



Ethnic Minorities
& Youth Support
Team Wales

Tim Cymorth
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All Wales Black Asian Minority Ethnic Engagement Programme

09 March 2022

Media and News Representation: The Look of Diversity

Location: Zoom

Project Staff- Selima Bahadur (host), Adam Johannes (Chair), Hasminder Aulakh (co-host), Judy Li (co-host and tech)

Key Speakers/Panellists:

Shirish Kulkarni (People's Newsroom/Monnow Media), Shaun Pascal (Black Wall St. Media), Roohi Hasan (ITN News/ITV Central)

Attendees (26 total): Pat Dunmore (Citizens Advice NPT), Chris Dunn (Diverse Cymru), Gwenllian Griffiths (Coleg Cymraeg), Jessica Perkins (EYST), Roberta Piazza (Sussex Uni), Deborah Stauber (GT Wales), Anna Ambrochoicz (Media Diversity), Vicki Ball (Creative Cardiff), Reshma Raycoba (NHS Wales), Joe Rossiter (Sustrans), Laolu Alatise (Cardiff Uni), Kelly Yarnold (GT Wales), Claire Rees, Sion Ford (Sustrans Cymru), Nia Edwards-Behi (S4C Cymru), Agnieszka (Polish news – Llanelli Standard), Sam Worrall (GT Wales), Julian Nicholds (Partneriaeth), Davy Cheema (Chwarae Teg), Twahida Akbar (EYST), Kaya Hughes (Gisda), Debanjali Bhattacharjee (EYST), Sally Griffith (Cardiff Uni), Michelle Lord (TRC Media), Donna Ali, Sonia Belabbas

SB: Introduction to Forum:

To introduce us to the topic, I am going to start with the current situation and the reporting of the invasion of Ukraine. I am going to read out a few snippets



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that have been taken from a news article online and let you have a think about what is happening and the racist coverage that is taking place.

"...they seem so like us. That is what makes it so shocking. Ukraine is a European country, its people watch Netflix, vote in free elections, and read uncensored newspapers. War is no longer something visited upon impoverished and remote populations." - from one of our daily British newspapers.

"Ukraine isn't a place like Iraq or Afghanistan that has seen conflict raging for decades. This is a relatively civilised revenue relatively European, I have to choose those words carefully to some relatively European city where we're where you wouldn't expect that or hope that is going to happen." – from an American news channel

"And they say the implication is clear. War is a natural state for People of Colour, while White people naturally gravitate towards peace." – British news website

From these snippets, it's obvious even at a time of conflict, racism is still prevalent and your right to safety and health is seemingly dependent on the colour of your skin. What we want to achieve today is not only see how media can be better at representation, but also to encourage people from Minority Ethnic backgrounds to enter the field and for them to see we have these wonderful role models in Shaun, Shirish and Roohi who are here today. We will be discussing how people from Minority Ethnic backgrounds, particularly the Youth can get into this field and go on to have really successful media industry careers.

So, each of our panellists has had an amazing career so far and I'm excited to have them with us and to hear their stories, as I'm sure you are too. Let's see what they have to share with us.

Introductions from Panellists

SP: My name is Shaun Pascal. I am the co-founder of a platform called Black Wall Street Media, which has been around a few years now. Officially we got going in June last year with the launch of this website. And the idea behind it is to unify media platforms globally, rather than working in silos. That way, we're able to have a much more powerful voice. And we're able to collaborate and it's about supporting each other, not competing. At the heart of it, it's



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community! And giving people that ordinarily wouldn't have a voice on mainstream media platforms, a voice on Black Wall Street media and showcasing all the talent and diversity we have globally. So, it's that and a lot more.

SB: Just a little side note that we usually have key speakers and panellists from Wales only. But this forum is a little different as we have SP and RH with us who are based in England as media is a global platform and in recognition of this, we extended invites beyond Wales.

SP: I'm keen to promote Wales as well, and the community you have in Wales, so although I'm based in England, I recognise that Wales has a lot to offer. And I want the world to hear that.

SK: I've been a journalist for more than 25 years now and I'm probably almost unique, I've worked at every major broadcast newsroom in the UK. ITV News Channel Four News, Channel Five, News with Sky, News from the BBC and I've also done pretty much every job from directing and visual mixing bulletins to being a cameraman and tape editor out on the road to producing network news programmes to being a drone operator to everything in between. And I've been freelance for the last eight years also, mainly working on investigations. And probably the thing I'm best known for here in Wales, is covering the British Steel pension scandal, which last count was worth almost 50 million pounds.

I now do a really wide range of things, including researching new ways of telling new stories - they're more inclusive and more useful, hopefully. And I work part time at the Bureau of Investigative Journalism, on The People's Newsroom initiative. So anyway, I think that's given me a pretty good understanding of how the media industry works or doesn't work. And the thing that makes me the most sad is that not all that much has changed in the last 25 years when I've been doing this.

RH: My name is Roohi and I am a Senior Producer at ITV national news. We're based at ITN in London. I've worked for more than 20 years across newsrooms but mostly at ITV News, making domestic and foreign news, but also working on documentaries and investigations. I've travelled as part of my work and



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covered what I call traditional news stories from the French and American elections and things you'd expect. But I think most of my career recently and probably the stuff I'm proudest of, is the stuff that I try and bring which is off diary, off agenda or trying to cover the stories of communities who would not otherwise be heard. And by that, I mean those abroad like in Syria. I've been covering the conflict for the past 10 years from London, people under siege getting to know them via WhatsApp and sharing their stories and the horrors they're seeing and going through.

Also, in more recent years, I'm proud to be able to try and tell, and also push at my end to tell stories of communities in the UK that might feel that their voice is not heard. Myself, as someone who grew up in an Asian family in Swindon, so not too far from Wales which was close to my heart, I never imagined working as a journalist, becoming a journalist for a national news organisation, living in the Capital, doing what I do, it's still like a dream come true. And whilst I still believe that it's privileged to do what I do, I do notice that things can be obviously improved.

With what Shirish has just been speaking about, my two focuses have been sort of interlinked. One has been trying to tell the stories of the communities around us, and those are communities that don't often trust the media. And also making sure that our coverage and also our newsrooms and who's in it staffing wise, represent the streets around us. Because DNI is a new buzzword or phrase everywhere. But actually, in the company and in the industry we work in, it's never been more important because we're producing programmes that go out to millions, online and through our main programmes every day on ITV.

I believe that when done right media is a good force which I'll go into more later. As a senior producer, I get to pitch stories so I try and pitch stories from those experiences that I've heard around me. I believe it's a massive advantage to be from communities that are often speaking to you privately, not publicly, but then you can try and bring those stories to a wider forum and I pitch those. I go away and film and edit them and sometimes it can take months. Shirish mentioned he works on investigations, they can take six months or more to bring to air but it's worth it for me.

It's a privilege to be here with Shirish who was my slight senior when I started out and I was scared of him. But it's been amazing to watch his work since.



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Question and Answer Session

First Q to all 3 Panellists: What has been the biggest boundary encountered in your career and the greatest highlight/achievement of your career so far?

SP: The biggest boundary for me when trying to set up Black Wall Street Media was that the powers that be saw it as a threat, saw it as something that I could use as a weapon! Something I would use as a weapon! Rather than take my word for it - that it was something I wanted to create to build wealth within our communities. So, you know, it is and has been met with resistance. They can do a lot more to help me elevate this platform, economically or by opening doors, but they choose not to. They're quite happy to have my face put out there, or faces like mine put out there to you, and that benefits them. But when it comes to being heard or seeing any kind of progress made within these communities, economically or otherwise, they are not forthcoming at all. So those are the biggest resistances I have faced and continue to face.

SK: I wish we didn't have to do this, right? It makes me really angry that we have to because the truth is, I don't want to be doing diversity and inclusion work. I just want to be a journalist telling stories, because this is extra work, which falls on many, many of us here. And it makes me really, really mad.

18 months ago, I ran an event for the Bureau about decolonizing news, confronting journalism's role in systemic racism. I did this because I wanted people to realise that the journalism industry isn't just reflecting racism, it's actually a primary source of racism. And I would say there's a lot of big talk about diversity, and diverse perspectives and different voices, because people love having conversations about it, or going to conferences about it and making up their diversity credentials. But when it comes to actually making change, which means giving up or at least sharing power, things tend to go quiet. And I think as an industry, we need to be explicitly anti racist, which people feel uncomfortable with. They'd rather have this vague notion of non-racism. We need to make newsrooms places where we feel like we can belong, not that we're simply tolerated or used as the kind of poster boys and girls for diversity. And we need to value perspectives that are different from a norm, which is simply largely White, male, middle class, and metropolitan, because the existential problem facing journalism right now is trust. That's the



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existential problem, amongst other big problems. But ultimately, that norm I just described is not the norm for like 85% of the population. And any industry that claims to be objective, but continues to cater mostly to the needs of a very small group of people simply cannot and probably should not be trusted, frankly.

So, I don't want to be completely downbeat because there is good work going on. I'm working on the bureau with the People's Newsroom initiative which is, part of that lowering the barriers for anyone to be able to tell their stories for people in communities across the UK. And in the last few months, we've also launched a network here in Wales for journalists, aspiring journalists and writers called Inclusive Journalism, Cymru. Which is a way for those of us who have been marginalised or excluded from the industry to build collective power to make systems change. There is positive stuff happening and I'll say I'm really delighted to be here. On the barriers, I suppose it's that it's that homogeneous mindset in the industry which says there's only one way of doing journalism, and this is what news values are, which largely don't include stories about marginalised or excluded people in communities. And from my experience, there's also a view of what brown people are good at and that's largely being enormously competent but tricky when it comes to actually making change, they have different views from us, we don't want to deal with that. So, let's put them in roles where they just have to be enormously competent and keep them out of the way. I'd say those are the biggest barriers.

RH: The biggest boundaries and the greatest achievements, I would say trust. I would say that the hardest thing after trying to get into the media and convincing people along the way that it is a career that's not a bad thing - I'm from a community where someone told my parents "don't let your kids go into the media because it's the devil's work". I just ignored that. Just like I ignored my very posh English teacher who told me I'd never become a journalist! But I'd say that trust, equally now that I'm in this position, is you need to gain the trust of the people who you want to interview, whose stories you want to tell. That trust has been eroded over the years for various reasons. But also, it's that many people still fear the media because it's an unknown entity. And therefore, gaining that trust is a huge challenge, but one that is not something that I've shied away from. And I believe that over time, through the stories I've



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done, with each story that you do someone's given you that trust and you get to do more.

That links into what I call the greatest achievement - the job I'm doing which I think is an achievement because I'm in a place that I can help make change. It is gaining that trust and realising that people know you, are giving you the honour of coming and sharing their very difficult and often traumatic stories. So, I cover stories of hate crime, I cover stories of PTSD and the community, stories of racism.

During COVID, I was investigating why people were dying more from Black and Asian communities, when I started off it was the early days of COVID. People originally thought that it wasn't going to touch ethnic minority communities and it was why it was happening more in the population. Why people were dying more? Why was that happening more amongst NHS staff? And it really revealed that 50% of the 2000 people that responded from the NHS said racism was a factor! 20% had been a victim of it! 50% said they'd seen it! Those findings were taken to Parliament when they were investigating COVID.

I think the biggest achievement is not just when you make the voices around you feel heard and feel represented when they're tuning into our news programmes but when those news pieces and reports can go on to be a force for change as policymakers and making decisions, to help influence hearts and minds about a wider population.

The other thing I do (other than work hard on which stories we tell) is to make sure that I mentor young people into journalism. I know there is a massive push where I work, to have a more diverse newsroom. I go out and do outreach talks in schools and community centres all around the country to people who don't like the media or amongst communities who aspire to it or don't dare to dream and to say that it can be a career for you. Because until those barriers of communication and trust are broken down, we can't help.

Question: What has your experience within the news and media field been in relation to racism?

RH: For the NHS related survey, as we were getting the findings I thought 200 people might fill it in because we were at the height of COVID the first lockdown, 2000 people filled it in! I'd left blank spaces for experiences again,



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thinking they're really busy doctors, nurses, healthcare assistants, they won't get time to fill this in, 1000's comments were filled in with the most heartbreaking comments! And from junior members of staff feeling that they were being sent and more exposed to the frontline as it were. They call it hot COVID wards or cold, depending on the danger levels. At the junior ranks, the NHS tends to be filled more with ethnic minorities and a lot of them refer to similar themes. Even though these people did not know each other, when they filled the survey in from across the country, including Wales, they were saying that their managers did not represent them and they felt that they couldn't raise it (issues). Or there was a cultural thing where people who were from ethnic minority backgrounds felt less able to speak up and say they didn't want to do this or they needed this. And so, as well as the other vulnerabilities that are being discussed which are health related and others, these were actual more systemic ones that were actually perhaps leading to this. So, I would say that exposing these experiences was really important. But what made me sad is in their daily lives, they didn't feel able to share. I would say that, that is one of the things that would make me more fuelled and passionate to tell, it can not only help make society better but also just people understand more.

I did an investigation last year, it was the first of its kind in two years to talk about anti-East Asian hate crime. These are attacks on people who look Chinese because at the start of the virus there was a US president who called it "the Chinese virus" and other rhetoric around it. We interviewed two guys who had been brutally beaten up in the UK last year. Figures showed that in parts of the UK there had been a 200 to 500% rise in attacks against the community who, again, often don't speak out. I think it's really important to shine a spotlight on these.

In terms of personal experience, people often ask me, when I was starting out what was my experience of racism at work. I would quite openly say that at that time I didn't see it. I'd managed with a whole bunch of gruelling, work experience, grafting and not taking no for an answer, to get into ITN when I was 19 or 20 years old for work experience and never left. But I would say that it was more age for them then and also being a woman. As I progressed, and now when I'm trying to tell these stories and I look around me, I do realise that we can only get stronger or better if we are more representative because then it's not one or two voices pushing these stories.



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SP: I can't call myself a journalist, I'm an investigator! I expose the truth and I write reports and highlight those truths. And the biggest difficulty I have faced is firstly, finding someone that will listen that has the power to make changes. Secondly, convincing them that I'm not some radicalist because of my colour or because of their perception of who they believe I am. And also because it's not their lived experience, if they're not experienced it, then it's not happening. These are some of the issues I have faced and in some cases overcame but it hasn't been easy. You find yourself constantly under attack, under suspicion, treated like you're a criminal or you're made to feel like you're doing something wrong.

It's a tough world to be in, being a journalist, or a speaker of truth. And especially when you're coming from a different outlook. But you know this is nothing unusual, it's something we have always faced. For me, my focus is really less about how I can change their minds, or their mindset and more about how I can empower people to go out and create their own media platforms, their own media companies. Because I feel that's probably one of the most effective ways we can bring about change, when they start seeing money coming in - the economic side of things, economics is power, when they see we can run media companies successfully and we can connect with our audience, which is something that they can't do. And, as my colleagues said earlier, it's about trust.

We're the only people best placed to do this and it's not something you can replicate or mimic as much as you try. The sooner they recognise that, the better because other countries, other places, are recognising that the only way forward is through diversity and inclusion economically. The sooner they recognise this in this country, the better for everyone because otherwise they will get left behind. Our young people don't just want to be seen, they want to be heard and they want to be in the boardrooms making decisions. So, you know, it's a lot of waking up still to do. But that's some of the issues I faced.

SK: I will just pick up on that. The waking up thing makes complete sense. When you talk about specific experiences of racism, these organisations have done this for 25 years and they don't think it is racism, like if you said 'this is racism' – they wouldn't understand!



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An example, mid-late 2000's, the war on terror days and what was happening was every other day, 5 Muslim men would be arrested in the Midlands and by coincidence the news place I was working at – a national/ international 24-hour news broadcast - our cameras would be there before the arrest happened. Our cameras would be there live, this was because this was a PR exercise for the police and government. So, we would cover the arrests at length, live and what would happen almost without fail is 24 and 48 hours later those men would be released without charge because it was a massive PR thing. So I would say in the morning meeting 'guys, so we've got to report the releases right?' and they would be like 'No, no, that's not how the news works'. I would say 'No, no, what we are here to do is reflect the reality of the world' and they would say 'that's not how the news values works. Then I would say 'then your news values are wrong because that's not what we are here to do as journalists'. But then they wouldn't regard that as racism but it absolutely is because that's not doing the job of journalism, that's an ideological perspective, frankly. So that made me very unpopular because ultimately, I was the only brown person in the newsroom. It's easy to do the eye rolls etc. there would be eye rolls if you mentioned a story about or from Wales before you get into anything deep or systematic. That is a lot of waking up to do.

I think there's also a question and I don't have a very good answer to this in terms of representation and in terms of telling stories of different communities as black or brown or disabled or traveller journalists. Do our jobs only have to be telling the stories of our community or can we just be regular journalists who are exposing stories about pensions or about crime? Do we have to be black/brown journalists or can we be journalists? I don't have a good answer to this if I'm honest, because the problem is, if we don't tell the story, who is going to? But equally we then get shoved into that ghetto as well. Organisations have to be better at understanding that. I see it now with diverse internships and this is happening in the real world. I see national/international news organisations employing young black people on diversity internships getting them to research stories on gangs or gun crime because all black people have contacts or that's what they think and then after a year doing that extractive work then 'see you later'. They never think those people can be a regular journalist. That's never in their mindset, so I think there's a lot of waking up to do.



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Question to SK: In Wales we have the Anti-racist Wales Action Plan due to be launched and the overarching aim of this is having an anti-racist country by 2030. Do you know of any changes being made/work going on behind the scenes, in the field of News and Media to become an anti-racist nation by 2030 and are you able to identify any changes needed in Wales?

SK: The short answer for 'is there any action being taken?' is No! It's a really good point that I hadn't thought about. It's a really good way to frame a lot of the work that you're doing because I don't think it's important just in terms of making the media industry anti racist, its important because journalism doesn't just reflect on what's happening in society, the way questions are framed in the media is actually helping drive discourse in society. The way I say that journalism is a primary source of racism, it can also be a primary source of anti-racism if we chose this. We've seen it in the characterisation of refugees recently and what we discussed earlier.

In terms of the Anti-racist Wales Action Plan, I think it is a really good way of framing conversations we have in Wales over the next 10 years. One of the reasons I joined 'Journalists Cymru' is because I got asked to be in a Welsh Government working group about the future of public interest news. I turned up on the call and there was 25 people on this call and I was the only Person of Colour and I think that was the high watermark in terms of diversity. So I think we should be looking at media, not just the employment strand of the anti-racist action plan but in terms of a systems change piece which I think they frame it around crime, justice, hateful attitudes and community cohesion because journalism is at the root of a lot of that stuff. And the truth is I don't see any concerted work going on to move towards being anti racist in the media in Wales. What people want to talk about is some vague notion about being non-racist but don't want to do anything about the systems change of being anti racist.

TRC Media Presentation

Michelle Lord – Project manager from TRC Media gave a short presentation to the attendees. Michelle is running RAD – which is a traineeship that has come to Wales where trainees will go onto a production company for 8 months, paid traineeship.

- Asked people to apply as there's a lack of diversity and want to address this
- First half of training will help trainee, second half TRC help the person become a freelancer

Question to SP: What the motivation is behind starting Black Wall Street Media?

SP: Also works in policing. Concerned about how people of colour were being represented in the media, only time would see a person of colour on the media was when linked to crime. Wouldn't see any positive images of People of Colour and this was in a time when they were trying to promote a diverse and inclusive force. There were no pictures of people of colour on websites etc. Sat down with the people in media, hoping naively that they would take on board what he had to say, but they didn't. I thought if they weren't going to do it, I will do it myself. I didn't want to go small but really big, wanted to be a mainstream media company. Wanted all journalist to come together to create something that will benefit the communities and wanted the profits to go back into the media, want to become self-sufficient rather than relying on grants. A few people raised eyebrows.

I have gone out and done the research and learnt by experience, rely on other people who have the passion so that we can collaborate, want to make Black Wall Street Media something that we can all be proud of and can all benefit from. It has already made a huge difference and already getting noticed across the world, people want to get involved! I do believe this will be something huge and a force of good. Not about blame or finger pointing, not going to see everything about crime as other media are always doing that. I want to put things that inspire our communities and give the hope and share ideas, this is my motivation behind Black Wall Street Media.

The voice paper was previously founded by my uncle. My uncle, Alex Pascal, had an opportunity to host the first Black radio show in the UK called Black Londoners. In 1974 – they didn't think it would be successful, but it was and it went on for 8 years and was the heart of the black community. Played music from all over the world, was diverse and had guests such as Bob Marley, Michael Jackson, Jessie Jackson and anyone who was famous at that time in that era right up until the 1980's. he interviewed them and had some great stories to tell. My uncle went on to do other things including being one of the creators of Teletubbies. He is a remarkable man and a great inspiration, a



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great mentor. He has told me about challenges he faced, one time he was asked to do a report on muggings that were taking place and was sent out to find muggers to interview because he was black and they think of muggers as being black and he said that was very insulting. He has had an influence on me entering the field.

Question to RH – Do you think journalism could make society kinder? If you think it could, what makes you think this?

RH: I agree because when I talked about the trust of communities that can be burnt, maybe by experiences they've had or newspaper headlines, to me it's the same as saying 'media is influencing hearts and minds'. If done well it can be done for the better. People tend to have a fear of the unknown. Examples, are refugees and the rhetoric around it. After Brexit and other various things happening and certain presidents getting into power, there was a rise in hate crime in this country against eastern Europeans, against Muslims, against people from ethnic minorities.

Really important to show the commonality of values between people, wherever you're from. An example of this was when we interviewed a 'hero imam' at the time of the terror attacks, who stopped the people from attacking the guy who led one of the terror attacks. When he was interviewed, we did a story of a young Paralympian who had lost her arm due to cancer on International Women's Day a few years ago and we also did a story on an 18 year old refugee boy who risked his life crossing alone from Syria through Greece to Calais to the UK. These stories showed us that they shared common values with every Brit watching, people seeing on a day-to-day basis the commonalities between people and not looking at the differences is huge!

Same with abroad. I remember when I did one of the Syria pieces, we showed the awful, horrendous things happening during conflict there and did a roll call of a week about how many children died there and so many children had zero years because they were only a few months old. One week 26 children under the age of 10. People were saying now I understand why they are jumping into the ocean to try and cross. You hope that one comment would help increase understanding, empathy and kindness not just a tolerance for us. Shirish mentioned earlier for people who are different around you, I've covered the Paralympics, covered basic issues that people have when disabled, who try and get



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around with public transport. Veterans who have PTSD. This is where there's both a duty and a need to ensure we tell these kind of stories, we normalise people from all backgrounds. It involves a lot of work and shouldn't just be a few of us doing it and should be a wider understanding.

SK: Agree with commonalities, can be problematic with foreign reporting as the starting point for foreign reporting is how different these people are! Look at the different cultural norms they have! Look at how different they are from us! But if we looked at it differently, look how same the people are! I think we would change a lot because in a way, that's what drives a lot of the problematic stuff that was discussed by Selima in the beginning. What we are saying about Ukrainians is look how same they are, but we don't apply that to people of Syria or Yemen or Ethiopia. If everyone who says 'send them back' would be on a boat crossing the Channel, if they were put in the same position as those people from Yemen, Ethiopia or Syria I think we'd be in a different place. We all want the same things. We all want safety and security for our families. From that position, look how much the same we are, I think we'd be in a very different place.

I was looking at comments on Wales online on a post about 'Would you take on a Ukrainian refugee?' and the vast majority were saying yes, of course. Well, if you asked 'Would you take in a Yemeni refugee or a Palestinian refugee', we all know the vast majority would have been like no way because the framing of the conversation of Ukraine has been very different. It started from that. People wouldn't call it racism, but journalists are behaving very differently when it comes to Ukraine than they are to other conflict situations.

Question to SK: We know media can be very cruel to different groups of people. Is equality, diversity and inclusion training something that is offered to media employees? If it was implemented properly, would there be more of a fairer coverage of all people in society?

SK: When I did some work at an event about diversity, we had some conversations with organisations where we would present a list of actions and they would all say 'yes, we will do that'. We presented five things and said you need to do these, which would include giving up or sharing power and that's when things went quiet. So, they didn't want to do the hard work that needs doing. This is a systems change needed not a superficial 'we will have a diversity internship, etc' but I do have thoughts about diversity internships – there is no



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point in having them if you're interning people into organisations which are toxic to People of Colour and far too many organisations are not good environments to People of Colour. There needs to be some work done. Replacing people like me in those organisations because I have been forced out. I don't want to encourage people going into those organisations. And lots of people I knew have been forced out by the toxicity of the organisation. Needs to be some more deeper systemic change and you do not do that by just some diversity and inclusion training, which people don't want to go to, which people don't see as the problem because they don't see themselves as racist. Someone once said to me in the Newsroom - You don't get racism anymore, do you! – Not as the question but a statement. That is problematic on so many levels. And that person gets to decide what's on the news? When we talk about framing and representation, and if that person thinks racism doesn't exist, what will they do when they are faced with a story explicitly about racism? They will think it is not a story and I've had that happen to me. I had a story about the far right in Wales, unfortunately, Swansea, which is a hot bed for far right organising. They didn't think it was a story whereas I knew it was a big important story. Need to acknowledge that the problem exists, the work we are doing is getting to the point where people are acknowledging this problem exists.

RH: Measures are being taken, not just recruitment but retention. We have work experience for 18+ and an apprenticeship scheme that doesn't need a university degree. Also, other entry level jobs that are trying to recruit widely. To me, being present is important but shouldn't have to deal with comments like that. I know some people believe that racism doesn't even exist. Diversity is having a seat at the table, inclusion is having a voice that is being heard, and that you belong just to be understood and acknowledged. Presence is key to power so please apply.

Question from attendee: The phrase that 'Ordinary people' has been used from the Ukraine coverage. I would love to know from the panel the counter resistance from the media in trying to change the language, for example, 'people' rather than 'migrants'.

SP: Language is important. How we describe people, anything that dehumanises or desensitises that we are all human beings. People would be the way to



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go, not migrants as it puts people in a box. It desensitizes what people are going through, we need to connect with what people are going through in Ukraine and in other regions where people are going through torment and destruction. Descriptions are very important.

RH: Language is important. We feed this back to our bosses. An example is before the Paralympics, a colleague of mine who was in a wheelchair and a journalist as well wrote a language guide. Basic things we may be saying can be offensive and alienate. Such a power in making sure the words we are using are right, there will be times where we will need to highlight someone's differences and times when not.

SK: an example, when I was working at a major 24-hour news broadcaster and there was a story about a chef that had killed his partner; he cut them up, boiled them and ate it. It was a horrible story. The newsroom used to have this massive screen where they would show story headlines and what came up was 'a gay murderer'. The fact that this guy was gay was the fifth most interesting thing. I'm sorry, but I had to say it. He cut his partner up and ate him and the fact that he's gay is not relevant. When are these things important? Journalists will often leap to the things that stand out. It seems abnormal to them, so will highlight it. Part of this work is to challenge that notion of objective news values when actually they are entirely subjective.

An attendee comment: We are led by news values and they are more than wrong. I worked for an Italian press group and they did news that had an impact on social issues, etc. The media focuses on whatever is negative and cruel. It is so important to wake up these students who are studying the importance of language and expression, and people who are studying to become future journalists to be introduced to these incredible issues. Thank you for organising this.

Question from attendee. Do you think that some of the differences with Black Asian and minority ethnic people in the media could be attributed to a difference in people who live in London and for someone who lives in Wales. Easy to live in London because it's so multicultural, may feel that there is no racism because of it being so multicultural.



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SK: In Wales we don't have a Welsh media of any real size or impact. We are told stories from the national media, particularly in the press that are London based. But I'm pleased to see ITV has appointed a Wales correspondent, but last 15 years only two out of six have had a correspondent based in Wales. This is a country in the UK that has a different health system, different education system and hasn't been regarded important enough to have a Wales correspondent based in Wales. That is a decision that has been made to say Wales isn't important enough. We are hearing stories from all of the UK and it's just not true if people are based in London and have a perspective based on experiences of living in England.

Final Question – All 3 of you are inspiring role models for our Black Asian and minority ethnic youth and anyone else who wants to get into the field. What advice would you give to an individual from a minority ethnic background who wants to enter the field?

SP: There are opportunities to get involved. One can start at home interviewing family members. These other people I want to write and hear about, there is so much history and learning to be heard from our family members, especially our elders and we need to document this. Go out there in your communities, report right and be creative and the rest will fall into place. What I do is with love and passion. You will learn and meet other people. Go out there and develop.

SK: It's the best job in the world, came into journalism to make the world a better place. It is and you do get to make the world a better place. It is the best feeling when you get to do that. The impact it can have on people's lives, get to speak to people and hear their stories. It is hard not always easy. Do join the student network, journalists have joined, There's people there supporting you. Don't do it on your own, 100% the best job in the world. We can help and support anyone. Please contact us.

RH: My dream job. I went into this wanting to make a difference. Always thought about how to tell untold stories. I believe telling untold stories can really help make a difference about society, attitudes, policy, politicians, absolutely everything. Please believe that you can do it. Sometimes in minority communities we believe there are spaces we shouldn't occupy, we can't occupy. Things can only get better when there is a wider presence. The onus shouldn't be on the individual it needs to be higher, needs to be a partnership.



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Communities also need to not tell young people that it's not a career that they shouldn't go into. Get work experience and contact those in the media that you aspire to be like and ask if they would mentor you! Volunteer! Contact us and contribute. Don't give up! I started as a runner and it was about the job I wanted to do and the difference I wanted to make. Small things that we can do can do to help make that difference. Things are difficult, but what job isn't? It's not an us and them, It's all of us.