

Weber Shandwick

Kellogg Conference

“Unpacking Racial Bias in the Media”

Moderator:

**Gregory L. Moore,
Editor,
The Denver Post**

Panelists:

**Evelyn Hsu,
Senior Director of Programs and Operations,
Robert C. Maynard Institute for Journalism Education;
Roberto Lovato,
Co-founder,
Presente.org;
Shirley Sneve,
Executive Director,
Native American Public Telecommunications;
Adam Stoltman,
Photographer, Editor, Entrepreneur,
E2 Productions**

Location:

**New Orleans Marriott
555 Canal Street,
New Orleans, Louisiana**

Time: 10:15 a.m. CST

Date: Thursday, April 26, 2012

*Transcript by
Federal News Service
Washington, D.C.*

GREGORY L. MOORE: OK guys, we're going to start. (Pause.) There? (Pause.)

MS. : Good afternoon, everyone. Hi. Just a quick announcement before we get started. If you would be so kind, I'm going to start probably in this row. Pass it around. If you see your name, just check it off. If you don't see your name, just write your full name on the back. That allows us to get a good sense of who attended, numbers and everything.

So without further ado –

MR. MOORE: Thank you. Welcome to this morning's panel, "Unpacking Racial Bias in the Media." I'm Greg Moore, I'm the editor of the Denver Post, and I'm going to be your moderator this morning. We hope that the experts that we've assembled here today will provoke a conversation and some ideas about some serious questions around media responsibility in a racially charged environment, which this still is.

I just want to emphasize that we really want this – our time together to be participatory. You know, we really want to take this conversation where you want it to go. So you know, feel free to jump in. We're not going to wait until the end to do questions. You know, if you raise your hand, get to a mic, we'll make sure that you're part of the conversation at any stage you want it to be. So please go to the mic.

Now before I briefly introduce the panel, I'd like us to get something to chew on here. So check out this video. I think it sums up some of what we're dealing with. And it's by no means the whole story, but it illustrates the questions about race in the media that we're going to try to address this afternoon. So take a look at this. It's produced by the Maynard Institute in Oakland, California. Dory (sp), thank you. Without further ado:

(Video begins.)

MS. : (In progress) – decided to take action in that case of the 17-year-old gunned down by a man who said he was acting as a neighborhood watchdog.

BRIAN WILLIAMS (NBC News): The use of deadly force against a teenager carrying nothing more than a bag of Skittles, shot and killed by a man who was carrying a gun.

JON SCOTT (Fox News): This story has built incredibly in the month or so since it happened. No doubt a tragic story, does it deserve the attention of national media?

MATT LAUER ("Today"): When you think of any possible scenario, is there one you can come up with in your mind where your son actually tried to harm that neighborhood volunteer?

SYBRINA FULTON: No, I cannot. I just can say that I'm pretty sure my son tried to get away. He didn't know who this guy was. He was seeing him as a stranger. So he was trying to just get away from the situation.

MR. LAUER: Anything in your son's past, Ms. Fulton? Any run-ins with the law? Anything going on his life at the time of the shooting that might have had him in a different state of mind, an agitated state?

MS. FULTON: No. He was never agitated. He had never had a run-in with the law. He was mild-mannered. He was a nice kid.

GERALDO RIVERA (Fox News): I am urging the parents of black and Latino youngsters particularly to not let their children go out wearing hoodies. I think the hoodie is as much responsible for Trayvon Martin's death as George Zimmerman was. Take that hood off. People look at you and they – what do they think? What's the instant identification? What's the instant association?

STEVE DOOCY: Uh-oh.

MR. RIVERA: It's those crime scene surveillance tapes. Every time you see someone sticking up a 7-Eleven, the kid's wearing a hoodie. You're going to be a gangster wannabe? Well, people are going to perceive you as a menace. That's –

MR. : This story has two components. There's the legal one, which the authorities are looking into, and then there's the media one.

(Music.)

NARRATOR: The images are everywhere. On local news, where often the rule is if it bleeds, it leads, black men in handcuffs and mug shots behind bars. On the big screen, black men and violent criminals – (inaudible) – as drug dealers. And in music videos, rappers glorifying the thug life. Paula Poindexter, a journalism professor at the University of Texas, analyzed local news reports from 12 major cities over a 10-year period. Her findings? More than two-thirds of the stories on blacks were about crime, compared to less than a third for whites.

PAULA POINDEXTER: That doesn't mean that African-Americans are not committing crimes like everybody else, it's just that the only time that you report on them in the news and you're showing them as criminals, then there is substantial perception that, you know, blacks are so much more menacing.

MR. : We have two teenagers are wounded on the city's south side. It happened at East 74th. There's an 18-year-old man and 16-year-old girl were hit while standing on the sidewalk. The male's in good condition while the girl's expected to recover. And kids on the street as young as four were there to see it all unfold and had a disturbing reaction.

CHILD: Well, I'm not scared of nothing.

MR. : When you get older, are you going to stay away from all these guns?

CHILD: No.

MR. : No?

CHILD: No.

MR. : What do you want to do when you get older?

CHILD: I going to have me a gun because I live right here and I don't want none of my family members to get shot.

MR. : That is very scary indeed. So far no suspects are in custody.

MR. : Well, that's I like to hear. You ain't scared of nothing. Damn. When you get older, you going to stay away from all these guns?

CHILD: No.

MR. : No?

CHILD: No.

MR. : What do you want to do when you get older?

CHILD: I going to have me a gun.

MR. : You are? Why do you want to do that? You know what happens –

CHILD: I'm going to be the police.

MR. : OK, well, then you can have one.

MR. : My first question is whether they had the parent's permission, of course. And then to hear that the boy aspires to be a police officer, and that's what he meant when he said I'm going to have me a gun and that they didn't include that is disturbing. As somebody who was a former journalist, like many ex-presidents of the NAACP, it's important to tell the whole truth, because when you tell half the truth you're, in effect, lying.

(End video.)

MR. MOORE: All right. OK, we're back. I think the table is at least partly set. Before we get into the – I don't – you just turn it off?

MS. : Yeah.

MR. MOORE: OK. Before we get started I just want to introduce the panel. To my far right, Evelyn Hsu is the senior director of programs and operations for the Robert C. Maynard Institute for Journalism Education. She directs training programs for journalists and media managers, and has worked as a reporter and editor at The Washington Post and the San Francisco Chronicle. Before joining the Maynard Institute in 2004, Evelyn was an associate director of the American Press Institute in Reston, Virginia. And she was a member of the faculty of the Poynter Institute for Media Studies in St. Petersburg, Florida. She is a graduate of the University of California at Berkeley and she's a past national president of the Asian-American Journalists Association and she was the key organizer of the first unity conference that brought together more than 5,000 journalists of color back in 1994 in Atlanta.

To her left is Adam Stoltman, a photographer, editor, entrepreneur. I think I have you down here as the founder of E2 Productions. Adam has been involved in traditional and digital media and publishing for over 25 years. He's worked for such companies as The New York Times, Time Warner, Time magazine, Eastman Kodak, Walt Disney Company and GlaxoSmithKline. That's quite a mix. (Laughter.) In 2010 he produced and directed a series of short documentary films about reconstruction efforts in Haiti after the earthquake. His media and strategy group encompasses all areas of media, including film and television, Internet streaming medium, broadband, publishing and games. So welcome, Adam.

To his left, Shirley Sneve – is that right – (off-mic conversation) – is executive director of Native American Public Telecommunications, whose mission is to support the creation, promotion and distribution of native public media. She moved to Nebraska from Amherst, Massachusetts, where she was the director of Arts Extension Service, a national arts service organization based at the University of Massachusetts. She is a member of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe in South Dakota. Shirley has extensive experience in the arts, including being the founder of the Northern Plains Tribal Arts Juried Show and Market, the Oyate Trail cultural tourism byway, and the Alliance of Tribal Tourism Advocates in South Dakota. Welcome, Shirley.

And then last but not least, to my immediate right, Roberto Lovato. He is the co-founder of Presente.org, the country's preeminent online Latino advocacy organization. He's a writer and commentary (sic) for A New American Media and a strategy consultant. In March 2011, Roberto was awarded a Crisis Reporting Grant from the Pulitzer Center, and a month later readers of AlterNet voted him one of the country's most influential progressive voices in media. Roberto specializes in developing and implementing political and business strategies involving old and new media. He's best known for leading the successful effort to have Lou Dobbs removed from CNN. Now, Robert is also co-founder of Latinos for Internet Freedom, which advocates to keep the Internet open and free from corporate control. Presente.org has more than 260,000 members, is that right?

Welcome, everyone. So let's start with Roberto. The Trayvon – the Trayvon case is sort of viewed by many as the new O.J. Simpson case. It exposes sort of the chasm on race in this country and bias in the media, some might argue, especially because of the early focus on Trayvon's background, his suspension from school for supposedly having an empty baggie with marijuana residue and of course the whole hoodie thing, plus the media got Zimmerman's race wrong, they tried to sort of make this a black/white thing when really he's half Hispanic.

So is this a legitimate place for us to start? I mean, you know, is this just the sort of result of a hyper-competitive environment where mistakes happen in a 24/7 news cycle? I mean, how should we be defining media in this conversation? Why don't you – let's start with Trayvon.

ROBERTO LOVATO: Whew, that's a – quite a (tragic person ?). Before anything, thank you. Thank you to Kellogg and for – (name inaudible) – and Alvin Starks for inviting me to be here. My first time back in New Orleans since Katrina, when I was reporting – I posed as a worker, snuck onto a military base – Belle Chasse military base – to investigate a story about – an alleged one – more than a thousand undocumented workers being hired by Halliburton to clean up the most toxic site in New Orleans at that time, the military base which has all this, you know, fuel and other chemicals that are a lot worse than the stuff that was destroying people's lives under their sinks. So I'm really happy to see the city is still surviving and trying to be thriving, and – but challenged at the same time.

So with that I'd like to speak first as a journalist and then as an activist about this, because I wear both hats.

MR. MOORE: OK.

MR. LOVATO: And the two needn't be mutually exclusive. As a journalist, it's kind of embarrassing, again, to watch the coverage of the Trayvon Martin case fall into predictable and very problematic tropes. I mean, I cut my political and journalistic teeth in a country called El Salvador during the war. And I learned there that what you need to do – and this for me is more of the larger context for what we're going to talk about – that in – media is a critical and is a precursor to the kind of dehumanization that makes possible violent policy, the kind of dehumanization that makes possible violent psychology that motivates people to pull triggers and kill. It foments fantasies like – I can't even imagine the kinds of the fantasies that the private security man, volunteer, George Zimmerman, had when he pulled the trigger when he pursued this boy. And media's also a precursor – a necessary precursor to create the kind of dehumanization that makes possible violent actions.

So with that, I don't see – viewed from that optic, I don't see a lot that's in the – in the media that kind of openly acknowledges its role – its own role in the formation of George Zimmerman's identity –

MR. MOORE: Right.

MR. : -- in the framing of Trayvon's Martin reality as a young black man in a – a still very racially – let me say racist country, built on racism like the United States. But at the same time, it's also just ill-equipped. I mean, George Zimmerman – one thing – he has never self-identified as a Latino.

MR. : Nope.

MR. : So he's racially ambiguous. And why I ask this question because they're not just – they don't just don't try to put black against white –

MR. MOORE: Right.

MR. : -- they're also trying to – they also try to – like the – some media actually called me up to say, hey, isn't this is like another example of the black-Latino rift? Well, I've written a lot about this rift, which is – has a – a large component of it is a construct. There's a reality and then there's a construct, the media puts out. So what matters about George Zimmerman is less his race but his action and the context for those action – (inaudible).

Nobody – very few people are talking about the – what I always call the built environment, gated communities. The fact that this took place in a “community,” quote unquote, that is privatized and built and fundamentally premised on the fact of white fear of nonwhites have anything to do with this. In addition, we've talk some about the gun laws, but we haven't talked about the notions of privatized – private sector-controlled lives that we live now. And I think that –

MR. MOORE: Mmm hmm.

MR. : -- as a – so as an activist, we try to address some of these issues like as far as Geraldo Rivera, we've had about 20,000-something people sign a petition demanding that Geraldo Rivera shut his face up. (Laughter.)

MR. MOORE: Well, he did apologize.

MR. : He did apologize, but after we – after a lot of us forced him – forced his hand. But it was also – for those of you that don't know, he had a program launching on –

MR. MOORE: Right.

MR. : -- just like a week or so later. And if you look at his career, if you're a journalist and you follow media, you know that this was PR move to draw – you know, because this will sell –

MR. MOORE: Yeah.

MR. : -- and so let me hold on that.

MR. MOORE: OK. Hold on to that. Now just – you know, one of the things that's sort of defining what we're talking about, which hopefully we'll get to, I mean, we're not just talking about the media when it comes to sort of shape and perceptions about race and stuff. We're also talking about music, and we're talking about movies. I mean, it's the proverbial demand, you know, causing all of this. I mean, there are black rappers and all of that who are contributing to that conversation. I mean, Adam, would you agree?

MR. STOLTMAN: Oh, yes. I mean, I think that's kind of a big topic, but I think you can – when we talk about media, we can talk about journalism, we can talk about entertainment in all sectors of the media. As I listen to the discussion about the Trayvon Martin and I share Robert – as a journalist, I do share Robert's disappointment in our profession, the familiar patterns its slipped into. But I – it makes me think a little bit about how conflict is such an underlying part of the way we create media, where I think we do a less good job as storytellers as in telling stories of actual cooperation, of actual things that do work. And you know, there are a number of reasons for that. Certainly, you know, as Robert said – (inaudible) – and that's driven by a lot of forces, very large.

You know, there is a school of thought that says that the creation of very discordant media and whether that's music, games, films, style of journalism, you know, the – at the worst it's hate radio and a lesser example of that is just the pace and the barrage of daily new show. I don't think it creates the conditions for true receptivity and sort of accessing our higher abilities or higher functions. So you know, I'm very sensitive to this in all forms of media, you know, on different levels.

MR. MOORE: I said earlier, anybody has a question just raise your hand. We'll fit you into the conversation. I used to work with the Boston Globe and, you know, in Boston race is kind of sort of front and center. And you know, it's sensitive as I thought I was – I mean, mistakes can happen. I remember one time we actually – trying to illustrate gang violence, we had a kid pose with a gun in his waistband, just shot him from the chest down. It was on the front page and the place went crazy. So you know, sometimes with the best intentions you can end up stumbling into racial controversies that, you know, reflect insensitivity.

Evelyn, can you talk a little bit about how you interact with institutions that stumble either on purpose or inadvertently into these controversies? And what kinds of things worked?

EVELYN. HSU: OK. Happy to. And thank you all for being here and thank you to the Kellogg Foundation. We at the Maynard Institute have been working on these issues for four decades; you saw our video. And we come at it looking at the news media. We were founded by a group of journalists. And we have approached it – there's just a number of different approaches and tactics that we have – we have employed and continued to employ. First of all, we look at hiring and promotion from within, because you cannot – it is much easier to get a fair, broad, accurate news report if you have journalists who reflect your population and reflect your community. And that has been an issue for us from the very beginning.

A – an examination of content; this is – can be high-tech, can be low-tech. We have done rigorous examinations of news publications over a period of time, looking at every single photo caption, every single headline, every single quote. But you – we all can do it. It just takes – looking at a screenshot, looking at a front page every day and saying, you know, am I reflected – am I reflected there and to bring that message back to the people who produce that news.

Building community capacity; we are – and I will talk about this more later –

MR. MOORE: OK.

MS. HSU: -- but we are aware helping community members tell their own stories by training them and teaching them just the array – about the array of tools that are available.

And we promote forthright dialogue across different – it's – I will say again, we started as a multicultural organization. That was really kind of the wisdom of our founders. And so going to the Trayvon – the Trayvon Martin case and just – I – we can't assume that we all know everything about each other, which is why as a multicultural organization we have emphasized learning as much about each other as possible. And I think you see that played out in the misunderstandings there.

As a – as an organization that's focused on news media, we help and ask these organizations to uphold the standards of their own craft – our own craft. Accuracy – are you reflecting all the stakeholders? Are you giving a complete picture? One of the things that we were asked to do is really provide some prescriptive things.

MR. MOORE: Mmm hmm.

MS. HSU: And I think one of the struggles, especially given – I mean, let's be honest, the news media's under a lot of pressure because of technological change. There's been a downsizing. So I think that communities can also interact with the media in a positive way. Always looking for sources, always for – it is – can be a struggle to reflect a community, partly because people are under a lot of pressure to produce a lot. So we can help them.

However, it is frustrating to just see – to see people of color not reflected in the breadth of everyday life. Where's the black dentist, you know, in a story about health? Latinos, I think, are among the most – I'm struggling for the right word – they're like one of the top customers for mobile.

MR. MOORE: Right.

MS. : And – but when there's a story about a blackout or raising rates, you know, where are the Latinos who are quoted in these stories? They are – you know, they are not there.

Asian-Americans, Native Americans – it's a struggle to be noticed. I think Dori Maynard, my boss who is here, she was talking about a tweet that she saw where somebody, a Native American journalist said are we just – you know, are we just invisible? So it is a – it is a struggle to be simply acknowledged in the conversation.

MR. MOORE: Yeah.

MS. HSU: So I think those are all things that we can work with and look at.

MR. MOORE: Yes, we got a hand out. You've got to raise your hand higher. You can't just go like that.

Q: (Off mic.)

MS. : I saw you.

Q: (Off mic.) Hi, my name is Janae Eysler (ph), and I work for an organization called Search for Common Ground, in Washington, D.C. We actually have a new service called Common Ground News. We distribute five opinion pieces a week, mostly on Muslim-Western relations, interfaith issues. But we did a pilot last fall to expand on opinion pieces on race. And so as the race project director, I'm hoping to make that a permanent addition.

MR. : Good.

Q: So my question for you, specifically Evelyn, around the Maynard Institute, you were talking about some of the resources that you have. And most of them seem to reference higher representation of minorities in the media. But as a minority who works in the center of Washington, D.C., I'm often solicited for my opinion on issues. And I'm reluctant to speak to the media because I know that they want to find a certain spin. And I intentionally don't give it to them, which is why I'm never on the news in D.C.

But so my question is, what tools, if any, does the Maynard Institute have to help journalists avoid some of that bias? Because as a minority, my biggest reluctance for speaking to the media is because I don't have control over what I've said after I give it to them and then I end up looking like a 4-year-old who wants to have a gun when he grows up, as opposed to the full complete picture that I'm trying to portray. So I'm curious, what are some of the resources that you have to equip minorities but also equip the media to avoid that portrayal of bias.

MS. : OK. Go right ahead.

MS. : And I will talk to that, but I hope everyone else will add something about it.

MR. MOORE: Yes, absolutely. We'll try our best to help.

MS. : (Laughs.) And I'm not sure if it's resources as much as tactics. But first of all, you're speaking as a journalist yourself, right? So –

Q: I'm not a journalist, but our organization –

MS. HSU: And so I think you have the wherewithal to put that issue on the table, that none of our communities are monolithic and that the more that we can learn about each other, the more we can be seen as individuals, rounded individuals with a variety of opinions. If you've ever been misquoted or taken out of context, I certainly hope that you call that person who did that on it and make that clear to them and their supervisor. I mean or – and I'm sorry to hear that. I understand the reluctance to be quoted, but one of the things that we do want is we do want a multiplicity of voices. And you seem like somebody who has thought a lot about issues. And so I would hope that that – you know, that that reluctance doesn't hold.

Let me throw it out to the other –

MR. MOORE: Yeah, anybody else want to jump in there?

MR. STOLTMAN: Yeah, I'll jump in on two levels. One is I'm so glad that somebody from Search for Common Ground is here. It's – people are unaware of their work. And perhaps you can even tell the group a little bit about what Search does but –

MR. MOORE: Later.

MR. STOLTMAN: They have – in fact, in the notes I made last night, I was referencing some of your work in Liberia, some of your work in the Middle East, where they've really created media interventions. It almost serves as a – like a social lubricant, you know, to dispel conflict. They embrace conflict, but they act on common points of interest or commonality.

What I will say, too, about this issue of learning more about each other, you know, my roots are in visual media as a photographer, photo journalist, picture editor. And in visual media, there's – in photo journalism specifically – there's a long tradition of socially concerned photography. And I think one of its strengths is that it can help foster identification. So again, I think it's – you know, when we look at a picture of what we see ourselves in the face of the other, and I think that's a very important element in day-to-day visual journalism. So I think there's a lot of power there, too.

MR. MOORE: You know, one of the things that's really interesting is, I think for legitimate reasons, people of color are afraid of media. I understand that. But there's a responsibility – if you want to help control the narrative, there's a responsibility to be there, to play and to demand fairness, right? So we're going – we're going – we're going to talk about that, because that's going to be the next question, is – and Shirley, I want you to take this. You know, when we talk about sort of leveling the playing field, the Internet – the Internet has just erased all kinds of barriers in terms of getting in the game. So you know, there are a lot of proactive things that we can do – not just talking to newspapers or television stations. And one is to tell our own stories, right, to use the blogs and videos and movies and books like we write to help – you know, not somebody else – we write to help. That's what most people are pissed off about, is somebody else wrote our story, OK? So that can be done independently, it can be done cheaply.

Shirley, talk about that. I mean, you really don't have to be afraid if you can do your own blog and you do – you know, you can do your own books, that kind of thing.

MS. SNEVE: That's true. There's a lot of truth in what you said. I want to thank you all for allowing me to speak here. I'm real happy to be here in New Orleans. I was here two years ago. The city has changed a lot in two years. It's just amazing.

First of all, I wanted to tell you that I'm funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. There's five national minority consortia. We're 36 years old, and we were started by station managers to increase the diversity of voices that you see on – hear on public broadcasting and see on NPR as well. And I applaud the ability that we all have now to be citizen journalists, that whenever we want to, we can post whatever we want. That's where one of the problems is, is that what is the truth, and how do you get to the truth? And I think that that's one of the things that I see my job as, is to be a curator, so to speak – or the fact that our programs, our broadcasts on PBS, still the most trusted organization in the country, above the

police and the courts, that we can do a service by putting our stamp of approval, our funding on documentary filmmakers to tell their own story.

And that's really one of the things that we pride ourselves on, is that we believe that Native Americans can tell Native American stories the best. And so we spend a lot of time training Native Americans, talking about them, and allowing them to speak and be heard on the Internet and on broadcast. Next month – well, here, we're not quite out of May or in end of May – but in June, we'll be launching an election initiative with the National Congress of American Indians to provide incentives for Native Americans to report on issues that are going to be important for their communities as we face a national election.

We are the minority of the minorities – Alaska Natives, Native Americans and Pacific Islanders – but we lead the statistics on things like rates of violence against women, diabetes, obesity and suicide. Sixty percent of our kids graduate from high school. And so we have a lot of challenges: oppression, colonization, years and years of being downtrodden. But it is tragic.

But let's move on. I mean, the things that we report about are terrible. I mean, it's terrible news. The fact that the damming of the Missouri River was on Indian reservations – we lost our farm lands. I mean, we lost our way of life. Over and over and over again this happens. But it is tragic. But whining around about it, poor me, pity parties – where does that get us? And that's why we feel that it's important to engage audiences not just in the problems but in the solutions. So in our – a lot of our documentaries, you're going to see the tragedy that faces Native Americans, but you're also going to see some of the solutions.

And we feel that, you know, it's important for us to embrace those things that our elders taught us. I am a Lakota, woman, and we talk about four virtues, that of – being wisdom, generosity, fortitude and courage. But I'd like to add that as resiliency. And that's one of the things that we can see as minorities – I do use that M-word – (chuckles, laughter) – people of color: that we need to take control.

And I'm glad you asked that question, because it is important for us. I mean, I often talk about myself as being the token minority on the panel for this or for that. And I'm happy to serve in that role. And I'm happy to be out there and to talk about issues that face Native communities, because nobody else does.

I mean, when I lived on the East Coast, I mean, people talked to me like I was a relic; I mean, that Native Americans just didn't exist. And the Native Americans that I saw out East – they look like black people. (Laughter.) You know, and they were proud of their Native heritage, but they didn't look like – they didn't look like Native Americans do in the western part of the country.

So you know, it's a – it's a great diversity that we have, and I think we need to celebrate that. And we can do that by telling our own stories on the Internet. But the truth will catch up with you eventually. You know, we – Lakotas have this great saying of what goes around, comes around. (Laughter.)

MR. MOORE: Yeah. You know, one of the things that Evelyn was alluding to is the fact that – yeah, go right to the mic.

Q: Oh – (off mic).

MR. MOORE: Or – but one of the things that Evelyn was alluding to is the high rate of consumption of social media by people of color. And that's a – that's a space that we're very involved in and need to be more assertive in, in terms of engaging and holding accountable – well, engaging and being a part of the conversation, but also using it to hold traditional media accountable. It's a very valuable and powerful tool.

Yes, sir.

Q: Yeah. Good evening.

MR. MOORE: Good afternoon.

Q: Hello?

MR. MOORE: Hello.

Q: Good evening. My name is Jose Lucero (ph). I work for Hagedorn Foundation. I came from Long Island. And I came – and my question is, how can the media – it can be accountable for something like happens – like – I just want to give this example. Like this promote the politician – local politician, which means the executive – the Long Island, where – the place I live, and he's been there for eight years. Recently he resigned in some way.

But he always was in the – in front page of the newspaper every single time when he do any law against Hispanic or minorities or blacks or anything. And so many years – like he was for so long, for eight years, so the media – they never treat him like it was something wrong with him. But when he switched parties – he was Democratic and he switched party – and then he was no longer the favorite person in the front page anymore.

So – which means, you know, I feel so ashamed that the media – you (can't?) trust in local media, because when you say something like what I'm saying right now, the media portray a different way. It put different words what I'm – sometimes I don't even say. I just give you example: I had a big tragedy in my life, but I don't want to, you know, comment over and over. But one of the things – I don't want to meet with this person, and I don't want to shake hands with this person because he always attacked the minorities – not only Hispanic; blacks, everyone.

So what happened – I kind of have a(n) ambush with this guy. And he come shake my mom's hands. And he shake my hand, and all the media was there. And it was – the next day the front page: Steve Levy (sp) meets Lucero's family. But no one read the – actually what is in the (battle ?) –

MR. MOORE: Right.

Q: – what I say, I feel like I was ambushed, because you always read what is in the front page with the big letters.

MR. MOORE: How would you summarize, really quickly, your question?

Q: (I must ?) summarize – like, why the media support somebody is always against the minorities?

MR. MOORE: OK. Take that.

MR. LOVATO: Well, I can't answer the full question, but I can answer it in a case that I'm very – I'm thoroughly familiar with as a journalist and as an activist. That's the case of – CNN, the most trusted name in news – (laughter) – had a gentleman named Lou Dobbs who started off as a financial reporter and then became an engineer, the engineer of – we were very clear – the anti-immigrant discourse that took hold.

And one of the primary factors – a lot of groups had gone after Lou Dobbs in different cities and locations. But they didn't quite do it, quite frankly, the right way, because they were doing it from a locale and they were targeting Lou Dobbs. And you know, there – it's necessary to (combat ?) – the facts. That's – you can't get anywhere unless you have the facts on your side, and you check the facts of your adversary. But that won't suffice, and it – I would argue it hardly even changes anymore. I hate to use an old-school term, but it's kind of reformist. Reformist approaches to media will fail, in my opinion, at this stage in the history of corporate-dominated lives that we live.

Something a little more – so we – you know, we did an analysis. And you know, I have a business degree, so I looked at the business model behind Lou Dobbs. What did I find? Hate was profitable. There's a market for that. There's a market for hatred in the media. Somebody profits from it, whether it's CNN with Lou Dobbs or whether it's other – or political profits, like ALEC and the NRA gain from – you know, like, our sister organization and us, we helped take on ALEC, the American Legislative Exchange Council, that has made, you know, owning a gun even a deeper part of this country, I would argue that's founded in many ways on gun craziness. (Chorus of ohs.) So I mean, it's called freedom – for who?

So Lou Dobbs – the way we took him on was not to target Lou Dobbs but to target the president of CNN. And what we did was, we organized in the top 25 Latino markets, communities – markets, because those are the economic interests that they had when they were launching “Latinos (sic; Latino) in America,” a program. And we timed our campaign to coincide with the big day in the Latino market of CNN, “Latino in America.”

And what we did was turn that into their Waterloo in the Latino community. Twenty-five cities protested simultaneously. We were getting ready to mount the campaign in 10 Latin American countries, because if you're going to take on a hemispheric adversary, global adversary, you have to undertake a hemispheric and global – and we were up to the challenge,

because some of us have worked in Latin America and have those relationships and have people willing.

I think this previews for me in many ways some of the approach in terms of not targeting just the discourse but the owners of the discourse, not just the company but the advertisers of the company. You know, like, our sister organization taught us – Color of Change taught Presente.org how to target advertisers, for example.

You know, we – so you know, there's a – there's a – there's a responsibility to the truth and to facts, but there's also a responsibility to fight and really force the hand of entities that are bent on profiting from hatred against us and promoting discourse, images, sounds that result in the deaths of our children – in a fast way, like Trayvon Martin, and in the slow way that is the extreme poverty you're seeing in the world and in this country increasingly.

So I'm not a – and my last thing – I'm not afraid of the fact that we're going into the – an age of media. It's kind of like the 19th century where, you know, you have your opinion and your media, and we got ours.

MR. MOORE: Yeah, and –

MR. LOVATO: So that's kind of the – I think embracing that fact along with promoting objective journalism are important for those of you that want to change these things.

MR. MOORE: Yeah. And the only other thing I would say to you is, like, don't stay – don't stay too focused on why does that happen. Just figure out a way to confront it, you know?

Q: No. (Thank you so much?). And –

MR. MOORE: Yeah. You're – no, no, that's all you get. OK. (Laughter.)

Q: Hi, I'm Sinsi Hernandez-Cancio, director of health equity for Families USA and, first of all, a big fan of Presente and the work that you do. And I'm going to try to squeeze in two questions. And one of them is the issue of journalistic objectivity, because it seems right now that journalism went from trying to actually fact-check and be responsible toward the truth to this game of, find the most extreme on the left and the most extreme on the right, and as long as you covered that, then your job is done with no regard to what actually is even some level of truth and what actually happened. So I wanted to hear comments about that.

And then the other thing more specifically on reaching out to Latinos: You know, for us, I'm really glad that Donna Brazile talked about how important and the big f-ing deal that health reform was for the future of our community. And yet we have totally failed in making sure that the communities understand how much is in it for them. And so part of what I've been trying to think about is how do we – how is it that we reach, in an age where so many of especially Latinos are engaged in social media, which only lets you, you know, speak in tiny amounts, what are really complicated things; how do you engage in a population that, you know, many of them

use Spanish, many of them don't. There are these even new platforms that are, like, supposed to be bilingual.

So I'm very interested in just hearing a little bit about what you have to say with your experience on how to engage Latinos in a kind of getting information out but also in a way that kind of promotes and pushes them towards more advocacy and being an advocate for themselves and their communities.

MR. MOORE: OK. Let's see if we can have – dispatch with those questions quickly. Two questions: One is sort of whether or not the media has sort of abandoned the seeking of the truth and is satisfied with presenting polarizing views that maybe don't even begin to approach the truth. Who wants to take that?

MS. : Well, I'll start.

MR. MOORE: All right. Quickly.

MS. : And then – I think if you look at the surveys from 30, 40 years ago, media was very trusted, and it's flipped, it's upside down, that it's one of the least trusted institutions. And so the – it's an outcome, I think, of some of the things that you're saying, and certainly the inability to reflect the demographics and who we – who we are.

One of the things that we talk about with journalists is the importance of framing stories. And just as the photographer frames something and can really determine – can change the context completely, that is one of the issues that we emphasize, which is to go very deep and not just look at the extremes, but to look at structural issues and broader issues.

MR. MOORE: OK. Anybody else want to take that part?

MS. : Go ahead.

MR. : I'll add to that a little bit. I think you've hit the nail on the head in a number of respects. I think the pace of media today crowds out our humanity, and that's a real problem. And I think, you know, with social media and tweeting and things like that, you cannot dispel complex thoughts and experiences in 140 characters. We're deeper than that.

MR. MOORE: The only thing I'll say about that – and there is a big debate in journalism now about whether “he said, she said” journalism is even journalism. I don't think it is. I mean, basically, it's cheap and it's easy to produce. You get somebody from the left, somebody from the right. They reinforce their position, and then you have to go off and find facts. So it's – that's not even journalism. It's sort of like entertainment or something.

I think the second part of your question is more interesting, which is in a medium like Twitter where you only have a 140 characters, yet 60 percent of African-Americans and Latinos use Twitter, Facebook and all that kind of stuff, like, how do you convey complex ideas, and how do you sort of promote more activism and advocacy when you're – when you're operating

in such a restrictive environment? I think that's a really interesting question. Who wants to take that?

Go right ahead.

MR. LOVATO: That's an excellent question (with ?) more time that we have, but quickly, to the question about, well, how do we view the media, I view the media as an ecology. A lot of the more thoughtful people on media right now for me are talking about the media ecology that we live in so that there is big kind of sharks and whales like traditional media, they move slow and they try to eat everything, and they're trying to expand themselves. And you have Facebook, which is also a big – then you have smaller media with a small m. So trying to understand that and positioning – because they are related. It may just be a – (inaudible) – I'm going to steal his quote, the pace of media crowds out our humanity. That's a lovely – (inaudible).

I would argue, though, that it – as it – as it gets more crowded and smaller, there is also opportunities for poetry, which concentrates our humanity. And that's – if you approach this new social media kind of with a narrative, with a literary focus – because content is still kind and queen; content still rules – and if you're able to figure out how to use these mediums and generate content that – because we're not going to change to Pavlovian conditioning that our society is imposing on the populace. You're not going to get a mass outbreak of the literary, suddenly, in the United States of America. You know, we're – our young people are conditioned to a different form. I don't like it, as somebody who has a 7-year-old in the house, but we've got to deal. So I – you know, it's equally important to find the opportunity in it.

So, you know, we mobilize, like, tens of thousands of immigrants – by the way, most Latino immigrants didn't who Lou Dobbs was when we launched the campaign.

MS. : (Chuckles.) Right.

MR. : But – so you got to educate, you got to agitate. You know, they follow. Educate to agitate and then mobilize. The media is doing that too. They educate us, they agitate to buy products for their advertisers. So we have to kind of learn from them, unfortunately, in order to (fight ?) them.

MS. : To go to your Twitter question, I think there's an opportunity, if there are certain trending topics – let's say, about health issues in the Latino community for, perhaps, your organization to set the context for those and to say what are the trending topics this week about these issues and provide some backstory, which would be very helpful, I think, to the community and to journalists.

MR. MOORE: You know, my mom was really, really adept at putting medicine in my oatmeal. (Laughter.) And I think that that's an important thing to do within those 140 characters and vetting links to other substantive information. And people are more willing to go where you're – where you're directing them, more than me as the editor the Denver Post. So I think you've got to put some medicine in the oatmeal and use those links to get people to drill deeper.

And I think that's one way that you sort of invent that advocacy and activism that you're looking for.

Question.

Q: Yeah. Want to make one quick comment. I'm – my name is Rosett (ph). I'm with the Saint Paul Foundation in St. Paul, Minnesota. And last year in our local markets we got 50 placements on our racial justice program, and I'm really pleased with how it was covered. We just had to peg it to things like an award ceremony that the media is interested in.

MR. MOORE: OK.

Q: So anybody wants to talk to me about that, I'm happy to.

But here is my question. I'm really curious about what the media doesn't cover. And Trayvon Martin was not the first person of color shot in Florida under "Stand Your Ground." I believe there a Mexican-American man. The only place I heard that talked about was on National Public Radio, and it was after the Trayvon Martin shooting. And so I just want to think about what is not said, and what does that mean when media is not covering certain things.

MR. MOORE: OK, why – I mean, we'll let the panelists answer that question, but I figured now is without question, the universe is so big that, you know, what any particular newspaper or television newscast covers is only a sliver of what's out there. It's not like the days of Walter Cronkite where you – you know, you thought that he covered everything in a half-hour when, of course, he didn't. We don't even pretend to do that. So to answer your question, lots of things don't get covered, and the squeaky wheel gets the grease.

But who would like to take on that question real quick? Because we've got people standing, so we want to move.

MS. : OK.

MR. MOORE: Go right ahead.

MS. : So I still love to read newspapers. And –

MR. MOORE: Well, thank you. (Laughter.)

MS. : And so – and I listen to NPR. I wake up to NPR, National Public Radio. I used to not when I was younger because it was just too depressing to start the day that way, because it was all bad news and you hardly ever heard any good news. But then after I got married to a guy who loves public radio, I started listening to it, and now I really enjoy that.

But by the time I'm done with that and I get downstairs to having a cup of coffee and I open up the newspaper, it's all the stuff I heard on NPR.

And I guess that's what I appreciate about Twitter and Facebook, which I know for many young people, particularly that's become their source of news. It's because it brings me something other than what I heard on NPR and, you know, it's more of a niche – a niche audience.

And I just wanted to – there is a guy who got released – his name is – I'm not finding it, but he's (in the ?) news in the American Indian community because he thinks he was mutilated in the hospital; he's blind, so he didn't know what was going on. I found that out on Twitter, and now it's in the Rapid City Journal today. So it'll be interesting to see how that one plays out too.

MS. : To go to the question and to second what Greg said, yes, there's a great deal that's uncovered. And as certain companies – as certain parts of the media downsize, that's going to be more and more an issue. I think one of the things that we have always done is talk – is really address this issue, is talk about, you know, who are the stakeholders, who has a role in this beyond just the two extremes. And there you find your untoward stories.

Going to the social media, I think the one thing we don't want to lose sight of is that there is still a public square, that we want to be in the public square. Social media is very important. It gives us the opportunity to follow, to – and we hope that you're following people that maybe make you uncomfortable, in a way, to know what the breadth of discourse is out there. So there's great capacity in those tools.

At the same time, there is – the mainstream media is still strong. We want to have a common conversation that we can have, achieve common goals as a country. So we don't want to lose sight of that.

MR. MOORE: Adam, you wanted to add something?

MR. STOLTMAN: Yeah. I just wanted to add briefly. In Roberto's opening statement, he used the word "construct" in discussing how news is covered and presented. And I think it's a very important word because constructs aren't reality. They exclude a great deal of reality. So I think as consumers of media, you know, it's some of our job to challenge and push back at those constructs. And fortunately now media is very much a two-way street and news organizations do respond to what the reader's thinking. You know, when I read The Times online, I often spend more time reading the reader comments than the stories. But this idea of construct is very important.

MR. MOORE: And one of the things that's really important is now, you know, you can send emails and they aren't just read by one person, they're read by dozens of people, and so you maximize your chance of your message getting through. But when you see – when you see the media focusing on a missing-kid case and you know that there have been four other kids of color that have been missing and have never been written about, you just got to say something about it. You got to, you know, fire that into that organization and demand that they pay attention to that kind of stuff. It may not result in them going back and addressing those previous cases, but it does make an impression going forward. If you're paying attention and you're participating, it makes a difference.

You guys are not going to let me conduct this the way I want to. Take over.

MS. : Bert (sp), may I say one – if you – you’ve been very patient, but if I could just add one more thing about social media, is –you know, they were constructed in a certain way, but that doesn’t mean that we can’t use social media to our ends. And as an example of that, after the Trayvon Martin shooting, one of the things Dori – Dori Maynard did was set up a Pinterest board showing – on black men and showing black men who – and you’re all invited to post to this – you like and admire. We wanted to give a fuller picture. Faceofblackmen.tumblr.com.

MR. MOORE: And I’m on it. Check it out. (Laughter.)

OK, your question.

Q: Hello. I’m Dory Paley (sp). I’m (at Nubeck (sp) ?) from Alaska. We’re a grantee with the First Alaskans Institute. We have the Alaska Native Dialogues on Racial Equity. Last week we hosted a short workshop with the Alaska Press Club, and we split the room in half and asked them to respond to the following question: Does media have the responsibility to ensure racial equity? And we –

MR. MOORE: To ensure what?

Q: To ensure racial equity. And we did not give them the construct by which to answer that question. One side of the room, we told them to defend the, yes, they have the responsibility; and the other side, we asked them to defend, no, we did not have the responsibility. It was a really short period of time that we had to capture their attention and get them thinking about it.

But in the responses that came back, essentially both sides said, yes, we have that responsibility, because we have to tell the truth; no, we don’t have that responsibility, because we have to tell the truth. And I felt like that was really the tip-of-the-iceberg conversation.

And we have an opportunity in the next three weeks. We’re going to be hosting a fuller, half-day dialogue with media throughout Alaska. And what I’m asking – because we want to approach it as bringing the media in as partners, under the idea that racism is all of our responsibility to eliminate, and them in particular, as media, in the way that they portray people.

What I’m asking you is, how can we effectively invite media into this conversation so it’s not a defensive “you guys do a horrible job, here are all the things that you’re missing,” but really this is why it’s important that you’re part of this conversation and help it to delve deeper beyond the, yes, it’s just the truth.

MS. : Is that something you want –

MR. MOORE: Yeah, just somebody. Just – anybody want to try it? Anybody want to take it?

MS. : I think you set it up really good, inviting them in and not being confrontational. I think that's really – really important and where that is going to start the dialogue.

MS. : Yes. You've had it – but you faced the issue straight on, which you have to do. And you have some constructive ideas, which I think this goes to. They're human beings; they're going to know you and your organization as a resource, you know, as having knowledge of certain issues. I mean, that's a very – very positive, yeah.

MR. MOORE: My advice to you would be reach a little farther down in the organization. I think you have a better conversation if you try to bring me, because it's a different thing. And you're going to be building relationships. As you grow and those individuals grow, you're going to have that one-on-one. You know, you can't get an answer to all of the questions. You want to have a dialogue. You want to build relationships. I'd reach down a little further.

MR. : I would just add, if you're going to sit and actually negotiate with them, do so from a position of power. And be aware that the playing field is not balanced. I personally don't believe that the – whatever was the conscience of U.S. generalism is salvageable. I believe we've reached the point where the corruption of our media system by the extreme, you know, 1 percent – dare I use the term – is such that we need a little stronger medicine than simply trying to “kumbaya” around a table and say, hey, guys, come on, do the right thing. That's not – except in the case of individual editors and individual journalists, yeah, but as entities and as a system, it's premised on the opposite, I mean on the opposite being keeping stereotypes and perceptions that don't challenge the class relations of the society.

Just look at the reporting on Occupy, and you see clearly the role of media to spin, frame and deflect and divert and destroy. So, like – and followed by politicians who are not even “the man” in the traditional sense, but are actually the Chinese mayor of Oakland, the first, a progressive, launching violent, almost murderous thing but not getting the coverage that way, or Antonio Villaraigosa in Los Angeles, in a country where, you know, the first African American president is really sending his homeland security forces to undermine, destroy Occupy. So.

MR. MOORE: Go ahead. Your question.

Q: My question. Sharon Davis. I'm from Cheetah (sp) Consulting.

MR. MOORE: Hi, Sharon.

Q: Hi. Good morning. Thank you all.

My question has to do with market segmentation. I was in South Africa several years ago. And you may know that in Johannesburg, there's three different newspapers. You go, you buy a newspaper, if you're Eastern – if you're Indian, you buy a – black African, if you're white, three separate newspapers from the same organization. So that segmentation that way. It seems

like – and I’m getting to my question – that to include a world of people, especially in our country now – and before, it was easy, right? But now that the world is included in our country, how – what do you do with that?

You know, you’re talking about basically being able to tell the stories in the news when it’s this big now. And I just can’t get my head and arms around how you can successfully do that without segmenting, and (not even like ?) the idea of segmentation, segregation. So could you address that, please?

MR. MOORE: Go ahead.

MR. : Yeah. Again to return to something that Roberto said earlier, he used the term “media ecology.” And I think taking kind of an overview of where things are, you know, is really important. I don’t think there are any easy answers to this at all. You know, with all the activity in the social media and the Internet, I mean, much of the evidence suggests that, you know, we use those spaces to talk to people of similar beliefs, you know.

It’s a real issue. I think it’s very early in this evolution. Hopefully it will lead in a good direction, though I do share some of Roberta’s (sp) sentiments about the state of corporate-dominated media. So it’s a real challenge. But I think this concept he alluded to of the overall media ecology is an important concept to get our heads around.

MR. : Yes, sir.

Q: Hi, my name is Simba Kenyatta. I’m chair of Santa Cruz Committee – (inaudible), (our ?) organization to overcome racism.

MR. : Sure.

Q: And the town I live in is basically a gated community. It’s very upper middle-class, white and a lot of Latinos and 1 percent black.

MR. : OK.

Q: And I don’t have a question; I just wanted to let people know that there is a part of all this that hasn’t been discussed very much. And I have a 28-year-old son, and I’m a former member of the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense. Now, even (there ?), people remember us for our self-defense. But my son keeps talking about getting a gun and advised me to get one. And I keep telling him, I’m not going to get a gun until I’m ready to use it.

MR. : Mmm hmm. (Affirmative.)

Q: And we’re nowhere near politically ready for that yet. But it makes me nervous because it’s causing a reaction in young people of color that nobody’s talking about and that reaction is fear. And of course fear begets all these other things, then, like, you know – (inaudible) – an eye for an eye leaves the whole world blind.

MR. : (Right ?).

Q: You know, I'm trying to get him to understand that. But he's afraid, for one thing, and tired of being the low person on the totem pole and just all these things that come on and to the point that he's like, "I'm through," you know? And he can't – he's 28 years old. He can't be through, you know?

MR. : Right.

Q: (Laughs.) I mean, you know. But anyway, that's something that hasn't been addressed in the media at all about the effect that it's having on young black men and young men of color about what they want to do in reaction to what I'm seeing going on.

MR. : Good story idea.

Q: OK.

MR. : Good point.

Yes, sir.

Q: Good morning, my name is Tom Wallace. I'm the communications director for the National Congress of American Indians.

So this isn't a new trend necessarily, but it – it's – and it's tied to social media around the fact of sort of movement, momentum online and how that type of momentum online kind of drives media coverage. And so when, obviously, for example on – with stories in Indian country, those stories are already hard to get in front of members of the media because they don't understand it. And if you have a really large movement – let's say, online around an issue – and those communities are invisible to those reporters, they might not be within sort of the group that's following those issues. Be interested to hear your thoughts about how that's impacting news over the last couple of years, more than just people sort of responding to news coverage, interacting, but more driving news coverage and what's sort of the threshold for large corporations, large media corporations to start paying attention and how that might be sort of transferred into getting them to pay attention to more of the thresholds for those – (inaudible).

MR. : (Inaudible) – (that ?).

MS. : That's why the Native American Journalists Association and our group and others – the Unity Group – fight so hard to encourage young people of color to become journalists so that they can present those other points of view to the mass media. And I think the social media that the – what do you call it – the democratization of something like Twitter where, you know, you get all these little things that cross your mind, but – or cross your little screen – my mind – (laughter) – and to be able to see those kinds of opinions, but I also think that, you know, what (was ?) said here about looking at those other places that you don't agree with is

really important. And I think that that's the demise of the newspaper that used to be there – was that variety of opinions, from the letters to the editor to the editorials, to have these different points of view. Now, I mean, you can walk down the street and convinced that you are right because everything that you see on the Internet agrees with you and you never see anybody that disagrees with you. And that's scary.

MR. : Harry (sp)?

MR. : Yes.

Q: Hi, I'm Regina Casalli (ph). I'm also from Long Island; I'm an educator and also with the help of the Kellogg Foundation, we work with immigrant youth for them to create their narratives so they can tell their story.

MR. : OK.

Q: And as you know, I think it's a great idea. I don't think there's a market for that. There's no interest. You know, you can post the stories, but if no one's going to watch them, it's not going to create the dialogue and the education, the cultural competency that we need.

But my questions, I have two. One is, in relationship to my friend's story on Long Island – and this might be very local, but then again, might be national as well – no one's addressed hate speech and the cause of – there were seven boys in high school who hunted and killed a man and the result of that was from the hate speech – 10 years of hate speech from a politician, 10 years of hate speech covered by the only newspaper that we have in Long Island, 10 years of hate speech that wasn't criticized by educators or parents. And so these boys, although they were proven guilty and they're in jail, we are all responsible, I believe, for that.

And my question is about media education because we haven't addressed media education. In other countries – in Canada, in Germany, in Italy, in Spain; I mean, I can go on and on and on – they have – it's part of the school system. It's not an elective. It's not – you know, well, this teacher wants to bring it in. It's part of the educational system because if the stories are out there that you're covering or other journalists are covering, the kids need to be able to interpret that. They need to be – criticize that. There needs to be critical thinking involved because, like I said, I could bring the narratives of the minorities on – to the platform or to the table and if there's no interest in listening to them, we're not going to go anywhere. So the other side is to introduce or advocate for media literacy. And I'm wondering if anyone on the panel is advocating for media literacy to be – to be a real emphasis and to really be in our schools, to really be on a national level, you know, present.

MS. : So I just have to say that it (strengthens ?) the storytelling, and that's one of the things that we really drill home to the students that we work with – is that no pictures about Indians, nobody cares about Native Americans. They think we still live in tepees or igloos. So we're not top of mind by any voice, shape or form. But when we tell a story that rings true across the board of – perhaps it's injustice or perhaps it's a story of success – but if it goes beyond that racial boundary or beyond that community boundary and rings a resonance beyond

the human experience, then that's when people will pay attention regardless of, you know, what the story's about. So I think it's the strength of the storytelling, and that's why I think that what you're talking about, a media literacy, is so important for the schools so that we understand what's good and what's bad.

MR. : I used to teach media literacy. So I – you totally – you totally – what you say resounds with me. Thirty years later, literacy's – I wouldn't say that the school needs to be necessarily the locus of literacy. I think we're having kids that are so sophisticated in their use of media now that we might provide home schooling about – (chuckles) – (media literacy ?) by practice. Like one of the things behind this (Dobbs ?) campaign was to model technological and political behavior, to show that it was possible to do things with this new media that were effective, even spectacular.

So – and to your point about not being interested in stories – immigrant stories, I would pose the case of the four young people that have – our organization worked with – four young undocumented youth – Dream Act students – who walked from Miami to Washington, D.C. – the Trail of Dreams. They crafted a fabulous story, overlaid it with a political strategy, you know, on top of this geography, and consciously didn't start off the narrative in a politicizing way, knowing that a lot of editors, as soon as they heard the word “Obama's deporting a million people” would shut their ears and not hear it. But if we tell a beautiful story of a young girl who's walking 1,500 miles with a Bible – it's the only thing that her father gave her – we got national and global coverage to the point where those young people are now the – some of the primary reference on immigrations. Just – so I think it's a good story and intrepid action, backed up by intrepid, spectacular action because that's kind of what it takes at this stage of the game.

MR. : A very good point.

MS. : Well, I think you make a good point about media literacy; however, teaching media literacy should not absolve the media of trying to get better. If you take just a – let's say a manufactured product and it's not working that well and the manufacturer says, well, that's because you really don't understand it and then doesn't – (laughter) – and but doesn't try to improve it, we would never stand for that. And so I think we should not absolve – let this kind of – the training is worthwhile, but we should not let it absolve media of its responsibility to get better.

MR. MOORE: So – that's good. Adam, did you want to say?

MR. STOLTMAN: Very quickly. With regard to the way you began your statement about hate speech, there's been some discussion at this conference about research as to biomarkers in terms of – you know, that are triggered by hate speech. I – that's profoundly important research. And –

MR. MOORE: Biomarkers? What are you talking about?

MR. STOLTMAN: Yeah, really what happens neurologically to the brain, and to our very being. People are more prone to fear violence – violent reactions. So I think that's very

important research. I'd also encourage you to speak a little with the young lady who's getting up from now from Search for Common Ground and learn a little bit about their work, which is very profound in this regard.

MR. MOORE: I'm going to get to you in a second.

MR. : Yeah.

MR. MOORE: I want to change the subject a little bit because we're almost running out of time, but I really would love to just have a little bit of conversation about how we should be looking at the racial significance of President Obama's election. Like, what does that mean? And I've said this before. I don't really know where the post-racial term came from, but how should we be looking at that as a watershed moment in sort of our American political racial history?

Rob – Roberto, you smack that around a little bit.

MR. LOVATO: No, well, I think the "post-racial" term is a – probably an academic and political activist term, but I think it's useful as far as the idea – the construct that we're in a society that's moving beyond race because we have Barack Obama as president, right? And that therefore, you know, things will – I mean, the expectation thrust on the man were so fantastically impossible that Jesus or Buddha – (laughter) – could not have stepped up to the challenge of the presidency of the United States.

That said, however, neither would I think certain conceptions of Jesus or Buddha except, say, in the case of the Latino community, the deportation of 1 million souls, the destruction of children's lives by terrorizing raids every single day on an unprecedented scale. And I don't use the word "terrorizing" lightly. I'm Salvadoran. I've seen children shake in -- their little hands in El Salvador. And I see it here because of these raids in the United States. That's the body's manifestation of terror, post-traumatic stress. And President Obama is hands-down the king now of fomenting this terror in Latino immigrant communities right now.

OK? And it pains me to say that, but I asked the organizers earlier, hey, is it OK if I speak my truth? They said yes. Well, so it's a – he's got an impossible job, but he's also got – he has a responsibility. And so right now my organizations, Presente, is advocating on behalf of a family whose husband – I don't – some of you may have seen -- Anastacio Hernandez Rojas, a name you're going to be familiar with soon.

The man was hogtied, handcuffed, Tasered with 3,000 volts, regularly beaten and killed by over 12 border patrol agents in U.S. – you know, under – who were under the – under the supervision of President Obama's Homeland Security. He does have control and he does know that this – I know the people who've told him about these things. So – you know, so then if he's going to come into our community and say – (speaks Spanish) – Obama, what is it going to sound like when you've deported a million souls, terrorized children and have done nothing to bring justice to the case of this – like – it's kind of Rodney King but the dude died.

So how do you – how are you going to – so the – this story – President Obama’s presidency complicates the situation because some of us have trouble criticizing the man or make up these fabulous excuses for the man when he’s perpetrating the same kinds of sinister stuff that his predecessors who occupied the presidency, which in my view is the equivalent of Sauron’s ring.

You know, I mean, you can be Jesus or Buddha in that chair, but you’ve got a responsibility to the Pentagon, you’ve got a responsibility to corporate domination of the world, you’ve got responsibility to the corporate citizen -- that is the primary citizen of the United States now. Your last responsibility is the citizen that used to matter, which is the rest of us.

MR. MOORE: Hmm. Wow. Well, OK. Sir.

Q: I’ll try to keep it short. I work in Mississippi. I work for a public interest law firm. It’s a pretty toxic policy climate. One of the places where sometimes we have success is when we’re able to turn local press, local TV, local journalism a little bit towards our way. One of the tools that’s available to me is volunteer law students. They can work locally or they can come down and see us.

I’m wondering what kind of tools are out there if I wanted to sic them on the racial bias record that they’ve built over, say, a six- or 12-month period. What kind of – what kind of guidelines or tools might I use to create a week-long exercise for them to gather information about? Do people teach this? Are there community empowerment tools? That’s what I’d like to be able to plug them into and work with.

MR. MOORE: Who wants to take that?

MS. : Well, I’ll start. I think that you can – you can audit what’s being printed and what’s online and analyze the content. I’m not sure what the questions that you would be asking of the content, but I – that certainly is a technique.

Q: And just to help answer it, suppose that we’re working in racial disparities in education, racial disparities in health care access and in housing – if that helps – and there’ll also be law enforcement elements, of course.

MS. : Sure.

MR. : So you’re trying to –

Q: Suppose I have 30 law students from a really bright law school – they’re smart kids.

MR. : OK, right.

Q: And they love to be on the computer.

MR. : OK, yeah.

Q: And I can sit them in a room and say, OK, guys. See this sheet of stuff?

MR. : Yeah.

Q: Go through – go through an archive. Tell me what you learn from that. But I don't know what to put on that sheet because I've never done an audit of the sort folks are describing.

MR. : Oh, I see. Got it. Got it.

Q: So what I'm looking for is a tool that helps me understand when people aren't showing the black dentist in a news story, when they're not showing an Hispanic person affected by a phone blackout, for example.

MR. : Gotcha. Gotcha.

MS. : So I think you start with what's before you, like, you know, what is the headline? What are the photos? Who is quoted? What is the – what are the content of the stories? You start as a – as a consumer.

And if I can take your issue about disparities back to the framing issue or the issue about the president, I think one of the interesting issues is how it was framed as post-racial and what one – and one of them – I think kind of the fallback frames that journalists use often is the individual actor, the person who overcomes tremendous odds, and leaving behind any discussion of the disparities and structural issues. And so that is also an area where I think your students can be a help if they – you speak of disparities – to document them, to present the data, to help explain it. That would be –

MR. : Yeah. I would just say, you know what, I don't think you have to provide that answer. I think – if you got 30 smart kids, just go out and have them – ask them the question.

MR. : Tell them to find out where the – (inaudible) –

MR. : Tell them to find out. Let them figure it out. Let them figure out what the metrics are. But what you do want is data. You want to create a matrix of data. And you know –

MR. : Images as well as print. I'm a visual artist originally, so I'm –

MR. : Images as well as print.

MS. : Yeah.

MR. : -- I am as impressed by the imagery as by the text.

MR. : Images as well as text, yeah. But –

MS. : And blogs –

MR. : Let them – let them figure it out, you know?

Q: OK.

MR. : Let me them figure out what to look at.

Q: I figure if this table has people that could kick Lou Dobbs off TV, I ought to at least ask what kind of public access tools there are out there, because I greatly admired that.

MR. MOORE: Good.

Q: Thank you.

MR. MOORE: All right. While, we've exceeded our time. Look, thank you for your questions. Thank you for the engagement. Yeah, it was very interesting. And I learned as much from you guys as hopefully you learned from our panels. Thank you very much. And I want to – I want to thank our panel. (Applause.) And I want to thank you.

MS. : And please don't forget to fill out the evaluation forms on your way out. It very much helps us in structuring the next-year sessions so it can be even better. Thank you.

(END)