



*Deep Listening. Fostering Trust. Bridging Communities.*

**Media & Representation**  
**Community Dialogue & Storytelling**  
**May 9, 2018**

Thank you to 88.9 Radio Milwaukee for hosting these listening circles. We would also like to thank our partners: Ex Fabula.

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*"I have a story about me as an individual. In 2015, I was selected by the Business Journal as a Woman of Influence in the category of Innovation. I've been featured a lot, but this is the first time I felt that my story represented the essence of who I am. Often, I find it hard to distinguish myself from my work and people view me as a tied to the community and Milwaukee. This is the first time I was seen as an individual. The story talked about my childhood, growing up and going to Catholic School. In many places in my life, I've had to be 100% authentic because God made me the way I am. Often, my story is mixed in with facades of overcoming, but my story has never been about overcoming or evading anything. My family has always made me feel like I am enough. I joined a new board and they didn't ask for bios. That story was included in my file and it made me proud."*

*"The media should be representative of the city by looking and sounding like the voices of the entire community. the population of the city should drive the media of the city. It should not sound like the people in charge at the media outlets or the reporters."*

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## Executive Summary

The Fellows & Facilitators' Media & Representation facilitated listening circles, a part of our Fellows and Facilitators in partnership with Ex-Fabula took place on May 9, 2018. During the event, participants were asked two questions by Zeidler Center trained facilitators:

1. *What's an example of a media piece or story (advertisement, print, news stories etc.) that you felt did your community justice or represented your story well? How did that portrayal make you feel?*
2. *What's a media portrayal that you think missed the mark and why? How did that portrayal make you feel?*

Participants were also asked to participate in the Connected Conversation. The Connected Conversation gave the following prompt:

*In a perfect world....*

*What would Milwaukee's media look like?*

*What would it show and represent?*

*How would media be supported?*

*What kinds of stories would be told?*

*What kinds of people would tell those stories?*

*What kinds of stories do you want to hear more of?*

The final portion of the listening circle encouraged participants to say parting words. They were asked what was next for them, what they plan to do next, what they want to see, and how they want to represent.

During the first round, most participants wished to see or described stories that depicted accurate and thorough journalism. Participants appreciated journalists or media representations that took the time to interview, research, and fact-check stories. Accuracy in the story, rather than for the story to be positive versus negative in itself was the main concern. Positive news stories were discussed by many participants. Participants enjoyed stories that highlighted positive events in the community. In contrast, some participants found it difficult to name any positive news stories. Some participants mentioned media coverage that did a poor job of discussing an issue or person. The Trayvon Martin case was noted by two participants. Some participants brought up media coverage that presented a balanced perspective on certain issues or people as important. Media coverage that discussed important issues (in general, or to the participant specifically) were mentioned by a few as enjoyable. Additionally, a few others noted specific

journalists who they felt did a good job reporting on specific issues. Finally, a few participants enjoyed positive cultural portrayals and brought up musicians, rappers, and cultural festivals.

During the second round, a common theme was shallow journalism. Many participants felt that some of the media failed to do adequate research and analysis on news stories and failed to educate the audience about issues. Participants were also unhappy with the excessive negativity in the media. The potential sources for negative media and news stories were not explored by participants, but participants disliked how certain groups were misrepresented and how certain issues were sensationalized by the media. One participant believed that the media purposely spun negative stories to retain viewers. Bias was another participant's complaint. Participants wanted more unbiased coverage and disliked how some journalists attempted to spin narratives to fit their own agendas or to fit a political agenda.

During the Connected Conversation, participants were asked to discuss what an ideal Milwaukee media would look like. Many participants wanted to see better representation and more diversity in the news as well as in the newsroom. Participants wished to see better community representation, and stories that offered alternative perspectives. Participants continued to express unhappiness over negativity and bias in the media, to the point that some shared having stopped watching the news due to the constant negativity. Participants discussed the role and influence of consumers on media coverage and bias. In addition, some participants were concerned about the effect of social media on news and mental health, and they also discussed the influence of social media on the news and bias in the media and individuals. Besides, other participants felt the primary objective of the media was to make money, underlining the financial aspects linked to media and representation. The desire for more positive or balanced news coverage was shared among participants. Participants wanted more positive stories about the community and more balanced political reporting. Finally, a few participants discussed the best platforms to share media. Participants felt that digital media was more effective in reaching younger generations. During Parting Words, many participants wished to be more critical of the media and more responsible consumers, more supportive, and more diverse.

**Questions about this dialogue may be directed to:**

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## Listening Circle Analysis

**Question Round One:** *"What's an example of a media piece or story (advertisement, print, news stories etc.) that you felt did your community justice or represented your story well? How did that portrayal make you feel? "*

*"I have several but I will choose an article from 2017 where the writer interviewed three musicians asking them about the creative process. One of the stories of the three which stayed with me and stood out was the one of one who recently passed away. When asked about the creative process he explained it as an "Emergency becoming Articulate" and it gave me a good sense of the process and stayed with me, I felt moved."*

*"The Neighborhood News Series did an article about the Armani neighborhood being given a grant to improve the neighborhood. The kids in the neighborhood were responsible to fix the problem and they control the program. They chose to make the boarded-up houses look more appealing, by painting pictures on boarded- up homes. They chose to paint murals on the border of homes using gold and silver, and they cleaned up the homes as well as track the garbage by the pound that was left at these houses. Neighborhood News did an excellent job at covering the story."*

### 1.1 Thorough & Accurate Reporting

Participants felt stories with thorough and accurate portrayals of the subject best represented their community or story. Participants noted that fact-checking, thorough research, interviews, and thoughtful analysis were factors that constituted a media piece that was representative of local community, a specific issue, or an individual. Not all stories were positive. One participant noted:

*"I read an article that didn't paint the Milwaukee slumlord situation in a positive way, but it was correct and accurate. Issues around slumlords are huge these days. People aren't prosecuted, the courts aren't adequate. The story needed to be told."*

Overall, the group was not concerned if a story was positive or negative but more whether it was accurate or not. Lack of sensationalism was mentioned. Participants appreciated stories that depicted issues or people in a fair and non-exploitative manner. Participants said:

*"[...] when viewing the clips of coverage of the march and speeches I noticed the diversity of voices, and the effort of the media to tell the stories of the immigrants, and to remind viewers about what it would be like to have a day without immigrants."*

*"The media spent enough time at The Bitter Southerner Women's March to get good sound bites. They presented a multifaceted picture in a historical context. They honored African American southerners, acknowledging that they had already marched for so many years. People were represented in a more fair light and it felt good."*

## **1.2 Positive News**

Many participants felt that positive news stories were important to be present in the media in order to represent fully their community. The group shared examples of news stories that put a positive light on their community or issues they valued. Participants shared the following stories:

*"There was one article in particular, where a fire destroyed the venue where a student production was to be performed. The neighborhood pitched in and offered several locals for "The Show To Go On".*

*"While I was in a fraternity we did a lot of work in the community. There was eventually a positive write up about us. We were trying to change the look of fraternities through our community work."*

Positive news coverage is a persistent theme throughout all rounds, as many participants wished to see more positive news stories. In later rounds, participants expressed a degree of disillusion with media outlets due to constant, negative news coverage.

## **1.3 Negative Experience**

Some participants did not have any positive stories that reflected their community or issues they valued. Coverage of the Trayvon Martin case was brought up by several participants. One participant described how the media coverage of the Trayvon Martin case affected his/her son and said, "My teen son was sitting with me and the experience, in my estimation, traumatized my child. To hear how the media can and do vilify the victim." One participant described an incident from his/her home in Atlanta, Georgia and shared the following account:

Like participants in the previous section, participants who described negative news experiences wished to see more positive news coverage of their communities or issues they valued.

## **1.4 Balanced News**

A few participants alluded to balanced news coverage in round 1. The media attention around high school students discussing gun safety was mentioned by two participants. Participants felt that the media reflected the high school students' ability to be articulate and well-informed, and said:



*"Young people have been receiving a lot of media coverage during past four months. They are well-informed about issues related to gun safety and gun regulation, and are able to speak clearly about this issue. We who are adults have a responsibility to listen to these young people with an open mind and an open heart."*

Another participant said he/she was reading alternative news reports about the recent comments made by Kanye West. There was a desire by participants to be informed rather than influenced by the media.

### **1.5 Important Issues**

A few participants described stories that covered important issues. Participants appreciated fair and well-moderated discussions about contentious issues. They shared the following stories:

*"Wisconsin Gazette ran a story about a non-discrimination law our organization passed for transgender students way before Caitlyn Jenner came on the scene. It featured Cudahy and got picked up nationally. Cudahy is a tiny municipality that doesn't get much consideration. It's always nice to hear nice things about what you're doing, especially in education, to have thought leaders moderate discussions that can be contentious."*

### **1.6 Specific Journalists**

Some participants also mentioned specific journalists who wrote stories that reflected the community well. Participants mentioned journalists who covered the African American communities in Milwaukee. Participants said:

*"James Causey has great columns covering the African American community. He's the go-to person to give African Americans a voice that probably would be missed if it weren't for him. He can get the stories that other people outside of the African American community can't get."*

Participants mentioned James Causey and Alan Gorsuk for similar reasons. According to participants, both journalists are insiders in a specific community and display in depth knowledge of issues that plague these communities.

### **1.7 Positive Cultural Portrayals**

Some participants mentioned positive cultural portrayals. Participants brought up specific movies, musicians, or cultural festivals and appreciated positive and multifaceted depictions of their culture. They said:

*"The Black Panther movie portrayed the richness of African history and African culture; the movie accomplished a lot in terms of instilling pride in our African American heritage."*

*"I read a recent piece in the New Yorker about Danny Glover [Donald Glover]. They did a good job not reducing him to one thing (a rapper) but showing him as a multi-talented artist."*

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**Question Round Two:** *"What's a media portrayal that you think missed the mark and why? How did that portrayal make you feel? "*

*"I didn't like how the 17 young people were covered by Fox 6 News with the Florida shooting. I feel like our culture is degenerating when we attack kids who have been hurt."*

## **2.1 Shallow Journalism**

Many participants felt that media portrayals did not explore stories and issues enough. Minimal perspectives, bias, lack of detail, misinterpretation of statements or facts were all mentioned during this second round. Participants made statements such as:

*"The camera is like a fire hose, and it just gets the highlight bits and pieces. I look at alternative sites to get different coverage and different perspectives so that I have a better and bigger picture of the entire story. More conversation is needed and better representation."*

*"As a new writer, I've also done article about things like community protests. It is easy to do a surface level story – to do what is easy and not give the context."*

Three subthemes emerged. Participants shared stories that lacked research and analysis of an issue, stories that failed to educate the audience on issues, and participants felt media was only interested in views rather than investigative journalism.

### **2.1.1 Stories: Analysis & Research**

Poor research and lack of analysis were major issues for participants. One participant believed that the election of Donald Trump in November 2016 was a result of "sound bites that generated emotional responses" and was potentially facilitated by "News reporters and commentators fail[ing] to provide any in-depth analysis of candidates and their qualifications, or on their position on issues". Other participants relayed instances of cultural insensitivity due to poor research. A participant shared a story about Milwaukee Magazine promoting fashion week, and the magazine had a model pose in front of a street mural depicting a black man in an orange jumpsuit. The participant said:

*"The problem I had with it is not knowing the history, the insensitivity. The model was Caucasian, blonde hair. The photo took away from the art and made it a backdrop. I see a disconnect between communities that should be represented and who tells their story. When confronted, Milwaukee Magazine said, "we didn't know." They didn't take the opportunity to know. There were no checks, no balances. That's what harmed me as a person of color and person in the media and what I put on display."*

In addition, other participants felt that sometimes, more superficial coverages were linked to an issue of time; underlining that it is at times faster and easier for media outlets to interview people they know:

*"It is easy to amplify the voices of people you have relationships with –to go the easy route. I want to try to seek out people we don't have relationships with."*

*"We have time crunch issues in the media. It is easier to go to the speakers you already know about topics. There is a cultural relevance and trust – people can be nervous or fearful to talk to you. There is hesitation on their part."*

#### 2.1.2 Issues: Education & Insight

Like poor research and lack of analysis in media coverage, some participants criticized the media's lack of education and insight about issues. Several participants who fell into this theme felt that media was ignoring real issues.

Other participants argued that the media preferred to pursue negative news stories rather than educate the audience on issues. A participant referred to immigrants fleeing violence in Central American, and said:

*"The news reports regarding the caravan of mothers and their children fleeing unsafe conditions in Central America often focused on speculation and untrue statements about the character of these travelers. The media totally missed the opportunity to provide education about the state of life in countries where drug cartels and criminal activity reign and people fear for their lives. The media also totally missed an opportunity to educate viewers about the distinction between immigrants and refugees."*

#### 2.1.3 Views

One participant shared feeling that part of the media is overly concerned with viewers numbers (Negative coverage and sensationalism are themes that arise in the connected conversation and that while be covered later in the analysis). Journalistic slant and the preference for negative coverage may be factors that increase views. One participant felt that media outlets were only concerned with retaining viewers, as can be seen in his/her testimony:

*"The news coverage about the Primary Election in West Virginia over the past two weeks and on election night itself reveals that the focus of the news media was to retain viewers, rather than provide accurate reporting. So, clips for the past two weeks included clips of voters who planned to vote for a candidate who had spent time in prison for his role in the death of 29 miners. However, there were only a few voters who supported this candidate, which became clear on election night; this candidate had no chance to win, even in his own small area of West Virginia. Yet viewers stayed tuned in because of the speculation that such a person could win. Retaining viewers seems like the only goal."*

While only one participant mentions the media only caring about views, other participants in later rounds felt the media sensationalized, misrepresented, and twisted issues or people.

## **2.2 Negative Coverage**

Several participants gave examples of unfair negative media coverage. Participants mentioned that media spun stories to portray issues or people in a negative light, expressed frustration at how the local community and issues were depicted, and how they did not consume news because of constant negativity.

*"There was a recent story that I felt the media took the wrong way and spun it into a negative thing. The quote was misconstrued to make the woman look like she was attacking another woman when she wasn't criticizing anyone, she was actually pointing out facts. I felt like it was incredibly sexist and missed the intent of the statements she was making. The media portrays things at a circus level rather than reading through the lines."*

*"The media is made up of people and everybody has an opinion. What bugs the heck out of me is when they only focus on what's bad. That's why I don't watch the news anymore."*

### **2.2.1 Misrepresentation**

Participants felt the media negatively misrepresented certain groups or issues. Several participants shared their frustration with how some topics or communities can be misrepresented, such as the LGBTQ+ community. Other participants mentioned the negative view of Milwaukee, or negative cultural stereotypes perpetrated by reality television. Participants shared the following:

*"I get angry about how LGBTQ people are portrayed. There are disparities. There was a column written about food and securities on college campuses. They said bisexual students are the hungriest and it was questioned if that was because they are cohorting with both sexes. I would like to see the disparities represented better."*

*"I have 2 friends who moved to North Carolina. They immediately texted me to say that when people heard they were from Milwaukee all they know about was drugs and prostitution. Even at my college all people knew about Milwaukee was negative. It is so sad when people who do not live in a diverse area only hear negative things. It demonizes Milwaukee."*

*"Reality TV shows, like Hip Hop and other dramas, cast negative images of African American people, especially African American women, who are often shown arguing and fighting, over a man or over a position. We need to separate reality tv from reality itself and portray women and men of all races and cultures and backgrounds in positive roles."*

### **2.2.2 Sensationalism**

Sensationalism was another point of contention for participants. Like misrepresentation, participants disliked that the media takes issues or events out of context to highlight the negative. Participants viewed sensationalism as a deliberate attempt by the media to negatively present a story. Some participants who fell into the negative theme category stopped watching news for reasons like sensational reporting. Participants said:

*"There was TV coverage of the MPS school board meeting. There was a sound byte of a school board member yelling "Go to hell!" It was ugly so they reported on it. I know why – 'tune in at 10!' – it isn't about the kids, education, it is just about pettiness."*

*"A graduate school counselor and mental health center created a healthy masculinity program. The discussions around what it means to be masculine was supposed to be fun. The article about it said that masculinity is under attack. And, because the program was associated with the mental health center, the article made it appear that masculinity was being called a mental health problem. Instead of the local paper interviewing involved students they chose to go with the negative story."*

## **2.3 Bias**

Participants wanted more unbiased media. One participant felt disconnected from the news and wished to find sources that were more objective. Two participants recognized the need for the audience to be more objective. Two subthemes that emerged in this theme were slanted news coverage and political bias.

### **2.3.1 Slanted News Coverage**

Participants shared instances where they felt the media actively tried to shape the narrative of a story. Several participants discussed Ted Perry's coverage of Martin Luther King Day on Fox News 6. Another participant took his/her kids to a protest. His/her kids were surprised

at how calm the protesters were because of the negative media portrayal that protestors often receive, as can be seen in the following testimony:

*"Act 10 led to many protests in Madison. I took our young children and they were very impressed with peacefulness of the experiences and the kindness of the protestors. Unfortunately, the news media showed very little of the positive efforts. Protestors were portrayed as angry people and those clips were taken totally out of context. The news coverage was filled with inconsistencies, labeling, and more importantly, a real lack of local voices."*

### 2.3.2 Political Bias

A few participants specifically mentioned political bias as problematic in media coverage. One participant felt that media only portrays one side to appeal to their audience. Another participant said that the media's election prediction that Hillary Clinton would win was a mistake, underlining that biases or prediction lacking factual strength can influence masses in the short term:

*"Media that covers politics portrays only one side. For example, CNN, MSNBC, and FOX NEWS each have their own audience; the conversations on these shows reveals a lack of care for the common good. We are each in our own silos. We need to find a way to connect with each other across our differences."*

*"When the media made the prediction that Hillary Clinton would win the election the impact was that it kept people from the poles. It made me feel sad. I think it was one of the biggest media missteps..."*

**Connected Conversation** - *In a perfect world what would Milwaukee's media look like? What would it show and represent? How would media be supported? What kinds of stories would be told? What kinds of people would tell those stories? What kinds of stories do you want to hear more of?"*

*"It has been a privilege for me to grow up in a diverse environment. Media representation is the foundation for younger kids – They need to see people who look like them."*

*"I'd like us to keep in mind one person's truth may not be another person's truth. We should consider what is important to us."*

### 3.1 Better Representation & Diversity

In the connected conversation, many participants wanted to see better representation of the community and more diversity in newsrooms, community representation, and news stories. Some participants discussed diversity in advertising. One participant felt conflicted because he/she did not enjoy consumerism but wanted to support diversity in ads. In contrast, another participant shared that the advertising company he/she worked for was predominately white. When his/her company moved from Brookfield to Milwaukee, people in his/her company were scared. This participant said, " advertising is very white; advertising is putting people in a very terrible light."

In round 1, participants enjoyed media pieces that portrayed different groups fairly. Participants criticized media stories that misrepresented groups in round 2. Representation and misrepresentation continue to be an on-going theme in the connected conversation. It was clear through participants' testimonies that minorities such as the African American Community or the LGBTQ+ community feel misrepresented and wish to be better presented by the media.

#### 3.1.1 Community Representation

A major subtheme of Better Representation & Diversity was improved community representation. Many participants said that local media should be more representative of Milwaukee. Participants wanted media outlets to effectively capture local voice and said things like:

*"The media should be representative of the city by looking and sounding like the voices of the entire community."*

*"I think Milwaukee should look like Milwaukee and that includes the sounds and voices that represent the city."*

#### 3.1.2 Newsroom

Newsroom diversity was another common subtheme. Participants spoke about the importance of diversity in the newsroom to create more diverse news stories, as can be seen in the following testimonies:

*"There are only 3 black writers on the paper. That is too few to cover the black community. That is not to say that you have to be black to cover minority issues, but people gravitate to what they are comfortable with."*

*"The same is true for women – women need to be in positions of power in the newsroom."*

One downside that participants noted was shrinking newsrooms. One participant said "It is a paradox – we need diversity and newsroom staff is chopped." Participants questioned how newsrooms could be diversified if they were shrinking.

### 3.1.3 Stories

Some participants noted that media stories needed to have different perspectives. Participants felt diversity in news stories was important to help educate, connect, and understand people of different backgrounds. Participants said:

*"Yes, we need stories about different cultures and neighborhoods as told by the people who live there. I know there are a lot of refugees and immigrants in the Milwaukee area but I don't know anything about them."*

*"HOW stories are being told is very Eurocentric. We need more multicultural, creative aesthetic choices in how stories are being told."*

## 3.2 Negative/Biased News

Negative or biased news was discussed among participants in the connected conversations. Participants were critical of the media's constant negativity. Participants said:

*"The negative things are what generates a money. The public is not being exposed to intellectual things it's been watered down as if we can't or don't have the ability to understand."*

Some participants stopped watching the news because of the constant negative coverage. Criticism of negative media news coverage and portrayals have been consistent themes throughout each round.

## 3.3 Consumer Responsibility

Consumer responsibility was discussed among participants. Some participants noted that consumers were responsible in media coverage as well and argued that consumers had to be more discerning. One participant said, "There's a lot of positive out there, you just need to focus on it." Other participants felt that people refuse to listen to differing points of views, social media exacerbated personal bias, and social and digital media sheltered people from challenging positions. Participants shared the following thoughts:

*"I think we need to be respectful as consumers. It's not the job of the media. I think it's on us to be more savvy and not be in our own little bubbles. There's so much media that we can*



*choose what we want to consume and step outside our communities. Maybe find a new outlet to pick up. Then do the research if you don't know something. "*

*"Much of media is self-selection. We tend to keep reading about the things we agree with and are sympathetic to."*

### **3.4 Social Media**

Social Media was another point of discussion. Participants noted the influence of social media on the news and expressed concerns about social media. Participants were concerned about social media's influence on the news. One participant felt that social media fed into personal bias, because it allows people to consume news that only aligns with their viewpoints. Another participant wanted more positive news and to reduce the influence of social media.

*"Social media is a formula and it feeds off of likes so, it is a mirror of your own viewpoints and you end up unable to accept or talk about differences."*

*"We need much more positive news; and we need to find a way to reduce the influence of social media on our news cycle."*

A few participants expressed concerns about social media. One participant was concerned about the impact of social media on the next generation's ability to share stories. Another participant noted the impact of social media on mental health.

### **3.5 Financial**

Some participants felt that the media was primarily concerned with making money and attributed certain depictions as financially driven, as can be seen in the following testimony:

*"My professor asked us when I was in school the very first day what is the purpose of media. His answer was to make money and to sell ads."*

Other participants talked about how consumers pay for news. One participant discussed how certain media outlets require a certain amount of money to read the news. Another participant discussed how newspapers will go the way of subscriptions.

### **3.6 Positive or Balanced News Coverage**

A few participants wished the media would have more positive or balanced reporting. Positive stories about the community and more balanced political views were noted by some participants. Participants said:

*"I wish the media would cover and highlight the positive things that are going on the counter balance all the negative things that are happening. What gets the media's attention is*

*what it's clicked on online, gets the most traffic, and gets the most views is what is aired and focused on. We need more balance in the media."*

### 3.7 Platform

Two participants talked about the best method to deliver media. The participants determined where an individual accessed media was generational. Participants said that younger generations were more likely to consume media on digital platforms like social media. Participants shared the following statements:

*"Print media just isn't going to reach younger audiences. Stories need to be available on many different platforms."*

*"I think the younger people use social media and media on-line to reach a larger audience."*

**Parting Word** - *"To close our time together, say a word or phrase that represents what's the next step for you? What will you do next? What do you want to see? How do you want to represent?"*

*"Read watch with a critical eye. Listen period listened to seek alternative views and question authority. Views are just that your views. Truth is based on your perspective as well. We need to adopt a holistic view. Step out from self. Assumptions hurt. Educate yourself on your views and others and why you think a certain way."*

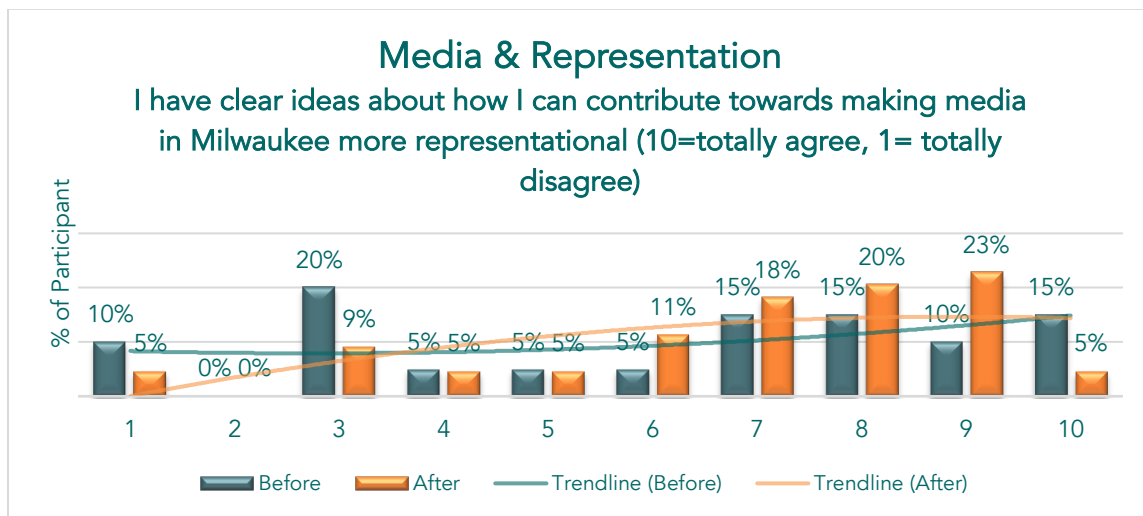
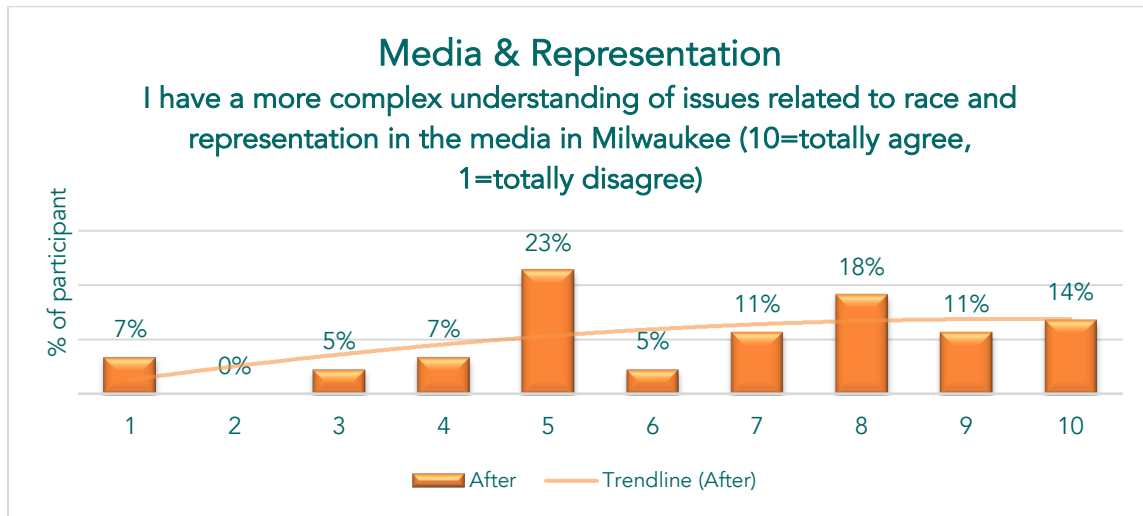
*"As a filmmaker, with everything on social media, misunderstandings happen because we abbreviate. I want to let my portrayals linger. Let deeper, more complex things exist rather*

Many participants pledged to be more critical of media. Participants agreed to listen more, do more research, and find alternative viewpoints. Consumer responsibility has been a common theme throughout the rounds. Participants were critical of media portrayals but recognized the role consumers play in news sharing. Participants shared:

Other participants expressed a desire to be more supportive. Participants wished to connect with more Black authors, share better stories, and be welcoming/trusting. Participants gave the following parting words:

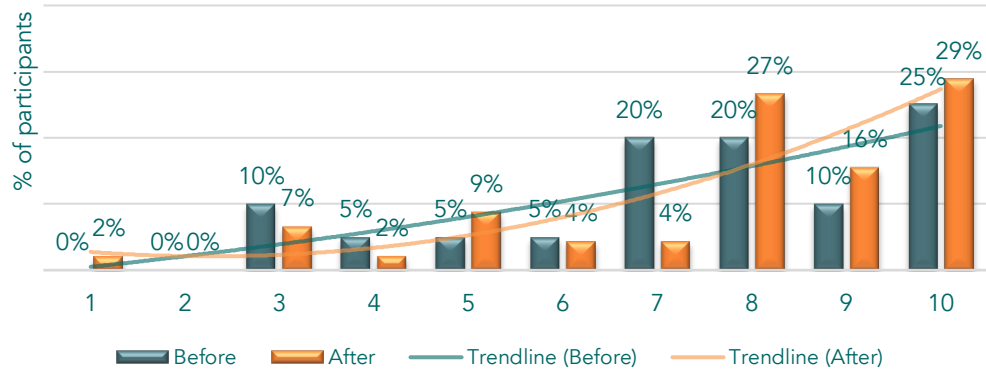
Two participants wished to be more diverse in their media consumption and the people they interacted with. Both participants wished to hear new perspectives and have a more open dialogue with people in their community.

## Feedback Forms



## Media & Representation

I can effect positive change as a creator and consumer of media (10=totally agree, 1=totally disagree)



**Question Round One:** *“What’s an example of a media piece or story (advertisement, print, news stories etc.) that you felt did your community justice or represented your story well? How did that portrayal make you feel? ”*

### 1.1 Thorough & Accurate Reporting

- I consider Milwaukee my community. I currently, reside in Mequon, I was drawn to an article that I recently read in The Milwaukee Journal / Sentinel, where the reporter interviewed all the persons that lived in the area he was focusing in on. I appreciate the thoroughness, and diligence of the author.
- My story is about me. I was recently featured in a profile by The Business Journal. It was the first time I experienced a periodical that provided real information, which captured my “Authentic Self”
- When a local educator passed away suddenly the media did a good job by interviewing the students. They all spoke very highly of how this man touched their lives and they had all been accepted into colleges from his help.
- Three artists were interviewed about how their creative process works. It caught my attention and I liked reading about how an emergency brings about a good story and creativity.
- There was an article written about my work and the journalist fact checked and was thorough. I felt really proud of that.
- I read the Sunday tab section and it covers its covers authors. It is very educational and authentic.
- I define community as the community I grew up in, Milwaukee. I grew up off of 36th and Capital in a transitioning neighborhood. Now, I live in a different neighborhood, Mequon. I would describe it as white and different from where I grew up. There was a piece in the newspaper and what drew me in was that A.O. Smith was featured in it. It talked about lost jobs. Like the speaker, James, talked about, it interviewed people instead of data. It was a five-day series that talked to individual people and it highlighted stories about generational experiences. It made me think a lot about my roots. Your memories growing up are different and you compare it to adult life and look at things differently.
- I have a story about me as an individual. In 2015, I was selected by the Business Journal as a Woman of Influence in the category of Innovation. I’ve been featured a lot, but this is the first time I felt that my story represented the essence of who I am. Often, I find it hard to distinguish myself from my work and people view me as a tied to the community and Milwaukee. This is the first time I was seen as an individual. The story talked about my childhood, growing up and going to Catholic School. In many places in my life, I’ve had to be 100% authentic because God made me the way I am. Often, my story is mixed in with facades of overcoming, but my story has never been about overcoming or evading anything. My family has always made me feel like I am enough. I joined a new board and they didn’t ask for bios. That story was included in my file and it made me proud.

- An example that affected me personally, the community, and nationally was a series by Meg Kissinger on mental illness. Meg Kissinger was talking about her brother with mental illness – he suffered from schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and several other things at some time. It was personal because my youngest (of three) was diagnosed with bipolar, even though she went through life successfully. Then, my oldest was diagnosed with bipolar. I needed and wanted to hear someone else. The stigma around mental illness was and still is strong. I felt normal, comfortable, and didn't feel by myself. Her last series resonated. I volunteered with the Grand Avenue Club and worked with people who experience mental illness and it made me think of more ways I can get involved, the community, and what we can do. The article was informative, compassionate, and accurate. We need to do a better job of understanding people who experience mental illness.
- I dislike news media because of its biased portrayal of news. (NOTE: Redirected to comment on a positive media piece). I listen to NPR. One good story that appeared recently was the story about assessed values of homes in Milwaukee.
- Voces de Frontera organize a DAY WITHOUT IMMIGRANTS on May 1st every year. This event includes a march and speeches. This year, the event was held in Waukesha rather than Milwaukee because the sheriff of Waukesha County has agreed to use his department to help ICE in rounding up immigrants. The large contingent of marchers attracted wide media coverage. I was one of the people who marched and then was also interviewed. Later, when viewing the clips of coverage of the march and of the speeches I noticed the diversity of voices, and the effort of the media to tell the stories of the immigrants, and to remind viewers about what it would be like to have a day without immigrants.
- I read an article that didn't paint the Milwaukee slumlord situation in a positive way, but it was correct and accurate. Issues around slumlords are huge these days. People aren't prosecuted, the courts aren't adequate. The story needed to be told.
- A WPR Project – Beyond the Ballot. It interviewed community members at community events, expos – it was very open. We asked people a set of 6 questions about how they felt about the election. We created landing pages so people saw all of the information.
- I was part of a United Way initiative to lower rates of infant mortality in communities of people of color. My team was wondering how to get things to the media – so often they just want to feature sensational stories of people co-sleeping with their child. That is an easy story to tell. But recently the news featured a UW staff member who had lost her child, and I was pleasantly surprised at the good questions they asked her. It was not exploitative at all.
- I read a short article about ACE trauma. It gave context and history. It gave little nuggets of information and ways we could take manageable action. It made me feel empowered.
- The media spent enough time at The Bitter Southerner Women's March to get good sound bites. They presented a multifaceted picture in a historical context. They honored African American southerners, acknowledging that they had already marched for so many years. People were represented in a more fair light and it felt good.
- FemFest flyers had many multicultural faces represented. I am just looking for a good place that honors women and this seemed to be a fit.

- The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel has been reporting on issues in Milwaukee from the 1960's and 70's as they relate to housing, crime and poverty today. Learning more about key figures like Malcolm X and Commandos was like a history lesson for me too.
- I watched the documentary of 53206 and learned about the impact of incarceration on men and families. That had not been talked about in the news. It really opened my eyes to what people go through. I heard hype before the documentary first aired but not much after...
- I like the pieces written about the Performing Arts Community such as the reviews of the shows and when the writer appreciates the details and acknowledges those working behind the scenes. I like when the writer appreciates the process that makes me feel good.
- I have several but I will choose an article from 2017 where the writer interviewed three musicians asking them about the creative process. One of the stories of the three which stayed with me and stood out was the one of one who recently passed away. When asked about the creative process he explained it as an "Emergency becoming Articulate" and it gave me a good sense of the process and stayed with me, I felt moved.
- Last year there was an organization who had to write about the media and the organization chose to write about one of the pieces of my work on "Mental Health". Several of them interviewed me and I felt appreciated that my work was appreciated.
- Positive News
- I identify Shorewood as my community as well as the Campus of UW-Milwaukee. I enjoy reading articles that highlight student success. There was one article in particular, where a fire destroyed the venue where a student production was to be performed. The neighborhood pitched in and offered several locals for "The Show To Go On"
- I don't have a specific instance, but when media portrays good things positive things happen in the community.
- Critics who are able to represent the artist, performers, and others behind the scenes make for good news.
- While I was in a fraternity we did a lot of work in the community. There was eventually a positive write up about us. We were trying to change the look of fraternities through our community work.
- The Neighborhood News Series did a article about the Armani neighborhood being given a grant to improve the neighborhood. The kids in the neighborhood were responsible fix the problem and they control the program. They chose to make the boarded-up houses look more appealing, by painting pictures on boarded- up homes. They chose to paint murals on the border of homes using gold and silver, and they cleaned up the homes as well as track the garbage by the pound that was left at these houses. Neighborhood News did a excellent job at covering the story.
- I'm a professor at UW-Milwaukee. I live in Shorewood but can't think about stories about either. UWM received R1 (Research 1) status and the only other university in the state with that status is UW-Madison. I appreciate stories about students or faculty doing well, especially given some of the hostility towards the university (i.e. media surrounding budget cuts). An example of a positive, student story was a story about a fire. The theater burned down last year when they were about to do a play, but the students still did the play with a space that was donated. The students were able to do work, despite the tragedy.

- The Milwaukee Business Journal highlighted the African American Chamber of Commerce in a really positive way. I felt good being a part of the coverage. It will help with recruiting new members in the future
- I appreciate Milwaukee festivals. All backgrounds are represented and presented positively despite divisions.
- I enjoy when things and stories are presented in a positive manner and from a relatable position to all.
- There was a story a couple of months ago about a counselor from one of our MPS schools that passed away recently. The story spoke about how the counselor interacted with the students, how he touched their lives, etc. I felt really good about that portrayal in the newspaper and media.
- There was an article written about my college fraternity when we took on a project out in the community and the article was really nice and I was proud to have something positive said about the fraternity.

## 1.2 Negative Experience

- I viewed a Fox news report on Trayvon Martin and there was so much vitriol directed at the victim. My teen son was sitting with me and the experience, in my estimation, traumatized my child to here how the media can and do vilify the victim, especially if the person is a "Global Majority Person"
- I currently reside in Atlanta, GA and I live in a county where the school district lost the "ACCREDITATION" and in the news it portrayed as a very negative situation and the local stations kept "LOOPING" the broadcast, similar to the 911 broadcasts. The continuous looping which indicated such statements that all the students lives would be ruined. Currently the schools in the district are now among the top 30 schools in the US. I wish, that the same local tv stations will loop the the positive like they did with the negative.
- I can't think singularly, so I have three examples. The first is with the Boys & Girls. I worked there in '91 as a helper in the Arts department. I was a student at John Muir, which was also in the 20/20 expose. It was horrible. The second was when Fox 6 News was describing my neighborhood, near 26th & Capital – actually, 24th Place & Vienna. It made me afraid of my own neighborhood and I shouldn't be. The third was Trayvon Martin. I went to New York and took my kids (6-month-old; 16-year-old; 9-year-old) on a road trip that resembled the chitterling circuit. We went to TGI Fridays in New York in Times Square. It was during the Trayvon trial and George Zimmerman was found not guilty. My son cried, and it hurt me; I said I was going to get them. We then went to DC, stayed at the Sheraton hotel, and it was the 100-year anniversary of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated. We went to the museums and memorials and that changed my perspective.
- I actually don't live in Milwaukee, I live in Atlanta, Georgia so my story is from there. Clayton County is predominantly African-American, middle-class. About 5 years ago, the public schools there lost accreditation. It was completely political and had nothing to do with the kids. The story was constantly looping on the news, literally looping every thirty minutes. It trashed the county's reputation, which was not that great to begin with. Now, 2 of the schools in Clayton County are in the top 30 schools in the country. It was never that bad, but people



got caught up in politics. When it was negative, the news was nonstop, and I hope the positive runs as much as the negative. I'm an editor so I know why the media does what it does, but I don't like it.

### 1.3 Balanced News

- I have been listening to alternative reports about the meaning behind Kanye West's comments on 400 years of slavery. I heard a comment that he was really speaking about white people gaining freedom after 400 years of slavery, meaning the slavery white people experience because of their role in enslaving black people. I don't know if this is true. It seems possible.
- I am impressed with the high school students from our school who organized the 50 mile walk from Madison to Janesville in support of Gun Safety issues. The media from across the USA covered their walk, and their speeches, too. The young people who spoke were very well informed, articulate, and polished in their presentations. The news media coverage reflected this, too.
- Young people have been receiving a lot of media coverage during past four months. They are well-informed about issues related to gun safety and gun regulation, and are able to speak clearly about this issue. We who are adults have a responsibility to listen to these young people with an open mind and an open heart.

### 1.4 Important Issues

- There was an article in The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, with the by line by Meg Kissinger~ on the issue of Mental Health. It was personal to me because I have children that are challenged with Mental Health Challenges. In the article, which was focused Bipolar and other mental health challenges, it helped me to see Mental Illness in a new light, despite the stigma associated with mental illness.
- Wisconsin Gazette ran a story about a non-discrimination law our organization passed for transgender students way before Caitlyn Jenner came on the scene. It featured Cudahy and got picked up nationally. Cudahy is a tiny municipality that doesn't get much consideration. It's always nice to hear nice things about what you're doing, especially in education, to have thought leaders moderate discussions that can be contentious.

### 1.5 Specific Journalists

- Journal Sentinel has two African American writers. James Causey has great columns covering the African American community. He's the go-to person to give African Americans a voice that probably would be missed if it weren't for him. He can get the stories that other people outside of the African American community can't get. It's hard because he can't cover every story that people would like so it's a blessing and a curse all at once.
- This is a challenging question. I work in education, a field that's wildly complex. Most of the stories miss the mark. If I had to pick anything, I'd pick pieces from Alan Gorsuk. Stories that pit public vs charter schools are not helpful to kids. We need better stories.

## 1.6 Positive Cultural Portrayals

- The BLACK PANTHER movie portrayed the richness of African history and African culture; the movie accomplished a lot in terms of instilling pride in our African American heritage; it was the highest grossing movie and it received excellent media coverage.
  - I read a recent piece in the New Yorker about Danny Glover [Donald Glover]. They did a good job not reducing him to one thing (a rapper) but showing him as a multi-talented artist. It felt nice to see a positive portrait.
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**Question Round Two:** *“What’s a media portrayal that you think missed the mark and why? How did that portrayal make you feel? ”*

## 2.1 Shallow Journalism

- There was a recent story that I felt the media took the wrong way and spun it into a negative thing. The quote was misconstrued to make the woman look like she was attacking another woman when she wasn’t criticizing anyone, she was actually pointing out facts. I felt like it was incredibly sexist and missed the intent of the statements she was making. The media portrays things at a circus level rather than reading through the lines.
- In my experience as a writer, when a Caucasian child is hurt or has an issue there is an entire blog about this child, but when it is an African American child there's barely any facts or even a paragraph about the child.
- Behind the scenes reporting is just as important as what is seen. I can recall working with a co-worker and telling him about the story and he asked if the person was dead yet and if he wasn't he didn't have any time for it the story. The camera is like a fire hose, and it just gets the highlight bits and pieces. I look at alternative sites to get different coverage and different perspectives so that I have a better and bigger picture of the entire story. More conversation is needed and better representation.
- The Journal did a really small story about a meeting about gun control, that my daughter was involved in. It was cursory – 1200 characters - and you didn’t come away with any real understanding of what actually happened at the event.
- As a new writer, I’ve also done article about things like community protests. It is easy to do a surface level story – to do what is easy and not give the context.
- I have been involved with a Mental Health organization that has been focused on Kids n crisis series since the Mass shootings. I find they don’t share the huge disparity in funding for Mental Health. The information is difficult to find through media and researching but I have experienced firsthand the effects of limited funding has had on the community.

### 2.1.1 Stories: Analysis & Research

- A very recent portrayal and representation was yesterday when the new African-American festival was introduced in media, Black Fest MKE. It is coming back to the Summerfest

grounds and seems to bring back a version of the African world Festival. I care about arts and culture and the representation of the new festival did not do a good job of sharing the history of the African World Festival, which fell to the wayside because of finances. It didn't do a good job of connecting the dots. Also, the new festival is the same date as Bronzeville, which I am personally involved in. I think it was a missed opportunity, a missed opportunity to celebrate the other things in the community specific to African-American arts and culture. The source of this information was a press event and the story followed the press event. You could also read the story, scroll, and then click to watch the press event so I saw the Board of Directors and representation for the festival. The people behind the new festival are peers, which made me more upset because they could have picked up the phone and called.

- The election of November 2016 could not have happened had news media folk focused on investigative journalism and reporting; instead they focused on sound bites that generated emotional responses. News reporters and commentators failed to provide any in-depth analysis of candidates and their qualifications, or on their position on issues. Further, news media folks turn from serious analysis of important news, like withdrawal from the Iran Nuclear Deal, to less serious stories about the president's personal life. Again, there is no real effort to inform the public or to analyze issues with more depth.
- It is easy to amplify the voices of people you have relationships with –to go the easy route. I want to try to seek out people we don't have relationships with.
- We have time crunch issues in the media. It is easier to go to the speakers you already know about topics. There is a cultural relevance and trust – people can be nervous or fearful to talk to you. There is hesitation on their part.
- There was a Milwaukee Magazine piece promoting fashion week. They included a picture that showed a model posing in front of a street painting in Black Cat Alley of male of color in an orange jumpsuit, which creates an automatic association with imprisonment. It was already a controversial piece of art. Originally the man had shackles on his hands, which were removed.
- The problem I had with it is not knowing the history, the insensitivity. The model was Caucasian, blonde hair. The photo took away from the art and made it a backdrop.
- I see a disconnect between communities that should be represented and who tells their story.
- When confronted, Milwaukee Magazine said, "we didn't know." They didn't take the opportunity to know. There were no checks, no balances. That's what harmed me as a person of color and person in the media and what I put on display.

### 2.1.2 *Issues: Education & Insight*

- Recently there was an announcement for a new festival. . . "BLK MKE" however; the press release and the persons at the press conference, glossed over the history of THE AFRICAN WORLD FESTIVAL by not providing a historical context and giving credit where credit was due, it upset me, because I firmly believe that due should be provided to the predecessor.
- The news reports regarding the caravan of mothers and their children fleeing unsafe conditions in Central America often focused on speculation and untrue statements about the character of these travelers. The media totally missed the opportunity to provide education about the state of life in countries where drug cartels and criminal activity reign and people

fear for their lives. The media also totally missed an opportunity to educate viewers about the distinction between immigrants and refugees.

- I don't know if there was negative intent but, I know black men who have been killed and there has not been much information provided – There has been so much room for interpretation. In one situation a father killed his son and that is all that was reported. I knew them and the fact the father was diagnosed with PTSD. The media needed to give more insight like this to the public
- When there are mass shootings, op eds are written about gun control for mental health. I've seen the effects on the funding cuts on mental health. That's what we should be taking about.
- I don't have a specific portrayal, but can speak about newspapers and media in general, in these times. Newspapers take the same topic, 3-7 writers talk about the same topic in different ways. There don't need to be as many when there are five other things going on that people need to hear about. A specific example is Stormy Daniels. There are 3, 5, 10 people talking about it, but we are missing a lot of other information.
- Media that covers politics portrays only one side. For example, CNN, MSNBC, and FOX NEWS each have their own audience; the conversations on these shows reveals a lack of care for the common good. We are each in our own silos. We need to find a way to connect with each other across our differences. Another thing that troubles me is the lack of effort in Madison to address issues that really matter; the news media reports on the lesser, or even meaningless bills that get passed, without informing citizens of more significant bills that do not even get a hearing.
- Trump was in the Milwaukee area and was supposed to be talking about values. I believe the media got the message wrong when they chose to focus on a Trump protester standing on an American flag. Why is THIS the story?

### 2.1.3 Views

- The news coverage about the Primary Election in West Virginia over the past two weeks and on election night itself reveals that the focus of the news media was to retain viewers, rather than provide accurate reporting. So, clips for the past two weeks included clips of voters who planned to vote for a candidate who had spent time in prison for his role in the death of 29 miners. However, there were only a few voters who supported this candidate, which became clear on election night; this candidate had no chance to win, even in his own small area of West Virginia. Yet viewers stayed tuned in because of the speculation that such a person could win. Retaining viewers seems like the only goal.
- Negative Coverage
- The media is made up of people and everybody has an opinion. What bugs the heck out of me is when they only focus on what's bad. That's why I don't watch the news anymore.
- There was a recent story that I felt the media took the wrong way and spun it into a negative thing. The quote was misconstrued to make the woman look like she was attacking another woman when she wasn't criticizing anyone, she was actually pointing out facts. I felt like it was incredibly sexist and missed the intent of the statements she was making. The media portrays things at a circus level rather than reading through the lines.

- Anything about Milwaukee is negative. Promoting the shootings won't stop it. I'd like to see them report about solutions.
- I didn't like how the 17 young people were covered by Fox 6 News with the Florida shooting. I feel like our culture is degenerating when we attack kids who have been hurt.
- Stories about the university that are rather negative, such as stories about extra money that the university wastes. I can't think of a story that has offended me, particularly. I guess, a lot of the stories about student protests. The university passed a rule on free speech and the media makes the university sound left wing and like conservatives have no say. I disagree with those stories.
- In the past 6 weeks the Health Commissioner resigned. 1-2 weeks later there was an article about him but it did not talk about his work at the Health Department. The article discussed PayDay loans that he had out. I think negative press makes it difficult for a black man to be in a leadership position. It didn't make me feel good about Milwaukee. I am concerned that the article will follow him.
- I think one thing that should be understood is that the media is made up of people and I seriously had to stop watching the news because the first twenty minutes of headlines are negative in my opinion and I do not think it has to be that way.
- I am frustrated as I see and read so many negative things reported about Milwaukee. I am frustrated as to how the media portrays us to the world such as highest rates of Evictions, Incarceration and that infamous zip code 53206.
- I remember a story from a high school newspaper regarding a staff departure the story about the departure was positive/negative. The students did lots of work gathering information for story and it turned out very critical regarding the parting staff member and his thoughts on the article was that the news article made him liable. "I am pretty sure you have me liable".
- Following up from my earlier statement, about the Meg Kissinger~ article on Mental health also; made me confused and sad.

### 2.2.1 Misrepresentation

- I get angry about how LGBTQ people are portrayed. There are disparities. There was a column written about food and securities on college campuses. They said bisexual students are the hungriest and it was questioned if that was because they are cohorting with both sexes. I would like to see the disparities represented better.
- When I am not there, I don't know whether the media portrayal is accurate or not, in cases of an altercation or crime. Sometimes, newspaper and television use words in portrayals of altercations, crimes, any interaction with police, that make assumptions about people. They toss out the word mental illness but don't even know the person. It is used as a catch phrase to lump people who have done something wrong, when society doesn't provide enough help. It makes me feel confused, sad; it makes me think what can I do to help? Are we doing this segment of society any favors by how casually we say he/she has mental health issues? What are we as a community doing?
- I have 2 friends who moved to North Carolina. They immediately texted me to say that when people heard they were from Milwaukee all they know about was drugs and prostitution.

Even at my college all people knew about Milwaukee was negative. It is so sad when people who do not live in a diverse area only hear negative things. It demonizes Milwaukee.

- There is one recent piece I think the media got wrong and that was the Annual White House Dinner jokes and comments by the comedian. Her comment regarding House Secretary “The perfect Smoky Eye” was taken as criticism her character leading one to believe it was frustrated sexism and misinterpreted the intent of comedian’s statement.
- For me I get upset with LGBTQ disparities there was a column recently on Food insecurities on college campuses. Their conclusion was Bi-sexual individuals disparities was because they were having sex with both genders and not acquiring food.
- Reality TV shows, like Hip Hop and other dramas, cast negative images of African American people, especially African American women, who are often shown arguing and fighting, over a man or over a position. We need to separate reality tv from reality itself, and portray women and men of all races and cultures and backgrounds in positive roles.
- It generally bothers me that journalists are portrayed poorly because people don’t like the story being told. A former journalist from Journal Sentinel is founder of #MeToo. She didn’t fool around, got to the point. Someone accused her of being a feminist based on the story she wrote. The reporter agreed that if feminism meant calling out sexual harassment, then, yes, she was a feminist. That was later turned against her to portray her as not being objective.
- We all come to a story with baggage. But professionalism overcomes this. Sometimes reporting can be dismissed because of who the reporter is. We should know that no one can be truly objective, but that doesn’t mean that they can’t be professional.

### 2.2.2 Sensationalism

- There was TV coverage of the MPS school board meeting. There was a sound byte of a school board member yelling “Go to hell!” It was ugly so they reported on it. I know why – ‘tune in at 10!’ – it isn’t about the kids, education, it is just about pettiness.
- A graduate school counselor and mental health center created a healthy masculinity program. The discussions around what it means to be masculine was supposed to be fun. The article about it said that masculinity is under attack. And, because the program was associated with the mental health center, the article made it appear that masculinity was being called a mental health problem. Instead of the local paper interviewing involved students they chose to go with the negative story.
- Two difficult stories come to mind. I heard from a friend that someone I used to work with who became semi-famous was called out as part of the “me too” movement. I Googled it and sure enough, there was an article with that person in it.
- Another friend who doesn’t live here had their name listed in the headline of an article with accusations of disturbing stuff. This second friend was in the headline, but the thing they did wrong was cheating on a girlfriend. The other people in the article were accused of rape and sexual abuse; my friend did something disrespectful to his relationship.
- It seems that there’s interest in sensationalizing just to get clicks. People’s stories are being taken out of context. I’m not saying that people shouldn’t speak out, but I’m not sure what commentary to make on this. It’s disturbing.

## 2.3 Bias

- I'm on a quest to find local newspapers that are not biased in their positions. I've become disengaged from all media over the last couple of years. I think it is a sign of the times. I don't know if it's politics or what, but I am disengaging. My intention in coming here today is to find some answers. Many people ask me "Did you hear this in the news?" and my response is always "No, I didn't" and I tell people to tell me about it. I do my own research through social interactions.
- What's always bothered me is that media is about people and we need to be conscious of bias. A lot of the racial stuff reported always misses the mark. The "me too" movement misses the mark, that's been happening for generations. Stories about poverty. Stories about crack addiction compared to stories about opioid addiction.
- Perception based on what's shown on social media - - that's what misses the mark. Perception becomes reality. Misunderstood people and personal beliefs become legitimate media stories presented by wholly unqualified people out there.

### 2.3.1 *Slanted News Coverage*

- A Ted Perry~ coverage of a segment of Dr. Martin Luther King day. Mr. Perry~ indicated in the article that "Why should White Students be mandated to take off from school... during the live coverage of a march that was proceeding through "Center City" near The Boston Store, Ted Perry~ was informing the the listening audience "We are approaching The Boston Store" "Let's see what transpires" as if to imply that an "uprising" would ensue. It was hard to listen to. When I encountered him in public for the first time, I called him out on his broadcast and each and every time I see him, he can not look me in the eye.
- The way the media covers homicides you don't get the backstory. The people involved are reduced to that homicide. I would like to see more of the who, the what, the when and the why being covered. Homicides are covered differently depending on the people and what area the homicide occurred in. The language used to cover story depends on where and what community that the homicide occurred in. It's a lot of wordplay covering stories.
- In my experience the biggest and most harmful news piece was on Trayvon Martin a young man killed as he walked home from the store. All of the facts were laid out about what really happened. He was approached by a man who was told by the police not to approach Trayvon. He pursued Trayvon, anyway and then shot and killed him, and he got away with it. There was the freeway shooting in Milwaukee he wasn't even a suspect but he was tried in the media and convicted. What happened to Trayvon sickens me. It baffles me that a kid is dead and the man who murdered him is free.
- Ted Perry from Fox 6 News. He did an editorial on how kids in the suburbs don't have MLK Day off, but kids in the city fight for MLK Day off. He said that why do kids want to hang out at the mall for MLK Day. I thought to myself, "That's what you do for Jesus' birthday." He also tried to steer the narrative during the Dontre Hamilton protests at Boston Store. His face was disappointed when the protests weren't as hostile as he thought. I couldn't understand him. What's his point? Why does he even care in the first place! I reached out to him directly and now, 10 years later, he looks at me with a weird look every time he sees me like "That's her!"

- Act 10 led to many protests in Madison. I took our young children and they were very impressed with peacefulness of the experiences and the kindness of the protestors. Unfortunately, the news media showed very little of the positive efforts. Protestors were portrayed as angry people and those clips were taken totally out of context. The news coverage was filled with inconsistencies, labeling, and more importantly, a real lack of local voices.

### 2.3.2 Political Bias

- Media that covers politics portrays only one side. For example, CNN, MSNBC, and FOX NEWS each have their own audience; the conversations on these shows reveals a lack of care for the common good. We are each in our own silos. We need to find a way to connect with each other across our differences. Another thing that troubles me is the lack of effort in Madison to address issues that really matter; the news media reports on the lesser, or even meaningless bills that get passed, without informing citizens of more significant bills that do not even get a hearing.
- When the media made the prediction that Hillary Clinton would win the election the impact was that it kept people from the poles. It made me feel sad. I think it was one of the biggest media missteps...

**Connected Conversation** - *In a perfect world what would Milwaukee's media look like? What would it show and represent? How would media be supported? What kinds of stories would be told? What kinds of people would tell those stories? What kinds of stories do you want to hear more of?"*

### 3.1 Better Representation & Diversity

- I am impressed with the increasing portrayal of people of diverse races and ethnicities and ages and even gender identities portrayed in the ads that I see on TV and Cable stations, and I am even more impressed with the growing numbers of mixed race and mixed ethnic family groupings. This causes me to consider the contradictions that I face, as I am not a fan of consumerism; still, when ads do appear, it is nice to see a wider representation of the kinds of people who make up our communities, our cities, our states, and our country.
- The advertising company I work for moved from Brookfield to Milwaukee. People were scared to go downtown; advertising is very white; advertising is putting people in a very terrible light. Look at H & M – no one said "hold on!" I want to be a part of the change.
- It has been a privilege for me to grow up in a diverse environment. Media representation is the foundation for younger kids – They need to see people who look like them.
- I feel everyone should be represented and allowed to talk about their perceptions.
- I think right and left should be equally expressed and exposed. I believe that diversity is important in the media because Milwaukee comes in lots of different forms.
- I would like to have media be more accessible and on multiple levels of distribution so it can be a catalyst to involvement for many more as it reaches more.



- I find that many of the stories I read I really do not understand so I would like to see the media to make some improvements so that everyone could better know each other and have an understanding of each part of the community. One example the coverage of television, radio, and media in regards to the Sherman Park Unrest in 2016. The first thing comes to mine for Milwaukee is the zip code when understanding what's being reported on.

### 3.1.1 Community Representation

- The media should be representative of the city by looking and sounding like the voices of the entire community. the population of the city should drive the media of the city. It should not sound like the people in charge at the media outlets or the reporters.
- There should be accountability for media producers to reach the people to give voice. A multimedia way of reaching the community is needed because if they are able to reach these people they will be able to respond and be a catalyst.
- I remember when there were community papers for each individual neighborhood. They would highlight the people and things going on in the community. We've lost this with the ending of the newspaper, but there needs to be community newspapers again.
- There are some communities I don't understand because I haven't been there. I wouldn't know anything about them. The media should be a place to help bring the community understanding across the different communities.
- I want more positive things to be brought up. Media looks for balance having a stories about babies, animals and old people as a counterbalance. What is consider news is what's out of the ordinary. We just can't look at one news outlet. We have to look at different viewpoints. You need the conversation. We need our media to reflect our population. Public Relation has the same problems. Unattended bias crepes in because who's reporting does not reflect who is served.
- We're not serving the public well.
- We need more opportunity for people in our communities to tell their own stories. We need authentic diversity in all medial outlets in Milwaukee's viewing area. We need news media to promote stories that call us to work together for the common good.
- ZIP MKE is one of the groups finding a new way of communicating news and culture and the people in our communities in a positive manner.
- The example of James' piece – excellent, doing great work. But in a little blurb, people don't know what happened. I want more local input – some media is owned by national groups.
- The media gives a clear voice to all.
- I would like to see better representation of the art community – being open to different expressions.
- I think Milwaukee should look like Milwaukee and that includes the sounds and voices that represent the city.
- My opinion on Radio Media is that my product should sound like the people who listen to my station.
- I like the local newspapers in the different communities that assist one in knowing what's available, what's where and who are the influential individuals in the communities of Kenosha, River west, etc. The printed media attracts the older crowd.

- I think every journalist should try and understand each community.

### 3.1.2 Newsroom

- I think hiring is super important. As a white person I have limitations of what I understand. It is important to hire people who can tell the stories.
- There are divisions in media. Newsrooms are white. I'm the only Person of Color in my paper. But I live on the East Side – I don't live in minority-dominant neighborhoods, so I'm not the most qualified to tell stories about these neighborhoods. It is a good first step to tell stories made by more representative media.
- How do we do that [tell more representative stories]? Particularly as media is shrinking and not growing. Clients and customers are demanding diversity - how do we tell the stories if we don't have the people?
- Our organization has gone so far as to fund a fellowship to mentor diverse news reporters. That isn't enough. 1 per year. We need to make time to build relationships with people to trust us.
- It is a paradox – we need diversity and newsroom staff is chopped. It is disheartening – the trade is losing revenue. However, there is unlimited space –network TV 4:30-7, 12-1, 3-6. In a perfect world there would in in-depth stories. However, if people aren't captured in first 5 seconds, they are bored. Ever if the reporting was deep, would people watch/listen?
- There are only 3 black writers on the paper. That it too few to cover the black community. That is not to say that you have to be black to cover minority issues, but people gravitate to what they are comfortable with.
- The same is true for women – women need to be in positions of power in the newsroom.

### 3.1.3 Stories

- I was so devastated when Trump won the election. It showed that so much in America had not changed. It is important to get diverse perspectives.
- We need stories to help us connect and get to know each other in a personal way.
- Yes, we need stories about different cultures and neighborhoods as told by the people who live there. I know there are a lot of refugees and immigrants in the Milwaukee area but I don't know anything about them.
- HOW stories are being told is very Eurocentric. We need more multicultural, creative aesthetic choices in how stories are being told.

## 3.2 Negative/Biased News

- Echo Chambers
- Looping Narrative
- Never Ending News Cycle
- Shaping emotions
- Labeling
- Struggle to maintain balance with getting information from reliable sources

- The negative things are what generates a money. The public is not being exposed to intellectual things it's been watered down as if we can't or don't have the ability to understand.
- One thing that you said about moving away from media – if you have the capacity to decipher and analyze, you choose not to because of your emotional well-being. I find myself ingesting negativity and fear and it is shaping my perspective on Milwaukee and it moved me away from my community.
- Looping. We are inundated with so much media and a lot of the same stories. It is hard to discern what is fact from regurgitation. I miss the Walter Cronkite's of the world who stated facts. I am concerned about social media because it is constant and a barrage of stuff. I am concerned for the next generation. How will we share other stories?
- I watch too much news and it causes depression. What about the stuff I am not seeing? Mental illness bothers me. At what point is it that you just don't understand the person. Not understanding someone doesn't mean that they have a mental illness.
- I agree with labels, like mental illness. A lot of kids get classified as Special Ed; the kids that are not easily disciplined get dumped in the Special Ed basket. How do you figure out who is mentally ill? I ingest a lot of news, but I try to watch different channels, even though it hurts. It is my way of getting out of the 24-hour news cycle.
- It feels more extreme, challenging, and negative when gathering information. It's always a shake of the finger, you're wrong and I'm right.
- I know people in Pewaukee who ask their friends to pray for them when they know they are coming to Milwaukee.
- When I hear 'next up a story about how a little girl lit-up the neighborhood...' I think it's going to be a white child; When I hear 'next up a story about a tragedy on the North side...' I think it's going to be a black child.
- I have chosen to disengage in "Corporate Media Outlets"
- Hard to read or listen to the corporate news "If it bleeds . . . it leads"
- I experience what I call Fox News Crazy. I monitor them to see what they are going to say and it makes me begin not to empathize with certain things. I have to physically remove myself because it makes me look at my friends, family, and neighbors differently.

### 3.3 Consumer Responsibility

- I think we need to be respectful as consumers. It's not the job of the media. I think it's on us to be more savvy and not be in our own little bubbles. There's so much media that we can choose what we want to consume and step outside our communities. Maybe find a new outlet to pick up. Then do the research if you don't know something.
- Much of media is self-selection. We tend to keep reading about the things we agree with and are sympathetic to.
- Social media is a formula and it feeds off of likes so, it is a mirror of your own viewpoints and you end up unable to accept or talk about differences.
- People don't talk to listen, they talk to respond.
- There's a lot of positive out there, you just need to focus on it.

- It is a paradox – we need diversity and newsroom staff is chopped. It is disheartening – the trade is losing revenue. However, there is unlimited space –network TV 4:30-7, 12-1, 3-6. In a perfect world there would in in-depth stories. However, if people aren't captured in first 5 seconds, they are bored. Ever if the reporting was deep, would people watch/listen?
- It takes a lot of time to understand some of these stories. Do people have the time?
- I think consumers need to take more responsibility because I feel it's on us to be savvier in choosing what we want to consume and take the opportunity to read outside of our comfort zone.
- I'd like us to keep in mind one person's truth may not be another person's truth. We should consider what is important to us.

### 3.4 Social Media

#### 3.4.1 Influence on News

- Social media influence on "The News"
- Social media is a formula and it feeds off of likes so, it is a mirror of your own viewpoints and you end up unable to accept or talk about differences.
- We need much more positive news; and we need to find a way to reduce the influence of social media on our news cycle

#### 3.4.2 Concerns

- Looping. We are inundated with so much media and a lot of the same stories. It is hard to discern what is fact from regurgitation. I miss the Walter Cronkite's of the world who stated facts. I am concerned about social media because it is constant and a barrage of stuff. I am concerned for the next generation. How will we share other stories?
- Studies show that kids on social media are lonely. They are connected through social media, but still lonely. There are studies that link social media to depression.

### 3.5 Financial

- Reality TV portrays people in a certain light and unfortunately others believe different populations of people. The way the media portrays people is negative. As consumers it's their job to entertain us and make money. Media is a business not desire to give us the news the angles what makes the money.
- My professor asked us when I was in school the very first day what is the purpose of media. His answer was to make money and to sell ads.
- How we pay for media poses many challenges at this time of big media. Could we return to mimeo pages passed out in local communities? Could this help?
- There is a price of entry barrier. The price of WSJ, NY Times – can be pricey unless you read them at the library. We are conditioned to pay for Netflix, but not local news reporting.
- In terms of revenue, people are advertising less with local media. \$100 buys more in FB whereas people used to spend this money advertising on local media. Ultimately it will have to go the way of subscriptions.

### 3.6 Positive or Balanced News Coverage

- I like the Shepherd Express Newspaper. They problem solve in their articles and you give inside.
- I wish the media would cover and highlight the positive things that are going on the counter balance all the negative things that are happening. What gets the media's attention is what it's clicked on online, gets the most traffic, and gets the most views is what is aired and focused on. We need more balance in the media.
- We need more positive stories about good people doing amazing things for the good of their families and their communities.
- We need true investigative journalism and deeper social analysis.
- I think right and left should be equally expressed and exposed. I believe that diversity is important in the media because Milwaukee comes in lots of different forms.

### 3.7 Platform

- Print media just isn't going to reach younger audiences. Stories need to be available on many different platforms.
- I think the younger people use social media and media on-line to reach a larger audience.

**Parting Word** - *"To close our time together, say a word or phrase that represents what's the next step for you? What will you do next? What do you want to see? How do you want to represent?"*

### 4.1 Critical of Media & Better Consumer

- Listening.
- Read watch with a critical eye. Listen period listened to seek alternative views and question authority. Views are just that your views. Truth is based on your perspective as well. We need to adopt a holistic view. Step out from self. Assumptions hurt. Educate yourself on your views and others and why you think a certain way.
- Work hard to be an active and critical listener. Do my homework.
- I will seek out additional news sources in order to consider a story from diverse perspectives.
- I will strive to analyze news with greater depth.
- I am going to explore new things and areas
- I am going to read something new
- I will begin following other news sources
- Don't take the easy way out of superficial news
- We need to be more philosophical culture.
- I will focus on being a conscious consumer
- I will be a better media consumer.
- I will seek to be a more educated media consumer.
- I hope to get closer to outcome
- Continue to consume news wisely

## 4.2 Support

- Connections make the connections. Connect with Black writers to bring about change.
- Continue to support the local. Start with community if you want to change the world.
- As a filmmaker, with everything on social media, misunderstandings happen because we abbreviate. I want to let my portrayals linger. Let deeper, more complex things exist rather than encapsulate.
- Trust
- Welcoming
- My job, career is based in telling a narrative - - tens of thousands of powerful stories from kids who aren't being served because adults are fighting over who controls the money. My job is to share their story in a way that's captivating.

## 4.3 Diversify

- Diversify and make connections. Talk to people and ask questions. Have real dialogue and conversation do understand people who are different from you. Do a better job at that and stop being segregated.
- Diversity. I don't think I've read more than a handful of articles from Milwaukee News. See where different writers are coming from, get different perspectives. I also want to continue to challenge the people I work with to diversify where they get their media from.