products and the services and allow companies and governmental agencies to engage them. If that doesn't happen, then I think it's going to be really difficult.

Félix Gutiérrez: Okay, we need to wrap up with two headline comments.

Check this. Is it Tom or Kenny?

Tom Arviso: My headline would be to build on Bill's good point. Traditional advertising is dead. Legacy advertising is dead. There's a new model that's being developed, and it's built on traffic. And that traffic has to be engaged. Page views, clicks, and registration define audience.

My closing thought is this: Nelson Poynter talked about the importance of the sacred trust that print media had to have in order to gain the kind of power that we're talking about here. If people don't trust the site, then it doesn't have credibility and it won't survive.

Sandy Close: One thing we haven't discussed at all is the growing number of poor people in the country and the widening gap between rich and poor. Ethnic media have always been advocacy media imbued with principles of social justice. I've been enormously struck by the absence of voices in defense of immigrants and particularly undocumented immigrants. Now I'm struck by the absence of a voice on behalf of homeowners who are losing their homes who may define better than anything else the closing of the American dream. Instead they've been stigmatized as people who over-reached and are now in debt and nobody is speaking out on their behalf. They have no voice.

I'm really struck by how responsive ethnic media leaders have been when we invited them to bring outreach to their audiences, bring homeowners to forums to learn about what they

can do. I've also been struck by collective editorials, 300 ethnic media all at once, advocating for immigrants. Even if blacks overwhelmingly have fears and worries about immigration, they still in California voted down 187. So I want to say the way the country is going, and what we see in the returns tonight, may very well help provide some unifying catalysts to build the potential of ethnic media around the need to bring the collective voice of their audiences to greater visibility.

Félix Gutiérrez: Thank you for being so great as prognosticators.

NEXT STEPS
FINAL THOUGHTS

The Comments

John Hamilton: Normally what we would do at this time is try to summarize. This is not an easy conversation to summarize because it cut across so many different issues, and also because ethnic media make up a house with many rooms. They appear in different ways at different times and with different ethnic groups. So to make a statement about ethnic media as if they were something that you could sum up in a word or two obviously doesn't work very well. I'm going to make a couple of points that I think come out of this. At this time, I must say I realize I'm just going from a few mountain tops leaving a hell of a lot unsaid.

I think that there was this question about mapping and the idea that we ought to be looking at ethnic media over time and seeing how they change. That would help us understand not only where individual media are but how they can go through certain kinds of life cycles.

I thought the conversation was interesting about what ethnic media add. It was good to hear it said, and it was said in some original ways. So we talked about the importance of community. We talked a lot about power which is what this should be about since this is the Reilly Center for Media & Public Affairs.

I think there needs to be more discussion of what kinds of original reporting are done by ethnic media. Where do they go out and do original news gathering that nobody else is doing? This is not something we discussed as much as we might. But in a world where we're very concerned about original reporting and the notion of it as a result of the downsizing of media, this becomes a really important question. Who is finding out the things we don't know rather than recycling on some web page what a few newspapers have already said. I would postulate that ethnic media could help fill that in a way that is not only good for ethnic groups but for all of us. They not only add to what we know but bring perspective.

On the power side, if we're really going to understand what other people think—not simply because it's respectful but because we might learn something from it—that would help us make better decisions. For example, in the run-up to the

Iraq war, if we had known more or if we had had some of the suspicions that some ethnic media had about what power was saying, we might have thought more carefully about these issues. This is something that I personally care a lot about. How do we know, how do we find out things that we don't know? And how do we test assumptions?

Maybe what we need to do is not only teach media literacy, which is an idea that's beginning to get some traction in schools of mass communication, but maybe a component of media literacy is to teach people to read media that they don't normally read. In other words, not to read media just to find out how the New York Times goes about its routines and understanding what its strengths and weaknesses are. But also understand you need to be a proactive reader and gather up information. So you need to look at media that would not necessarily be in your ethnic group but would give you perspectives. So maybe there's a message here for media literacy.

We talked a little bit about sourcing. I think there is a question that relates to all of us which is where journalists themselves get their news. I thought it was a fascinating point that mainstream journalists go to talk to editors of ethnic media to find out what they think ethnic people think. That's because they are ready sources, and I guess they are authoritative sources. That's not the same thing, however, as going out and finding out where they get their information or how they get their information.

We might want to teach media to be politically literate. If ethnic media don't do a good job of leveraging what they know into power, maybe we need to teach people who are ethnic media people how to do that. Maybe it's being done but it strikes me as a skill that could be useful.

Then the question on engagement came up at the end which actually ended up touching on a lot of issues. I was struck by the Univision issues. One thing you might say about Univision is it's been very successful, and it hasn't sought to have a political agenda. That's what all major mainstream media purport to do. Now we know they do end up supporting certain kinds of political agendas. But they aim to be non-partisan, unbiased sources of information that don't

want to alienate advertisers and want to attract as many viewers as possible. So Univision is merely behaving like mainstream media do.

If I may be permitted a little story; years ago, I was in Africa and I did an interview with the first president of Tanzania, and I kept asking about political prisoners and all these political prisoners he had, and finally he said, "You know, everything we did we learned from the British." Well, you might say that what Univision is doing is what it's learned from what had been its oppressors previously. It's learned that to be financially successful it needs to behave, not like ethnic media, but it needs to behave like a mainstream media. It behaves in a non-advocacy way.

If you argue that ethnic media have a traditional role of being advocates, then you have to ask the question: Should we think of the for-profit model as the way to support that? Most media that have been advocacy media, including liberal white media like The Nation, have never been financially viable. *The Nation* now is supported partly by paying really crappy wages to people writing stories for it and by having a foundation that supports it or rich people who took it on as a cause. Maybe when we look at funding models, if we're really interested in ethnic media being advocates, it has to have an advocate-type foundation to support it rather than a for-profit model to support it.

So those are my points. Does anybody want to weigh in? Would anybody like to just jump in on any of these points before we adjourn? Anything that needs to be said that was left out or was not emphasized or said wrong?

Federico Subervi: Listening to Sergio's presentation yesterday and to the points that Sandy made today about the foreclosure not being covered. You had points about the policies of the Obama administration that benefited directly the minorities not being dealt with in the ethic media. My question was why is it that way? Why don't they cover these things? I mean, these are people who are political in their own communities. They know what power is about. Why don't they cover these issues like the foreclosure issue that's affecting Latinos and blacks

primarily? Why don't they cover the healthcare bill, which is primarily affecting minorities?

Sandy Close: The biggest Achilles heel, and we found this very early on in our very first poll on usage of ethnic media, is covering politics and policy. They are covering home country and neighborhood community. The whole of public politics and policies are really beyond their reach. That's where the change is happening now. You are seeing more proactive efforts to cover policy and politics. I've seen this all over, that people in ethnic media want to expand their coverage beyond the community issues, the closing of a school. They also have to cover the school and the policies at the state level that led to the closing of the school. They are now trying to connect the dots. When we did our first poll, the one thing our audiences said that could not be found in ethnic media was information about political elections and policy. And they went to mainstream media to get that even when they didn't speak English that well.

John Hamilton: Thanks Sandy. I think we have a final comment from Tom.

Tom Arviso: We've been talking about power and technology. I just want to close and say that power means many things to many people. The people that I've talked about, the traditional people, have always said that you as journalists, you have that power. You have the power to touch people's lives. You have the power to change people's lives. You have the power to bring good things to your people. And I think we need to really think about that sometimes and take it to heart. We do, as journalists and as educators, we have power. How we use it is really important.

My grandma told me that, it stuck with me and when we're talking about power here today it just came out in my mind what she said. And I think that we're blessed in that way. Really I want to thank everybody here for all your comments because it allows me to be that much more of a powerful person when I go home. So I can use that, what I've learned, people I've talked to, people I've met and go and do a better job for my people, for our readers, for everybody, for ethnic media.

John Hamilton: There couldn't be a better ending than that. I want to thank all of you. These Breaux Symposiums are always fascinating. They open up all kinds of information; I learn so much from them. You were great panelists.

Next Symposium 

A GLIMPSE AT THE 2011 BREAUX SYMPOSIUM

The study and practice of political communication are at a crossroads. Within the past decade, the political and media environment has rapidly become markedly more fragmented and polarized. Control of the White House and Congress has shifted back and forth across parties, bringing dramatic changes—and often gridlock—to national policy agendas. Presidents and other elected representatives struggle to make policy and communicate with the public in an often corrosive political atmosphere. And reporters try to make sense of it all with fewer resources and a seemingly less attentive public.

The 2011 John Breaux Symposium will explore what can be done to improve the study and practice of political communication in this changed environment? How can scholars learn more from practitioners and practitioners learn more from scholars in order to elevate political discourse and public understanding? And crucially, what can the academy do to prepare students for the changing world of media and politics?

March 28th will feature an evening discussion moderated by LSU's Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost John Maxwell Hamilton, "Professionals and Academics: Learning from One Another for the Public Good."

On March 29th our panelists will explore, examine and test new ideas to expand and deepen the study of media and public affairs in the classroom, in the public arena and through research. Session topics will include incivility in politics, the challenges of governing in a polarized media environment and how to better train students for the 21st century.

Panelists include: Lance Bennett, University of Washington; Robert Entman, The George Washington University; Dan Balz, *The Washington Post*; Shanto Iyengar, Stanford University; Roderick Hart, University of Texas; Bill Purcell, Harvard University; Amy Walter, *ABC News*; Michael X. Delli Carpini, University of Pennsylvania; Bob Mann and Regina Lawrence, Louisiana State University. Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost John Maxwell Hamilton will moderate.

We would like to thank the following individuals, corporations and foundations for their support of the Breaux Symposium endowment:

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