MR. SHORENSTEIN: Good morning. I'm Walter Shorenstein. The sponsor of the Joan Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics and Public Policy at the Kennedy School. Got that all out.

But I want to introduce my daughter, Carol; my grandson, Wally; and granddaughter, Gracie. Delighted that they could be here with us.

It's a real thrill to be able to sponsor programs of this nature. When the Shorenstein Center was established 15 years ago, little did we think that it would emanate to the position that it has attained and we're delighted that Marvin Kalb has done such a great job at the center. And we now have Alex Jones who will follow Marvin's footsteps and do a great job for us. So, Alex.

MR. JONES: Thank you and good morning. Very glad to have you with us. On behalf of the Joan Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics and Public Policy of the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, welcome. That is a mouthful I understand.

Today we're going to be taking a sharp look, a sharply focused look at the issue of the race in media. That's a big topic as you know. Before I get to that...

...though, I want to tell you a little bit about the Joan Shorenstein Center. Joan Shorenstein was Walter Shorenstein's daughter. She was a committed first rate journalist, a producer at CBS of the CBS Evening News with Dan Rather and with Face the Nation. She died far too
young of breast cancer and in 1986, Walter Shorenstein endowed the Shorenstein Center in her honor. Since that time, Walter has been the Center's chief benefactor, main squeaky wheel, and the man who absolutely is committed to this enterprise and I would like to ask you if you would to join me in honoring him because he is really the one responsible for us being here today.

I also particularly want to say a welcome to Carol and Wally and Gracie. We're very glad you all are here with us.

So what exactly is the Joan Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics and Public Policy at the Kennedy School at Harvard? Well, you know what Harvard is. The Kennedy School you may not understand quite so well. The Kennedy School is not just a graduate school at Harvard dealing with government. It is a place that has both an academic, a rigorously academic side and a side that is intended to be engaged with the real world. It's supposed to be both of those things. That's very unusual. That's very unusual in an academic world. That real world dimension.

The Shorenstein Center is like that. Real world and academic but focused on the media itself, which is a very, very big topic. Our job is to illuminate how the media affects politics and public policy. And we're here today to try to do something that is also our mandate which is to improve the way the media affect politics and public policy.

Our idea today was to bring together people who
are very knowledgeable and dig into this enormously important issue of race and the media. We wanted to make this gathering focused, manageably short, not encyclopedic, insightful. Ultimately useful. We're going to distill this morning's ideas into a document that we will distribute widely which will also be focused, not encyclopedic, and we hope very insightful and useful. So let's begin.

Our first plunge into the issue of race in the media will be led by Tom Patterson, my colleague at Harvard at the Shorenstein Center and the Bradley Professor of Government and the Press. Tom is the author of a number of books including Out of Order. His specialty is the impact of the media on politics and many of you may have followed the research project that he and Marvin Kalb ran this past year through the Shorenstein Center called the Vanishing Voter Project which really tracked voter attitudes throughout the 2000 campaign. Tom's subject race in the media, the local story. Tom Patterson.

MR. PATTERSON: Alex, thank you. Good morning. We're going to do the local side of the race and press story. It's a story that includes the misrepresentation of minorities through if it bleeds, it needs reporting. And it's a much larger story than that as you'll see. The local story is obviously a large part of the total story. The community is where the hopes and the fears of America's many faces come together and we'll talk
also about that this morning.

Hopefully, we'll have a forward tilt to the panel. To know where we're going to go next, we need to know where we are and where we've been but I do hope at the conclusion of the hour that we'll have some ideas to take away from here.

I'll also, when this panel is over, you can look back and say that we've used the time efficiently and equitably and I've imposed and this is the only restriction on their opening remarks, I've imposed a five minute limitation on the panelists. So let me introduce the panelists. We have -- it's a relatively short period for this panel and we can jump right in. I'll introduce all of them and then we'll start without reintroductions as we move through the panel. And we'll try to get to the audience with at least 15 minutes left so that you can be part of the participation or discussion as well.

On my far left is Robert Entman. Bob is Professor and Chair of the Communication Department at North Carolina State. He was with us three years ago at the Shorenstein Center as the Visiting Lombard Professor. He was senior author of Mass Media and Reconciliation which is a report that was written for President Clinton's race initiative. Author of several books, most recently the award winning The Black Image in the White Mind, Media and Race in America.

Next to Bob is Paul Tash who's the Editor and President of one of the nation's best newspapers, the St. Petersburg Times. He came up through the ranks of the
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Times, joining it in 1978 after studies abroad as a
Marshall Scholar.

Next to me is Gerald Boyd, Deputy Managing
Editor of news at the New York Times, a 17-year veteran at
the Times. A variety of positions including in this town
as a White House correspondent. Before joining the Times,
he was for ten years at his hometown newspaper, the
St. Louis Post Dispatch.

On my right, Paula Madison, President and
General Manager of NBC4, a Los Angeles television station.
A 25 year veteran of print and television journalism. She
was at WNBC in New York prior to heading up NBC4. She led
both stations to the top of the ratings, an extraordinary
accomplishment in what arguably are the two most
competitive media markets in the country.

And then on my far right and concluding the
panel is Robert Blendon. Bob is a colleague. He's a
Professor of health policy and political analysis at both
the Kennedy School and the Harvard School of Public
Health. He co-directs with the Henry J. Kaiser Foundation
a special series that many of you are familiar with,
Public Opinion and Social Issues for National Public Radio
and the Washington Post.

So we're going to jump right into this question
of race in the press, the local story, starting with

MR. ENTMAN: Thank you. I want to talk about
context. If I said Koby will be as good as Michael, I
just came from Italy, if I said that in Italy I think only a small number of people would know what I was talking about. I suspect in this audience the majority think they know what I'm talking about but that's because we share a context and you know when I use those two words, you know who those two first names probably refer to. It's also possible that I'm not talking about Koby Bryant and Michael Jordan but I'm talking about two other people and maybe I'm talking about how well they'll behave for the babysitter. That's a very homely example of the importance of context for understanding how heavily we rely upon context for inferring the truth of a description of any situation and for understanding what that situation means.

I would argue that local news, both television and in many respects newspapers as well, do a lot of uncontextualized reporting as if they were giving you names with no context and you have very little to go on to understand the larger meaning. If you look for example at crime reporting which is the staple of local television news, not quite as much so in the newspaper, but you find many daily uncontextualized reports of crime involving, especially black and Latino defendants, newspaper visuals, little tiny pictures of heads that are often minority members without context.

Without context, false inferences are likely. Failing to contextualize means implanting and reinforcing derogatory views of non-whites among whites and it means supporting false ideas, inaccurate understanding. So in
other words, failing to contextualize violates the central goals of journalism which are balance and accuracy.

Now journalists and those of us who study this area know there are many forces working against the provision of context. There is ratings competition, there is the time pressure, there is space limitation, there's the declining audience in serious news, this great fear of losing the audience if you provide too much information. All of this is well-known. Less acknowledged I think is journalists' own deficit of understanding how they are violating objectivity. They are violating the central professional norms that they claim to adhere to when they enact the process, the standard operating procedures of the newsroom in combination with those forces like limited time and so forth.

Also less widely recognized I think is the irresponsibility and cynicism of many political leaders who have in the main failed to discuss race and ethnic relations honestly in the past few decades which means journalists have few sources to turn to for this context. Journalists have trouble providing it on their own. There aren't many good sources to provide it.

So what do we do? I would suggest that journalists understand that the white audience consumes news with a high degree of sensitivity to racial and ethnic identity. Journalists can't deny, they can't just say, oh well, you know, the person happens to be black,
happens to be Latino. We know from social science research that Americans are very sensitive to the ethnic identity of people in the news and white America also consumes the news with a high degree of anxiety and ignorance about non-whites. Therefore, it's easy for the news to reinforce prejudices both by what it reports and what it leaves out.

Given that context, what should journalists do? One thing I would suggest is choosing visual images and sources deliberately to counter this ignorance, to counter stereotypes, which therefore helps to uphold the standard tenets of journalism: Balance and accuracy. It helps to correct for the deficits that are in the culture. Choose black scientists deliberately when you're reporting a science story. Choose Latino economists. Show white welfare recipients.

Another possibility, use quotation marks, I always feel like Austin Powers when I do this, around the word race. The very notion of race is thoroughly discredited in social scientific and scientific circles. It's a bogus concept left over from the 19th Century. If local TV news has to show crime, how about one long story each day that actually tells the full or at least a good part of the whole story of the life of the defendant and the victim. That actually makes it into I think a much more interesting and compelling story for the audience.
than five or six brief snippets about Michael and Koby or whoever it is did some crime and we've seen that yesterday and we're going to see it tomorrow. So it seems to me there are ways to provide context and perhaps still maintain ratings and audience interest.

Perhaps the core theme of some of those kinds of stories would be the discrimination that shapes the lives of so many members of minorities, particularly African-Americans, pervasive discrimination. It's the key contextual point. It is the key source of racial animosity among whites is the ignorance of pervasive discrimination. The whole coverage for example of affirmative action suffered egregiously and suffers to this day from a lack of understanding of the context of discrimination. There is solid evidence that preferential admissions for upper middle class white people far exceeds preferential admissions for African-Americans or Latinos in college. That's a contextual fact that most Americans don't know and that might be extraordinarily helpful in healing the racial breach.

So, absent a contextual understanding of the individual stories that parade by the audience, I believe racial and ethnic tensions will continue. All the costs that they entail not just for members of non-white groups but for the white group as well, all of those costs will continue. So I do believe the media have both an opportunity and a responsibility acknowledging the many limitations and pressures they face.

MR. PATTERSON: Bob, thank you. Paul.
MR. TASH: I want to spend a little time talking about the connections between the people covering the news and the kinds of stories that they cover.

Ten days ago on Father's Day, we published a story about a young woman of Indian ancestry who had defied her father's wishes and married a white American man. Dad came around and he paid the bill for five days of wedding ceremony but it was quite a moving story. And it was written by a young woman, herself of Indian ancestry, who also had gone against her own father's wishes that she go into the family business and instead she became a newspaper reporter.

A little while before that, we published a story about a housing project in Tampa that is now dominated by immigrants from southeast Asia who have imported their own customs and they are even growing their own Vietnamese vegetables. That story was written by a young woman who when she was two years old escaped with her family on the last ship to leave Saigon when South Viet Nam fell to the Communists.

So if you're looking for evidence of the connection between the people who are covering the news and the kinds of stories they tell, these two examples strike me as pretty compelling. And it's that connection between life experience and world view that makes the drive for greater diversity in America's newsrooms so important and what makes the gap between goals and results so vexing.
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Of course, the categories of ethnic background are measured principally because they are so obvious. At best, they are only the rough surrogates for some presumed collection of common experience shared by the members of an apparently similar group. It's as easy as it is dangerous to let race be the filter through which we see events and issues.

One of my favorite columnists is Bill Raspberry of the Washington Post who had a great column last week in particular. Myrtle Beach, South Carolina was the site of two successive rallies by motorcycle enthusiasts. One group was mostly white. The second group was predominantly black. "The white bikers," Raspberry writes, "left town with their bills paid, their motel rooms untrashed, and the restauranteur is grateful." "The black bikers," not to put too fine a point on it, "didn't." But Raspberry goes on to say that the most obvious characteristic may not be the most important one. The white bikers were older, in their mid-50's and up and more affluent. Their bikes were in the $20,000 range. The black bikers were younger, 35 and down, and rode cheaper bikes with more exuberance. Raspberry quotes an observer, "Yes, these two groups of bikers are as different as night and day but when considered as individuals, the differences are attributable to age, income and attitude, not just the race."

Well, if it's a mistake to rely excessively on race as a way to frame coverage of people and events, it's also risky to rely only on the race of the journalist.
doing that coverage as a measure of diversity. Those two young reporters I mentioned at the outset of my remarks, helped broaden the coverage of the St. Petersburg Times with stories that might otherwise have been beyond our scope. But those two women cannot represent the full range of experience and perspective among people who happen just to look like them. They help our newspaper achieve a measure of diversity that is absolutely necessary and welcomed but not by itself sufficient.

So how can newsrooms get past the threshold of demographic diversity within their own ranks to a more complete and rounded reflection of the communities they cover? The problem is difficult and I wish I had better answers. Every journalist we hire, whatever his or her demographic characteristics and background, has met a fairly common standard of education, enjoys a certain level of economic success and shares some set of professional values that help make them more like other journalists, whatever their personal background and can diminish their connection to the people they cover.

But one answer to the riddle of real diversity does seem clear to me anyway and that's to have enough minority journalists within a newspaper or a news organization so that the full range of their own experiences, including their differences can reveal themselves.

I'll close with a story from my own newsroom that gives me some encouragement. I overheard an argument
between two editors about a story we had published. A
passer-by had rescued someone from great peril and was
credited by authorities as a hero. But down in the jump
of our story, we noted that the hero had a criminal record
and had done time in state prison. The editors were
arguing whether that was a gratuitous shot at someone who
had risked his own life to save another or whether it
reflected appropriately that even someone who had been
branded a felon was capable of great good deeds.

The positions themselves were well stated and

forcefully stated but the argument itself was unremarkable
except in this one respect. All the people involved, the
subject of the story, the reporter who wrote it, and both
editors, were black. And for a moment, I thought I had a
glimpse of what real diversity might look like.

MR. PATTERSON: Paul, thank you. Gerald.

MR. BOYD: Good morning. I'm always glad when I
do panels like this and go before sister Madison over
there because if you really want to know what's going on
in local TV news, there's no one better or more
knowledgeable. So you should listen to her and take down
what she says and hopefully I can entertain you a little
but you don't have to remember.

I can't tell you how great it is to be here even
though any journalist I know who's worth his salt is a
night person, not a 9:00 a.m. person. And even though
this must be the two millionth panel discussion on race
and the press and probably the one millionth that I've
personally participated in, it's still a joy to be here.
The issue of how local TV news covers race and all of its manifestations remains as important today as it has been at any one point in our history. Perhaps more so because we all know I think that society is changing. Now I won't waste time since we're sort of limited detailing the profound demographic and economic changes that are transforming America and I won't sort of rehash the widening gap of class that takes on even more significance today as increasing numbers of African-Americans especially move into the middle class leaving their brothers and sisters behind. But if ever journalism had a mission and that mission being to help society understand itself or navigate these waters, it's now the time.

So, you know, I remember when I started in the business of, in St. Louis, the Post Dispatch referred to people who appeared in its news, identified in its news columns, as Mr. with two noticeable exceptions. Felons were not identified as Mr. and blacks were not identified as Mr. I remember when I started in the business, black on black crime was not something that routinely appeared in the paper and it didn't appear, certainly didn't appear on page one. Black on white crime always did. So it's not just TV that's at issue here. It's certainly the media at large.

But even so, I think we should start this by resolving, having it resolved, that local journalists and TV journalists in particular are not bloodthirsty ratings driven twits who live to suck the life out of the crime.
story of the day. I think we should all agree on that.

They're not. They're good people, believe me. So why
does this happen? Why do we have this drumbeat of crime

I think we can't lose sight of journalism as we
know it and journalism as we know it is such that crime is
and always has been news. It's at least as interesting
and stimulating as the local, your local zoning board
dispute, or the martial woes of the local mayor, even if
heat local mayor is brother Giuliani. The quick and dirty
recounting of crime stories delivers a bang for the buck
and people have come to want it and expect it.

And let's also remember that these local TV
stations or local TV markets we talked about are not owned
by that little lady next door who has a stake in the
community who goes to church every Sunday. They're owned
by a huge conglomerate whose leaders have little or no
stake in the community and who really don't care. So if
that's the reality we face, how do we begin to fix it? I
have to believe that the smarter people in our industry
realize a fundamental truth that unless we are relevant to
readers and viewers and unless we give them the
information that undresses the complexity of today, they
will eventually tune out and turn off. Now maybe I'm
naive although I don't think people at the New York Times
or people who know me would call me naive.

I think that's the case. I have to believe that
in the end, good roots out bad. That my news industry
will wake up and understand that we can't begin to be relevant and I keep using that word because I think it is critical to those we serve unless we provide the balance and context they need to understand the world of today. I have to believe that we know some truths. That presenting one dimensional coverage of blacks and other people of color is wrong. Just that simple. It's wrong. It's wrong morally and it's wrong ethically. And in the long run, I believe, we understand that this makes us less than relevant.

I have to believe that we know that our world today is a world that is far too complicated to be simple for very long journalistically. So why if indeed we kind of know these things, why doesn't it take place? I think there are some dirty little secrets. Increasingly, journalism and what we call journalism -- involves an issue of class. The dirty little secret is the moment any journalist gets his first paycheck, he begins an upward journey, up a ladder, in which he leaves behind a lot of people and that is especially true of people of color. And so the notion that a journalist of color understands what's happening in inner cities across this country is a myth. You know, I live on the east side of Manhattan. I go to Harlem and (indiscernible) to get my hair cut but that's not my world. And I have to recognize that and I

have to own up to it.
The other little secret which someone touched on is, earlier, is that we don't all agree. I had the luxury of growing up in a time when it was very popular to be black. A few of you in this room know what that means but most of you don't. Where you would go out to a lunch or a dinner with a bunch of white people and you would sit around and you would talk about how all black people felt. All black people love basketball and everybody would say, "Wow." Or all black people eat fried chicken and people would say, "Wow, I didn't know that. How interesting." Well, people now know or at least they think they know and blacks and people of color disagree.

Witness what happened in Los Angeles when we were supposed to have the Los Angeles Mayor's Race when we were supposed to have this grand coalition of blacks and Latinos that was going to elect the first black or first Latino mayor. It didn't happen. It didn't come together. People disagreed. And so I think we've got to own up to some of these truths as we go forward and really try to deal with this issue in an honest way.

The last point I want to make is increasingly when you talk about these kinds of issues, you're talking about an issue of honesty. You're talking about an ability of people whether they're whites, blacks or other people of color to be honest about their feelings. And time and time again, that doesn't happen. Whites don't want to say how they really feel about blacks and people of color because they don't want to be perceived as
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racists. Blacks don't want to say how they really feel about whites because they're tired of it and they feel they've been there, they've said it, and nothing changes. And unless we find a way as journalists and as a society in general to really talk about these kinds of issues, whether they're in the newsroom or outside of the newsroom, we're not going to go forward.

Last point, the New York Times did a 15 part series on "How Race is Lived in America" that won a Pulitzer prize this year and it started after some of us, one of us, after I witnessed what happened in our newsroom when the O. J. Simpson verdict, remember O. J. Simpson, came down. And what happened was whites looked at the TV screen and blacks looked at the TV screens and you could see black reporters and editors kind of smiling like, "He got off." And you could see whites shaking their heads saying, "What the hell is happening out there?" And no one talked about it. No one talked about it. The minute the verdict came down, people went back to their jobs, we put out the next day's paper, no one talked about it. And I think that's a statement of honesty, a lack of honesty that we need to find a way to address.

MR. PATTERSON: Gerald, thank you. Paula.

MS. MADISON: First of all, I'd like to thank Gerald who obviously loves me.

MR. BOYD: I do. I do.

MS. MADISON: Secondly, I'd like to correct one thing. At WNBC we did become number one in all newscasts. I've only been in Los Angeles for seven months and we're...
number one in three newscasts but I'm on my way.
The issue of coverage for me is really important
and as for all of us but the concept of what news is in
television newsrooms is where I'd like to get to. And
after, I don't know, maybe 25 years now of working in
television newsrooms and I spent some time in there eight
years, I don't remember quite how long, as a print
reporter and editor, what I've concluded is that it isn't
a dastardly plot and it isn't that, you know, we've
decided that we're going to make black people look really
bad on the air. It's laziness and it's such a degree of
laziness and lack of connection with the communities that
we cover that we do what I call we pay homage to the
scanner gods.
The easiest, stupidest news to cover is the news
that comes across the scanner. There's a fire at 4th and
Main. Police are moving to a location where XYZ is

happening and we will break all those stories and we run
and that is our definition of news.

If you don't have a connection to the community
and if you, community in general, and if you don't have
any historical perspective and you have no real context as
a journalist in that community where you're working, the
easiest thing to do is make beat checks. And in our
world, beat checks translate to calling the cop shops and
what do you get, what crime, when you call the cop shop?
When you call the desk in a police station and you say,
"hey, anything happen overnight?" You get crime, you get
rape, you get crime, you get murder, you get, you know, you call the fire department EMS, you'll hear about heart attacks and fires and we have created a real market for reporting this all of which I think is important.

But the question has to be asked, you know, when you're establishing your priorities, when you're establishing what do you want to put on the air in the 22 minutes out of a half hour that accounts for news, is that really what you want to tell the people? And my position is no, not really. Only when it breaks through.

I just moved to Los Angeles seven months ago and, you know, with some, you know, trepidation but determination, I got there and said okay, I am moving to the home of the helicopter chases. I'm moving to the market where suspend all newscasts, all news content, cut into programming, so that we can show you police chasing a driver down the highway. And most times it ends with the driver getting out of the car, doing this, laying down in the street and being handcuffed. That's usually how it ends. On the occasions that it doesn't end that way, I believe that's when it's a news story.

But until or unless something takes it over the top, you know, in Texas for example there are car chases and the police in Texas, one of their routines is we'll just shoot the tires out of the car. That's so typical in Texas, that doesn't make it on the air all the time.

In Los Angeles, if the police were going to shoot the tires out of the car, now you see that's when I'd say put it on the air. But until then, it becomes
unfortunately a routine occurrence in a highly congested
populated area where people are frustrated and are
doing -- some people are doing bad things. But when does
it get to the point where I say I'm not going to tell you
about immigration issues. I'm not going to tell you about
education issues. I won't cover politics or governmental
affairs. I won't talk about issues affecting seniors, the
elderly, because I want to show you in my allotted news
time this guy driving down the highway and cops chasing
him

I do believe that there is a place on television
for guys driving down the highway and cops chasing them
But Fox has a program sometimes and they call it, you
know, America's Greatest Car Chases or Cop Chases or
something like that. You know, there is a place for
slugging it out. That's boxing. There's a place for
forgive me, T&A. That's the Playboy channel. But I don't
know that just because this event happens that that means
that I must therefore put it on the news.

So try this one. It's 2:00 in the afternoon and
there's a three alarm fire. Might break into coverage. I
don't know. It depends upon your market and your news
director. At 4:55, three alarm fire, you can pretty much
bet that's going to lead the newscast. Why? Great
picture. Somewhere in the world of producing, somebody
has defined that action means oh, my God, suspend all
other coverage and put it on the air and I disagree with
that.
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Consequently, when I got to Los Angeles, you know, I revamped news. I said to everybody gathered, all the reporters, let's all figure out what you are interested in. What area of expertise you have and then let's come up with a beat system. And they were like, "wow, beats, TV, that's odd." But at WNBC in New York, everybody had a beat because that's the system we set up there. So I go to Los Angeles, everybody has a beat. Immigration, elderly, education, two reporters covering politics and government. In New York I had three and a half and I was very happy. But in Los Angeles that same race that Gerald was referring to, those of us who were covering that race regularly and often and by that I meant each candidate on our morning newscast had seven minutes right at the top of the newscast to talk, when there were like six or seven candidates, to talk about what their issues are and there was Q&A with the reporters who covered those particular areas. So they were informed.

And then the day before the election we gave each of them 15 minutes on our 5:00 newscast. I wanted to give them the entire hour which is what I offered them to have a conversation. Not the League of Women Voter debate where you have 90 seconds, a 30 seconds, and 90 seconds, a 30 seconds, but let's just talk. Challenge each other. Let's have it moderated by one of us and they didn't want to. That's not surprising. So I gave them 15 minutes each back to back.

Now, I was very happy when I heard from some viewers that that kind of coverage helped them make their
decision as to who they were going to vote for. But those
of us who, and I didn't care who they voted for, I just
wanted to know that they voted and that their decision was
impacted by what we'd put on the air.

Now those of us who were covering news regularly
out there, we knew that there was no coalition between
African-Americans and Latinos. There's been a historic
division in Los Angeles between them. So were we
surprised that Viaragosa (phonetic) was not elected?
Absolutely. I was absolutely surprised because I thought
more Latinos would go to the polls and they didn't.

But we knew there was a coalition between an
overwhelming majority of African-Americans and whites in
Los Angeles and that's how Hahn got elected. But you see,
the -- speaking to Gerald's point, there is the
expectation that people of color will automatically band
together. There's the expectation that people of color
are automatically going to be the ones who will populate
the prisons. That's true because of a number of
social issues that we could spend 15 years discussing.

But the fact is that if you're connected to your
community, you will in fact report the crimes that will
make a difference in your community. If what you're
trying to do is impact quality of life decisions --
transportation in Los Angeles is huge. So was health.
The percentages of young people who have asthma. These
are important issues that transcend economic level, race
and gender. And I am a believer in if as journalists, we
are smart enough to go out into our communities which I do with 15 other station and news executives. Every six weeks we go to a different community and invite 50 to 60 leaders of the community, who have constituents but they're not necessarily elected leaders, and we listen to them tell us what are the issues that are most important to your community. We will put those on the air. That's what we did in New York and slowly but surely we became number one in every newscast and in every day part. That was because when there was a question about New York, we knew our market. There's a question about Los Angeles, I am still learning. It's a fast learning curve but my goal is, my hope, my belief, no my prayer is that should we become successful at this, that other news operations will copy us.

MR. PATTERSON: Paula, thank you. Bob.

MR. BLENDON: Hi, Bob Blendon. I'd like to be helpful here by drawing from a recent survey we have done in conjunction with the Washington Post, my colleague, Rich Warren, is in the audience, on race relations today. This is the most sensitive issue that you can pull on an American. And I want to use the data very briefly to make two points.

First is that the perceptions between many whites and blacks about the state of black experience
today is so widely far apart, it's almost impossible to find a common ground when you talk about specific problems. This could be in a crisis in Cincinnati. It could be for a number of issues that we're writing about today.

The second point I'm going to make is that if you narrow those perceptions, you make it much easier for people to actually talk about and solve the problems that are in front of their communities. So I want to use the data, this is very briefly, from March and April and what I want to do is first just briefly summarize black answers about their experiences today.

First, 46 percent say that they have experienced significant discrimination in the last ten years. 49 percent say they haven't been hired or promoted based on their race. 37 percent and this is where you are and what is the news story, are unfairly stopped by the police based on their race. That was one-half of all African-American men in the survey. How many whites answered that question? Four percent.

70 percent of the African-Americans said that they received poor service in restaurants and in stores because they were black. 51 percent said that their personal financial lives were in fair or poor shape, that was twice that of whites.

We then turned to whites and we said to them, "Let's just ask you about the other side of your community. What goes on?" 20 percent of whites said that African-Americans faced a lot of discrimination today.
percent said that African-Americans had the same or better income than whites. 51 percent said they had the same or better jobs than whites. 49 percent said that the schools were as good or as better as white Americans had. And 61 percent said, "Oh, the access to health care for blacks, as good or better than whites get today."

On every one of these issues, the African-American answer was at the other end of the scale. These were serious deficiency where they viewed their life very different.

A point too. Does knowing or now in this different matter, we asked whites about their perception of the black experience today. If you're white and you think that they actually face a lot of discrimination, on every issue that I mentioned, you're in favor of government and community organizations trying to narrow the gap here today. If I'm white and I say that there isn't much discrimination today or blacks have the same lives as most of us, I am against government moving on every one of these.

I want to close and use one example because it has nothing to do with government. It has to do with newsrooms and universities. We ask people what we thought was an extremely benign question. Would you favor employers and colleges making an extra effort, extra effort is all we used, to recruit qualified minorities, qualified here? One-half of whites said yes; one-half of whites said no. The whites who said yes believe that
there is discrimination in this country. The whites who said no said it's not a serious problem. Perceptions matter.

And would close briefly by saying that this is usually the moment when we say it's all the media's fault. The problem with the search is life is complex. In our survey, people perceived that they got their information about whites and blacks from lots of sources. Not just the media. So it's a mistake to say that we just look in the window here. It's all the fault of everybody in the room. It's not correct.

However, you're stuck. There are only three places that people ever talk about narrowing the perceptions. Through the media, in colleges and public schools. And if we can't narrow these perceptual differences, when there is a crisis on race, the survey of The Post of which there is a series coming shows that immediately the white audiences and the black audiences start looking at any specific issue at a completely different place about the state of America today.

MR. PATTERSON: Bob, thank you. We obviously violated our efficiency but I would like to go back to the panel one more time before we go to the audience and invite each panelist to speak for a minute or so on one of two issues, whichever they think they can contribute the most to.

One, and it's an item that's come up here and that's how do we deal with crime reported? As many of you know, about half the local television newscasts lead with
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a crime or a bloody story of some kind. The subject takes
up the largest amount of air time on local television
news. That may be changing. A study by the Committee of
Concerned Journalists indicates some audience fatigue in
our own work. Audience fatigue around that subject and
some changes that are taking place in local news but as
Gerald suggests, you know, crime is always going to be a
pretty large part of the news coverage. The first paid
full time American reporter was not a political reporter,
it was a crime reporter hired by the New York Sun back in
the 1830's. So it's going to be there. And the question
that I have is how can the over representation of blacks
and Latinos in this coverage be reduced or at least
contextualized which was the question that Bob had.

The second question that I would invite the
panelists to address and because of time, address only one
of these two, and here we get I think into a bit of where
Paula was leading us and certainly what Bob's remarks, Bob
Blendon's remarks allude to, how do we cover the minority
community? Not simply how do we react to this crime area
but how can we be proactive in terms of thinking about
this community, bringing it's needs, it's interests, it's
perspectives, to the table in a more -- in a larger and
more affirmative way?

So again, maybe starting with Bob and again if
you'd kind of work within a minute, minute and a half
here, so that we do in fact have some time left for the
audience. And then when we get done, we'll go straight to
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the audience and if you want to ask a question, then you can begin to anticipate getting in line. You'll have to use one of the microphones that's in the aisle. Bob Entman.

MR. ENTMAN: Let me say a little more about the crime coverage issue. My research showed that Blacks accused of violent or drug related crimes are twice as likely to be shown on local television news physically restrained, either in handcuffs or being grasped by a police officer, as white defendants accused of the same kind of crimes.

Now that sends a message over the years of the steady drip, drip of these images that Blacks are more dangerous than whites even when they're accused of the same crime. Now the cause of that is a very complicated series of forces that act together. One thing is that police, white dominated police forces, may be more frightened of black defendants than of whites so that they may in fact be twice as likely to hold black defendants. White police forces may be less protective of the privacy rights of black defendants. Black defendants are less likely to have costly legal representation which can lobby or instruct police stations not to show their client for a perp walk.

Now given that kind of knowledge that it really isn't exactly the media's fault, but that these images are damaging and they are demonstrably damaging, social scientists have found that they heighten white antagonism what can journalists do? Well, I guess I lobby for an
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understanding that showing those images disproportionately that way is an editorial statement. It has an effect on race relations and one needs to counter it. One way would be to stop covering the crime daily as I suggested and just focus on one individual story each day.

But another might be just deliberately to turn down the perp walks when it’s a black defendant. Show something else. Knowing that this fits into a damaging pattern. So I think we’re all sensitive to the constraints on journalists.

On the other hand, there is a range of choice there which I think journalists could be more active in seizing.

MR. TASH: I’d like to pick up on Bob Blendon’s point about the gap in perception between white and black citizens. After the Florida election, you remember that, we were very interested in the question about how the results of the election as they were ultimately certified might affect the perception of black citizens about their ability to participate in the process and their sense of detachment from electoral politics as a whole. And so we did a statewide poll and reported the results showing a great sense of, as you might guess, of suspicion and antipathy about the results from the Florida election.

And the reaction on our letters to the editor page was interesting and in some ways disquieting because white readers, many white readers, excoriated the newspaper for having asked the question and reported the
answer as a way of stirring up this sense of division. Why can't you just leave well enough alone? And so while I'm from the Midwest and therefore constitutionally an optimist, that optimism is challenged a little bit in the sense that just because we may know each other better, doesn't necessarily mean that we're ready to hear what someone else is thinking.

And I think that's one of the challenges for news organizations is to write about these issues in ways that do resonate with the larger majority white audience rather than just have them tune out and turn off as yet another example of the white liberal media sticking up for causes and issues that really don't have our own sense of support.

MR. BOYD: Hi, Carole. It's Carole Simpson, outstanding TV journalist. You know, we have more blacks, African-Americans, in the middle class than at any point in this country's history. More blacks or African-Americans attending college, more African-Americans owning homes, at any point in this nation's history.

That doesn't come up and we have these kind of conversations is to talk about or focus on African-Americans as criminals and all of that. There are two realities about journalists.

One is Paula mentioned how there is a lazy way of reporting. I wouldn't call it lazy. I wouldn't say journalists are lazy. At least those journalists who work for me aren't lazy. But we're human beings. And, you
know we come in, we come to work, we want to go home, we
got to deal with the kids, we got to deal with going out,
we got to make a wife happy or a husband happy. We're
human beings. And we face a lot of pressures and that is
a reality.

Another reality is We're arrogant as hell. We
think we know everything because we get paid for that. So
what you have essentially is two kinds that clash when it
comes to covering something like race. You're covering a
subject that by it's very nature is so (indiscernible) and
so complicated that you can't do it in effect on the
cheap. Whether it's time or whether it's money, resource
wise, you can't do it on the cheap. And yet the tendency
is to do it, get it done, and get out of there and move
on. That is human.

And I think what has to be done at some point is
recognition of the reality that we face. There is no such
thing as that community. No matter what surveys show or
polls show, there's no such thing as a monolithic
community when it comes to people of color or it comes to
whites.

When the New York Times did a series a few years
ago called "Children of the Shadow" and it was about
inter-city kids and what they were going through and it
started with a profound premise on the part of some
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1 editors at the Times and that was we didn't understand
2 these kids. These kids aren't our kids. They don't live
3 in our world. We don't live in their world. And so how
4 can we sit down and devise a series of articles that gives
5 insight into the lives and the struggles of these kids
6 when we don't know them
7 And I could design five series on the presidency
8 because I cover the White House or government because we
9 know government or the middle class because we know middle
10 class. But if you're talking about inter-city kids who
11 happen to have be a minority, their world is not our
12 world.
13 So before we did anything, anything, we sat
14 down, we spent a day and a half just talking to a group of
15 inter-city kids from Bedstuy, poorest neighborhood in New
16 York. And we learned from firsthand accounts, their
17 feelings that institutions were failing them whether it
18 was the church, whether it was the school, whether it was
19 police, whether it was parents, and that they had no place
20 to turn. And that became the basis for our smarts. And I
21 just think that before we move ahead journalistically,
22 we've got to acknowledge some realities and we've got to
23 try to work through them and I think that's all.
24 MS. MADISON: I am one of those kids. I grew up
25 on welfare in Harlem. My parents were immigrants and they
26 broke up before I was born. And I did go through a number
27 of systems where my family relied on governmental support
28 and charity frankly in order to get us through. My
brother went to Williams and Harvard Business School and I graduated from Vassar and I went to Syracuse University and left because I didn't like it there.

But anyway, you know unless you are -- and I said that -- I mean I tell you that not because I got a badge or there's a mark on my forehead or any of that. I mean it is who I am. But the fact is is that unless we invite everyone into our newsrooms and unless everyone has the opportunity to rise and help set policy in our newsrooms, we're going to get ourselves into trouble insofar as coverage is concerned.

If -- I mean it's sort of an interesting story about the O. J. Simpson verdict that, you know, what happened at the New York Times. The New York Times, as Gerald said, you know, people saw the verdict, the black reporters took it one way and the white reporters took it another way and nobody talked for fear that it would probably turn into a slugfest I'm certain. But at WNBC, oh, we talked about it and voices were raised and we, you know, and but the reason why we did it was not because we said, "Well, you know what, we don't have anything better to do. Let's stand around and risk getting into a fight."

We did it because we are a huge institution, we the media, and if we don't discuss race and if we can't talk about and hear from each other and try to dispel some of the attitudes on both sides, then how are we equipped to go out and cover the story when we're coming equipped with our own biases that we've never said out loud. That we've never put in the context of for example some of the
statistics that Bob just shared with us.

So one of the things that I think would be important would be, unless you are skilled at this, I would not recommend that you encourage a discussion about race in the newsrooms or frankly in the classroom because you are likely to find that fights will occur. But there are organizations, the Maynard Institute, Nancy and Bob Maynard's, the fault lines discussion, bring somebody in who can either train your managers and your employees or help participate in such a discussion so that, you know, here's an example that I'm asked by teens often, "Why do teenagers always end up on the news doing bad things?" You know, that's another group that just overwhelmingly is shown doing something bad. Unless they rescued an old lady from a burning building. But otherwise we're afraid of teens. We don't like them they're bad, sex, drugs, hey, rock and roll.

But think about the numbers of teenagers who are graduating every year as valedictorians and salutatorians and going to college and going into the military and becoming productive citizens. But when they see themselves on the news, they're as handcuffed as African-American males are. So it's the biases that we bring into the newsrooms that get played out in our coverage and so interact with teenagers. Interact with people of color, and not just black people. Interact with people of color, have conversations, and learn, learn what the biases are that we need to talk about and then dispel
before we go out and cover the same issue in our communities and run the risk of doing an incredible amount of damage because I've seen lots of damage done by journalists.

MR. BLENDON: Just quickly two thoughts that might be helpful. One is which relates to a point that Paula made earlier. Schools and health care are special issues. They are the two issues that it look like from polling data, people will reach across racial divides, listen and learn. So my first message is every time there are two schools and health care stories on the front page and one less crime story, you have an ability to reach across the divide. White Americans are willing to talk about those issues. They feel more comfortable. They feel more concern.

Second point is the most difficult and that is in the issues of police and courts, there is a sense of white concern for fairness. But as everyone who has covered this issue or looked at letters to the editor, the bar is very high for convincing many whites about discriminatory patterns. So in order to make an impact on many white readers, you need evidence of very significant patterns of discrimination by sources that are impeachable -- I mean unimpeachable for that.

Otherwise, on this issue, unlike health care and schools, whites just had this very you're really going to have to work very hard to me to show that. But if you show it, they'll be instant supporters I think we'll see on racial profiling around police where whites are
15 becoming extremely convinced that there is a pattern,
16 there is legitimate reason to think something has to be
17 changed.
18
19 But there's a very high bar on that issue of
20 convincing people about the level of discrimination in the
21 community and I looked at some of the data on voting in
22 Florida and it was interesting to me how far you would
23 have to go to convince many whites that there really was
24 an organized pattern of discrimination. So you've got to
25 go very far or it doesn't have an impact on white readers.
26
27 MR. PATTERSON: Good, thank you, Bob, and thanks
28 to the other -- we don't have 10 or 15 minutes for your
29 involvement but we do have seven or eight. And please
30 join us and you must use the microphones and it would be
31 helpful if you could identify yourself please. And we'll
32 start with the front microphone and just work back and
33 forth as many times as we can.
34
35 MS. GILLIAM: Yes, my name is Dorothy Gilliam
36 and I'm director of the Young Journalist Development
37 Project at the Washington Post. I just think it's
38 important to put a little context into some of the remarks
39 as I've heard them
40
41 First of all, I think it's important to realize
42 that there are probably only maybe two Paula Madisons in
43 the whole country. There are probably maybe ten news
44 directors. But in terms of major markets, I believe
45 Paula, correct me if I'm wrong, are you the only?
46
47 MS. MADISON: Well, I left the rank of news
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director but you're right.

MS. GILLIAM: I'm sorry. You're the President.

MS. MADISON: There's probably about ten and the general managers, there's probably like five or six of us.

MS. GILLIAM: Okay. But the point I'm trying to make is this is a total anomaly that you're hearing today and that part of the problem exists because we still have the absolute refusal on the part of the white power structure to really name people of color into positions of power.

Now Mr. Boyd, there are very few of him. There are only -- when you look in this country, the number, the total percentage of people of color in the press today as reporters it's about 12 percent. So 88 percent of the media is white. And while of course that is an average figure, it does not include, you know, the New York and the Washingtons of the world, the metropolitan centers.

Part of the context of this whole discussion has to be that for those of us who have tried to battle this problem for 25 years, there has consistently been a refusal on the part of the white media owners and managers in this country to share the power with African-Americans and other people of color. There are always a few high profile people who are named into positions and certainly as you've seen, they are always excellent representatives.

But the problem we're facing today is that almost as many African-Americans are leaving the news industry as are coming in which means that there's not enough being done to keep them on the staffs. So I think
the problems that are being discussed are urgent. The
diversity is not -- we're not meeting the goals that are
being discussed if we're losing the experienced people and
we're bringing on very new young people.

So I think that it just -- the context of all
this is really urgent and it cannot all be pinned on
black, you know, black people and black reporters and that
diversity. We have to look at the people who own and
control this who truly, truly are not from my perspective,
not truly willing to bring about the changes that are
necessary.

Ms. PATTERSON: Dorothy, thank you.

MR. BAILEY: Yes, my name is A. Peter Bailey and
I'm with Vital Issue, The Journal of African-American
Speeches.

And I came across something in the Washington
Post on June 25th. An ad, "We have a question for
President Bush, working families play by the rules, why
shouldn't corporations?" Now in this ad, they have a
Hispanic family, Hispanic-American family, a
European-American family, an Asian-American family with
husband, wife and children. The black, the
African-American family is a mother and a daughter. And I
said this came at a perfect time to bring to the this
meeting and I would like to have you respond as to why --
if the Washington Post does this, I mean what else? What
do you expect from the Idaho, you know, News Journal?

And this ad is signed by the AFL-CIO, the
Liberties Union, are people who have announced their support of this ad.

Now I said when I brought this, I said, now the Washington Post is going to claim this is an ad in which they have no control. So Sunday I read the Washington Post again in the business section. Now this is what they control and they have a what's in it for them talking about the tax cut. Again, they show three white families with man and woman; man and woman; man, woman and children; and a black family, a woman. Just a woman. This is the Washington Post. Now if the Washington Post -- and I would have to assume there must have been I would hope that there was somebody black when these discussions were being made about these two different, these two things, and yet they run. This is more devastating to me in terms of young people and in terms of images, in terms of what the press and the media, than anything that appears in some of the more reactionary conservative newspapers.

And I would like to ask the gentleman who talked about context. Could you explain to me how the Washington Post in 2001 could publish something like this?

MR. ENTMAN: The Washington Post, not just the Washington Post -- it brings to mind for me that journalists themselves are certainly subject to
1 stereotypes, to automatic thinking in patterns than a lot of research shows this. It does suggest that even if there are blacks, Latinos, Asians in the newsroom that's really not enough and what's actually needed is some education of white journalists as well.

2 Now as Gerald said, journalists tend to be arrogant and be kind of difficult students. Not easy to instruct in these things, which does suggest that perhaps -- two things.

3 One that the people who run these organizations ought to do more than lip service and actually have systematic discussions of this, not only because it's the right thing to do but because it helps to insure accuracy and because it helps to guarantee future profits because the audience is increasingly diverse.

4 The second thing it suggests and something that hasn't been mentioned very much is it can't be done by journalists alone. We really need political leadership to speak out about these things in a way that is not cynical and manipulative.

5 It's one of the really fine things that President Clinton tried to do was have this initiative on race and get a discussion going and I must say that I'm doing a little research now. The media's response to the initiative on race was very hostile. Almost uniformly critical of the idea of talking about race. So I do think we have some issues within journalists themselves and I don't think we can limit our discussion to just increasing
the numbers of minority journalists.

MR. BOYD: Well, if I could just say quickly. I think Clinton's media initiative, media on race initiative, was a joke myself.

I was about to say to my brother back there who I'm about to piss off, I'm sure. I was about to say that would have never happened in the New York Times. But that would be wrong.

What you're not -- what makes this all so complicated is there are black single moms who raise kids. I was raised by one. And so I am not offended by that in the least. The problem is does it go, does it tell the whole story? It tells a part of the story. And as we talk about race, whether it's in the ads or in stories, how do we make sure we tell the whole story and not just be PC about it.

MR. WILLIAMS: Hi, Damien Williams, Harvard College. We can sit under the Harvard banner and, you know, talk about, you know, these changes that are going to happen but how are they going to happen? I mean there -- we're talking about conscience of the media but money has no conscience. So how does a for profit nature of the press, how is that going to prevent these changes from actually being put into place because isn't it just more scandalous to put out, you know, a black guy in handcuffs on the 5:00 news?

MS. MADISON: No.

MR. WILLIAMS: Isn't that so?
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MS. MADISON: No, it does not --
MR. WILLIAMS: I'm playing devil's advocate.

That's --

MS. MADISON: Well, but it doesn't and that's part of what -- I mean that's part of what hopefully will become a greater discussion among the people who own these outlets. In fact, the more we report that kind of news, the more we are driving the audiences away. There is an audience watching television. It's just that they're picking something else to watch. It's not that fewer people are watching television overall. There are significant numbers of people watching television and that daily diet of death, destruction and murder when, you know, I watched a newscast here in Washington last night where, you know, tell me that there are not issue stories in Washington, D.C. And the first five stories I saw on the 11:00 newscast last night in Washington were all about crime. And I just sat there and scratched my head and said, "How do the people who live in Washington let them get away with that?"

MR. PATTERSON: Well, we have another panel that's following this one and so that'll have to be the last question. If any of the panelists have about a ten second comment, I invite you to give that. If not, let me put on the note where Gerald talked about this maybe being the two millionth panel on race and the media, and he may be exhausted by them. But I do think that the persistence of the problems, what all of you have been saying about these problems, haven't really gone away all that much.
Some of them in fact have deepened. I think the persistence of the problem speaks to the importance of the continuing dialogue.

And thank you very much for being part of this panel and we're going to fold right into the second one so your program may say a five minute break but in fact we exhausted it. We used it up. Thank you very much.

(MR. JONES: For those of you who are joining us, who joined us a little late, I'm Alex Jones, Director of the Joan Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics and Public Policy and welcome to our morning's discussion on the very tricky, very important issue of race in the media.

We now turn to race in the media, the national story, and this discussion will be led by my colleague, Marvin Kalb. Marvin Kalb was the founding director of the Shorenstein Center. It was my honor to succeed him as Director last year. Marvin is now the Executive Director of the Washington office of the Shorenstein Center.

Marvin, as most of you already know very, very well, was a veteran of television news, a very distinguished 30 year career at ABC, rather at NBC and CBS, as a chief diplomatic correspondent covering politics and all kinds of delicately nuanced issues for a long, long time. Hence, has great skill as someone who, you know, takes these things in hand. His -- probably the sine qua non of his career was his years of hosting Meet
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the Press which I'm sure many of you also remember.

He's the author of many books. The newest one,
One Scandalous Story, is about to be published. This was
given a particularly sweet plug by Bill Sapphire recently
who said it was going to be one of the sleepers of the
year. It's also true that this conference itself sprang
from the fertile mind of Marvin Kalb originally. Marvin
Kalb.

MR. KALB: Thank you, Alex, very much. It's
really my pleasure and an honor to have been asked to
moderate this panel, the second of the morning, and let me
quickly introduce the panel and get right to our subject.

To my left, Christopher Edley, a Professor of
Law at the Harvard Law School, the founding co-director of
the Civil Rights Project at Harvard. Professor Edley
served as Special Counsel to President Clinton and he was
the Director of the White House review of affirmative
action. He's the author of Not All Black and White.

To my right, Ray Suarez, Senior Correspondent
for the PBS NewsHour with Jim Lehrer. Suarez has been an
award winning journalist for the past 20 years, working at
ABC and from 1993 to 1999, he hosted NPR's afternoon
call-in show, Talk of the Nation. He is the author of the
Old Neighborhood, What We Lost in the Great Suburban
Migration of 1966 to 1999.

Deborah Mathis has been a Shorenstein Center
Fellow in Washington this past year, researching and
writing the paper distributed to you today called No Seat
at the Table, the black-white appearance gap in the
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election 2000 story. Ms. Mathis is the former national
correspondent and columnist for the Gannett News Service.
She is a commentator for America's Black Forum, a weekly
talk show dealing with issues of importance to
African-Americans.

Taeku Lee is an Assistant Professor of Public
Policy at the Kennedy School of Government. He
specializes in public opinion, political behavior, racial

politics and social policy. His forthcoming book, Two
Nations, Separate Grooves, explores the role of race
immobilizing and activating the civil rights movement.

Orlando Patterson is the John Cowles Professor
of Sociology at Harvard, a leading scholar on slavery,
freedom, and ethnic inequalities. He contributes
significantly to the public discussion of racial issues in
America. He's a prolific writer. Two of his books are
The Ordeal of Integration: Progress and Resentment in
America's "Racial" Crisis and the other is Rituals of
Blood: The Consequences of Slavery in Two American
Centuries.

And finally, Carole Simpson is anchor for World
News Tonight Sunday. She's an Emmy-award winning senior
correspondent for ABC News. Her reports appear regularly
on World News Tonight with Peter Jennings and Good Morning
America. She's done many memorable broadcasts including
moderating one of the Presidential debates in 1992.

The previous moderator, my colleague, Professor
Patterson, gave his panelists five minutes to speak and
some of them went a bit over five. I'm going to give them about two minutes each. And if they go much beyond that, I'm going to stop them. Because we got to move on. So let's say two to two thirty and I want to start with each of you with a single question.

And the single question for all of you is having heard the first panel and those of you who didn't hear the first panel should have, having heard the issues, knowing the issues, what in your definition is the single most important quality or factor in this discussion. I want to start with Chris Edley.

MR. EDLEY: I know better than to answer the precise question asked by a journalist.

MR. KALB: But try. But try.

MR. EDLEY: So let me start by just saying thank you to the Shorenstein Center for this panel. I am sure everybody joins me in feeling that way and also thank you to Mr. Shorenstein and his family for the gift he has given to all of us in creating the Shorenstein Center.

Marvin, I want to give you three, not a single. The first it seems to me major problem is the tendency among all of us but particularly in the media to still treat this as a black-white issue. When the diversity of the country and certainly the diversity of a great many communities makes it far more complicated. If you talk about race as a black-white problem in Los Angeles, they will look at you like you are from another planet. That's not the nature of the problem and everyone beginning with journalists as the nation's educators have to appreciate
The second is that I'm fond of saying that race is not rocket science. It is harder than rocket science. I want to associate myself with Gerald Boyd's comments from the first panel in that respect. The notion that somebody can be assigned to a race related story and be expected to do a decent job of it based on a day or two or a month of casual reading or conversation strikes me as nuts. But there are some topics on which that is possible and I speak as somebody who spent a good part of my career being a policy wonk (phonetic) generalist, including being National Issues Director in the Dukakis campaign in '87 and '88.

Race is way up there near the top of complicated stories to cover. It's harder than writing about the MX missile in today's newspapers. And the assiduousness with which I think people have to prepare to do a good job is often, indeed almost always, underestimated by journalists themselves and it seems to me the editors and producers above them.

The third and final one I'd said which is related -- I'm very tired of talking to reporters, editors, producers about race related stories and finding that I'm talking to a 20-something-year-old or even a 30-something-year-old who came of age during the Reagan era and seems to believe that America's biggest race
problem is the oppression of white males. I don't think that's the case. The data that Bob Blendon provided on the disparities in perceptions about the nature of the problem is certainly a compelling thing for us to focus on but there's so much ahistoricism, so much lack of context, so much lack of understanding, that because of the complexity of the race story, I think the journalists need to redouble their efforts to firmly grounded in some of the basics about America, where it's come from and where it is today.

MR. KALB: Education. Education. Ray Suarez.

MR. SUAREZ: Well, I would like to borrow ahistoricism maybe on a lateral and continue to run down field with it. I think part of the problem with the conversations we're having is that we're talking about how to do what we do better and not noticing that we have now entered a sort of post-race era in the way we do news and the way we talk about changing American culture. There is a desire to get on with it already as if all the old battles have been won, all the old dragons have been slain or have at least slunk dejectedly back into their caves.

So when you try to do a story that has a racial component to it, there's this feeling in the newsroom of "oh that again." You know, haven't we been doing that story in some form or another for 30 years, 40 years, 50 years.
stated reluctance on the part of people who align
themselves with the demographic majority in the United
States to think that well that’s just not a story any
more. In part, it’s because of the tremendous spatial and
residential segregation that still remains in metropolitan
areas. So if you wake up in a totally white place, go to
work in a largely white place, recreate after 5:00 in a
largely white place and then go back to sleep in that
largely white place and somebody says, “Hey, what about
the race problem?” You say, “What race problem?” But how
are you going to try to impinge on my very comfy life by
telling me that there’s some kind of problem here.

So when we are in this post-race moment where
integration is not an issue not because it’s been
accomplished but because it’s never been tried and we’ve
sort of just given up, there is a reluctance to have an
honest conversation about how all this cuts in where you
live, in where you go to school, where you can expect or
if you can expect to get any post-secondary education.
How this affects the employment profile in the United
States. Nobody really wants to talk about any of this.

We also in our gush, our post-census gush, about
the changing face of America and the new demographic

realities, blah, blah, blah, we aren’t also dealing with
the truth that if you jump in a car in the western suburbs
of Philadelphia, you can pretty much drive all the way to
Portland, Oregon without seeing a brother or seeing a
Latin guy anywhere because there is a cent, a degree to
which when you look at the map this is not an all over
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America American story in very broad terms. This is still very much not solely, not exclusively, but still very much a metropolitan and coastal and borderland story more than I think we're willing to talk about.

If you take six top metropolitan areas, you've accounted for more than half of all the black people in the United States and all the Latinos in the United States. So when you're trying to aggregate a mass audience for a national story, you're sitting there in the newsroom scratching your head trying to find a story teller, a vessel to carry that story that represents common humanity. Ad America isn't yet big enough or great enough of heart to have non-white people represent common humanity when it comes to things like paying a mortgage, paying a light bill, worrying about whether or not you wear your seat belt or talk on a cell phone in a car.

So in the coverage of things that are sort of all of us type of things, we still see a white person as the default mode regular person. And to the extent that we cover minority communities, it's only when we cover their complaints. So the overall trajectory of the story is that white people argue about and wonder about and worry about what's important and other people complain. And with those as our sort of master tropes, no wonder we get it wrong all the time. I hope that was three minutes.

MR. KALB: Okay, thanks. Thank you. Thank you very much. Deborah Mathis.

MS. MATHIS: Yes, I think that what ails
journalism on this issue in particular, but as I also --
our national dilemma and that is right now trying to put
our hands around what is racism. You remember in Jasper,
Texas, that awful story, the man being chained and dragged
behind the truck, dragged to pieces literally. Everybody
in the country of any decency whatsoever decried that
abhorrent, that found that the most awful thing, couldn't
imagine taking part of that. Had no sympathy whatever for
the culprits involved in that. Many people applauded the
fact that one of them got the death penalty.

But what that did was allow us to say, "Okay,
here is racism quite obviously and it is extreme. I'd
never do that. I don't feel that way. I hate that kind
of thing. Therefore, I am not racist." And when we
define it, only on its edges that way, we miss the story
because the story is how it happens in the most subtle
ways.

When you look in Cincinnati with the riots that
occurred there just a few months ago, you think that was
because one kid got killed? Do you think that that's why
people put their lives and their livelihoods and
everything else on the line because one person was killed,
as awful as that may be? You think that the people tore
up south central Los Angeles because the police officers
were -- walked in the beating of Rodney King?

Now these were the proverbial straws. This was
an accumulation of toil and trouble and heartache and fear
and anger and resentment. And if we realize that as
reporters, when we jump on a story and cover the crisis
mode of the story, that's only the top layer of a story that actually produced that. The why is always a thing that we fail to cover best. Why something happened. And once we recognize that things don't happen in a vacuum and there's not a lot of spontaneous combustion, that there are all kinds of other chemical processes going on before you actually have that eruption, I think we will realize that we haven't really covered the story very well at all. Years ago, I remember reading a little blurb, one of those little interesting in the news things about two elderly brothers who lived together and one killed the other in a fight over a tuna sandwich. Now I looked at

that. It was just that little blurb. You see that and you think oh, lock him away. He's sick. That's crazy, you know. You can react angrily in this way to that. But you don't know that that was about more than a tuna sandwich? Don't you know that some other things, just as a human being, aren't you aware that other things have happened over the years? There's been a buildup and the tuna sandwich was the turning point that time.

Let us get to the root of the story. Let us figure out what is causing the story from stem to stern.

MR. KALB: Okay. Thank you, Deborah, very much.

Taeku Lee.

MR. LEE: You know in my business I'm used to thinking in 30 minute chunks and then being told I have 15 minutes to say it. Aml --

MR. KALB: Oh, no, 15 is not what you have.
MR. LEE: Because they usually speak twice as quickly but this is not an option because I don't think anyone wants to hear me try to talk ten times as fast.

MR. KALB: No, that's not going to work.

MR. LEE: So let me try to stick to just one point and start by saying what I think the problem is now. The single most important issue on race is not and that I think the single most important thing is not what scholarship can bring to the table because it's easy for us scholars to show you that media coverage, what the media does cover and what the media doesn't cover, has an important and huge impact on the way we think about race and the way stories play out.

It's easy for me to show that, you know, politicians, advertisers, and producers understand this, they use this to their advantage, they exploit this when they need to.

It's easy for me to show you that, you know, race in the United States today is not simply about black and white and if you don't get beyond that, you're going to miss an important part of the story. It's easy for me to show that who gets to construct the news, who your sources are, who the editors are, who the actors are, has a huge role in what I see the news turns out to be.

That's the easy part and it's easy to show it on a whole range of different issues. People either know this or can be convinced of this if given enough time in a setting between journalists and scholars.

There is no polio vaccine to this issue of race.
and the media's role in covering issues of race. The tough question is and I think the important question is what do media professionals choose to do given what we do know about this issue of race and the media's role in influencing public views on race? And what do we as citizens and consumers of media information expect and demand from media coverage. That's the tough part. And it's tough because it's easy to simply say that, you know, the media is a business. It deals in a competitive market environment.

It's easy to say that there's a lot of compassion and fatigue out there and there's a lot of apathy because, you know, this is the two millionth story on race that we've been exposed to and I just don't want to hear about it any more. Those are the easy things to do. It's really tougher to stay vigilant on this issue. To be self-critical about the way we think about this issue. To take the pathway of greater resistance. That's the tough part. It's easy to assume that if you cover two sides of a story, you're doing what's fair and what's accurate and what's professionally of you as a journalist even though some stories really don't have two sides to an issue.

And so the tough thing is that race and racism have really I think been thorns in the side of the kind of society that we'd like to aspire to achieve for far too long and we don't get to that kind of society by taking the easy way out and I think we get to that society by
asking the really tough questions about race that we already know about.

MR. KALB: Thank you, Taeku, very much indeed. Orlando Patterson.

MR. PATTERSON: I'm going to answer your question by asking several brief questions. What do the foreign stories have in common, really have in common? The foreign (indiscernible) Senate hearings, the Rodney King riots, the Supreme Court decision against the remandering of seats to insure the election of Afro-American candidates, the O. J. Simpson trial, the interpretation of the 2000 census data in the press, and the recent LA mayoral contest.

The obvious one you may say is race but there's something far more important and that is the racialization of issues which are not primarily racial, important issues of course, but which were not primarily racial and made racial by focusing on the second racial issue at the expense of the truly critical ones.

Never forget the Thomas hearings. Here you had two antagonists who happened to be African-Americans on both sides. The issue was not primarily racial. It was about a (indiscernible) of Thomas and the cynicism of his appointment but once saw the press repeatedly grappling their two black faces up there, this must be racial, we got to make it racial, and of course it became racial even though African-Americans were asked to not view it as a
racial issue. It was a gender issue. And even though the
witnesses were all over the ethnic map, the press kept
hollering this must be a racial issue and in the end sort
of converted it to that.

The Rodney King case, the riots, my favorite
story on that is the Newsweek story which showed a
photograph in which it was perfectly obvious that those
weren't black people that were throwing the stones. They
were primarily, well of other ethnic groups, but was
defined essentially as a racial issue rather than an
eruption of essentially poor people, most of whom in this
case happened to be Latinos.

The Supreme Court decision on gerrymandering
which was the right position and any critical examination
would show that it was but in fact the bottom line being
that taken by the African-American leadership because the
press wouldn't allow it, seeing it as a racial issue.

But -- and so on and so forth, the U.S. Census
interpretation, the obsessive sort of racialization of
those figures which I have written above but I want to --
it's the recent mayoral election which I'd like to
emphasize since it's in everybody's mind.

I was in LA when those elections were going on.
I didn't see any tensions between African-Americans and
Latinos. I was indeed struck by the number of mixed
couples, Latino/African-Americans, which I saw in LA.

More than usual. But and it is perfectly clear what is
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going on. This was no in American politics and which
had -- who had devoted his life at a time when
African-Americans needed support, for 40 years, supported
African-Americans. When most white folks simply saw it
just is irrelevant. They saw simple American parties of
payback time. Loyalty, particular loyalty.
African-Americans are voting for this man because he and
his family had really sort of stood up for them when they
needed support.

The press kept seeing it as an issue of a
conflict between African-Americans and Latinos. Let me
recite you two headlines. One from the Wall Street
Journal, "LA Mayoral Contest Mirrors Racial Tension."
This is grotesque. But the same is true of the Houston
Chronicle. Quote "LA Mayoral's race all about race," the
headlines. I imagine this is typical. I'll go back and
check out Lexus Nexus and a clear case where the press
racialize an issue, insisted on seeing it in racial terms
which in fact was far more complex.

And here I must agree with Deborah about this
superficiality and I was going to ask her why? Why does
the press do this? Partly it's intellectual laziness.
No, not -- someone mentioned this earlier. Not physical

laziness, intellectual laziness. It's easy to ride the
race story. As a young journalist, the quickest way to
get on the front page is to write a race story. So the
temptation to simply see issues which do concern
African-Americans and Latinos profoundly but to see it
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largely as a race issue rather than what it really is, which may be an economic issue or a political issue or a familial issue or a gender issue, it's all it is is the way to get on the front page is to make it a race issue. And this superficial and it's like the laziness is what I'm complaining about.

There is one other point, however, I wanted to raise. Why does the press insist on sort of promoting this view, superficial view of race? I think the reason is a very complex one and it's the fact that the U.S. press is an institution that pretends to have a liberal bias in theory so that this may lead to demise and excuse its conservative bias in practice.

We see this right now. So you can -- you can always overcompensate. I essentially, you know, they're saying well I mean we have a liberal bias so we have to overcompensate and present a conservative viewpoint. Well, you end up basically only presenting primarily conservative viewpoint.

We see it now with the horrendous way in which the harbor shark attack on Clinton in contrast with the pussycat approach to what is undoubtedly the most conservative president in recent memory. And why does he do this? How does race connect to this? I'll tell you and this is my final point. Race fits into this because one way in which the press maintains its charade of being, having a liberal bias, is to unpolitically cover race. This is the code that we are really liberal. This is how the press persuades itself that it really is liberal when
in fact it is in practice operating in an extremely conservative way as evidenced by the really extraordinary failure to cover what is now a dangerously conservative movement in the country. Thank you.

MR. KALB: Thank you, Professor. That liberal bias charge is the one normally leveled against the press by conservatives by the way.

Carole Simpson.

MR. LEE: Exactly. Conservatives use it and mildly (indiscernible). It's all up to sniff liberal bias and you all keel over and say oh, yes, we overcompensate.

MS. SIMPSON: Marvin, I forgot what your original question was.

MR. KALB: What is the single most --

MS. SIMPSON: No, I'm going to answer other stuff per se.

MR. KALB: You'll follow in a long tradition.

MS. SIMPSON: Right. I -- Edie Halway of the Shorenstein Center sent us some talking points before today. So I'm going to answer those questions. Yes, important, inadequate, bad, badly, no, yes, yes, yes, worse.

MR. KALB: Thank you very much.

MS. SIMPSON: Seriously, Marvin, and I hope you will indulge me a little bit of time because I see a lot of young people here and I think we do need to put some context into what we are seeing in the media today. So I want to give you a little bit of the history of what is
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happening in television news because unlike --

MR. KALB: I'm not going to be that generous but
go ahead.

MS. SIMPSON: Okay. I'll try. You are not
going to see race stories on television, on network
television. Okay. Number one. I always start my remarks
with how glad I am to be here or wherever I am but I'm not
sure I am glad to be here because while I may shed some
light on the problem for you, I know that I'm going to
leave here more depressed than I am when I came in here.

Some background is essential about where I'm
coming from and where I think the industry is going. I
went to journalism school in the 60's because of race.

That was the turbulent decade of the civil rights
revolution. There were urban riots, freedom rides,
sit-ins, Dr. King's non-violent demonstrations that
provoked violence, and I wanted to be a reporter so that I
could tell that story. And white reporters really
couldn't because they were suspect. I look at Bernie
Shaw. He and I started together in Chicago at the same
time and I think that's probably the reason that you
wanted to go in was to help tell that story.

And I felt that if people understood what was
going on in black neighborhoods and understood what -- why
these things were happening, that we could reach some
understanding of the problems and then we could have
solutions to the problems. And I wanted to tell the truth
and there was anger and frustration about why America was
not living up to its promise of equal rights for all.
people.

I wanted the public to know that all black people were not ignorant, were not poor, and were not criminals. That we had the same desires for good schools and good jobs and for decent places to live. That we wanted access to opportunities, to live the American dream. This is not the mission which I believe my white colleagues had. They weren't living in black America as I was.

So I entered the profession not to become famous or to make a lot of money or to go on television. I entered the profession because I wanted people to know what was happening. So for more than 30 years, I have been a reporter on my high school and college newspapers, community newspapers, then radio, then local television, and then network television where I've spent the past 25 years.

Because of the power of the pictures and story telling, I think television has to be credited with helping end, strike down segregation laws in this country and for helping to end the Viet Nam war.

I loved the work until some major developments occurred in the mid-1980's and now I know I'm past my time but I got to tell them this. That's when the three national networks were bought by corporations. News had heretofore been pretty much left alone. We were to bring distinction to networks that brought you the Beverly Hillbillies and the Dukes of Hazzard. I should say
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Survivor today and Temptation Island.

But we were left alone. Just go out there, distinguish yourselves and bring distinction to this network. Now we have been bought by these corporations and it was determined that news cost too damned much. Why $600,000 to cover the Persian Gulf War every day for television? Why did we have to charter jets to go to tornado ravaged areas? Why go with the President on every overseas trip with two crews and three correspondents and producers? The bean counters became involved in our budgets.

At the same time, we've got cable getting off the ground. And we've got people renting video cassettes and the networks which once commanded 90 percent of the television viewing audience were beginning to lose it. As the years went on and on, more cable stations popped up, Fox became the fourth television network, and today they're all -- there are three all news channels.

So ABC, NBC and CBS which once could deliver a 100 million viewers saw our audiences dwindle to the point where today I think less than 50 percent, actually I think it's 47 percent of the audience, is tuned to one of the major networks. Considerably fewer for the network television news. And what does fewer people mean? Fewer people means lower revenues from advertising and lower revenues from advertising means cutbacks in personnel, in facilities, and what we did.

We are being run by corporations now who don't really care how many Emmys and awards we win but how much
money have we saved.

You're touching me, I know, but I got to finish this.

There is no fat in where we are now. We are down into the bone and muscle and we are struggling for our survival. So how important is it that we cover race today? Been there, done that. That's the attitude. You've heard all of us say that. That's not to say we don't cover stories about race at network. Nightline and the magazine shows have done provocative and award winning work and I'm proud of what they've done. But you should know that the network news programs, the evening programs, are now in the fight of our lives and we are struggling to if not attract new audience, at least hang on to what we have and that tends to be white, older, more affluent, college educated and suburbanites.

So we do have focus groups to try and determine what they're interested in hearing and seeing on television and they like medicine and technology. So our producers try to give them some of what they like and some of what they should have. And what they don't seem to like and what some of our producers don't seem to think they need these days is stories about race, I'm sorry to say. I disagree with that position but after 19 years at ABC, I do understand the competitive pressures that we are under and I hope, I pray that racial divisions in this country don't get so bad that we are forced again to start
Thank you. I'm sorry I over spoke my time but --

MR. KALB: No, that's okay. Thank you. You've made a very good point.

What I would like to do in the time that remains is focus on three themes.

One of those themes is a study that Deborah Mathis did and a copy of which you can pick up up front if you don't have it as yet.

The second is a study that a former colleague of mine did, Bob Weston, about why the issue of race which we've already touched on, why black people don't get on the air as much and why black issues don't get put on the air as much.

And the third is to review and expand a bit on the racial profiling poll that Bob Blendon has already talked about just a little bit.

But I'd like to start with the first theme which takes us back to the election last year and one major issue that came up in the election last year aside from all of those that you know already has to do with race because in a very real way, blacks were discriminated against according to everything that I have read so far.

Deborah Mathis, please give us a couple of quick headlines and what your study says and then what it is
that you think it means and then I would like the panel to respond to that.

MS. MATHIS: All right. This is after watching 158 talk shows. These were the Sunday talk shows, yes, and I did watch them. These were the Sunday talk shows and the regularly scheduled evening Monday through Friday talk shows on cable, like Hardball, Rivera Live, and O'Reilly Factor, that kind of show.

What I found was that there was a total of 857 guest appearances on those shows. 107 of those were principals. They were people involved in the story. They were the James Bakers and the Warren Christophers, et cetera, and so the reason I pulled those out of the total or made them a separate category is of course because the producers and bookers and hosts really have not much choice in who they get — in who those people are, what the race of those people are. But they do have choices in terms of who they have for media, legal experts, House members, Senate members, former elected officials, former Cabinet members, former administration officials, other elected officials such as the mayor of a city in Florida, scholars, Floridians, political operatives, and people who represent special interest groups. They have choices there. Of those total, if you take the 107 out, we're talking about 750 guest appearances of all those others that they had options with. And of those, 44 were black, 44 appearances. 20 black individuals made a total of 44 appearances.

I find this very questionable about the media
which is supposed not just to be the watchdog but the
guard dog of democracy, of the principles that this
country espouses, and those that it aspires to and yet you
see here to me evidence that there is a problem in the way
we think about who is expert? Who speaks with authority
here?

I also in this report give ample evidence that
there are several organizations of black lawyers, black
journalists, black historians, black scholars. You can't
say we couldn't find any in other words. The Rolodex
problem as it's been called is -- has been blamed for some
of this oversight but I think that there's not too much
room we can give that excuse any longer. We know that
black experts are out there. This story even had a racial
component to it and still you saw such a paucity of black
experts.

MR. KALB: There was 94.2 percent of all of the
appearance were by whites.

MS. MATHIS: Correct.

MR. KALB: Right?

MS. MATHIS: Yes.

MR. KALB: How do you account for that? Take
the lead. Say you were looking at this from a scholarly
point of view, how would you have accounted for that?

MR. LEE: Well, I mean I think that Rolodex
phenomenon speaks to some of it. I think the Florida case
is especially prominent just because it can have decisive
consequences. But I think it's a fairly pervasive

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phenomena no matter what issue you're looking at.

So I've done some similar work with the 1996 campaign finance scandal where I looked across about a half dozen different media sources to try to see how they were covering this issue and in particular how they were covering this issue with respect to Asian Americans. How often were they quoted? Does it reinforce prevailing stereotypes about Asian Americans? Does it challenge them in the way that Bob Entman tells them that media coverage should.

And there's a huge difference in terms of who the author is in these different media institutions are, who the journalists actually are, and what their prevailing markets are. So newspapers on the west coast, in particular in Los Angeles, was covering this issue in a prominently different way than newspapers elsewhere in the country were. And then newspapers that had journalists who were Asian Americans were covering this issue in a different way than other newspapers were.

So I think it's a pervasive issue. You see it in a whole range of different settings.

MR. KALB: Ray Suarez, your experience in journalism has been with ABC but also with NPR and now with PBS. Is there a difference in the way the selection process works at for example ABC or PBS?

MR. SUAREZ: Well because working at PBS means you basically work for a program rather than a sunrise, Nightline news organization --

MR. KALB: Okay. The program
MR. SUAREZ: -- it's a very different kind of animal. You get all your key decision makers in one little room quite easily at the news hour with plenty of room to spare so it's quite different from some of the other places that I've worked.

The selection process does not differ all that much from place to place to place. I would agree with Deborah Mathis' analysis about how the news dropped the ball with not seeing aspects of the story in the way they booked talk shows. But I think the political operations more than met them halfway. This was a conspiracy in a sense. I know that word is used very advisedly in Washington these days. But the two were let's say enablers of each other in deracializing this story.

When you talk about hiring a private organization to handle the voter roll strikes for felons and switched addresses and that kind of thing and you look at who was struck and why they were struck and who stayed struck and whose votes didn't count, there is a racial aspect to that story.

MR. KALB: Why would they want -- why would the press want to deracialize the story?

MR. SUAREZ: The press already as we've very thoroughly discussed has an interest in deracializing the story from the get go but they were met in that desire by, seemingly by both political organizations of the two principle candidates who also wanted to keep the battle strictly on other terms.
MR. KALB: I understand. Now but why just on the press side, Chris Edley, I know you're not a journalist but you've talked to them in the past. Why would it be in the press' interest to deracialize the story? Why would it be in the press' interest that there be 94.2 percent of the people interviewed on a story which had an obvious racial component? Be black. Be white.

MR. EDLEY: Well, I suspect that there a couple of things going on. The ones that come immediately to mind are these.

First, there is a sense that we want to put somebody in front of the camera who will be perceived by the audience as a bona fide expert. Now of course this is vicious because it feeds on itself. If the only so-called experts the public sees, this is Bob Entman's point, over time the narrative is teaching the public that people of color are never experts. But still that's -- so that's one possibility.

A second possibility is that in the minds of the bookers, a person of color isn't neutral. A person of color has baggage, has a point of view, and therefore if we cast him or her, it's because we want them to be on the side of some balanced mud wrestling exercise. So that's another possibility.

And the third and this I think speaks to the much broader problem if I may, Marvin, Deborah's research, Bob Entman's research, I think there's an underlying difficulty in news management and that is what I call the accounting period problem. I'm booking a show for
Tonight. Let me figure out how to fill those four slots tonight. Who is responsible for stepping back and saying over the course of several shows, over the course of an extended time period, what does the balance look like? How many folks from Ivy League? How many folks are women? How many folks have been people of color?

The mechanisms if you will to police the overall balance of the narrative are difficult to come by and I think that's true on the news side, it's true on the entertainment side, and part of the long run solution to these problems it seems to me is for journalism to invent mechanisms within itself to keep tabs on how we are doing. To do some self-auditing and then hopefully some self-correction.

And by the way if I can just, since I have the floor, drop a footnote. I disagree with 92 percent of what Orlando Patterson said. I don't think our principal problems is that there's too much news coverage of race. Occasionally there's a problem when something that isn't a race story is made into a race story. Acknowledged. Far more often, the problem is that there's race in the story that isn't addressed or race is addressed but it's done very, very poorly. So I think the multiple difficulties here have to be kept in proportion.

MR. KALB: I want to go ahead to Bob Weston's account which may in fact help answer the question that I've just raised and I'd like to ask Carole Simpson and Orlando Patterson to respond to this.
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Bob Weston has worked in television for about 50 years and he's been at most of the networks and last year and earlier this year, what he did was embark on a specific project to interview 100 executives, producers, correspondents, researchers, production assistants, and production crews from five commercial networks then plus PBS. And he was asking them about best practices. But what he found in his exploration was not good examples of good journalism but rather one stark example that kept coming up over and over and over again and that was as he puts it, "the reality that race is a criterion for story selection." And what he then concluded was and I quote: "Every week, every day, stories about African-Americans, Hispanics and Asians are kept off the air. Racism is alive and well in many television newsrooms around the country. Race is a substantial factor in assigning stories and deciding whom and what to include."

All right, Carole. You have given us some autobiographical material and you have put it I think within this context in a way. But help us understand whether in your experience, race is a substantial factor in assigning stories. That means the journalist who covers the story, as well as the story covered, and whether that story then goes on the air.

MS. SIMPSON: I suggested to ABC some time ago that I be given -- that we create a new beat which would be race and diversity and the changing America. And it was nixed and I was told we don't want you identified with
one particular thing. That would be wrong to have a black person covering racial issues. So they weren't interested in that debate, yet racial incidents continue to happen every day in this country.

I think the problem is a problem that has been long standing at all news organizations and that is the lack of people of color in decision making capacities. They are not at the high reaches. They are not the people that decide who covers what and when and how much time it is given. And I have talked to our executives and they agree with me and I'm still hearing 30 years after I first heard it that it's still hard to find qualified black people to take these jobs, which is absurd. It's not hard to find them. If you're not looking for them, it's hard to find them. But I don't think they're looking for them.

So until we get more people at the table, this is your thing, no seat at the table. And that's what I say about the network news divisions all the time. We're not there to be able to make a difference. Paula Madison runs a station. She can make a difference. She can decide what the programming is going to be. But we still don't have the people there making the decisions and I think that would make all the difference in the world.

MR. KALB: Orlando Patterson. One of the things that Bob Weston notes in his study is that while what

Carole has just said is probably almost certainly the
case, of Weston's experience and research, that was not what he focused on. What he focused on was something quite matter of fact. It was ratings.

And what they do now in newsrooms is have ratings quite literally for each minute of a program. And what I've said is what the producers explained to him was that it is their experience that when the ratings charts come up, when there is a black face, when there is a black issue, the numbers drop. And it was that that was the principle reason, not the other.

What is your sense as an outsider on this?

MR. PATTERSON: Well, it seems in many ways Weston's data supports the position I am taking and I'm so charmed to see such mutuality in my feelings towards Chris because I happen to think 100 percent of what he says is wrong. I mean the --

MR. EDLEY: But we're both black.

MR. PATTERSON: But with respect to -- this is related to the Florida issue. It may well be that for once that the press did adopt the right position in not going after the racial issue. Everyone assumes that.

The --

MR. KALB: We're not talking about going after the racial issue. We're talking --

MR. PATTERSON: But the --

MR. KALB: No, I'm sorry.

MR. PATTERSON: Sorry.

MR. KALB: We're not going after the racial
issue in this case. We're trying to explain why what Deborah has raised in her study, what Bob Weston suggests by his work, that there is a systematic decision making process at work, not by racists but by people who look at charts and figure that the bottom line is what is central to a decision.

MR. PATTERSON: I thought what the point which emphasizes the absence of African-Americans --

MR. KALB: That's correct.

MR. PATTERSON: Right. And I'm saying --

MR. KALB: But I'm trying to explain why.

MR. PATTERSON: Yeah, but getting at that, what I was about to say was the association of anything having to do with African-American with a racial issue. I mean African-Americans are racialized. In other words, 90 percent of the problems of African-Americans really have little to do with race. It has to do with being poor or it has to do with whatever political issues they may be facing or so on. But there's a merge -- I mean socialization of the process where if you see a black face it's race.

Therefore, the problem with this tradition is if you bring a black face on, it's assumed that the audience is going to assume that you're treating the issue racially and therefore if you decided that the issue is not racial, you don't bring on a black face and it may well have been that the Florida case was not a racial one but one of poverty.

I'd like to see -- the data I'd like to see is
whether in fact this has room for poor white people. Whether they were being discriminated against too. And there are some reasons to believe that is more about poverty than race. But if you have a society in which a black face means race, then you have a problem as a producer or whoever and until we get away from that, and by the way this is a two way process and not that the (indiscernible) are doing this, it's also African-American and this means that only black people can talk about race.

And so you have here a real problem that we have to break out of that to move to a point where yes, black people can talk about the presidency or what have you and that becomes normal and conversely whites can talk about black issues and most important of all when you see a black face you don't think automatically out there that you're signaling race. And we're not there and until we break that, I think the producers are right to make that decision and I don't know how you break that logjam. It's not just the journalists going to be African-Americans changing their attitudes about how you call race.

It's not just among journalists and it's in the university, academy, only blacks give lectures on Toni Morrison. Only blacks can talk about black issues. It pervades the entire culture. And until we change that, that I'm afraid is the right decision of the producers. You see a black face, you deal with race.

MR. KALB: All right.

MR. SUAREZ: It can't be the right position of
MR. PATTERSON: Well, it may not -- it's not what I'm saying that we living in a culture in which it's become institutionalized that only blacks talk about blacks and when you see a black face, you're talking about black issues. And how will you change that?

MR. SUAREZ: I think it's much deeper than that.

MR. PATTERSON: I'm sure it is.

MR. SUAREZ: It's not just that you're talking about black issues because if you take parts of the coverage that have absolutely or are perceived to have very little to do with the way race is lived in this country, let's say a report in tomorrow's New England Journal of Medicine that taking aspirin in a prophylactic manner does advantageous things for your blood. They would not use a black man popping 200 milligrams of salicylate acid in the morning to do good things for this blood to be the stand-in for common humanity to illustrate that story.

If in fact one of the members of the clinical trial group was a black guy who had hypertension or some other circulatory related problem they would use that guy but also find a lot of other people to crowd into the story because if it just is the black guy in the morning popping the pill, the feeling in the newsroom is that too many people will look at that story and say, "This is not me. This has nothing to do with me taking aspirin." When of course, it does, but we can't see common humanity in all Americans. Americans' own working head definition of
what an American is that we show on the news in order to illustrate these stories -- I mean after all, these stories are peopled by people. But not all Americans can perform that function in a news story.

MR. EDLEY: Marvin, I think that both --

MR. KALB: Chris, I wanted to give it to Deborah.

MR. EDLEY: Okay.

MR. KALB: And then you can come in after her.

MR. EDLEY: Okay. Great.

MS. MATHIS: I'll be real quick. Only to kind of riff off of what Professor Patterson said, you know, I do agree that there is obviously this sense that black people are there to talk, they're to be black. You bring me on as a black person. I'm supposed to be a black person today. And I'm going to tell you I am and it's always there.

I happen to think that race does permeate every bit of everything and to the degree that it's a class issue, well you tell me how you separate the poverty rate from race. You tell me that they are not mutually involved. And so when it is a class issue, when it is a matter of opportunity, when it is a matter of access and all of that, there is often race at the bottom of the thing. That's what we've got to come to grips with. We've got to be real and get real with ourselves about what we actually believe and what our own prejudices are about someone's capability.
I'm looked at a lot of times as some exception. There's, you know, there's some fantastic brains in this room and at this table and in this city for sure. I got to tell you, smart black people are a dime a dozen. But we're treated as oh, you know, you're so articulate. You know, so -- and since we are just some really rare find. I got to tell you, there is some real talent out there that we're missing because we make these assumptions and we've got to check our own prejudices because the people who do make these decisions in media, in academia, everywhere, are after all creatures of the same society. The same society that we're covering and we're talking about that has the problems, we came from it. So in all likelihood, we will carry some of that fruit, too.

MR. KALB: Carole.

MS. SIMPSON: I just wanted to say that change can be effected in the newsroom if people of color get together and that did happen at ABC News. The Rolodex problem we ended up producing, my bureau chief is here right now, but we ended up going through and finding experts that were Asian, Latino, and black in all kinds of categories so that Nightline and This Week would have more than their Rolodexes to go to find people of color that could speak as experts.

We also have made every effort to when we do a poverty story, go into Appalachia instead of down the street in D.C. to the welfare office to show that white people are poor and that is something I'm very proud that ABC has done and when we do drug problems, they're not
always black people on drugs. We will go out of our way to find some Wall Street broker who has a drug problem to discuss that.

So people who are in these news organizations because the white people that run them aren't going to do it, we have to if we're in there, try to make a difference and those of us at ABC did.

MR. KALB: Chris, you wanted to come in.

MR. EDLEY: Yeah, I think that it's interesting that a couple of months ago at ABC, Good Morning America created a race beat to which they assigned George Stefanopolus. Now George is a friend. I have an enormous amount of respect for him and actually think that he is exceptionally knowledgeable on race issues. But it does raise a question as to why George and not any of a number --

MS. SIMPSON: And why not Carole?

MR. EDLEY: You got it. And so I feel a little bit ambivalent about it. I think that there had been a number of interesting and I think compelling explanations for this phenomenon, the racialization issues as Orlando puts it.

But I do want to try to debunk one in the Weston study. The notion, Marvin, that the market is demanding it as evidenced by ratings, that that somehow provides a justification for the choices made --

MR. KALB: Explanation.

MR. EDLEY: Right, right. I understand.
Certainly provides an explanation. But does it provide a justification? And I think the answer has to be no.

If you think back to the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the opposition to for example the public accommodations, the notion that the white owner of a luncheon counter in the south could say, "But I have to be allowed to exclude blacks because if I serve blacks, it'll be bad for business. All my white patrons will object."

The proper response and unfortunately one that Congress ultimately gave was that may be true. Too bad. America's got to change and you've got to shoulder some burden in helping us make those changes. I think the same has to be said of journalism.

Mr. KALB: One brief. Go ahead.

Mr. PATTERSON: But there seems to be a real contradiction here. I mean why did everyone laugh at the announcement that CBS or whatever had George Stefanopolus on the race beat? That was the correct decision. Also, I would have been disappointed. I mean Carole Simpson is a breath of sort of fresh air -- seeing an African-American woman discussing public issues not having to do with race. I'd have been very disappointed if she was appointed to the race beat. Why did you all laugh that Stefanopolus is in charge of race. Isn't this the problem? I can't understand what --
MS. MATHIS: It's called deep background. Some of us have deep background on the issue. We don't have to get as up to speed. I mean there is a native understanding.

MR. PATTERSON: What about a wise person who says that I have the background in being white and therefore you stay away from white issues.

MS. MATHIS: No, no, no.

MR. EDLEY: No, I don't think the issue is that much the selection of George as it is turning down Carole's proposal but then reaching out to do the same thing with George.

Now you know there could be lots of explanations. They could have decided no we'd much rather have Carole covering Alan Greenspan because she's certainly more credible as a journalist than George is. And these are mostly going to be fluff pieces. I mean whatever -- I'm just saying it does raise a question and it is symptomatic I think, it's symptomatic of this broader problem that Carole's research, that Weston's research, that Bob Entman's research points to. It's not helping unite America. It's helping I think exacerbate some of our racial divisions.

MR. KALB: Chris --

MS. MATHIS: First, there should be a team.
MR. LEE: Sure. As Dr. Patterson's junior colleague, I feel like it's in my self-interest to say I only disagree with 75 percent of what you guys were saying and actually the point I want to touch is actually on the other 25 percent. I think even if we agree that an issue is fundamentally about race, it's not clear what the media's obligation is in terms of covering on that issue and just two quick examples is the impact of AIDS in the Latino and African-American communities is disproportionate. But it's not clear given that that's a disproportionate burden is carried by those communities and how we should think about that issue because do we want to cover this issue as a racial issues in ways that may reinforce stereotypes like a lot of Americans may already have about Latinos and African-Americans.

Another case in point is an issue that's looming in our future which is the epidemic of obesity. Obesity is an issue which disproportionately affects women, poor people, Latinos and African-Americans. Do we want to treat this as a racial issue or not? It's not clear even if we have the best interests of black and Latino communities in mind, what the media should do in terms of
MR. KALB: Okay, Taeku, thank you very much.

Again, I apologize to the audience. Our time has been drastically cut back. What I am asked to tell you is that when you leave this ballroom there are three elevators outside and to take, line up, take one of the three and go on down but press LL on the elevator and that will take you to the floor that will take you to the room where you're going to be served lunch.

I wanted simply to thank the panelists and to make a comment that relates to the racial profiling issue which I did want to get into a bit more than Bob Blendon did earlier today. But in the Washington Post story, there's one thing that comes to me in very human terms and it says that the overwhelming majority of blacks, Latinos and Asians also report they occasionally experience at least one of the following expressions of prejudice. Poor service in stores and restaurants. Whether you have to be
we all learn so much simply from the expression of the problem and what it is that different people of intelligence think about this problem. Because racism today is still the unfinished business of American democracy and it's something that is everybody's business and it simply has to be addressed. So thank you all for your time. Thank the panelists for their participation.

(Break)

MR. JONES: Ladies and gentlemen. It is my honor to present the 42nd President of the United States, William Jefferson Clinton. The dog ate his speech. I'm going to do something that is going to be -- that is going to play to Bill Clinton's strength. I'm going to introduce him and if he has to go on ad lib, I know he'll do it dazzlingly. Saved.

I'm Alex Jones, Director of the Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics and Public Policy at the Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University. The Shorenstein Center was created in 1986 by Walter Shorenstein to honor his late daughter, Joan, who was a distinguished producer at CBS News. Today we're probing the very thorny and critically important issue of the media and race. Like some of you, I was watching last weekend CSPAN's coverage of Bill Clinton receiving the Dayton Peace Prize. Americans haven't seen much of Bill Clinton's face or heard him speak since he left office and I was somewhat
taken aback at what I saw. He’s gotten older I thought. Though that’s usually considered a curse in this country, that’s not what I mean. What I mean is that I was actually seeing him for the first time in a long time. I had this image of the youthful golden boy of 1992 still in my mind. But what I heard and saw last weekend was Bill Clinton speaking in a way that made me feel like I was being reintroduced to someone who had been such a familiar presence that I had not done him the courtesy of actually seeing and listening.

There’s much speculation about what Bill Clinton is going to do with himself in the years to come but one thing I am now certain of is that whatever he does will include speaking out thoughtfully on the important issues, the ones that vex us and trouble us and that are difficult.

On the occasion of the Dayton Peace Prize a week ago, Bill Clinton spoke on a theme that is very much of a piece with our topic today. He talked about inter-dependence. The need for the peoples of the world to think of themselves as part of something that is shared and he spoke of the need for justice and fairness.

I doubt that anyone here would dispute the importance of the issue of race as this nation begins the 21st century. The way we conduct our national conversation about this subject is largely through the media for better and often for worse. So where do we go from here? To address that quickly and difficult subject, I am pleased to introduce the former President of the
United States, Bill Clinton.

FORMER PRESIDENT CLINTON: Thank you very much.
Thank you very, very much. Thank you. Well, thank you.
Thank you.

I am I think glad to be back. And I'm glad to see so many of you there including many people who were part of our administration and Julian Bond, thank you for coming. Helen, you can even ask me a question when it's over.

I can say that because nobody cares what my answer is anymore. It's great.

And it's -- I'd also like to thank my good friend, Walter Shorenstein. Walter just beat me to death to give this speech and so did Deborah Mathis who's a Shorenstein fellow this year. And so here I am I thank you very much.

And let me say to all of you, those of you who covered me for eight years who were a part of the administration, you know what generally I think about this subject and I don't know that I have any particularly unique insights about what the media's role in dealing with the racial issue is but I will offer a few.

And first I would like to harken back to some things that you said in your kind introduction. I'd like to put this subject of the state of race relations in America and the obligation to the media to deal with it in the larger context of what is going on in the world today. It is true that when I accepted the Dayton Peace Prize, I
said and I will reiterate that I think the defining characteristic of the modern world is our inter-dependence. It's not globalism in an economic sense.

The facts that have given rise to this are obviously the growing diversity of our own society and its growing complexity, the globalization of the economy and culture, the explosion of information technology and scientific advances that have global reach, and the globalization of security threats, including AIDS and climate change, terrorism and weapons of mass destruction. And it seems to me that the great question the whole world is grappling with today is whether this inter-dependence will be on balance positive or negative.

Clearly, notwithstanding the protesters at the economic meetings, on balance, the globalization of the economy has done more harm than good. There has been a slight decline in equality and more people have been lifted out of poverty in the last 30 years than at any previous time. The United Nations Human Development Index says that most of the indicators are moving in the right direction. On the other hand, half the people on the face of the earth, most of them people of color, live on less than two dollars a day. A billion people on less than a dollar a day. A billion and a half people don't have clean water ever. One in four people die of AIDS, TB, malaria and infections related to diarrhea and overwhelmingly these people are people of color.

It's not entirely or exclusively true the
fastest growing AIDS rates are in Russia and the states of the former Soviet Union, but the second fastest growing AIDS rates are in the Caribbean and the third fastest growing in India and obviously the biggest number still by far in Africa.

So I think when we think about the state of race relations in America today, we have to look back to our past, look at our present diversity, and understand where we're going in the context of an increasingly inter-dependent world.

Those of you who have been with me on recent occasions know that I try never at one of these talks to miss an opportunity to mention a book that I read last year that had a profound impact on me called Nonzero by a writer called Robert Wright who earlier wrote an interesting book called the Moral Animal that some of you may have read. But Nonzero is a shorthand term from game theory. A nonzero sum solution and a zero sum solution refer to the nature of contest. A zero sum solution is NBA playoffs or a presidential election. In order for me to win, you have to lose. A nonzero sum solution is a peace process or global debt relief. In order for me to win, you have to win, too.

And the argument of Wight's books is that throughout all of human history, societies have gone
steadily more complex and with increasing complexity comes inter-dependence and with inter-dependence comes the absolute imperative of looking for more nonzero sum solutions.

I say that to point out the thing that I think is most important about this debate today, quite apart from the burdens of the past, which is that our ability to build a future of our dreams for our children and to lead the world toward greater peace and prosperity, freedom and security, consists in large measure on our capacity to find these kinds of solutions around the world which would be impossible unless we continue to set a better example and move forward at home. And in a world dominated by information technology, the media is going to have a profound impact on that.

When people of different races are presented in different programs, are they going to be talked about separately or with others. If they are part of the entertainment stream, are they going to be presented in ways that confirm or that contradict established stereotypes? When we talk about political issues that have a racial component, are they going to be treated as exclusively racial or as also economic or health or education related? And are we willing to probe the deeper recesses of our consciousness continually to try to get at the roots of this?

This is profoundly important because I believe almost all of the things we need to be doing require us to
think in a more integrated way. For example, how do we handle the baby boomers retirement and do right by the largest and most diverse group of school children in American history? How do we handle having virtually every adult wanting to be in the work force, that's good, with their parallel obligations to raise children? Still the most important job of any society. How do we promote economic growth in a way that also advances social equality and environmental harmony? And how do we heal the racial wounds of the past and deal with our present racial issues, which are increasingly also I might add religious and cultural issues, in a way that this comes to be viewed at meetings like this not as a problem to be solved but as an asset to be celebrated in a world that is so incredibly diverse.

I can at least ask the questions. I think we would all admit today that the present state of race relations in America is kind of a good news/bad news story. The good news is we have come a very long way. America is recognized around the world as a successful multi-racial democracy. In a world torn by ethnic, racial, religious and tribal strife, that is a precious asset.

When I left office, we had and I presume we still have, I just don't follow the figures as closely, the lowest minority employment we had ever recorded, the highest minority owned business rate we had ever had, and educational progress in all racial and ethnic groups. Not what I would like but moving in the right direction.
But more important than that perhaps is that our children's generation actually believe that racial harmony and respect for diversity is the only way to live and prosper in the 21st century. That's the good news.

The bad news is that racial prejudice, racial discrimination, racial animosity and dramatic opportunity gaps along the color lines still exist in America. Most evident in disparities in education, health, criminal justice, and economic well being.

Therefore, the first thing I want to say to you is that this is one of those problems for which there is no single simple answer, that you in the media have to keep front and center in the hearts and minds of the American people.

Dr. King once said, "Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter." We have to be able to count on you not to be silent about the things that matter.

Now I'd like to say just a word about what we try to do with the President's initiative on race and how it kind of fits into this. We ran that obviously in the White House during my tenure. I think even the critics of what we tried to do would acknowledge that we started a very serious dialogue on this issue that is of several years duration now. The commissioners I appointed traveled around the country meeting with Americans and talking about how they dealt with racial conflicts and problems in their areas. They gave me phenomenal
documentation of the remarkable ways ordinary Americans are trying to address racial issues. From churches to businesses to schools to youth organizations.

And then after they did a lot of their preliminary work, we organized the White House Office on One America and asked them to keep the nation focused on closing opportunity gaps in fostering racial reconciliation. They did some interesting specific things. We organized a Lawyers for One America effort. Attorneys who committed to change the racial justice landscape through greater diversity in the ranks of their law firms and more active pro bono service in the cause of racial justice. We convened corporate and religious leaders who pledged to renew their commitments to diversity in their workplaces and make stronger efforts to close opportunity gaps.

We established this office because I thought that national efforts to build One America deserved a continuing national audience and a voice at the highest level of the executive branch and I was very pleased when the new administration agreed to maintain it.

I will say again, the only way we can continue to make progress is not to look for a simple line or a simple speech or a simple act but to recognize that this is a lifelong process and the journey and the integrity of the journey and the feeling that people have that they are part of the journey, that is the main thing. And we may, when it comes to work, just have to keep saying the same thing over and over again. Martin Luther King used to
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say, "I didn't have but one speech." And that's important in several areas of life.

I remember the great father of United Europe, John Benet, once said, "I only had one good idea in my life but it was good enough." And you just have to keep hammering it. One of the things all of you taught me and you actually said it in your introduction which I thought was quite a brave thing to say, I learned this as President, just because you're talking doesn't mean they're listening. And so a lot of this involves a continued effort not only to speak words but to open ears.

However, talk will never be just enough and we also tried in the context of the race initiative to advocate specific things which I hope would build and generate broad bipartisan support that would advance the cause of race relations and harmony in America. For example, the empowerment zone and the new market initiatives. With the new markets effort was a big bipartisan effort. We took it to all parts of the country, to the Mississippi Delta, to the Indian reservations, Appalachia, the inner cities, to try to open new frontiers of possibilities and I was very proud that in the eight years I served as President, the first bill I signed was the Family and Medical Leave Law and the last notable piece of legislation I signed was the New Markets legislation. And now the current administration is working to do what is necessary which is to put out the regulations which will prescribe how we can get private
investors to get the tax credits they should get for investing in areas of high unemployment or low per capita income.

But the basic idea was to say to people, we want to give you the same incentives to invest in people who have been left out and left behind in America, we give you to invest in poor areas of Latin America or Asia or Africa. And it is a way of dealing with race by dealing

with the economy that I think is very, very important.

It's also important to deal with some of the direct issues, to deal with more diversity in the workplace, and this is an area where the media can have an impact not only by reporting on what others are doing but by setting a good example. It's important to deal with the education disparities which are still quite profound.

A couple of years ago for the first time since we started making these statistics, the African-American high school graduation rate equaled the white rate for all practical purposes for the first time ever. But the Hispanic dropout rate is still staggering. There will be racially identifiable problems for a long time to come until we eliminate these disparities. And we need to focus on things that are likely to work.

One of the things that I was most excited about when I was President was doing things that I thought would close the disparities in educational achievement. In 1994, only 14 percent of our schools were connected to the Internet. In 2000, 90 percent were, no, 95 percent were, including 90 percent of the poorer schools. In 1994,
there was not a single federal dollar given to help school
districts provide after school programs for children even
though we knew that poor kids and disproportionately
children of color were left alone on the streets after

school, needed extra time and instruction, needed the
opportunities that could be provided. In 2000, 1.6
million children were being funded by federal support for
after school programs.

You can't talk about racial reconciliation or
closing the racial divide without doing specific things
that deal with specific problems in peoples' lives.
Because peoples' color is not -- it doesn't exist in a
vacuum. Peoples' racial history doesn't exist in a
vacuum. It has a history that's embodied in the life
story of every person and I feel very strongly about that.
And that's why basically the last thing I did with the
Congress as President, besides sign that law, was to send
a message to the Congress that would establish what I
thought were the challenges and opportunities of the
unfinished business of race.

On Martin Luther King's birthday, January 15th
this year, I delivered my final message called the
"Unfinished Work of Building One America" and we made
other specific recommendations on economic and social
progress, on education, civil rights enforcement,
eliminating health disparities, election reform, civic
responsibility and criminal justice reform. And I'll just
mention a couple. And remember what I said, you can't
look at somebody's color divorced from the story of his or her life, the facts, the circumstances, the context in which they live.

So one of the things we ought to do in this country is to reexamine the national sentencing policies in criminal justice, focusing primarily on mandatory minimum sentences for non-violent offenders. And I think we need national legislation to ban racial profiling. Now this mandatory minimum problem has to be addressed. There is a reason we adopted mandatory minimum sentences which is that the disparities cause people to think that there was great unfairness. The problem is since no politician, except people like me that don't have to run any more, ever wants to be seen as weakening in a sentence. Any time you have uniformity of standards, you always raise the average amount of time everybody's spending in jail. So now you've got a big percentage of people of color, especially African-American males who committed non-violent offenses spending long periods of time in jail during which time by and large they do not get more education, more training, more drug treatment and more preparation to succeed when they do get out.

At the end of my term I tried to remedy some of the more egregious of these cases through the exercise of executive clemency. But it is a highly limited tool given how many thousands of people there are that are caught up
in this web. We have to make up our mind whether with
crime at a 30-year low, we think the sensible thing to do
for building long-term racial reconciliation is to keep
warehousing large numbers of people that didn't commit
violent crimes. Wouldn't it be better for them to serve
in community centers or would it be better for them to
serve shorter sentences? Or would it be better to know
that before they could get released, they had to have drug
treatment and greater education and training.

This is a serious thing. This is a huge block
of population that is disproportionately a population of
color that we have decided to treat in a certain way.
That -- I don't want to pretend this is an easy question.
It's actually -- since a large number of crimes are
committed by a very small number of people, in this big
population there are a small -- there are a relatively
limited number of people who will never get well socially.
Who would continue to commit crimes and that's one of the
reasons the crime rates gone down because those people
have been in jail. But we've been going after them with a
shotgun, not a rifle, and we're taking a lot of other
people out of the prospect of living productive, good
lives.

But the media has to help with this because
you -- I'm just telling you you cannot expect a politician

who has to run in the next election to come up and deal
with this issue without some support from the electorate
based on evidence and options and new imagination. Nobody
who's got to face the electorate, you know, when everyday you pick up a story and there's some other really horrible thing that's happened, is going to stand there without some support and a rational alternative. And no one wants to be arguing that serious offenders who commit a significant percentage of the violent crimes in America should be released from prison.

But if you look at the statistics today and the trends, it is chilling and I find I think it is literally inconceivable that there will be the political will to make any changes of any significance in this. Look at all the problems we had just trying to eliminate the crack cocaine disparity which is just one piece of this. It is inconceivable that we will do what we ought unless you help people to just deal with the facts in a calm and honest and open way. Not because people are animated by racial impulse but because nobody wants to be the victim of a crime. But it has a racial impact if we cast a net that's so wide a lot of people who have no business staying in prison a long time are there.

So I just give you that as one example where I believe you could play a big role.

Let me just give you one other example where I think the public policy and the press functions could reinforce one another. The most recently publicized health disparity, although by no means the only one and not the one that affects the largest number. The one that affects the largest number may be the incidence of
diabetes which has a crushing impact among people of color especially in the native American population. But the most recently publicized one is the fact that infection rates of HIV are going up again among certain groups of African-Americans while the overall AIDS rate continues to go down. And while the incidence of AIDS is almost down to one-half percent of our population in America today, the infection rates are up to almost 30 percent among African-American gay men which is what they are in Botswana, the country with the highest infection rate in the world.

Now I work with Sandy Thurman, as a lot of you know, ran my AIDS office and Andy Young and the people at the AIDS Trust and last night in getting ready to come over here, I was reading a long memo that I had asked for and not for this speech interesting, I just happened to get it last night, about why this is happening. When we are making so much progress in America on the AIDS issue and we're trying to raise up all this money to finally deal with it around the world in an adequate way, why is this happening? And I learned number one, we still got real problems talking about this in a lot of minority communities. There's still a lot of stigma attached through homophobia or fear of being rejected for some other reason. That's something you can help with.

Number two, an enormous percentage of the young women infected get infected because of heterosexual sex with people who are predominantly IV drug users who either don't know they're infected or have an almost coercive
relationship with the women. Now we got to do something about that.

Number three, even though there are some brilliant examples of community AIDS clinics and I guess the one in my neighborhood in Harlem is maybe the most successful in America in that it's a real tough caseload and 85 percent of the people are taking their medicine 80 percent or more of the time. So I doubt that there is any place in America, even the most up scale neighborhood, that's doing better than that. But notwithstanding that, there are still a stunning number of people that are not getting early diagnosis and treatment.

Okay, so this is a big problem and it's breaking down along the color line. You've got -- we're making -- America needs to have the kind of moral and practical

force to turn back this epidemic worldwide. We need to have it going down among all population groups in the United States. Plus which there are peoples' lives at stake here.

And it turns out that the things that I had assumed were true in America because we had, you know, we've been out there talking ourselves blue in the face, we had community AIDS clinics everywhere, we've got AIDS hostels all over America, we've got all this stuff going on. It turns out the things that I assumed were true are not true in terms of what a lot of young people, particularly young people of color, know and in terms of the circumstances of their lives.
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Now this is something where you can help. Does there need to be some public policy changes? I think there probably doubtless do. But I also believe that this is an area where you can help.

Now, I believe -- I won't go through all the other policy issues. I don't have much to add to what I put in my report in January, but the point I want to make is now thinking about the rest of the world. I'm glad that we tried to do the right thing to end racial and ethnic and religious hatred and destruction in the Balkans, in Northern Ireland, in the Middle East, and Africa. But for America to be the world's only super power called upon to help in times of need, people have to instinctively feel that we're on their side and we're pulling for them. And they don't have to think we're perfect. They know we're not perfect. They know nobody will ever be perfect. But they got to know we're moving in the right direction on what is the oldest demon of human society.

I mean it's really interesting to me that there -- it seems to be almost endemic in the human condition that we are both afraid of people who are different from us and drawn to them like a moth to the flame. And a lot of the things that happened, even today in this most modern of ages, I think are deeply imbedded in sort of psychological forces of fear and excitement and hope. But we have to be realistic here. The fear of the other, of people who are different from us, has a much longer and sturdier history than the impulse to reach out.
and live together in harmony.

It is rooted in the beginning of human societies when doubtless there was some reason to be afraid of people who were different. In alien clans when there were doubtless many cases where there was limited food and shelter and things that had to be fought over or guarded or protected. But in an inter-dependent world, we can't afford fear and mistrust and as we see all over the world, it so easily lapses into hatred and dehumanization.

So we have to keep working to change the world and to do that, we have to keep working to change America through words and through deeds. I am convinced that we are in the process of developing a whole different social consciousness in this country and in a larger extent, in the world. One that will set new boundaries and open new possibilities for people who consider themselves liberal and for people who consider themselves conservative and those who consider themselves somewhere in between. All rooted in our inter-dependence. The simple recognition that everybody counts, that we all do better when we help each other. That no one has a monopoly on truth and therefore we have to find a truth we can all share. That we have to find a way to celebrate our diversity as the most interesting manifestation of our common humanity.

And I guess one of the things I ought to say to the dominant culture in this country, which is basically white guys like me over 50, I think too many people worry that this celebration of diversity will somehow diminish
the meaning of people who at least at a subconscious level
have always known they were on top. And I just don't
agree with that. You know, if we're playing a zero sum
game, that's true. When California gets to have a
majority of people that aren't white folks any more,
that's true. But it seems to me what people ought to be
thinking who have been previously in the dominant racial
and economic groups is I better get on this zero sum game
deal because I don't want to be, when the numbers change,
I don't want to lose here. This is just going to make
life more interesting.

I gave a high school commencement speech the
other day and I told those kids I'd give anything if I
could be 35 or 40 years younger, I'd even risk not getting
to be President again, just to see what's going to happen.
Just to see what's going to happen. This is going to be
the most interesting period in all of human history.

Young women in their child-bearing years are going to have
kids that live to be 90 or more.

Because of the human genome project and the
development of detection devices with nanotechnology,
we'll be finding cancers that are a few cells in size. So
the whole idea of incurable cancer will probably just go
away. We'll either figure out how to genetically engineer
cells to put up blocks to stop tumors from growing or
we'll find them when they're so small we'll be able to
excise them.

We're working on digital chips now that
replicate nerve functions in damaged spines so that people
can, literally like a heart pacemaker, we'll stick a chip in somebody's spine. They'll just get up and walk. It's going to be an interesting time.

And it's very important, I say this that the people who have always thought of themselves as, you know, broad minded about racial matters but basically like being on top. I understand the only salvation here is to create a world where nobody's on top because of the group they're in. And it's going to be much, much more interesting.

But there are a lot of sober problems out there that have to be faced. I will say again, we have the globalization of opportunity and the globalization of security challenges. And the big struggle of our time is to prove that the age of inter-dependence is on balance far more positive than negative.

A big, big part of that will be getting the issue of our own diversity right. It will require words and deeds. It will require us to do it together. It will require us not to be impatient. And it will require the media to set a good example in the workplace, to set a good example in entertainment, to explore everybody without stereotyping anybody, to tell the truth when the truth is bad, to tell the truth when the truth is good. And most important, to never let us forget that building One America in an inter-dependent world is our most important mission. Thank you very much.
MR. JONES: I want to thank you, Bill Clinton.

The Secret Service has asked that you remain standing,

remain at your seats, until Mr. Clinton has left the room

(Whereupon, at 1:12 p.m the session adjourned.)