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Embracing Unity in Diversity: Media and Ethnic Minorities in the USA

Einheit in Verschiedenheit annehmen: Medien und ethnische Minderheiten in den USA

Abstract

This paper rests on several assumptions. One is that the ideas of unity and diversity are compatible. Another is that media play an important part in the interactions between and among diverse groups of a society. A third is that a society's integration of ethnic minorities is a continuous, ongoing and dynamic process. After a brief historical overview of immigration patterns in the United States, the paper sketches the relationship between media and ethnic minorities before moving on to contemporary issues with emphasis on the latter. Drawing primarily on a critical review of scholarly research and professionally-oriented literature, the paper focuses on three main points: (1) the representation by mainstream media of ethnic minorities, (2) the production process of mainstream media and (3) the background and preparation of those engaged in media production. The principal conclusion is that media as a critical institutional force in a democracy must serve all of society. This is achieved by taking a proactive stance in striving for equality of justice and opportunity and in balancing desires for national unity and ethnic identity.

Dieser Beitrag beruht auf mehreren Annahmen. Eine ist, dass die Vorstellungen von Einheit und Vielfalt vereinbar sind. Eine andere ist, dass die Medien bei den Interaktionen zwischen den und innerhalb der vielfältigen Gruppen einer Gesellschaft eine wichtige Rolle spielen. Eine dritte ist, dass die Integration ethnischer Minderheiten in eine Gesellschaft ein kontinuierlicher, anhaltender und dynamischer Prozess ist. Nach einem kurzen Überblick über die Merkmale der Einwanderung in die Vereinigten Staaten, skizziert der Beitrag das Verhältnis zwischen Medien und ethnischen Minderheiten, um sich dann aktuellen Fragen unter Betonung der letzteren zuzuwenden. Gestützt vor allem auf eine kritische Bestandsaufnahme der wissenschaftlichen Forschung und der berufspraktisch orientierten Literatur konzentriert sich der Beitrag auf drei Haupt-

*punkte: (1) die Darstellung der ethnischen Minderheiten durch die Main-
stream-Medien, (2) den Produktionsprozess der Mainstream-Medien, und (3)
den Hintergrund und die Ausbildung derjenigen, die mit der Medienproduktion
befasst sind. Die Hauptschlussfolgerung ist, dass die Medien als entscheidende
institutionelle Kraft in einer Demokratie der gesamten Gesellschaft dienen
müssen. Dies wird erreicht durch das Einnehmen einer aktiven Rolle im Bemü-
hen um Gleichberechtigung in Bezug auf Gerechtigkeit und Chancen und durch
das Gleichgewichten der Wünsche nach nationaler Einheit und ethnischer Iden-
tität.*

<p style="text-align:center">* * *</p>

1   Introduction

<div style="text-align:right">

"I hear America singing,
the varied carols I hear."
Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass* (1855)

</div>

–   "American beats out Kwan." That headline on February 20, 1998,
from the Winter Olympics in Nagano, Japan, told the nearly one mil-
lion subscribers to MSNBC's News Alert service on the Internet that
Tara Lipinski had won the gold medal in figure skating. Lipinski, of
course, is a citizen of the United States. But so is Nancy Kwan, who
was born in California. The Asian-American community was not
happy. MSNBC apologized. But was "American" even the proper
word? What about Americans (north) in Canada or Americans
(south) in South America?

–   "The typical American home contains 30 pairs of women's shoes, 22
men's ties, 1.8 cars, four remote controls, 2.5 televisions, 25 battery-
powered devices and enough closet space to house a Chinese family
of three." That was the opening paragraph of an article April 3,
2002, in the Baltimore Sun under the headline "Outlet-mall kingdom
forced to sell pieces of its empire." Two days later members of the
Asian American Journalists Association's Washington, D.C., chapter
responded: "This Baltimore Sun business section article gives a clear
example of how racial cliches lead to bad journalism. Not only is the
lead of the story offensive, with the implied sneer/chuckle at immi-
grant Chinese, it's unclear exactly what the reporter means. Is
"enough closet space to house a Chinese family of three" a lot of
closet space? Or not much at all?"

–   "[…] [a] lot like Aunt Jemima" is how a sports anchor at a cable news station, CLTV in Chicago, described a spokesman for a hunting and fishing festival who was dressed in black hunting camouflage and turkey-feather hat. (Aunt Jemima was a stereotypical image of a large Southern black woman servant used in advertising to sell pancake mix.) The station issued an apology, suspended the anchor, ordered all of the station's employees to attend a training session focusing on "language, sensitivity and ways to communicate that are positive, thoughtful and understanding in a diverse workplace and a diverse television environment." (Chicago Sun-Times, October 17, 2002)

–   In 1965 when the Los Angeles Watts riots took place, the Los Angeles Times did not have a single black reporter to send to the scene. Editors recruited a black man working as a messenger in the classified department. He covered the riots for days. (Editor & Publisher, May 23, 2003)

* * *

There can be no doubt that differences in ethnicity and, more broadly, culture affect how people perceive one another. It is inevitable that these perceptions – or, misperceptions, as may be the case – carry over into media content. The examples above provide vivid illustrations of how media and ethnicity can clash in the USA and how ethnicity quite literally colors the way the media portray the world, its people and events.

This paper will present an overview of the interplay of media and ethnic minorities in the USA. The paper rests on several assumptions. One is that the ideas of unity and diversity are compatible; indeed, the acceptance of this compatibility in the contemporary world is essential to the efficient and successful functioning of any society. Another assumption is that media represent one of society's important institutions in the interactions between and among diverse groups within that society. Finally, the goal of negotiating the fusion of unity and diversity is never achieved – ultimately societal, economic and political integration of minorities, ethnic and otherwise, is a continuous, ongoing, dynamic process.

The paper will begin with a brief historical overview of immigration patterns in the United States. It will then sketch the relationship between media and ethnic minorities. Contemporary issues will be the major focus with emphasis on three main points: (1) the representation by mainstream media of ethnic minorities, (2) the production process of mainstream media and (3) the background, including education and

preparation, of those engaged in media production. The author draws primarily on a critical review of scholarly research and professionally-oriented literature.

As will be seen, the principal conclusion is that media as a critical institutional force in a democracy must serve all of society. This is achieved by taking a pro-active stance in striving for equality of justice and opportunity and in balancing desires for national unity and ethnic identity.

2   Context and Conceptualization

> "America is God's Crucible,
> the great Melting-Pot […] "
> Israel Zangwill, *The Melting Pot* (1923)

Many of us are familiar with the title of one of Broadway's most famous plays, *The Melting Pot*, by well-known English playwright Israel Zang-will. The play enjoyed immense popularity upon its opening in 1908. When it closed a year later, it had gone through 136 performances. Melting pot became a metaphor for immigration in the USA and the transformation of settlers from abroad into a new creation: an American. The story, Romeo and Juliet-like but with a happy ending, is about a Jewish boy and Christian girl. Both are foreign-born. Despite numerous obstacles, they fall in love and marry. In combining their capabilities, they build a union – an America – that is even stronger than before. The story, of course, is allegorical.

Despite different interpretations in meaning (e.g. crucible, is a vessel for melting ores and metals and suggests a much more violent and complex process than implied in the phrase) and a variety of imagery to describe the adaptive process (e.g., tossed salad, stir fry, stew, mosaic, smelting pot, etc.), the melting pot remains a powerful metaphor in the attempt to characterize what happens when newcomers take up residency in a new land. What does happen? This and other questions can be provocative: Does one culture blend seamlessly into another? How significant is a person's ethnicity in making one's way in the world? In what way does a person's ethnicity influence how a person or group of persons is defined by others? How about skin color? Importantly, how do media depict people who look different from most of us and behave differently from the way most of us behave? And why do media present it that way?

These are large questions and, as with large questions, probably unanswerable in any definitive way. But the questions are worthy of our

attention. How we think about them and on what basis will help deter-
mine the future of our own countries and of the world. Events of 9/11
(or, 11/9, if you prefer) and post-9/11 only serve to intensify our interest
and heighten our concern.

* * *

The story of immigration to the USA begins with the colonial period
when maybe as many as a million persons came to these shores (this and
following data are adapted from Berthoff 1999). Over the years the most
striking characteristic of the history of USA immigration is that for a
century and a half (roughly from 1820 to 1970) immigrants from Europe
far outnumbered those coming from other parts of the world. Of
45,162,638 immigrants to the USA during this 150-year period, 79 per-
cent (or, 35,704,302) came from Europe. Up to the decade 1961-70, the
number of Europeans coming to the USA constituted the majority of all
immigrants to the USA. Here's a sampling of the data showing for 10-
year periods the percentage of immigrants to the USA who came from
Europe:

-   From 1820-1830   70 percent;
-   From 1851-1860   94 percent;
-   From 1891-1900   97 percent;
-   From 1911-1920   76 percent;
-   From 1931-1940   66 percent;
-   From 1951-1960   53 percent;
-   From 1961-1970   34 percent.

Clearly, in 1961-70 the trend of the preponderance of immigrants coming
from Europe was reversed. Of the total number of immigrants for that
decade (3, 321, 677), the percentage was 34.

    The reason for citing these numbers and percentages is to under-
score two important facts about immigration in the USA: One, though
the number of immigrants has varied due to a variety of circumstances,
including economic and political, the immigration phenomena has per-
sisted throughout the nation's history. The second point pertains to the
places where immigrants come from. Today's immigrants come mainly
from Latin-America and Asia. Between 1971-2000, writes Zhou (2004),
about 21 million immigrants came to the USA, and of these 80 percent
were Latino and or Asian. Today, immigrants and their children account
for a fifth of all USA residents, and projections indicate that by 2050 a

third of all Americans will be Asian or Latino. Thus, it is clear that challenges of integration, accommodation, adaptation, assimilation – whatever it is called – have occupied the nation and, hence, its institutions, throughout its history. The second point – the changing ethnicity of immigrants – is particularly relevant here as we try to frame the large picture and identify specific issues. But first some clarification of terms is necessary even though relevant terminology most certainly will lose something in translation to other languages.

Alba's conceptualization of several models of the immigrant experience, though rudimentary, is useful and provides a linguistic roadmap for this paper. Immigrants experience a process of "incorporation", according to Alba (1998). Incorporation, he writes, "refers to the processes by which immigrants and their descendants change from being outsiders-in-residence, whose participation in the host society is limited to its labor market and who remain in many respects oriented toward their homelands, to natives" (p. 1). He identifies two basic incorporation models and suggests the possibility of a third.

One derives from the experiences of different ethnic groups coming from Europe. It encompasses a number of related models under the umbrella term of assimilation (acculturation, adaptation, integration). The other model arises out of race, that is, racially defined groups, especially African Americans. It is known as racial exclusion. Based on color and physical features, racial exclusion originated with slavery and has drawn more attention in recent years with the differing ethnic composition of immigrants. Alba refers to a third model as the ethnic enclave economy (e.g., the Cubans of Miami, the Koreans of Los Angeles). This third approach suggests that immigrants enjoy socio-economic advantages derived from ethnic solidarity while maintaining cultural loyalty to their ethnic groups. While Alba concludes that none of these three models has become dominant, recent scholarship indicates that a reconceptualization of the notion of assimilation combines what has happened historically in the USA with a vision of what the USA can become. Titles of several recent books encapsulate this approach: *Reinventing the Melting Pot: The New Immigrants and What It Means to Be American* (Jacoby 2004) and *Remaking the American Mainstream: Assimilation and Contemporary Immigration* (Alba/Nee 2003). The present paper relies heavily on the general approach espoused in these works.

Assimilation as a social-scientific paradigm to study and understand immigration in the USA traces its origin to the Chicago School of social thought, especially the work of Robert E. Park and W. I. Thomas

and their associates (Alba/Nee 2003). The idea of assimilation with its linkage to the nebulous "melting pot" metaphor remained vague until the publication in 1964 of Milton Gordon's *Assimilation in American Life*. He emphasized the multidimensionality of the concept of assimilation and reinvigorated immigration studies from an assimilationist perspective (Alba/Nee, 2003). Those dimensions of assimilation can be virtually limitless, cutting across all aspects of culture but most especially encompassing the social, the economic and, arguably the most challenging, the political.

In the USA color of skin cannot be ignored when it comes to assimilation. Gans calls race "the most important obstacle to speed and ease of assimilation" (Gans 2004, 34). Alba and Nee (2003) agree, pointing out that even if assimilation expands to embrace non-Europeans it is unlikely to eliminate racial distinctions entirely or to end inequalities resulting from racism. This is a reality confronting all of the nation's institutions, including and most especially the media.

The new concept of assimilation makes several other important assertions, according to Nee and Alba (2004). One is that even as immigrants undergo change in adapting to the new environment they influence change in the mainstream. That is, assimilation is a two-way process. Another assertion is that assimilation does not demand the surrendering of ethnicity. Nor is assimilation assumed to follow a consistent or universal pattern. What influences the outcome of the assimilation process is a number of societal mechanisms. Nee and Alba (2004) identify three mechanisms which affect the speed and success of assimilation: (1) Institutional – perhaps the most crucial, especially law and government policy; (2) Individuals – that is, the "workaday decisions of individual immigrants"; and (3) Communities and networks – that is, support groups (pp. 88-93). An important component of the institutional framework involves mass media, and that is where we turn our attention.

3   Media and Ethnic Minorities

> "[…] the communications media, ironically, have failed to communicate."
> *Report of The National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders* (1968, 210)

In 1967, after several summers of troubling racial riots in cities in the USA, President Lyndon Johnson established a National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders to study the issues and make recommenda-

tions for the future. The Commission issued its report, which came to be known as the Kerner Commission Report (1968), a year later. In concluding that American society was "moving toward two societies, one black, one white – separate and unequal" (p. 1), the report devoted considerable attention to the media. A content analysis of media coverage of the riots of 1967 found instances of sensationalism, over-reliance on official sources and defining confrontations as black vs. white. But these were not the main deficiencies. "We suggest", the authors wrote, "that the main failure of the media last summer was that the totality of its coverage was not as representative as it should have been to be accurate" (1968, p. 202; a portion of the report also is available at http://history matters.gmu.edu/d/6553/). Among the report's recommendations for the media: (1) carry out more in-depth analysis of racial problems, (2) hire and promote more African American journalists and (3) treat ordinary news about African Americans in the same way that news of other groups is now being treated. Finally, the report asserted that a press that "repeatedly, if unconsciously, reflects the biases, the paternalism, the indifference of white America […] may be understandable, but it is not excusable in an institution that has the mission to inform and educate the whole of our society."

The Kerner Report may represent a watershed in the history of the depiction of African Americans in the USA. This is not because it produced immediate or even dramatic change but because it served as an impetus to getting journalists and journalism educators thinking about ways to address the painfully obvious failings of an all-white media (Wilson II and Gutiérrez, 1995). As the past four decades have shown, it would require an even more painful – and continuing – effort to find effective ways to correct inadequacies of reporting about race. The Kerner Report's concern was mainly with black-white issues. But if we take seriously the role of the media in a democratic society, many of the Kerner Report's criticisms and recommendations apply as well to all ethnic minorities.

And what is the role of media in society? Let us turn briefly to the report of an earlier commission, the Commission on Freedom of the Press (Leigh 1947). Consisting of prominent intellectuals and scholars and no media representatives (though financed by Henry R. Luce of the Time magazine empire), the commission in its report emphasized the critical role of the press in a democracy. It argued, "The relative power of the press carries with it relatively great obligations" (Leigh 1947, p. vii). The report, known more familiarly as the Hutchins Report (after Robert

M. Hutchins, then chancellor of the University of Chicago), identified five chief obligations of the media as required for a free society (Leigh 1947, 20-29):

1. present a truthful, comprehensive and intelligent account of the day's events in a context which gives them meaning;
2. provide a forum for the exchange of comment and criticism;
3. project a representative picture of the constituent groups in the society
4. present and clarify the goals and values of the society; and
5. provide full access to the day's intelligence.

All this is no small task, to be sure, especially in light of developments in media technology since 1948 when the report was published. Though in all probability unattainable, the goals certainly are worthy of our quest. Deserving our special attention is the challenge for the media to "project a representative picture of the constituent groups in the society." The report's recommendations for the media included: be more accountable and more professional; improve journalism education; establish centers of advanced study and research.

Two points to be emphasized here are that the media (1) occupy an important position in society, and (2) in a democracy must strive to be as inclusive as possible of all groups in society, especially minorities who normally do not have access to the corridors of power, political or economic.

That the media have an impact is indisputable. While admitting that effects of mass communication are complex and difficult to measure, Wilson II and Gutiérrez (1995) in their comprehensive account of minorities and media conclude that their review of research shows "that the media's coverage and portrayal of minorities have an effect on members of both minority and majority groups" (p. 56).

We now turn to media practices beginning with representation of ethnic minorities.

4   Media Representation of Ethnic Minorities

> "[…] media representations […] are not a
> foregone conclusion and they most certainly are
> not beyond challenge or change."
>
> Simon Cottle (2000, 10)

Media portrayal of ethnic minorities has been examined from a variety of perspectives as well as by ethnic groups themselves.

Wilson II and Gutiérrez (1995) sort out representation on the basis of media devoted predominantly to entertainment, such as movies, and media concerned more with conveying news and information, such as television and newspapers, including advertising and public relations. This discussion draws upon their well regarded study, *Race, Multiculturalism, and the Media*, which has its origin in an earlier work, *Minorities and Media* (1985).

Before the end of World War II, American mass entertainment media engaged in similar stereotyping of all ethnic minorities, the authors conclude, from Native to Black to Asian Americans and Latinos. Ethnic stereotyping appeared across all entertainment media, from popular literature to live drama to movies. The authors write, "The stereotypes were based upon negative prejudicial characteristics that when compared against the values of the majority White society, were deemed to be innately inferior traits" (1995, 84). Economics, they argue, was a factor with producers providing material that would cater to audience demand. After World War II, public attitudes began changing. Still motivated by economic considerations, media began offering content that – despite continuing to reflect earlier stereotypes – was designed to tap the multi-billion market of ethnic minorities, especially Blacks and Latinos. An important point the authors stress is that media basically seek to appeal to audiences that have economic capacity.

Advertising occupies part of that economic picture. The principles that apply to stereotyping also come into play, but Wilson II and Gutiérrez (1995) are mainly concerned with advertising as it helps to support media owned and operated by ethnic minorities. A few large corporations have acted, at least in part, out of a sense of social responsibility and supported ethnic media with their advertising. The growth of ethnic media to help give voice to minority groups will be dealt with later in this paper.

The authors deal with public relations mainly from an educational perspective. That is, in a diverse, multicultural society, public relations

practitioners will need to be culturally sensitive if they expect to serve their clients successfully. In such a society, a similar educational philosophy will apply to all professional communicators.

Though the communication aspects of ethnic minorities discussed above are relevant, of greater interest in this particular paper is the news media. Wilson II and Gutiérrez (1995, pp. 150-159) identify five historical phases of news media treatment of ethnic minorities: (1) exclusionary – that is, virtual disregard of ethnic minorities, (2) threatening-issue – that is, ethnic minorities as a danger to social order, (3) confrontation – that is, ethnic minorities openly challenging the social order and the media, (4) stereotypical selection – that is, mainstream media begin accommodating ethnic groups to the extent that specific themes emerge, such as "success stories" and "model minorities" and (5) multiracial coverage – that is, ethnic minorities reflected in all types of news.

As a former reporter on a metropolitan newspaper in the American Mid-South in the early 1960s, I recall experiences conforming to this evolution of press coverage of ethnic minorities. Prior to my arrival, the newspaper largely ignored African Americans who made up a substantial part of the population. Black murder victims merited a paragraph in news accounts, while significant attention was devoted to news of white victims. In February 1963 I witnessed police officers whipping a black prisoner with a rubber hose at a police station. To the newspaper's credit, editors placed the story on page 1, prompting an investigation and suspension of three white police officers. (Afterwards, an unidentified reader sent me a note on a business-size card that read, "I have Contributed $1.00 in your name To The N.A.A.C.P. Congratulations. You Are Now an "HONORARY NIGGER".")

An example of monitoring of media by an ethnic organization is provided in a recent study by the National Association of Hispanic Journalists (NAHJ). Such studies have been going on for eight years and are called the "National Brownout". The latest study showed that television's evening newscasts offered little and stereotypical coverage of Latinos ("Latinos Remain […]," 2003). Coverage dealt mostly with crime and immigration. While Latinos make up more than 13 percent of the USA's population, the percentage of Latino-related stories made up less than one percent (0.75) of the approximately 16,000 stories aired on major newscasts in 2002. Actually, that percent was a tiny increase over 2001, which was 0.62 percent. While the number of Latinos used as interview subjects increased, two-thirds of the stories pertaining to Latinos involved crime, terrorism and illegal immigration.

Meanwhile, another group, the Native American Journalists Association (NAJA), found in its study that most stories about American Indians in the nation's largest newspapers dealt with reservation affairs, casino gambling, sports mascots or entertainment (Fitzgerald 2004). Researchers had to establish a separate category they labeled "Curious". Most newspapers published stories in this category which included such items about: "Native Wisdom" in weather prediction – in the Chicago Sun-Times; alleged cannibalism in Indian ruins without mentioning the skepticism of Native Americans – in Newsday; and blaming the death of a high school athlete on "alleged practicing of bad medicine" with the headline "Little Big Rivalry" – in the Los Angeles Times (Fitzgerald 2004, 40).

Though space limits discussion of other perspectives on ethnic representation in media, several deserve mention if for no other reason than illustrative purposes. Ferguson (1998) argues that a theory of ideology can be "productively related to any analysis of issues of "race", identity or media representations" (p. 1). Kamalipour and Carilli (1998) offer an overview of cultural diversity and media in the USA. Among common themes in the book's many specific examples of media representation – which include cartoons and reporting on such diverse topics as Arabs and the environment – are stereotyping, self-identity, the status quo and media responsibility. Joyce (1976) examines how editorial content of the Irish-American press in the 19th century helped Irish immigrants adjust to the expectations and values of American society. Mansfield-Richardson (2000) has carried out a comprehensive content analysis dealing with Asian Americans – the role Asian American journalists play and how USA media portray Asian Americans. Especially useful to scholars is Cottle's (2000) wonderfully insightful collection of articles dealing with media and ethnic minorities. In the introduction, Cottle states that continuity, conflict and change characterize the topic of media and ethnic minorities and that the purpose of the book is to "to explore the complexity of this interaction" (p. 1). This complexity becomes manifest as we examine the next two parts of this paper: first, the media structure and production process followed by the preparation of media professionals.

5   Media Structure and Production Process

> "[…]the circulation of Spanish-language newspapers has more than tripled in the last decade to 1.7 million […]when English-language newspaper circulation has declined 11 percent."
> State of the News Media for 2004; Project for Excellence in Journalism
> www.journalism.org/who/pej/about.asp

Most of the attention devoted to examination of media and ethnic minority issues revolves around representation in the media and background of media professionals. Intertwined with these issues are the structure of the media system, including especially ownership, and the newsroom process of production.

As Gandy (1998), who brings a critical studies approach to his scholarship, notes, the profit motive in the media system means that decisions concerning production must "accommodate the desires of advertisers as well as the desires of individuals and groups within the audience" (p. 94). This has obvious implications for media content, including, of course, coverage of ethnic minorities. So, what about media ownership by ethnic groups and the role these media play in the lives of minorities?

Ethnically-oriented newspapers in the USA played an important role in the early history of the nation's immigration. Such newspapers served two seemingly contradictory functions. They helped newcomers, mostly European then, to adapt to the new culture, and they helped the new arrivals to preserve their ethnic heritage (Shim 1997). In more recent times, other ethnic groups have undergone a similar process. To get an idea of the longevity of newspapers sponsored by ethnic groups now prominent in the USA, consider that the first Latino newspaper, El Misisip, was established in 1808 in New Orleans, and the first Asian American newspaper, The Golden Hills' News, appeared about 1851, in San Francisco. The first African American newspaper, Freedom's Journal, was published in 1827, in New York, and the first Native American newspaper, the Cherokee Phoenix, appeared in 1828, in the state of Georgia (Wilson II and Gutiérrez 1995).

It may be instructive to examine what has been happening with media and the Latino population, the nation's fastest growing ethnic minority group. Since 1970 the number of Spanish-language or bilingual daily newspapers has quadrupled – from eight to about three dozen (Manor, 2004). Advertising revenue has increased more than seven times

between 1990 and 2001 – from \$111 million to \$786 million. During the same period the number of English-language dailies has declined by about 17 percent. The same thing has happened in broadcast. In 1985 a total of 17 Spanish-language television stations were operating; by 2002 the number had grown to 252 (Manor 2004).

Whether these Spanish-language media will continue beyond the second and third generation is open to question. If history is any indication, assimilation is likely to take place with English becoming the dominant language of coming generations. If the flow of Spanish-language immigrants continues, then Spanish-language newspapers likely will persist, according to a newspaper consultant (Manor 2004). In other words, as one would expect in a market-driven economy, market demand will determine the sustainability of ethnic minority media.

Mass media content results from a complex, interconnected production and distribution system. Gandy (1998), from his critical studies perspective, takes that idea a step further when he writes, with a nod to the Frankfurt School, that "Mass-produced cultural materials are industrial products" (p. 93). How have newsrooms and professional journalism organizations responded to the challenge of covering ever-changing ethnic diversity in their communities? In covering ethnic minorities, the media, at best, have realized mixed success. But there have been many efforts to improve performance. Here is a sampling of organizations especially active in promoting media diversity with brief mention of some of their activities. Many other groups are similarly involved, and the aim here is to provide a few exemplary illustrations.

– The Robert C. Maynard Institute for Journalism Education (MIJE) (www.maynardije.org/about): Founded in 1977, the nonprofit organization based in Oakland, Calif., devotes its efforts exclusively to help news media reflect the nation's diversity in staffing, content and business operations. According to its Web site, MIJE has "a history of training and placing more nonwhite journalists than any other single institution in the country." The Institute operates many training programs, from editing to management training. Most programs are for persons of color, though some, such as a week-long multicultural, multimedia program, encompasses professionals of all colors. MIJE carries out many of its activities in conjunction with universities. The Institute is named in honor of its late co-founder, a prominent African American, Robert C. Maynard, a former Washington Post journalist who became owner, publisher and editor of the Oakland Tribune.

–   The Freedom Forum (www.freedomforum.org/diversity): Established in 1991 and based in Arlington, Va., the Freedom Forum is a nonpartisan foundation that has as one of its three main focus areas newsroom diversity. (Its two other focus areas are the Newseum and the First Amendment.) One of its diversity programs trains people of color who want to become journalists but have no formal journalism background. This program takes place at the Freedom Forum's Diversity Institute at Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tenn. Seven graduates in April 2004 brought the total number of Institute graduates since the program's inception in 2002 to 42. The Freedom Forum's activities are supported by income from an endowment.

–   The Poynter Institute (www.poynter.org): This is a school for current and future journalists and journalism teachers. It is located on the University of South Florida campus in St. Petersburg. Among its specific goals in seeking to promote excellence throughout the news media are "a recognition of the value of diversity in the newsroom and in life" and "a clear picture of the special role of journalism in a democracy". A year-round series of seminars (e.g., "Writing About Race Relations and Social Justice") is the core of the Institute's mission. The Institute was established in 1975 with an endowment from Nelson Poynter, chairman of the St. Petersburg Times and its Washington affiliate, Congressional Quarterly.

–   The Society of Professional Journalists (www.spj.org/diversity.asp): The nation's largest professional journalism organization with about 9,000 members, the Society of Professional Journalists promotes high standards of journalistic performance, which includes diversity in the profession. The Web site provides many resources as well as a forum for discussion of diversity issues.

    These institutes and other professional organizations engage in a wide range of activities that impact the news media in many ways. Here are a few examples:

    In an online discussion of "Copy Editing for Diversity", Ron Smith, deputy copy chief of the Milwaukee (Wis.) Journal Sentinel, writes that "Diversity is always a work in progress. But most papers get a failing grade in it because they are too lazy to go beyond the obvious" (poynteronline.org/content/content_view.asp?id=52475). Other points from Smith:

    –   "Diversity is not just racial; it can be political, and it can also be economic. And also remember that no one person speaks for any one group."

- "Incomplete descriptions alienate and infuriate readers – especially those from minority groups. Nowhere is that more prevalent than in police reporting […]. Make sure descriptions have meaning, and make sure they are necessary."

– A diversity audit serves as one method media can employ to determine how representative their content is of the communities they serve. For example, the San Jose (Calif.) Mercury News has been conducting such audits for several years. Each editorial department and the photography department participate. A week's content is selected at random. Using guidelines developed by the Maynard Institute (MIEJ), each item is scored on the basis of race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, age and geography. Data collected then can be compared to census demographics of the community. Early audits in San Jose showed – not surprisingly – an over-representation of white males and an under-representation of the Asian and Hispanic communities (www.maynardije.org).

– Time-Out for Diversity and Accuracy is another project designed to remind media that they should reflect accurately in content the ethnicity of their communities. News organizations such as the Associated Press Managing Editors (APME) and American Society of Newspaper Editors (ASNE) cooperate on this effort. Activities include initiating or renewing connections with diverse elements of the community, bus tours and auditing diversity of sources. Time-Out archives of ideas and projects can be found at the APME Web site: for 2003 the address is www.apme/com/timout5/history.shtml, and for 2004, the address is www.apme.com/timeout6/invite.shtml.

Finally, mention must be made of the various journalism associations of color. They include the Asian American Journalists Association (AAJA), National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ), National Association of Hispanic Journalists (NAHJ) and Native American Journalists Association (NAJA). (See References: Part 2 of this paper for Web sites of these groups.) Together they form a national alliance representing 7,000 journalists of color. The alliance is UNITY: Journalists of Color, Inc. (www.unityjournalists.org/). UNITY, according to its Web site, has two goals: „developing programs and institutional relationships that promote year-round journalism advocacy and education, with a focus on fairness and accuracy in news coverage as well as diversity in America's newsrooms, and planning the largest regular gathering of journalists in the na-

tion (the UNITY 2004 Convention)." The 2004 convention took place August 4-8 in Washington, D.C.

Speaking in Iowa City, the then-president of UNITY, Ernest Sotomayor (2004), online editor at Newsday, Long Island, N.Y., said, "Diversity boils down to credibility, relevance, honesty." Noting that there are 150 ethnic groups in the USA, Sotomayor said diversity must be a core value of journalism. "In this instance, journalists must be advocates."

Personnel is a key component in the production process, and that is where we turn our attention next.

6   Preparation of Media Professionals

> "Diversity is important because it makes us relevant. You've got to have people around the table with a variety of backgrounds."
> Gerald Boyd, Remarks at 2003 APME conference ("Boyd's message: Get out there", 2003)

In May 2003 an investigation by the New York Times revealed that one of its reporters, 27-year-old Jayson Blair, had fabricated or plagiarized hundreds of articles over a four-year period. The scandal sullied the reputation of what is generally regarded as the nation's leading newspaper and damaged the credibility of news media everywhere. But the incident raised another question: In a zealous attempt to bring minorities into journalism, are the media showing preferential treatment that was damaging journalism itself? Blair is black. So is Gerald Boyd, who at the time of the Blair incident was the Times' managing editor and the first black person to hold that position in the newspaper's more than 150-year history (Gelb 2003). Blair, of course, lost his position. Ironically, so did Boyd (as did the newspaper's editor, Howell Raines).

Long before Blair and prodded by civil unrest of the 1950s and 1960s, USA media have tried with varying degrees of success to be more inclusive in their coverage of ethnic minorities, especially people of color. As we have seen, there has been some progress in representation and in responding to issues of media structure and production. We have not yet dealt directly with a critically important component of the entire media enterprise, and that involves personnel. What are the backgrounds of today's journalists? What are the media doing to recruit staffs that are ethnically diverse? What are journalism schools doing?

The American Society of Newspaper Editors (ASNE), an organization of about 750 members who are main editors of daily newspapers, has collected data about minority employment since 1978 (Table 1). Over time, the data show an increase in the numbers of minorities working at newspapers, nearly four times as many in 2004 (7,000, or 12.95% of the total work force) as compared to 1978 (1,700, or 3.95%). While that may seem significant, ethnic minorities make up about 30 percent of the nation's population, and that figure is expected to grow to about 40 percent in 25 years or less. Further, of the 927 (out of a total of 1,417) daily newspapers responding to the survey, 373, mostly those with less than 10,000 circulation, reported no minorities. Despite the increases, the chair of the ASNE's Diversity Committee, asked, "Are editors encouraging growing numbers of people of color to help change the content of their newspapers to better reflect our changing communities?"

Data also show the number and percentage of each ethnic minority according to job category (Table 2) as well as the number and percentage of whites and minorities by job category (Table 3). In all ethnic groups, reporting is their predominant position. In supervisory positions, about 1 in 10 positions is held by a member of an ethnic minority. More complete reporting and analysis of data can be found at this Web site: www.asne.org/index.cfm?id=5147.

The Knight Foundation, which promotes excellence in journalism worldwide, has carried the ASNE findings a step further. In an attempt to add context to ASNE data, the Knight Foundation has developed a Newsroom Diversity Index. The index compares the share of jobs held by journalists of color with the non-white share of the population in the circulation area. The result is intended to help determine how well newspaper staffs reflect their communities. In addition, it is possible to go to a Web site for each state and for the 200 largest newspapers and compare diversity of the newspaper with the diversity of the communities they serve. Here are several examples: With parity at 100 (meaning the newspaper equates with the community in terms of diversity), two newspapers that far exceed parity are the Beacon, Akron, Ohio, Journal, with a parity score of 169, and the Des Moines, Iowa, Register, 150. Two newspapers well below parity are the Tampa, Fla., Tribune, 19, and the Journal Newspapers, Alexandria, La., 23. Further explanation together with additional data of the Newsroom Diversity Index are available at powerreporting.com/knight/.

Table 1: Minority employment in daily newspapers in the USA:
projections are based on responses to annual employment
census. Numbers have been rounded

Year	Total Work Force	Minorities in Work Force	% Minorities in Work Force
1978	43,000	1,700	3.95
1979	45,000	1,900	4.22
1980	47,000	2,300	4.89
1981	45,500	2,400	5.27
1982	49,000	2,700	5.51
1983	50,000	2,800	5.60
1984	50,400	2,900	5.75
1985	53,800	3,100	5.76
1986	54,000	3,400	6.30
1987	54,700	3,600	6.56
1988	55,300	3,900	7.02
1989	56,200	4,200	7.54
1990	56,900	4,500	7.86
1991	55,700	4,900	8.72
1992	54,500	5,100	9.39
1993	53,600	5,500	10.25
1994	53,700	5,600	10.49
1995	53,800	5,900	10.91
1996	55,000	6,100	11.02
1997	54,000	6,100	11.35
1998	54,700	6,300	11.46
1999	55,100	6,400	11.55
2000	56,200	6,700	11.85
2001	56,400	6,600	11.64
2002	54,400	6,600	12.07
2003	54,700	6,900	12.53
2004	54,700	7,000	12.95

Table 2: Numbers and percentage of minorities by race and job
       category, 2004

	Blacks		Hispanics		Asians		Native Americans	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Supervisors	572	19	454	20	263	17	86	28
Copy/Layout Editors	503	17	362	16	298	20	60	19
Reporters	1,555	53	1,070	47	689	46	126	40
Photographers	309	11	373	17	256	17	40	13
Totals	2,938		2,258		1,507		313	

Table 3: Numbers and percentage of whites and minorities by job
       category, 2004

	Total Work Force	Minorities		Whites	
		No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Supervisors	13,053	1,375	10.5	11,679	89.4
Copy/Layout Editors	10,554	1,223	11.6	9,331	88.4
Reporters	24,830	3,440	13.9	21,390	86.1
Photographers	5,756	978	17.0	4,779	83.0
Totals	54,194	7,016		47,178	

Source for all three tables: www.asne.org/index.cfm?id=5147
(Note: Any numerical discrepancies appear in the original.)

Ethnic data also are available in the broadcast area. The 2003 annual survey for the Radio and Television News Directors Association (RTNDA) carried out at Ball State University shows that the total percentage of the minority workforce in television dropped from the preceding year from 20.6 to 18.1 with a similar decline in radio (Table 4). The total percentage of minority television news directors also declined during the same period – from 9.2 to 6.6 (Table 5).

*Table 4: Percentage of broadcast news **workers** according to color*

Year	2003	2002	2001	1994
Television				
Caucasian	81.9	79.4	75.4	82.9
African American	8.4	9.3	9.9	10.1
Hispanic	6.5	7.7	10.1	4.2
Asian American	2.7	3.1	4.1	2.2
Native American	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.6
Radio				
Caucasian	93.5	92.0	89.3	85.3
African American	4.8	4.1	5.2	5.7
Hispanic	1.2	2.4	5.5	7.5
Asian American	0.3	0.8	<1	0.6
Native American	0.2	0.7	<1	1.0

Source: Papper (2003)

*Table 5: Percentage of broadcast news **directors** according to color*

Year	2003	2002	2001	1994
Television				
Caucasian	93.4	90.8	92.0	92.1
African American	0.9	2.0	0.6	1.6
Hispanic	4.4	5.8	5.7	3.8
Asian American	0.9	0.4	1.1	1.5
Native American	0.4	1.0	0.6	1.0
Radio				
Caucasian	95.0	94.9	95.6	91.4
African American	2.5	1.9	1.5	5.4
Hispanic	1.7	2.6	2.9	2.4
Asian American	0.0	0.0	<1	0.0
Native American	0.8	0.6	<1	0.8

Source: Papper (2003)
Note: The survey by 2003 RTNDA/Ball State University encompassed all
1,421 operating nonsatellite television stations and a random sample of 1,490

radio stations with valid responses coming from 890 television states and 272 radio news directors (Papper 2003).

Despite the decrease over the two-year period, the total percentage of minorities in television broadcast news surpasses that of newspapers (18.1% vs. 12.95%). These data can be read in a variety of ways. The point to be made here is that the news media are striving to make their staffs look more like the communities they serve. Success varies widely depending on recruiting efforts and available personnel as well as other factors.

In their series of studies of American journalists over a span of several decades, Weaver and Wilhoit (1996) warn of a problem of retention of minority news workers. That is, while there have been increases in the proportions of racial minorities working in U.S. mainstream news media, their opportunities for advancement are limited because the field has not grown significantly during the 1980s and early 1990s. Thus, while recruitment is a problem, so is retention.

Also responding to the diversity challenge have been the nation's journalism schools.

With journalism education long established in the U.S. – the world's first school was established in 1908 at the University of Missouri – it was natural that with the civil rights issues midway through the 20th century educators sought ways to respond to the challenge of preparing a journalistic work force that represented the many faces of the nation. As with the media, efforts were slow in coming, and the results mixed. The main impetus to educate a diverse and inclusive work force has come from a national accrediting agency established in 1945. After several reincarnations, the agency has become known as the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC). Composed of academic, professional and public representatives, ACEJMC sets and assesses standards of performance in journalism education. The process is voluntary. Today more than 100 programs are accredited by the organization. Among its nine standards is one titled Diversity and Inclusiveness. (The other eight are: Mission, Governance and Administration; Curriculum and Instruction; Full-Time and Part-Time Faculty; Scholarship: Research, Creative and Professional Activity; Student Services; Resources, Facilities and Equipment; Professional and Public Service; and Assessment of Learning Outcomes. (This and other information, including an elaboration of each standard, can be found at the ACEJMC Web site: www.ukans.edu/~acejmc**.**)

ACEJMC provides the basis for evaluating each standard. Over the years the Diversity and Inclusiveness standard has been the one least complied with. That may change with a change in the standards adopted in September 2003 and scheduled to become effective September 2004. It may be instructive to review the complete details for the standard dealing with diversity. See Figure 1. "Unit" refers to the academic unit. "Teams" refers to the evaluators who visit the school and carry out an evaluation. The Standard asserts that an academic unit should have as a goal a program that "serves and reflects society" and then suggests a number of "indicators" toward that goal (e.g., a written plan to achieve an inclusive curriculum and diverse faculty and students); and finally, asks for evidence of compliance (e.g., curriculum materials).

Other efforts too numerous to mention here also have sought to promote the understanding and value of diversity in its many forms, including especially ethnic. Other educator groups, such as the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC), continually arrange programs to facilitate the teaching and appreciation of diversity. For example, syllabi for courses have been collected from universities with accredited journalism programs and are available on line. The site of the Diversity Syllabi database is: newswatch.sfsu.edu/diversity_syllabuses/. Numerous task forces and committees have been established to search for more and better ways to achieve diversity. One example: A subcommittee of the AEJMC Task Force on Teaching and Learning in the New Millennium focused its attention on diversity and inclusion, probing issues dealing with student enrollment, faculty hiring and retention and a multicultural curriculum. It is available as a pdf document at: inclusivity rep.pdf

Professionals also have access to many diversity programs offered through workshops by the institutes mentioned earlier as well as through university service and continuing education programs.

In their efforts to advance ethnic diversity, the classroom and newsroom often meet. For example, Martin Baron, editor of the Boston Globe, told a group of journalism educators at a meeting of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication: "[…] you need to structure journalism programs that push your students out of the classroom so that they are exposed to people who are wholly different, who speak another language, who come from different countries, who hold different beliefs, who see the world through a very, very different lens" (Baron 2001).

Figure 1: ACEJMC Standard on Diversity and Inclusiveness

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3. Diversity and Inclusiveness

    The Unit has a diverse and inclusive program that serves and re-flects society.

<div align="center">Indicators:</div>

(a)   The unit has a written plan for achieving an inclusive curriculum, a diverse faculty and student population, and a supportive climate for working and learning and for assessing progress toward achievement of the plan.

(b)   The unit's curriculum fosters understanding of issues and perspectives that are inclusive in terms of gender, race, ethnicity and sexual orientation.

(c)   The unit demonstrates effective efforts to recruit women and minority faculty and professional staff and provides an environment that supports their retention, progress and success.

(d)   The unit demonstrates effective efforts to help recruit and retain a student population reflecting the diversity of the population eligible to enroll in institutions of higher education in the region or population it serves, with special attention to recruiting under-represented groups.

(e)   The unit has a climate that is free of harassment and discrimination, accommodates the needs of those with disabilities, and values the contributions of all forms of diversity.

Accreditation site visit teams will apply this standard in compliance with applicable federal and state laws and regulations.

<div align="center">Evidence:</div>

A written plan
Syllabi and other course materials
Records and statistics on faculty and staff hiring and on promotion and tenure decisions
Records and statistics on student recruitment, retention and graduation
Records on part-time and visiting faculty and speakers.

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from the ACEJMC Standards of Accreditation: www.ukans.edu/~acejmc

7   Conclusion

> "[…] what after all, is American popular culture if not a fossil record of the melting-pot experience – a story about hybrids and cross-pollination."
>
> Tamar Jacoby, *Reinventing the Melting Pot*
> (2004, 313)

This paper has covered a vast range of topics – immigration and assimilation, the role of media in a democratic society, the desire for equality of justice and opportunity, a media system challenged to walk the fine line between market forces and audience needs and, ultimately, a society that strives to balance the value of individual identity against a collective consciousness. In a way, there can be no definitive conclusion since there will be no end to the need for more and better communication among different people. Transmigration will continue, perhaps even at an accelerated pace, as people try to improve their place in life. One constant amidst all this "big blooming buzzing confusion" that William James (1911, 50) refers to is communication. Interpersonal communication is important, but mass media provide the stitching that permits each part of the social fabric to retain its own special character while at the same time bringing those pieces together in a whole. Given its role in a democratic society, the media must be proactive in promoting inclusiveness.

To put this another way, in the form of a question, one posed so simply but eloquently more than a decade ago by Arthur Schlesinger in his classic book expressing concern over a "cult of ethnicity", *The Disuniting of America: Reflections on a Multicultural Society"* (1992): What is it to be an American? Or, perhaps the better question is: What is it to become "Americanized"? Any answer envelops the whole of the history of the United States. For what is the composition of this nation of immigrants if not a rainbow of human colors and a kaleidoscope of hopes and dreams? The question can be asked of others: What is it to be a Canadian? A German? A Mexican? An Arab? A Finn? And why is it not possible for that citizen to look forward to the hope of the future while still honoring the ethnic roots of the past? It is a responsibility of media to help individuals and nations negotiate these differences in a fair and just manner. Could it be that one day the Latin phrase "E Pluribus Unum" ("one out of many") which appears on the great seal of the USA and some of its coins will convey a meaning that transcends ethnicity, embraces nationality and ascends into universality?

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Part 2: Web Sites Pertaining to Diversity
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     tion: www.ukans.edu/~acejmc

AEJMC Task Force on Teaching and Learning in the New Millennium –
     Report of Diversity and Inclusion Subcommittee: www.aejmc.org/
     pubs/2001.html

American Society of Newspaper Editors: 2004 Newsroom Employment
     Survey: www.asne.org/index.cfm?id=5147

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Diversity Syllabi for teaching diversity courses: newswatch.sfsu.edu/ diversity_syllabuses/

Freedom Forum – Diversity: www.freedomforum.org/diversity

National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (Kerner Report) – Portion of Report: historymatters.gmu.edu/d/6553

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Newsroom Diversity Index (Knight Foundation): powerreporting.com/ knight/

Poynter Institute Diversity Page: www.poynter.org/subject.asp?id=5

Poynter Institute Home Page: www.poynter.org

Robert C. Maynard Institute for Journalism Education (MIJE): www.maynardije.org/about

Society of Professional Journalists – Diversity: www.spj.org/diversity. asp

State of the News Media for 2004-Project for Excellence in Journalism: www.stateofthenewsmedia.org/

Time-Out for Diversity and Accuracy – Associated Press Managing Editors: for 2004, www.apme.com/timeout5/history.shtml; for 2004, www.apme.com/timeout6/invite.shtml

UNITY: Journalists of Color, Inc.: www.unityjournalists.org/

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Among his published works are: (with Horst Pöttker) "Crisscrossing Perspectives: contrasting models of press self-regulation in Germany and the United States", Journalism Studies, Vol. 4, No. 1, 2003, pp. 47-64; "What's Right/Wrong with Journalism Ethics Research?" Journalism Studies, Vol. 2, No. 1, 2001, pp. 133-152; "Negotiating Professional and Academic Standards in Journalism Education", AsiaPacific Journalism Educator, No. 8: January-June 2000, pp. 59-69; "The whole world as a foreign place: Journalism and culture", The Global Network, No. 3, 1996; Journalism's Special Challenge in Covering Ethnic Minorities, monograph published by the Pro Europe League and the National Endowment for Democracy (Cluj-Napoca, Romania), 1996; "The Case for Intercultural Journalism," Australian Journalism Review, Vol. 16, No. 2, 1994, pp. 11-24.