

Informed & Engaged Ep. 12 - English

[00:02:18] Hi, good afternoon. My name is Karen Run Lette, and I'm a journalism director at the Knight Foundation. Thank you so much for joining us. For Informed and Engaged after the death of Jorge Floyd and after millions of Americans protested against police brutality and systemic racism, American newsrooms began interrogating how they covered the black community. Some have hired new teams to report on the topic of race. Race is not a new topic. Top editors and news leaders have asked what stories have been missed or underreported. There is a lot of reflection happening, but what does research show about the experiences of black adults with media? The audience? What does the black audience think and see about news and journalism? We are going to start off by digging into the data, the research, and then we are going to talk with a panel of four great journalists. Our first guests are Priscilla Stanbridge, senior researcher at Gallup, and Amy Mitchell, a director at Pew Research Center. Thank you both for joining us. Let's begin with Priscilla's findings. Priscilla.

[00:03:41] Hello, thank you for having me. So I'm going to be sharing data from a study that we did in partnership with the Knight Foundation this past year. This is a study that we do every two years.

[00:03:52] It's a very large sample of over 19000 Americans. And I want to start by talking a little bit about this overall trend that I don't think will surprise anyone of the increasing feeling that there's a great deal or a fair amount of bias in the news coverage that people experience in this country. Neither trends at Gallup. We don't really expect them to move a whole lot over time. So this upward trend in bias that people see in the news that they consume is really striking. It's increased nearly over 20 percentage points since 2007. So this is really something that we see creeping into people's feelings about news in general. And we dig into that by asking people about specific areas where they might be seeing bias and being afraid of the bias that they're creeping into the news coverage. One area is the increasing number of news sources that report the news from particular viewpoint. And this is a big concern to people. And what's interesting here is that while around 70 percent of Americans overall see this as a major problem, we do see some interesting differences by gender and by race, especially in this area. So if we look at the difference specifically between white men in black men, black women, this is where we see the sharpest difference between those perceptions and black women are those who see this as are less likely to say that this is a major problem in the news that they consume. Similarly, one thing that we saw this year was that Americans overall increasingly see a malicious and an intentionality behind the bias and news that they're consuming, which is very concerning. There are a strong majority of Americans who think that the media is intentionally trying to persuade people to adopt a certain viewpoint. Eighty percent of Americans feel this way. And this sentiment is actually lowest among black adults. And black adults are more likely to say that this bias is probably due to an ability to cover the news accurately and fairly. Rather than an intentionality. But what's really striking here is that one in 10 Americans really across the board actually now begun to say that the news is intentionally trying to ruin our country. And it's all pretty constant across all of these groups. One area where black adults have a more positive view of the news is around the idea that the news actually carries the blame for the political divisions in our country. There's this idea of sort of a chicken and egg scenario where the news is feeding the bias or vice versa. And we see that among black adults. We see the least amount of responsibility attributed to the news media, specifically in creating political divisions in this country. And not surprisingly, we see also a smaller degree of black adults that feel that the media can actually heal these political divisions. What's interesting here is that Americans overall think that while

the media is responsible, it could also fix these problems. So probably the lower percentage of black adults that feel this way is because they actually see less blame to begin with in terms of the media's role in this specific issue. This year, we also asked quite a bit about how people felt about diversity in news. Of course, this has been a conversation for a very long time and it's definitely a concern that's come to the forefront, especially recently. And we asked Americans whether or not they thought that representing diversity in the U.S. was a critical goal for the news media. Here we're looking at, you know, what is the responsibility of the media in specific areas in society. And we see a strong percentage of Americans overall who do think that this is a critical goal for the news media. But really, there's a strong percentage of black adults who feel this way, that it's critical or very important for the media to reflect diversity in the US compared to white adults, where that percentage is significantly smaller. And in addition, we also asked about the responsibility that news organizations have to hire reporters from diverse backgrounds. This was another interesting question that we ask people and Americans overall, you know, strong 80 percent really feel that this is something that news organizations in general should do. And this feeling is higher among black adults in particular, as well as Asian adults in our country, just slightly lower among which you and white population. But what's interesting here is that when we dug into specifically the areas where news organizations needed to hire more diversity and asked people what kind of diversity are you actually thinking about? We really started to see those divides and those perceptions start to diverge. We asked about a variety of different types of diversity, from waitress's city to political views, income and social status, as well as age. And Americans overall definitely see that race and racism, honesty and political views are the two chief areas where there should be greater diversity. But among black Americans, there's 60 percent of them that say that race misses. You should be the main area where we need more diverse staff. And among Republicans, there's a much stronger view that political views should be the diversity that is more represented in the news media. So with that, I'm going to hand over to Amy Mitchell from the Pew Research Center. And I think that she has some more steps to give to this conversation. Well.

[00:09:29] Thanks so much, Priscilla. And I will if you turn off your screen, I can share mine.

[00:09:34] And I'm going to build off of some of what Priscilla was speaking about. We certainly have seen a number of the same similar types of findings in terms of black adults in the US generally being more positive about the news media compared with white adults in particular, expressing greater interest specifically in local news and tending to be larger followers of local television specifically. So I'm going to sort of build off where Priscilla was and share a little bit more of our data that come from a range of different studies on both the specific topic areas and areas of news of black Americans particular express higher levels of interest in. And then some of what they're looking for in the news media and the sources that they turn to.

[00:10:29] So this is a asking about sort of how big of a problem different issues in issue areas are in the country.

[00:10:37] And you can see here the one that's highlighted is one that had to do with the particular study at the time that was around made up news and information. But you see the ranking here much higher among white adults than among blacks or Hispanics. Drug addiction tends to be high across the board. But then you start to get to a lot of areas of difference with racism and violent crime gap between rich and poor, much higher among the black adult population in the US compared with the whites still high among Hispanic

adults. But in some cases, not as high end. Even if you look here at something like the gap between the rich and poor. It's 70 percent of black adults who are saying it's a very big problem compared to forty five percent of white adults. So even though their ranking is similar, the portions there are still particularly different.

[00:11:28] So we look at the protest, which certainly has been a major part of the news agenda and the narrative of what's happening in our country today. This was a survey that was asked in the early part of June, just to put it in context.

[00:11:43] But you can see here, you know, even though it's been followed quite closely by U.S. adults, overall, much higher portion of black adults that have said that they're following this storyline in particular very closely.

[00:12:00] And then we also ask about how the news organizations are doing covering it and about the messaging that Donald Trump has been delivering in response to the protests following the death of Jorge Floyd.

[00:12:12] And again, you see here also very large differences with the black adults in particular, giving higher ratings to the news media for how they're doing covering these protests, following the death of Jorge Floyd and more negative marks to the response that Donald Trump has been giving as well. When we ask about sort of different storylines within the protest, whether they've been getting the right amount of attention, too much, too little coverage in the news, you also see differences between black adults and white adults here as well, with two of the larger areas of difference in the amount of coverage being given to the decision of whether to prosecute officers involved in George Floyd's death. And again, this was asked in a survey from June four to 10. So that's the context of the timing of this story at that point.

[00:13:05] And then also more black adults saying too little coverage is given to the larger issue of race relations surrounding the protests. Some areas where there is general agreement as well.

[00:13:20] And then if we think about one of the other big storylines that's been with us for now quite some time, that Koban 19 outbreak in the US, we also see here that black adults tend to be discussing it almost all the time with others to a greater degree than Hispanic adults or white adults. And then we ask here, both at a national level and the local level, did agree to which people are following, again, different storylines with in the coronavirus outbreak very closely. And you can see at the national level this first question, the health impact on people like me, a 19 percentage point difference between a portion of blacks. Fifty-five percent black adults who say they were following this news very closely, compared with 36 percent of white adults and Hispanic adults. Fault falling in the middle. The sixteen point gap between very closely following the availability of U.S. hospitals to treat people the number of cases and deaths in the US as well. And when we ask about local storylines, again, you see the availability of testing being a very high difference between black adults and white adults in the US. Twenty-three percentage point difference. And this was we've asked we've done a number of different studies around the outbreak. And this was one that was late April. So it was at a time period where the availability of tests was a, you know, a question and also the status of nearby hospitals in the local area. Twenty-three percentage point difference. Twenty-one percentage point difference in the availability of unemployment and other types of aid, 20 percent to 41 percent. So quite striking differences in the storylines that black adults, compared with white adults in particular, are following very closely. And then just also, we'll we'll pivot to

add to look a little bit about what black Americans say they're looking for, specifically in their news sources. And if you look at the U.S. population over all Americans overall, see journalists demeanor, that sense of them seem friendly and warm as most important in choosing news outlets. So this side here with the dark is the very important, somewhat important. And if you look at these, then by race, ethnicity, you can see again, significant gaps here with Hispanic adults, often in the middle, although sometimes a line much more closely with black adults in the US.

[00:15:48] But the question of excuse me, the question of the fact that they cover people like me much more important here among black adults than among white adults, specifically, 68 percent. Forty one percent. And again, you see this question of journalists seeming friendly, warm, much higher among black adults in the US compared with white adults. Not quite as big of a gap here in sharing. My views also becomes important as well.

[00:16:20] And again, if we look at sort of how people feel about news organizations, a majority of Americans overall say news organizations don't understand them.

[00:16:28] But then we followed up with that and said, what don't they understand about you? And here's where you see these differences with the largest segments of whites talking white adults, talking about political views as what they don't understand about me.

[00:16:41] Whereas among black adults, the largest segment says personal characteristics and Hispanic adults are have a little bit more of an even sort of spacing across to a number of different factors.

[00:16:57] And then finally just end with a slide that looks at the industry itself and the employment.

[00:17:02] And you can see here that this is comparing NEWSROOM employees in these numbers to the US workers overall. So NEWSROOM employees compared with employees overall. And you do see that NEWSROOM employees are less likely to be non Hispanic white.

[00:17:19] I mean, are far more likely to be non Hispanic white here. Seventy six percent less likely to be non Hispanic, black or Hispanic. And these are data that are coming from DFI, a five year census block that went up through twenty seventeen. So with that, I will turn it back to you, Karen. And I think we'll have some conversation. Thank you.

[00:18:01] Oh, Karen, your muted.

[00:18:05] Sorry. Thank you. Thank you, Amy. And thank you, Priscilla. We that's really going to inform our conversation. A lot of important themes to pull out of that. I do want to introduce our four panelists. We have a great journalists with us. OK, we'll start by introducing Dorothy Tucker.

[00:18:29] She is the president of the National Association of Black Journalists and also a longtime television investigative reporter at the local CBS station in Chicago. Then we have Tofor Sanders. He is a race and justice reporter at ProPublica. He is also one of the founders of the Ida B Wells Society for Investigative Reporters. We have Karen Hawkins. She is the co-editor in chief of a publication called Chicago Reader and Jiwon Strader. He is the main news anchor at the Miami NBC station, and he also hosts a program called

Black Voices. Thank you all of all of you for for joining us today. I really appreciate the time. Thank you.

[00:19:19] So there are definitely journalists watching, but there are also this is a an audience of lots of different kinds of folks. So I just want to start let's just get some terminology straight. OK, show of hands, if you describe yourself as a journalist. Show of hands, show hands if you describe yourself as a member of the media. OK. All right. Joe one, would you? You're the one who's raising your hand. So let's talk about that. What is what's the difference between those two terms for you, John?

[00:19:59] Well, me personally, I don't see a big, huge difference. But I will say being a journalist is what's most important to me than anything, as I'll please try to teach it and educate young journalists coming into this business. It's important to be a journalist first, more so than anything else when it comes to this business. So the media, of course, to me falls under. Everything else is sister to me personally. It could be something that it's almost like an umbrella that you could be thrown into. But most importantly, when it comes to fact finding, when it comes to explaining, when it comes to sources getting your information correct, to me it's about being the best journalist that I can be.

[00:20:49] Thanks. OK, Karen. A small little smile from you. So I just want to know what those two terms mean to you.

[00:20:56] Sure. And I did it raise my hand because I feel like when people know I, I when I hear the term media, I think mainstream media, obviously, and I work in alternative media and have worked in alternative media for a long time. I've also worked in mainstream media and I feel like I have made a very conscious choice in my career to work in media that disrupts the mainstream media ideas and the notions that the mainstream media practices. So that's why I didn't raise my hand. But I absolutely identify as a journalist. It's something I've been trained to do and that I take really seriously.

[00:21:28] Thank you. Karen, I want to talk a little bit about Chicago Reader. Chicago Reader is combed by an African-American. You are a coeditor and Jews, and the board of the organization is 50 percent African-American. What does that composition? What is the goal of that composition to serve community? How does that affect how you serve community at Chicago Reader?

[00:21:55] Sure. I do think it was a very intentional move by the reader to better represent Chicago. The Chicago Reader was founded in 1971. We got new owners two years ago. And I feel like as we were going into this next stage, into middle age, we were really looking to better represent what the entire city of Chicago looks like. We have always covered the city of Chicago, but not always well. And everybody can guess what communities those are that we have not covered well. So this bringing in of different ownership that's bringing in different leadership was really an effort to do better by everyone in Chicago.

[00:22:31] Thank you. A lot of themes, a lot of data coming out of the presentation, you know, very much there. Americans are seeing more bias in the news and their news has accelerated. It is infinite and it is immediate. It is coming at us on our phones. It is coming at us in social media. Their 24 hour news cycles. But the black community is saying that diversity is important to it. And when they talk about when the black community talks about diversity, they're talking about race and ethnicity, whereas we specifically had numbers about white and Republican audiences talking about diversity of politics, political ideology.

[00:23:21] Dorothy, I'd like to ask you, as a president of the National Association of Black Journalists, there's been a lot of agony and anger and criticism about what news organizations have really done to serve black audiences. And it's come not just from the outside, but from the inside. How is the National Association of Black Journalists NABJ responding to that?

[00:23:51] We are saying a reckoning in the newsroom, just as we are in every other industry and in this country, you know. So on a national level, we are definitely joining everybody on a local level. I mean, what's going on in the newsrooms? It is in some cases almost a little bit of an uprising. And it's you know, quite frankly, it's about time because, you know, for so long, black journalists have been waiting for their turn. You know, they have suffered through unequal pay, a lack of mentorships. You know, they haven't had opportunities for those prime assignments. You don't see them covering or as many as we would like to see covering politics. They are in the investigative units, you know, so there are a lot of issues there, which is why I think, you know, you're seeing this kind of uprising again within the newsroom. So we are talking to many CEOs and publishers and talk leaders and owners of newspapers and the media companies, because now it's not just print is digital with their television is everything. You know, I probably have two or three meetings a week sometime early in the mornings before I start my day. Yet another CEO discussing with them what they are doing in their newsrooms, not just talking about diversity, but also talking about the culture of the newsroom, you know, pushing for more black managers and finding things that, quite honestly, are very disheartening.

[00:25:45] You know, when I speak to some of them, some of the managers who are in major markets in, they have either just one black manager or they have no black managers in and they wonder why there was something stupid that ended up on television or ended up in a newspaper or on the Web site.

[00:26:08] You know, there was that Mike. So where was the black person at the table where there was that, you know, so it's we're having lots of conversations, the meaningful conversations. But the thing that probably frustrates me and I will shut up in a minute. But the thing that frustrates me more than anything is that many of these managers, they come out with these statements that say, you know, we support black lives, you know, we support Black Lives Matter. They come out in these they support diversity. They support inclusion.

[00:26:42] But yet and still, when we ask them to publicize their numbers on diversity. Their silence. You know, they don't want to do that. And it's very difficult for us to measure success if we don't have the data. And that's what we're asking for now.

[00:27:05] We need these managers to really, you know, put their money where their mouths is and not just talk about how important this is, but to allow us to help them. But to do that, we need to measure success. We need the numbers.

[00:27:23] We need them to publish the diversity numbers, because our concern is that, you know, maybe they don't look that good and.

[00:27:33] So. Well, thank you, Dorothy. I know they're not good enough. We certainly have numbers from the radio, television, Digital News Association. And we certainly have numbers from the VA in L.A.. And they don't align with what the populations are. It's not about specific organizations, but it does not align with what the populations are too for or

something that Dorothy just brought up. And she's an investigative reporter herself. So you founded the ad about Bewail Society. What is that and why is it necessary?

[00:28:14] Yeah. Thank you for the question. And thanks for everybody being there. This is really important conversation of ideal society for investigative reporting. It's a nonprofit that's looking to do kind of exactly what Dorothy's challenging everybody pay attention to is increasing numbers of black and brown people who have opportunity to do investigative work, both as reporters and editors.

[00:28:43] So twofer. I'm like, why is that even a thing? Aren't they're just like reporters working? Like, why? What's the big deal about becoming an investigative reporter?

[00:28:53] Sure. So investigative reporting is that many organizations is, though, is the work that they pour a ton of resources in that they allow their reporters many weeks and months to develop and to pore over and make sure it is pristine. And that is also targeting important issues in the community. And so when those are kind of your gold standard reporting teams within an organization and they lack diversity, what types of projects will they pursue? What type of things will they find important to pour those resources in? And yet it's a no brainer when you have diverse thoughts and perspectives on those teams. It shows up in work and it starts to show up in the community because often times the work generated from our investigative teams and investigative reporting has real impact in our community. And so when you diversify those spaces, you can really start to see those impacts happening right there where you live.

[00:29:58] So tough for you. Did a series of reports. It was called Walking while Black. That is that was a large project. Talk to us a little bit about how long it takes to kind of lift that. So it does get published. I mean, it doesn't happen in a day.

[00:30:17] Right. Yeah. Walking while black. We reported on over a period of seven months, about five or so those months before the first story published. And the way a story like that begins, you know, ProPublica is kind of a special place where its entire mission is is devoted around the dog investigative work. But even there, you still have to push and find ways to get certain things out there. So walking while black, it was never really intended to be the project that it turned out to be. The editor originally was when I brought the concept to the editor, the others said, hey, take a few weeks on this and, you know, let's turn in something quick. There's this other big thing I want you to do. And a couple of weeks turned into five months. And to that editor's credit, that's how the conversation began. But as I began to present more and more material about what we were finding as me and my co-writer Ben Connock were doing our reporting, the editor began to see the vision that me and Ben saw in the very beginning, and walking while black eventually became what it became.

[00:31:29] Thank you, Joanne. I want to turn to you now. You are the main anchor, but you also host a program called Black Voices. And I'd like you to talk to us a little bit about how a program like that comes about and what what what what it kind of takes to make that make that happen and keep going.

[00:31:51] Well, first and foremost, again, I want to thank the Knight Foundation. I want to thank you, Karen, as well as your colleagues, for this important conversation. I believe that education is the key to success, no matter where you're from, no matter what level, how old you are. This is important, something all of us can take from this conversation. Voices basically has been around for two and a half years now with NBC. I give them credit for

allowing me to use his platform in order to educate and better our community. We found out that and I been telling them for years that I've been at the station that we need more representation on the air when it comes to us in our community. It's the main reason I've gotten this business in the first place, because I got tired of not seeing enough faces and people that did not look like me. And I got tired of seeing so many people that were not as educated say that they were putting on a screen making us look a certain way. And so I knew that there were other voices out there. And so now I have that platform. So we've done stories breathing while black. This was last year before George Clooney when we had voices from the community talking about some of the issues going on in the black community when it came to driving while black, walking while black, swimming while black. And sure enough, George Floyd happens. And then we have another breed of all Black Town Hall. We've talked about prison reform, black entrepreneurship, black afro, Latino conversations, black hair, you know, black youth attempting suicide. So every week that we have this show, we want to make sure that it's a time, in a way for people that we do not hear from every day, which is why it's called voices. They get a chance to talk about some of these issues that are impacting the black community. And there are so many issues. It's not just one thing. So many issues.

[00:33:57] And it gives our viewers a chance to see people and hear from people that look just like them, which is extremely important.

[00:34:07] Thank you, Karen. I want to go back to you. I want to hear from you a little bit more about. We had talked early about ethnic and black black publications and news outlet partnering with commercial larger commercial properties. What how would that look? And what might larger commercial properties learn from an organization like Chicago Reader?

[00:34:34] Thank you so much for that question, because it's a project that I love talking about that I love that we are working on. So the Chicago Reader has created the Chicago Independent Media Alliance, and we are nearly 70 outlets from the community and ethnic media all coming together, working on fundraising projects, working on editorial projects. And what I find, one of the things that I find interesting about being in CMO, we call it Zema. At this point in time that I'm also watching larger legacy mainstream organizations having all these conversations about pipeline and how do we diversify and how do we reach hard to reach communities and neighborhoods. And the community and ethnic press is made up of people of color and are reaching all these communities y'all are trying to reach and have been doing it in some cases for a century. And I think there is a ton, of course, that the community and ethnic media can learn from mainstream press. And we would love to have access to your resources, but there is a ton that you can learn from us. And I think at least when I was coming up in journalism, there was this notion that you worked in community and ethnic media as a jumping off point so that you could get the bigger job at the bigger platform and that people kind of turn their nose up at those jobs. And now I hope we're in a place both because of the economy and because of where we are as a culture, that people see this as a place where you spend your career. Not everybody wants a big mainstream media job. Not everybody wants to work in a newsroom where no one looks like them. And so I am hoping that we have more of these conversations now that CMA is coming together, that we have more of these conversations with our colleagues in larger media outlets.

[00:36:10] Thank you, Dorothy. You have been in Chicago, which is your hometown for a number of years. I know you're wearing your NABJ hat.

[00:36:18] But I want to talk to you about how I want to hear from you on how you have engaged with the community over that time and how it's changed. What are you doing today with community? How is your role changed?

[00:36:36] Well, I don't know that my engagement has changed drastically. You know, I mean, because I am now fully an investigative reporter, I am not out on the street covering stories on a daily basis like I used to. So it has changed in, you know, in that regard. But, you know, I, I make a point and I always have. I mean, not you know, not just because I'm from Chicago, but, you know, I make a point of attending various events. As a Chicago in, you know, I happen to be a jerk when I go. But, you know, if there is a fair going on, if there is church event, you know, I mean, I go and I do that. And I know that that really allows people who see me to say, oh, wait a minute, I have this story. Let me tell you about this time. But the other thing, so that, you know, I engage in person, obviously I engage like so many of us do on social media. But the one thing that I will say is that what I have found in your stats that you guys lay out very interesting local reporters.

[00:37:52] You know, I think we we have we are not seeing we are more trusted than I think those on the national level.

[00:38:01] You know, so people turn to us and they do expect us to to represent them. You know, they do expect us to to be truthful. So, you know, with a lot riding on our shoulders, you know, in that sense. So there you know, there's an obligation. You were gonna do it anyway. But, you know, there's a little bit more weight when you do a story, especially when you do a story that is that slice of life about the black community or that, you know, really focuses on something, some systemic racism that's happening in the black community. I'm not sure that answered your question because I wasn't quite sure where to go. But the follow.

[00:38:46] So let me ask you also this report specifically what Amy Mitchell from Pew spoke about the trust and also, frankly, that more black adults are choosing television as one of their sources. So at the local level, if there's if there is this viewpoint that there is more bias in the news and local is more trust in what is local doing, well, what do you see looking at doing well?

[00:39:14] You know, I mean, I think I think local is covering the neighborhoods. You know, I think I think local is really out in the community, you know? You know, we when we talk about the covered stories or we talk about the protest stories, you know, the local reporters are because we're connected. You know, we're the ones that are telling the story of that that that part of the community that is overlooked because we know them, because they called us, you know, so that when you talk about even the cover related stories, you know, we can really get in there and in reveal different things. And about the history of a neighborhood, for example, you know, so when we talk about something like you, you talk about the number of the Dysport, the number of African-Americans who are die, you know, we can then look at that story in and break it all the way down to the neighborhoods. We can talk about the stores, the grocery, the group, the desert, you know, go through Dentsu that exist in where those stories are. And so I think what we do well is just really dove in a little deeper on the neighborhoods because we know that.

[00:40:34] Yeah. Karen Hawkins, I see you kind of nodding. Did you want to chime in on that?

[00:40:39] Yeah. You know, I'll just add and I just want to say what an honor it is to be on a panel of 30 you. But I'm trying not to fangirl, but I grew up in Chicago, so, you know, what is what local media outlets doing. Right? I also I feel like we are engaging with audiences in a completely different way. And like Dorothy said, we're in neighborhoods reporting on neighborhoods. And if you're a black journalist and your outlet does something that people don't like, that they're going to let you know. Like I feel like. That news organizations are spending all this money on is gathering data from readers and from viewers. We want to know what you think. We want to engage with you. We want to have conversations like you, like I I've conversations people all the time. So it's not that people have a dearth of opinions. I feel like another thing that we're doing right is that we are closer to our readers and that it is more of a it is already more of a conversation than other media outlets might have.

[00:41:33] But let me let me I saw a question here that I just have to respond to. Somebody said they're not they're not with the media in. What can they do to help? You know, they're they're just somebody who a viewer ends up on the chat, is out on the chat.

[00:41:50] That was on the chat. Yeah. Yeah. That's Liana Gwinn. Yeah. What can ordinary members of the community, those who are not CEOs and managers, do to support the work of our black brothers and sisters? Well, our does the everyday community have to affect these issues into Karen's point about that engagement?

[00:42:08] You can complain and you can compliment, you know. And that really makes a huge difference. If you see something on television, if you see something, you know, on an online. If you don't like it, if it if it disturbs you, don't.

[00:42:29] In addition to social media, you know, still do the old fashioned way. Write the letter, send an e mail, make a phone call and then ask all your friends who probably are chatting about it at the barbershop. You know, if you don't like it, say something and let management know that that was offensive. You know, at the same time, if that story really finally strikes a chord, if you haven't seen that story anywhere else, you really appreciate what that reporter did, what that reporter wrote, that compliment them so that management will sit back and go, oh, so that one resonated. Let me. Other story like that, you know. Oh, that was offensive. Let me make sure we don't do that again so that I mean, the power of the public is huge and we still need the public to support us.

[00:43:29] Thank you. That's that's incredible. I. And Dorothy, also thank you for reminding me to get to the questions from the audience. There is a question here. We have spent a lot of time looking at the data around the idea of bias. And there, to be honest, there has been a robust discussion about among journalists about what does objectivity mean. And there is a question here. How do you handle pressure to fit in with established news values? What tactics do you use when you are told an idea is not newsworthy? I'd like to put that one to tell far tougher. Would you talk about that little bits from Jocelyn Ford?

[00:44:09] Yeah, I want to make sure the topic question was about off the top of the question.

[00:44:13] Sure. How do you handle pressure to fit in with established news values?

[00:44:22] I don't know that I have that pressure. I don't know. I feel that pressure. I don't think I've felt that pressure at any place. I've been. I feel like I when I came into journalism, I have pretty strong feelings about what was newsworthy, what was ethical. And I don't

see that being different at any of the organizations that I worked at. And so I haven't had a pressure to necessarily fit in. I don't know. Maybe that is about Mike story selection and stories that you want to cover there. There's some there's elements there that we can speak about. And I don't know, I've had pressure more than just uphill fights and battles to kind of cover the kind of stories I want. So I don't know if that's answering.

[00:45:06] I got to go deeper there. You got to go deeper on that. That was. That was it. Yeah.

[00:45:11] Well, I mean, you know, it's it's everything from, you know, when Trayvon Martin was killed in in Florida in trying to advocate for coverage from the news organization I was at when I was in Florida, that that was an important story that we needed to cover that story and we needed to be present in that story. And all you can do when you're a reporter, particularly you're a junior reporter, which I was at the time, is all you do is make the arguments and fight for it. And in that instance, I happened to be pulling a cop shift. I don't know if anybody knows what that is anymore, but when you work at a newspaper, you pull the short straw and you work at a television station. You may have to man a scanner for weekend or whatever.

[00:45:53] And I demand the scanner when we can to cover cops and happened to be like maybe the second big rally that they were having in the community where Trayvon was killed. And and what it looks like for me is saying that's what I'm used my cop shit for. I'm a drive two hours down the street and I will cover this rally because is an important story and is why I want to do. And I'll come back if there's something major happens. But if not, I'm not gonna cover the bar mitzvah that weekend. This weekend, we'll go cover Trayvon Martin's rally. And so I you know, I think it's a subtle move like that. You can make it a newsroom trying to see where you could fit in and how you could push for those stories that get out there and be important. We want you to keep your jobs. I want you to stay employed. So don't be too rebellious, but be as robust as you feel you can be to get that coverage out there.

[00:46:47] Thank you. Joulwan, you are in Miami. So I'd love for you to reflect on what coverage around Trayvon Martin looked like as opposed to the coverage of today and how the movement has changed and the kinds of questions that the newsrooms are asking as they cover this.

[00:47:06] Well, it's changed a lot. Now we have their ear more so than we had before, since George Floyd. But we should have had their ears years ago when it comes to editors and managers in the newsroom, because, again, as Dorothy said, and as your research has shown, it does not reflect us. Our newsrooms. And so now we're trying to change that. So let me do one better. And Sabrina Fulton is actually a friend of mine and a good, good friend of mine, actually, Trayvon Martin's mother. But I'm a do one better and actually devastated. I'm going to talk about the church shooting in South Carolina where nine birds were killed by a white supremacist. So that's in South Carolina. That is not in Miami. So when that happened and now woke up that morning and I found out about what happened, I felt compelled to go to my manager who's and it's a Spanish woman and tell her I'm in.

[00:48:09] We're in Miami. But you have to send me to South Carolina to cover this story. And she she's like, I'm like, listen, I have to go. This represents all of us. This does not just represent South Carolina. And so she said, hold on just a minute. I'll get back to you. Talk to the GM. She said, pack your bags. You on a flight. You're going to South Carolina. Now, let me tell you, this R rating leading into that newscast was the worse it could be. It was

like a point zero zero one, that newscast, because we pushed that we were going to South Carolina and let our viewers in Mount Miami, you know, in South Florida jumped almost tripled at night. Because of our culture, I feel filled anger from South Carolina, talking about this mass shooting by white supremacist and what we were starting to see and we've been seeing. But Tizen, on this type of scale in our country. But you have to push, as tofor said, you have to do in a way, though. Well, we don't come across as the angry black man or the angry black woman. There is a way to do it without coming across a certain way. Now, if they would have said no, I may have turned into that angry black man. But. But they did. But you have to be willing to take a risk.

[00:49:33] OK. I heard angry black man. And I see Dorothy. She's she's dying to jump in a black journalist biased. Are black journalists biased? Let's let's I need you to. I need somebody to tell me I'm biased because there's that assumption. Dorothy.

[00:49:52] No black charitableness died by his. No. I mean, you know, we come to the table with who we are, with all of our experiences. But, you know, I mean, that's an unfair question. And it really upsets me when anybody even raises that question, because you don't. That's why journalists are they bias. You know, black is are the only ones that are ever asked. Are you are you biased? Can you be fair? No professional. We do our jobs. Thank you. We can cover any story and we can look at every angle there is in that story.

[00:50:23] And even if we may not agree with that person, person, you know, personally of something, we we may object to something they don't. They do or don't do. It doesn't make a difference. We're going to cover that story, but we have to bring our experiences to the story. And that's what makes us. I have the advantage in a newsroom because we are black, because we understand what that person in the neighborhood may be going through, because we speak the language, because we share a culture that we can bring all of that to that story, that perhaps someone who is not black cannot bring to that story. Well, we're not we're not bias. You know, we're we're doing what everybody else does. We're being who we are and we're being professional.

[00:51:09] Can I say something real fast? Can. Of course. So someone someone asked me and talked about the whole angry black man, angry black woman comment. Let me tell you this. There is a stereotype, unfortunately, that we have as black people, not only as black journalists, because we continue to get stereotype any anytime we try to speak up. So this is not just being a journalist. This is you speaking a professional in general. Whenever we are a confident black male or black woman, we are stereotype of being if we disagree with someone of another race, beginning with an angry black man or being an angry black woman. And so that's what I was talking to. I wasn't talking about. That's who we are. But if they want to call me that, they could call me that because I'm going to still come with it. With confidence is not cockiness is confidence. As a black.

[00:52:00] I want to piggyback on that and just say the word rebellious resonates with me, I founded a magazine called Rebellious and I used that word because my boss told me I was being rebellious when I was in the mainstream newsroom. And the reason was that I had asked for too many weekends off in a row. That's what I got called rebellious for. And I feel like it also speaks to like we've been talking a lot about culture, about coverage. But I think we also of course, the other part of that equation is newsroom culture is how black journalists get treated and newsrooms in general and the culture of newsrooms that supports the status quo idea that you have to be straight and white and middle class in order to be objective. That is the default position for viewing the world. And if you are not those things, then you are biased. So, I mean, it's both about culture and about it's both

about coverage and about a newsroom culture and the culture of journalism and the whole.

[00:52:57] And jump in. You. Yeah. So, you know, I also just the the positioning of bias versus objectivity is false in and of itself.

[00:53:06] The two are not they're not polar opposites to each other.

[00:53:09] And I just said I'm not objective. I have a viewpoint. I have a perspective. It doesn't make its way to my news coverage. And it also but it does guide my interests. This guy, the way I see the world, for instance, walking while black will not come to be had it not been for my lack of objectivity. So I'll give you the origin, sort of my colleague who is white, great reporter, Ben Connor. He wrote a daily story about a viral video where young black men had this encounter with the police. So the daily story wasn't gonna be anything more than a daily story. He astutely in the daily story identified that the cop tried to give Davonte a ticket for walking around a ticket for not having his I.D., which is illegal. And you can't do because guess what? They've been doing that for about one hundred so years. Right. So I saw that video. My homeboy in Jacksonville wrote up a daily story. I watched the video. And as a black man was offended by what I saw. I was offended that the officer tried to give me and say basically say, hey, can I see your walking papers? Is what he tried to say to him on the street and was flanked by two other officers who did not bat an eye. So watching that, I was like, oh, that's real casual. They've done that before. And so then that's where I start to put on my skills hat and say, you know, I know how to obtain the data to show that they've done it before. And that's where the journalistic pursuit begins. But it began in the very beginning for my lack of objectivity. Watching the video and seeing what was happening to the young man and recognizing that it was wrong, it was unjust. And as a journalist, I can ask educated questions that could lead to a story that could have profound impact on that issue.

[00:55:03] Yeah. Yeah. I would tell her I totally agree with Toepfer because I'm sorry, but I grew up as a black man and so raised by a woman and what I went through growing up. The trials and tribulations I went through growing up helped to mold me to the man I am today to help me tell some of these amazing stories. And so what happened with George Floyd? I'm sorry.

[00:55:32] I felt the pain. I cry. It hurt me. So when I'm on television that evening and they're burning down and we are protesting peacefully, some of us, some of us took to the streets and started fires and started rioting. I had to speak out against that. Now, I received some backlash. Very few, but also received a lot of support from our community for speaking out because at the same time, I didn't want to take away from the message. So I believe that, you know, there is there is no way based upon where we came from. You can add perspective as a journalist. It's okay to add perspective, but you have to be careful. And when you add that perspective and you can't be objective at the same time. And it it adds humanity to who you are as a journalist. Like I said, yes.

[00:56:22] I'm a journalist, but at the same time, I'm also black.

[00:56:26] Do they think we need to redefine this a little bit, don't you, Karen? I mean, because you know the word bias. Objectivity. You know, I you know, I think this unfortunately means a longer conversation because I think the same thing.

[00:56:39] Oh, yeah, you are me. And I'm using the language.

[00:56:44] I'm using the language of bias very much from the research. Objectivity is something that is really being interrogated and litigated all over social media. What does that mean today in a world where news is infinite and immediate constant? That's really a conversation going on at NABJ National Association of Black Journalists conferences at journalism conferences across the industry. So it's it's a really important issue that I really wanted to get at. We just we have a few more minutes on the chat is fire. There are just a ton of comments. I can't even get to all of them. But I do want to let you know I am going to ask you for final thoughts, like a quick final thought. So start thinking of that might drop genius thing. Of all the things you could say. But I do want to get out a little bit. And look, the other thing that this research really shows is that white Americans and Republicans that are there is a partizan divide around diversity. And so I just want to get a little bit how how does that strike you for your work? This idea of bias that those voices are left left out. Maybe when take a crack at that tofor, do you think you can talk about that?

[00:58:10] I just want to make sure I understand the question repeatedly.

[00:58:12] So some of the research shows that there is another there is another group, Republicans and white audiences, that are losing trust in journalism that think it's bias. So what does that mean for journalism? What does that mean for the work?

[00:58:31] I'm not sure. For me personally, I don't know that it means much because with each story that I do, I apply intense scrutiny to the story because again, given my position now that I'm given some latitude to try to choose the projects I work on, I have to work on things I think has an import to the community and I want it to resonate. And so for me, it must withstand the most intense of scrutiny in order for the residents. And so I don't know that, you know, the trust is being lost on some white readers, white viewers. It element is going to impact or change the way I pursue my journalism, because I've always pursued it in a manner that would, I hope, end up with a result is above reproach.

[00:59:21] So would you talk about the scrutiny that goes into producing and producing the journalism that you produce? What does it entail? Just set up for the non journalists audience a thing?

[00:59:32] Sure. So, I mean, we just published. I don't know, maybe with a 9000 word story about NYPD and ability to consider civilian complaints. And in that story, nine thousand words, we fact checked every single sentence. And so it means two and a half days of going through a sentence and and arguing over the verb in that sentence and whether it's fair to the complainant and fair to the officer. And that's that's what the fact checking process looks like for me. And I think that's that kind of level of intense intentionality. It's kind of built into the reporting as well.

[01:00:19] Thank you. It is not a casual. It is not a casual effort at all, is what you're saying. OK. Final thoughts. I'm going to start with Jiwon. Do you have a quick final thought? We just have a couple of minutes.

[01:00:33] Well, yeah, I just make it real fast. First of all, I want to thank all of our panelists. I want to thank all those that tuned in for this conversation. Extremely important. I want to thank the panelists for joining us. Dorothy, it's always an honor to work with you. Tofor Karen Hawkins. You know, I love to hear from children, Cheiron, just different minds and cheering. Thank you once again.

[01:00:55] I just want to encourage everyone to continue to be a voice in your newsrooms if you are not in a newsroom. Be a voice out there for the community. You know, you you have the most powerful thing. Use it. If you don't feel like I can't I can't speak about it. Well, you can write about it. If you can't do that, then contact someone who can who can't be that voice for you. Remember, you have that power. Use it. Use your mind. We're all surrounded by different things are happening in our in our communities. It's important that we put pen and paper. And lastly, I always say education is the key to success. If you believe you will succeed.

[01:01:36] Thank you, Karen Hawkins. Jwan, that was fabulous, Karen Hawkins. Yes. Thank you. Again, that's from you.

[01:01:42] Absolutely. Thank you again. This was an amazing conversation. And I just would leave with people to support community and ethnic media. Support your local journalists. There are more than 100 independent media outlets in Chicago alone. I'm sure there are dozens that wherever you live that you know nothing about. It's important to seek those out to support them. Vote with your wallet. I'm sure they're running membership drives like right now. We all are. So if you believe in local journalism and you believe that you want it to survive, please support it however you can.

[01:02:12] Thank you, Karen Tofor Sanders, final thoughts? Yeah, Karen stole my outgoing message. But I love someone.

[01:02:20] I would just echo it like please support local journals. You know, it's what Dorothy said earlier, complaining a compliment. I love that. Right. You if you like something, say it. If something rubbed the wrong way, say that as well. But you gotta subscribe to your local newspaper. You've got to watch your local newscast.

[01:02:39] You've got to do that because local journalism, as much as ProPublica do national stuff now. But it does not. It goes nowhere without local reporting. All of the stories I'm most interested in are about local issues. So. So please support your local reporters is vitally important to our democracy.

[01:02:58] Thank you. And finally, Dorothy Tucker, president of the National Association of Black Journalists.

[01:03:05] Thank you. It was really a pleasure being here with all of you. I learned a lot. It was great engaging with all of you and hearing from all of you. Let me just say that I know that many journalists are really going through a very challenging time. I know it is difficult some time to find your voice, which is why the National Association of Black Journalists exist. We are here for you. So if there is something going on in your newsroom, please do not hesitate to call. You know, I met that point where I have no problems with making another phone call, helping you out, giving some advice. We have an entire board is really kind of standing by, waiting to help you. You know, that's what we are here for. So we got your back.

[01:03:50] Thank you. Thank you to this amazing panel to this. This really, truly engaged audience complain, compliment, pay for it. And yes, this is recorded. Bye bye. Thank you.