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Portland State University

Marky Azul

Tana Lane

Alan K. Ota

Chuck Strutter

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“Minority Employment in Mass Media”

Marky Azul (MA), Tana Lane (TL), Alan K. Ota (AO), and Chuck Strutter (CS)  
interviewed by Bill from the Black Studies Program, Portland State University  
November 5, 1977

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Transcribed by Evelyn Birnbaum, April 3, 2020-May 16, 2020

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BILL: Gotta make sure I have everybody's name right. I have a hell of a time with names.  
[laughs] Okay, I think we should start. This is the second of a four-part series on minorities in the media, and our guests today [are here] to discuss the topic of minority employment in the mass media. Our guests today are Tana Lane [pronunciation corrected] [from] KOIN TV News, Marky Azul [from] KOIN TV News, and Alan Ota from... a reporter from the *Oregonian*, and Chuck Strutter from... producer-director from OEPBS-TV. Did I get your names right?

ALAN K. OTA: Yeah, you got them.

BILL: Starting out today will be Alan Ota. Alan.

[1:06]

AO: I'm a reporter for the *Oregonian*... and I've been in Portland for seven weeks. [I've] been on the job for about six now. Specifically, I cover minority affairs, that's my beat, but as a beginning journalist, I'd say that I cover a number of general assignment stories as well. As an Asian American, I'm one of five hundred non-white news and editorial employees in the United States; that's in newsrooms, newspapers. That's to say that Blacks, Asians, Chicanos, and Native

Americans make up somewhere between one and two percent of the total news and editorial personnel in the country, which numbers somewhere around 38,000 total.

I've always thought that—as a little background, I've always thought that American journalism is one of the most biased institutions in the country. Members of my family in Oakland, California still won't buy an Oakland *Tribune* because of the coverage of Japanese Americans during WWII. Historically, and even now, Americans have been getting an incomplete story—a story about America written from a middle-class, white, male perspective, essentially. The history of American journalism is—particularly newspapers, and I work for a newspaper in Portland—it's steeped in traditions of stereotyping the races. I often... If you know a little bit about the history about American journalism, you know that it began in the 19th century with the penny press and yellow journalism. I, also, sometimes refer to yellow journalism as “yellow peril” journalism because some of the great giants of 19th century American journalism like William Randolph Hearst and Joseph Pulitzer, et al., used caricatures and slanders of the races—Chinese in particular—to sell the penny press. You might say that the “pig-tailed coolie” of Thomas Nast, probably the for... one of the foremost American political cartoonists, is one of the keystones of American journalism.

It's true that... the effects of this have just become, really begun to be getting known across the country, and during the 60s, the Kerner Commission found that the lack of coverage in the American inner cities—the lack of reporting on despair in the American inner cities—was a contributing factor to millions of white Americans being surprised by the racial unrest and violence which erupted during the 60s. It's been said by Walter Lippmann that American journalism, the real reason of it, is to prevent people from being surprised, and although I disagree with a number of the types of stories Mr. Lippmann did, I think he was right there.

I'm of the view that American journalism is perhaps one of the most influential institutions in the country, and I think that one of the first questions that I wanted to deal with while I was here is, “What can a minority journalist do today, based on the history of American journalism as we understand it?” Well, I think if you look at a style ledger society page in the *Oregonian*, and historically in other newspapers, you read about, essentially, the same well-to-do white families: “His father was a doctor. Her father was a state Senator. Together they made lots of money. They live in a huge house and summer in Europe. They have two beautiful children and attend private schools.” It's an okay story, except that you read about it about a million times. It's not that the white success story should not be told, it's just that, well, what about the rest of us whose lives don't read like a storybook?

Minority reporters have a limit on what they can do, but they can offer insights, and I think this is important. They can offer insights which will help the country finally come to understand itself. There's two things, in closing, that I really wanted to deal with, and I think that minority reporters are maybe limited in what they can do. But, there's two things, primarily, which I think they can do, and I think there's documented... there's documented evidence that they can make a difference. Number one, just on a very elementary level, did you ever notice the paucity of minority, non-white persons quoted in plain, everyday stories? How many non-whites did you see interviewed in stories about the effects of the Teamsters—the recent Teamsters strike? About how non-whites were affected by the last big storm? About what non-whites think about the rising cost of gas and electricity? You won't see them interviewed in news stories on TV, or in newspapers. Just on a very basic level, minority reporters can go out into the communities and interview people about these basic problems and get their views heard; that's on a very simple level.

On a more serious level, a more deep level, there's the issue of inequities and injustices of the system. To some extent, they can be publicized in newspapers. There are limitations on what a reporter can do in this area, which, I suppose we'll be going into later, but the fact is that reporting about minority persons can and should be done. Reporting about inequities and injustices of the system can and should be done. One of the best examples of a minority reporter uncovering discrimination and bringing about a solution was just earlier this year, in the area, as a matter of fact, in Salem. There's a reporter on the *Salem Statesman*. He's a friend of mine; we went to the same schools... His name is David Reyes and he's a Mexican American reporter. Between January 22nd and April 17th, he uncovered the fact that local sheriff's offices were raiding... essentially raiding the homes and rousting Mexican Americans in bars and in stores in Independence, Oregon. It was part of... essentially what they explained as "sweeps" to find illegal aliens. They ran 23 news stories on it during those... some three and a half months. The ultimate effect of it was that the Oregon attorney general determined that raids on Mexican Americans by state and local police are illegal, and so it's been stopped. I just think that points out that minority reporters can make a difference. I think it's documented, and that's where I'm coming from.

BILL: Okay. Thank you, Alan. I think we should have time for Tana [corrects pronunciation] Tana Lane, now.

[8:33]

TANA LANE: I don't really come prepared with a prepared statement, but as I understand it, we'd like to discuss a little bit about employment opportunities in the media for minorities. I

think that right now, employment opportunities, per se, anywhere in the media are much more limited than they were, say, five or ten years ago. When I first started into television, I started in a small station in Idaho, and I suppose the reason I'm here as a minority is because I'm a woman, but that really was very pointed when I started in Idaho, because there were very few women on television doing news, which is what I actually ended up doing. I did not set out to become a news reporter; I started out as a weathercaster, and I answered an ad in the newspaper in a small town, in Idaho Falls, Idaho, that's how I got into television. I started out doing weather and gradually worked into doing television news reporting, and by the time I left Idaho, I had worked into—I not only was doing the weather, but I was doing news reporting, and I was co-anchoring the late news, and writing and producing the late news, so I was doing a lot of different things, but only because I gradually worked into them. Because originally, I was hired as a weather girl and it was to kind of run competition with the local weather man that was getting good ratings.

So, as far as my educational background, I have a bachelor's degree in speech and drama education, and a master's degree in classical rhetoric, so I had not set out to be in television or in news. For that fact, I had not... I don't even have a journalism degree. So, I think that in that time, which was about four years ago, it was much easier to work into the type of things that I'm doing now. I do television news reporting and I also do the weather on the midday show on Channel 6. My point—I hate to talk about personal things, but my point is that [back] then it was much easier to get into television and work it up through the different things than it is now, I believe. I think that, as far as employment opportunities, people generally, now, need to have some kind of a college degree, preferably in journalism, even though any kind of degree helps.

Then, on the other hand, we have some people that are working at the station (minorities), that do not have degrees, but are gradually learning and working. You can also get into training programs. They have excellent training programs in some of the television stations that you can work into, but I do think that—and Marky might back me up on this, I don't know—but I kind of think that a degree is important these days, and also, getting in and getting some good experience while you're preparing, while you're getting your college degree. I think any kind of experience you can get, any kind of writing experience, any kind of practical experience. If you have a television division in your college, then I think that you should take full advantage of that as much as you can, and do as much work, because people are really interested in the experience. When you go to apply for a job, they want to know what you can do and what your potential is, and if you have a tape that you can show and say, "This is what I've done," then that's something they can look at and say, "Yes, that's good," or, "Well, it's [not] good but, you've got good potential." So I think right now, what I'd like to do is maybe answer a few questions, I don't know if we're gonna have a question and answer?

BILL: Yeah, after everyone has given their presentations.

TL: Okay. So basically, I think as far as employment opportunities, I think they're there. I think you have to really look for them, and work towards getting into television, radio, newspaper-type work. I don't—I can't speak for television, or I mean for newspaper, because I don't know what the situation is there, but as far as TV is concerned, the jobs are there, it's just you have to kind of work to get them, I think.

Bill: Okay, Marky Azul.

[13:09]

MARKY AZUL: I think I'll just continue as Tana was on the employment situation. As she says, it's very tight now, a very tight market, and very hard to get into. Being a minority, I have found, does help, but to be quite frank, I don't think simply being a woman is much of an advantage anymore, not the advantage that it was, we'll say, when I got my job, which was quite a bit [of an advantage] because I was a woman, it was pretty blatant at that time. The minorities that are having a little bit of an easier time now are the Blacks, Chicanos, and—

GUEST: Black women.

MA: Well, people say that when I was looking for a job, that was some time ago, [say] that Black women and Oriental women are the ones who are getting all the jobs, and then I talked to a Black female reporter who was leaving the city and she was leaving without a job to join someone else, and I said... everybody had mentioned to her that she would have no problem finding a job, she'd just walk into the newsroom where she was going and they'd say, "You're hired." She said, no, that wasn't true. She hadn't been able to get a job because she said, when she walked into a newsroom to apply for a job and she saw one Black woman reporter sitting there, she knew she didn't have it. She knew there was no point; that news editors/news directors don't... in TV, don't seem to be ready to move away from their classifications of people: "Well, we have our Black female reporter, and when our Black female reporter leaves, then we will fill that spot with another Black female reporter." They don't look at reporters, yet, as reporters. They haven't gone past the color-blindness and [pauses] the categorizing. She said, when they want a reporter, what they still want is a white male unless to... for their federal regulations, or to meet whatever their...

TL: To fill their slots.

MA: Unless either the government or their conscience is saying, "We need a minority," most TV stations... their idea of a reporter is a white male. And when you add to the fact that there are so many people looking for jobs in this... in this field, it really doesn't look too good as far as going out and... just getting a job. It used to be that, like Tana, I started in a small market, and that's what you did, except now the small markets are just flooded with people who are willing to work for nothing, long hours, everyone seems to want to be an investigative reporter, and they're really willing to work for it, so you're gonna really have to do that, too. Although, there are still some... there are still some lucky breaks. There was a girl at one of the other stations who worked at the switchboard for a while just to get in (she had a journalism degree), and then she got shifted into radio news and she's a radio reporter now, and from radio, in this situation where there's a radio station and a TV station in the same building, you can move from one to the other. So, certainly that was just an incredibly lucky thing. You could bang on the door of their employment office every day for years and... since you didn't have that job in the station, you probably... you would stand a very small chance, or a much smaller chance than this girl who was actually right there.

As far as a degree goes, I think you probably need one, and even a master's degree is nice to have, but it doesn't do you any good. It's nice to have, but it's not gonna get you the job. It's something... it's gotta be there, like the basic skills, they got to be there, but what really gets you the job is how well you can perform on a tape. When we have a job opening at the station, the news director walks around with this stack of audition tapes about this high because he gets them constantly, and he sits down at a video tape machine and starts going through the cassettes and listens to how people sound and how they put together a story, and... tries, I think, to get an idea—which is very hard from a tape—to get an idea of if you can work under the pressure, which is perhaps the biggest thing; it's the biggest reason since I've been in my four years at KOIN why people leave. It's because they cannot work under the pressure. They have no concept of a deadline, of time, and that's one thing that if you don't have, don't kid yourself that you're gonna develop it, because it's probably doubtful that you will and you'll make yourself crazy in the meantime. [laughs]

Another thing is, as far as minority reporters that I've noticed is it's still... I don't even know if it's on purpose, but in a lot of places a minority reporter will cover a minority story: the Blacks go out on the Black stories, and the ladies go out on the fashion stories, and this type of thing. I'm a consumer reporter and... I don't think there are more than... well, there are very few male consumer reporters anywhere, and it's always a little disconcerting, even for me, to see them [laughs] so I understand why, because buying things, or consumer reporting, is traditionally a

woman's field, and they haven't broken away from those stereotypes yet. I think that's about all, and I'll be happy to answer any questions later.

Bill: Okay thank you, Marky. We have Chuck Strutter, now. Chuck.

[19:08]

CHUCK STRUTTER: Thank you, Bill. I came today, not prepared with any remarks or anything, and the only thing I can say is to perhaps reiterate what some of the other panelists have already said to you. I'll give you a little bit of my background and then maybe I could talk about some of the things that the other panelists have said here. I've been with Oregon Educational Public Broadcasting for about seven and a half years now, and I've worked television and radio. There's one thing that all of the panelists said here this morning that I agree with, and that is, in the media the standards are high. That you're expected to be a reporter, a reporter is a reporter is a reporter. There are certain standards, for example, that you're expected to have and maintain and improve upon, especially if you're just starting out. For example, you're going to have to have the basic skills. Basic skills are writing, reading... and as Marky pointed out, a sense of responsibility in terms of deadlines, etc.

Employment opportunities, as Tana said, are much more limited than they were, say, five years ago. That's because—I think, and this is just my personal opinion—it's because today, there's not the kind of pressure put on society to hire minorities that there was five years ago, because... well, I'll even go back ten years ago when the riots, etc., when the media became aware that minorities were there and they just wasn't going to sit still and they wanted a piece of the action. The FCC came out with certain regulations that you had to have so many minorities. Now, I think station managers and people that hire minorities, that's one of the things that they do. For example, when license renewal time comes and you'll see increased activities in terms of covering minorities' stories, but those stories often times are put off into public service, that kind of thing, and the reason for that is because... let's go back here a minute.

The media exists for, I think, a surveillance of society and the environment, and as a mechanism for transmitting that surveillance, and also, to transmit a culture. Okay... two things I've talked about in terms of surveillance of society and transmitting that surveillance, it happens, but as Alan pointed out, they cover the white society. The media is guilty of not going into the minority communities and searching out news events. It's kind of like a hands-off kind of thing because they do not understand! There's a tendency on the part of the people in management to carry that stereotype that they had when they were kids, into their adult life, and all of a



sudden they [say], “You know, those Blacks, those Chicanos, they don’t know what they’re talking about. Let’s not even fool with ‘em,” you know, that kind of thing. Another point I wanted to make about... and that was about minorities having to cover minority stories, as I said before a reporter is a reporter. I think, and these are just some of my own personal thoughts, that whites should cover Black stories, and Blacks should cover white stories, if we’re going to transmit the culture. You know, there’s a lot of things written down on paper that sounds good, and is written real nice... nicely, but it just doesn’t work that way. I think the biggest thing we’re gonna have to do is change some attitudes, and until some attitudes change, then it’s gonna be the same old story all over again. I don’t have anything prepared, this is all just off the top of my head, so... I suppose I’ll just open it up to questions. I can answer your questions better than I can just sitting up here talking to you.

BILL: Okay, we’ll have a panel discussion...

TL: Chuck, I’d like to kind of touch on something you mentioned. You mentioned that cross-reporting, the white covering the Black stories. The problem in television is that we want all the reporters to get the best story they can. Okay, the problem is, and I have done it, I’ve been asked to cover a Black story, something that’s going on in the Black community, but as soon as I get to do the story, I find that I’m not able to get as good a story as a Black reporter, because the people that are involved in the story are not as trusting. They’re more suspect of me than they are of, say, the Black reporter, so you can see why management is sending the Black to do the Black stories. I don’t know if you found that or not.

[25:37]

CS: Oh, well, no. I disagree with you Tana, because I think it all gets back to management. Management you know, like for example, commercial mass media is about making money. The better you look on the screen, the better your delivery is, the more valuable you are going to be to that station. Then there’s just as much hostility on the part of Black reporters, in terms of reporting, as there are white reporters, because there’s a lot of people who suffer from mic [microphone] fright, for example, and with the onslaught of Watergate... I’d better keep my mouth closed, because I don’t know who I’m talking to here. It doesn’t make any difference about the color. I think the fact is that a lot of people in society are skeptical of reporters, per se, because they are afraid that they are going to say something to jeopardize their jobs. They’re going to say something to... that they should not say. So that... I think management is making a big mistake when they say, “Okay, I want this reporter to cover this story because he’s white, and this reporter to cover that story because he’s Black.”

[27:04]

TL: Well, I agree wholeheartedly. I don't think it—

CS: But there's a tendency!

TL: [...] any kind of bar anyway, but unfortunately what you say is very true as far as rating. Another thing that really limits television news, which I'm against and I think probably everybody is but, we're very subject to news ratings, which means if you don't get the little numbers, then you're not a good news station, and you're gonna lose money. Okay, well, that you have to learn to live with if you're gonna go into television news, because it's a fact and it's not gonna change, I don't think, for some time. I wish it would, but I don't think it's going to. Which is one thing that really rules what news stories are considered the best news content and what's gonna reach the biggest audience. You wanna reach the biggest audience, the minority is not the biggest audience, so a lot of the minority things are not gonna be the ones that are covered. As Alan was saying, we need to cover more minority things, we need to go and visit the minority family that's on strike, but because of the old numbers game, I think that there's gonna be limits on that until we can get that changed.

[28:07]

AO: I'd just like to back up what Chuck on the end said. I think folks are really... in this town, particularly minority folks are really... I don't know what it is but I'm just learning that folks are real scared about what the effects of minority... of reporters are gonna be. They don't wanna talk and they won't talk to all reporters, I don't think it's regardless... it's regardless of color. It's a matter of going out there and looking for the story. I mean it's the same—it's really the same as doing a story on whites, as far as I see. I had occasion this week, I was covering the strike and I actually got a guy fired. We did a story on a grocery clerk at Fred Meyer's and he just talked with me about what his feelings were and like this. Turned out—he was white—and [it] turned out he had been involved in several of the strike incidents, violence and whatnot, and reported them, so I just did a story on what his feelings were, crossing the picket lines. Turned out he was [in his] twenties, wife's pregnant, just got out of [the] Marine Corps, can't get a job for a month, and [so] on. Sob story, basically.

SPEAKER [unidentified] I think he was subsequently rehired.

AO: Well, what happened was, he was fired the next day when a Channel 8 reporter went over there because his manager, "What [are] you doing talking to the reporters? If a reporter comes,

you say, 'no comment', and you send him over to see me." So the guy says, "Well, according to my convictions, I can't do that." He was real honest, and [laughs] it's unusual these days, but he was real honest and he said, "I can't do that. If a reporter comes, I want to talk to him." So the guy said, "You're fired." The next day, I was gonna do an editorial on it, and in the course of doing that, going to talk to management, they said, "Well, hey, we might have made a little misjudgement here. We'll rehire you." But there's... what I'm saying is people have real fears and they're valid, and it's white and Black, and both, and as reporters, I suppose, it is our responsibility to deal with it in one way or another, assuage... sort of lessen the fears that people have (Black and white) of talking to reporters.

[30:42]

CS: In terms of minority coverage in the media, I don't think minority employment has a great deal to do with what's covered in the media. For example, there are Black reporters on newspaper staffs here; there are minority reporters, Black, you know, all kinds of minorities. There's not a lot, but there's a few—

AO: A few.

CS: There's a few. But what I'm talking about, what I'm saying is, I'm talking about coverage per se, and I don't care who covers it, just as long as it gets covered. In terms of the media here, and it's probably true around the country, Blacks don't die, Blacks don't get married, Blacks don't do anything, they don't even exist.

BILL: Yes, they do exist, they do exist, but...

CS: They just exist.

BILL: ...In crime. [laughs]

CS: I don't think that has anything to do with whether or not a minority is employed at the station or on the staff, etc. That has to do, a great deal, with management policy. And as I said before, until we can change some of those attitudes, it's going to exist.

[31:58]

BILL: Let me take issue with you, Chuck. I definitely take issue on that point. I usually don't say too much, but I think that to some extent, that might be somewhat true, but not in a pure sense, because I think people do make a difference. I think when people take stands, and as

Alan pointed out, people have some conviction. Now, if you have a bunch of lambs on a radio station or TV station and not begin to raise these issues and confront the management, then obviously nothing's going to inquire, nothing's going to occur. My position, my perspective is this, I think that, to some extent, the people own the employees that work have to begin to have some set of standards, some sort of ethics in regard to what they will do and what they will not do. From my perspective, I don't really see there is a set of ethics that relate to the media itself. There is no set of standards except for the standards of money, in terms of rating. I think we [have] got to move into a different sort of area in terms of what kind of values, what kind of humane values do we have? Are we humane people? Are we sort of locked into the buck? Are we afraid of our job? Are we concerned as a human inside of society? The problem I have with the media is that very few people are willing to take a stand on anything, not in terms of the written media, but in terms of TV media, per se.

TL: Well that's not my job, to take a stand—

CS: That's what I was going to get to, Bill. See, minorities, very often, when they get a job at say at television, radio, or with the print media, they don't make decisions about what's going to be covered. They take assignments.

BILL: They take assignments, but they...

CS: ...from an assignment editor or a city editor, whatever the case may be.

BILL: Of course that's true.

CS: If they want to eat, if they want to keep the job, they go out and cover that story. That's what I'm saying.

[34:00]

BILL: Okay, let me back up. I think you hit a major point and I think it's a point of contention between people that have observed and tried to analyze the media, and the people that serve the media. I mean serving in the sense that are employed by the media. I think the question is a very legitimate point I'm making. It's that whether one eat and whether one not eat is an important question, but the other point is an ethical question. Whether these people have a set of values which will say that, "This is wrong and I will not be a party to it," and begin to disengage themselves from that sort of situation. Or will they say, "I can make a difference." [...] it's a political sort of thing. It was raised at a recent meeting that we had, a recent

discussion at the Portland Community Forum, which we sponsor. It was between Gladys McCoy and a few other people regarding the school board, and her issue, her question was whether Blacks should serve on school boards or not serve on school boards, if their input is important: to be on the school board, or whether they should not serve on the school board. I didn't get a chance to respond to that question, but what had obviously come out, in terms of that discussion, was it was beneficial for Blacks to serve on school boards, when in fact they really didn't have any power whatsoever, and I take issues with that. I think the question should have been whether one can influence, have political influence, whether one participates, or whether one can have more influence whether one not participates. An issue here, is that if you're not on the school board, then obviously you can begin to attack it more vigorously. You can attack it from the position that it represents a little white institution, but when a Black is in that institution and doesn't take issue, then, honestly, they legitimize it. A Black serves to legitimize the existence of the institution, and to that extent, it denies the community the opportunity to attack that institution politically.

So to my extent, it's that you take the effective inner situation, then get off the pot. Get off the pot and then we would have to attack that institution, and isolate it, and identify it, and it would have a much greater opportunity to have a significant amount of institutional change. But when we begin to talk about reform, we're going to change it internally, individually—one person—because we always look at these institutions as individuals. We've never looked at it as a total community and the effects of media is widespread; it's not only owned to the individual, of eating. Whether one have a job or not have a job, that has tremendous implication. Where we are, you as an individual to the total community, I think we're gonna have to begin to look at it as a sort of political thing as opposed to a personal sort of thing, and I think that's the question we get down to, a question of values. Sorry to get all upset.

[laughter]

CS: I don't know if I agree with you totally, Bill. I'm just trying to think of some rebuttal here for you, but... [laughter] but if you're not there, Bill, if you're not represented there, then how can you affect a decision? You're talking about politics, and in terms of Portland, you're talking about very small numbers, in terms of Black population, because politicians don't really care whether or not they get the Black vote here in Portland, because it's not that significant!

BILL: Okay, let me clarify—

CS: With the recent gerrymandering that's been going on, it's just like Blacks don't even exist.

BILL: Okay, let me clarify my statement.

[talking over each other]

CS: We aren't talking about the movement. This goes beyond...

BILL: Wait a minute. Hold on. Let me clarify my statement in terms of politics. I'm not talking about politicians, because once we begin to think about politics and only in the arena of the politicians, then we are losing out in terms of all kinds of institutions. Every institution that was created has a structure, a politic, that people engage in. No bureaucracy has bureaucracy politics that you are engaged in, in terms of that arena. Every TV station has internal politics; every institution, and that's the kind of politics I'm talking about, and we must get beyond looking at the broad perspective in terms of the number of votes, because basically, when you look at the electoral politic, it is only one aspect of Black politics. Obviously, the largest part of politics that Black folks have engaged in is influential politics, the ability to influence based on a morality code. That is the main sort of politics Blacks have played in American society, but when we engage in these sorts of discussions, we always begin to relate to electoral politics, and that has not been the main state of Black politics in America. To that extent, we must go back and understand: what is politics in an institutional setting? And we must begin to play politics in an institutional setting and not be apolitical because Black folks, at least professionals, believe they are apolitical, that neutrality exists. That doesn't really exist. That is not a reality, whatsoever.

TL: If it doesn't exist, though, then that reporter is gonna have a hard time keeping his job. In that case, he will be replaced with someone who does have neutrality, because it's not up to us—as I said, it's not my job to take a stand.

BILL: The question I'm saying is that I don't believe that neutrality exists. I think that's a facade that the media utilized to justify some of their existence and justify some of their perspectives. What I'm suggesting is this: your culture provides you with some sort of perspective. You come there with a certain perspective, and from that perspective, you analyze things from that background. There is no neutrality; you don't think and disregard your background. You didn't throw away Idaho; you still have part Idaho, in terms of your perspective—

[39:58]

TL: So what are you saying? The Black reporters obviously bring their background and I bring my background, and if we can't get away from it, it's probably better to have more backgrounds there to give a more diverse look at the news, than to just have the one kind of background,

and I think that's what a Black reporter has to depend on. If he's gonna take any more stronger stand than that, and get too much more political or vocal, he is going to put his very presence in that institution in jeopardy, I think.

[everyone tries to talk at once]

MA: I think we're talking about two different types of politics. The politics, I think, that you're talking about is getting in and playing the game with everybody else, right?

TL: Within the institution; it's learning how to gain your goals through the politics of that institution...

BILL: Well, to some extent: yes, and to some extent: no. For minorities to understand, to a great extent, that they have [an] external community. White folks, white employees understand that they got an external community. They take and [...] and that community is not within the profession itself. Whites engage in professional organization. That organization is relatively strong. If a Black were to play into an organization, the white organization, they are really a minority, they have very little voice in that organization. They don't seek to create alternative structures within the profession itself, usually afraid about the damn job. I keep hearing the job thing, whatever it is worth, the job is the most important thing...

TL: Well, it is in a way because without the job, you cannot pursue your goals. If you have a goal to help the Black community as a reporter, you've got to play some politics in order to keep your job to keep doing that.

CS: You don't throw the baby out with the bath water, Bill. [laughter]

BILL: The question is this: whether—and I think I have a little advantage because I was here last week when Clarence McKee spoke from FCC and Marcus Walters from California talked about this whole issue to some extent, and it's just that, to a great extent, your jobs are not secure in any damn way, and they can get rid of you when they want to. If you don't begin to play politics, you won't have the security, and he gave some examples, mainly... what's the guy's name from California? His wife... I can't think of his name now but one outstanding militant that was there in the 60s, his wife worked for one of the TV stations and they wanted to get rid of her. She called Clarence, Clarence called Marcus up and because he had this strong organization, a citizens' organization, they weren't prepared to fire her because they would file a suit against that station in regard to their media coverage. Today, still, they have to keep her, but the issue here is that Blacks don't believe in playing politics, they're apolitical people. I have

never seen this sort of thing in my whole life [in] any place in the world. They're apolitical and they don't understand how they got jobs and what other things will allow them to maintain that job, and I think that's important.

TL: That's what I was saying. If a Black person wants to become a reporter and go out and help, then they gotta learn to play the politics to a certain extent within that institution so that they can keep their job and go out and do that. I think that's improving; women are learning to play the politics that men always play, and I think that Blacks are learning to play it. We can reach our goals by modifying the politics within the institution and using them to our own goals, I mean, to gain what we want.

BILL: Go ahead and ask a question.

AUDIENCE 1: Can I say something? First of all, in order to play the politics, you've gotta have some type of constituency that dictates some demands from you. If no demands are being made by the Black community that impinges upon anyone functioning in any position in the media, then no one is going to do anything. It's only when demands are made of you, based on your position and how responsible it would seem, by members of that community. That's where the political power originally comes to bear. When someone from an organized group approaches you saying, "Hey, Francis Bob," I'll just use that [name], "We've been noticing you on TV and we don't agree with the type of reporting you're doing," or "[with] your program." That's pressure from the outside, from a legitimate body out there. When he goes back in there and then he's got pressure on him. What I'm trying to suggest is if the Black community and any other community here in Portland is not making demands on the media to change, to include them in their program and do a more effective job, then I can't...

BILL: Criticize them.

AUDIENCE 1 [continuing] ...expect that those people, seeing as they are minorities, are gonna rock the boat on their own accord.

[44:55]

TL: I agree with that. At our station, we had a real problem with women. As maybe some of you know we had a suit by the NOW organization. Because that organization brought a suit against the station, there were women hired, and we finally settled with them, and there's going to be documentaries on Blacks, that was part of the agreement. There's going to be a documentary



for women, and that outside pressure, I think it's an excellent point, the outside pressure has got to be there and it can work.

BILL: I agree with you one hundred percent, but I don't agree with your contention about how you ought to start, because what you're saying is that the professional is not liable, they have no responsibility.

TL: No.

BILL: Is that what you're suggesting in some way?

AUDIENCE 1: I said this: I don't expect, knowing a little bit about human nature in my two or three years of school—I went through the third grade. [others chuckling] When one comes up through whatever challenge, and gets a position at a TV station or a newspaper, he brings to that experience, his background, his affiliations that you mentioned. If in those affiliations, he hasn't been influenced by anyone who tells him the importance of that position, the type of change he could bring into that position by doing certain things—in other words, he is not schooled to what his role could be—now, what I'm saying is here, in Portland, I haven't seen... I know there are a number of organized groups, but I don't think there's one organized, specifically, at least on the long-term, back a few years, that has been dealing effectively with the media on a daily basis.

BILL: Okay, I agree one hundred percent with that statement, but let me add one other point I'd like to add to it. I think the professionals in the media have a role to play, and a very important role to play, in terms of trying to develop some sort of organization internally, and also begin to try to do some things with the community to educate and politicize the community to some extent. The reason why I'm saying this is that from my observation from being only here a year, is that most professionals sort of saying, "We have no responsibility. We only have responsibility of ourself, and we are stars." To a great extent, TV people are stars, today. They tie into the whole thing, and they get into this "Hollywood-ism" sort of notion and they have no social responsibility whatsoever.

[both voices speaking at once]

AUDIENCE 1: I know I'm not on the panel but let me say this...

BILL: Go ahead, fella.

AUDIENCE 1: Here in Portland, I happen to know that most of the people who deal in the media, who happen to be minorities of color, use the subtle type of body politic that you were referring to earlier. They are involved in associations. A lot of the activity is clandestine; it has to be at this point, perhaps. I see these people all the time, working on public service type of things without pay, and doing a number of things that aren't obvious.

BILL: Okay. Let me ask you one question: why aren't they here today? If they're so clandestine, and they are doing so much, and they're so concerned, why aren't they here today? Why weren't they here last week? That's just crazy. I can buy the argument, but it seems to be absurd to some point...

AUDIENCE 1: You said that people who are in the mass media, I know...

BILL: I'm talking about...

AUDIENCE 1: ...only 3 or 4 Blacks...

BILL: There's quite a few minorities in the media in this town. They may not be on the screen, per se, but they're in some aspect of the media, and we had FCC attorney here last week and we had a person which is a national organizer, in terms of media people, which have been a tremendous track record in terms of getting media to alter their policy in regard to minority employment, and yet we haven't see any of them here. They've been praised of this program, and, to some extent, they should be the ones here engaging in discussion, and begin to provide some perspective, but yet they're not here. And so, to that extent, I don't buy the argument that they are being clandestine. Yes, I think they are clandestine, because clandestine's doing nothing.

TL: I think, this is from within—

BILL: This gentleman had a question, let's let him ask the question.

AUDIENCE 2: I didn't have so much of a question I just wanted to say that I agree with you Bill, because one thing I did learn... and I see this whole series as being very valuable because I learned last week that Marcus Wilshire said that nobody that came to him in time, that had their job in jeopardy, ever got fired, and that if stations have to pay lawyers to go to court, they don't want to pay lawyers, and stations know that as long as you don't have an organization backing you up, then they can do something to you. You don't have to wait until an organization comes to you. You don't have to be that active in your organization, but just let them know that you're there and you're doing the best you can, and if trouble comes up, then

there's some people there that will back you up without you having to have done 10-15 things for them. I know that that organization is there so I know that if I get hired by a television station, and somebody comes out and tells me I have to write a story or do a story this way, and I may disagree, I may do the story the way they're telling me to do it because I want to keep my job, but then I know I can go to the media coalition and say, "We need some people to organize in the community and put up a petition against the station because they are deciding to portray this portion of the city in this way. I don't think they're being objective, I think they're being racist." I can let them know about that and be the person on the inside that's helping them, and know that the station is not going to fire me because they can't get up in court and say that they're firing me because I thought that they were racist, because that's why they hired me there. To provide a balance and to influence the way the station's coming across. So I don't think it's really valid to say you're just a reporter; you just have to take the assignments that you get. You can take the assignments you get and you can do it the way they want, but that doesn't have to be the limit of your influence. I do have a question also about you [Tana]. You come in on the bottom... I thought I was going to ask another question later on, but. In the five years since there's this drive to hire minorities and women, is anybody getting to those management positions where they're making decisions, or is everybody staying in...

CS: Well you see, that's the problem. That's what we need. In terms of minorities in the media, we need some minorities in decision-making key positions.

AUDIENCE 2: Do you have to come up from the bottom?

CS: You have to come up from the bottom. Usually you come up from the bottom, because people that are in management making decisions are people that have the expertise, have the experience. When you get into a situation where you have a non-media person trying to run, for example, a newspaper or a television station, then there's going to be a lot of mistakes because that person does not have the experience it takes. So until we get, for example, some Blacks, Chicanos, or Mexican Americans and women into positions of authority (people who call the shots about what is going to be done, or what should be done), there's going to be a gap; there's going to be a void there.

AUDIENCE 2: So how do you pressure the management to promote you from reporter?

CS: Well...

[laughter]

AUDIENCE 3: How come it can't be anybody from the outside? You got to come up from the bottom, you gotta go through them or over them.

CS: [hesitant] Well, what do you mean "somebody from the outside"? [others talking] You mean somebody that's non-media related?

AUDIENCE 3: No, I don't mean non-media related. This is some other question in terms of preparation as a student in communications. [Let's] say you needed a master's degree, say, in communications, it has only so much value. Would they pull somebody in, say, [who] has a master's degree in communications and didn't major in television, has done some work in school in television... in a management position... or as a reporter?

CS: it's been done, it's still being done.

TL: [quietly] I think you have to come in to...

AUDIENCE 3: In that case, is it just journalism training you need to have, or...

MA: I think really, in the real world, in television, the thing that you need, you need the basic intelligence to convert a very complicated story into a form that people, that the masses can understand easily. I think the biggest thing that you need is you need to be able to work in front of that camera. You need a good voice, you need a good manner on film, and be able to put together a story well, and quickly. [pauses] There are a lot of other intangibles but you've got to have those basics.

CS: And in order to make a decision, you gotta know what you're making a decision about. If you're going to make a decision about what should be covered in the minority community, you've got to know how that's going to be covered. For example, in some instances, you've got to know about the kind of equipment you need. That comes from experience. [Knowing] the kind of equipment you need in order to get the job done effectively. A manager, you can take a person who is non-media related and put him into a management position but I don't think he will function as effective as a person who has had that experience. I think that most people, when a person is hired, the hiring echelon or whoever does the hiring, usually will take that into consideration.

AO: Well, Chuck, let me just jump on and [...] for a second. First of all, the five year push you're talking about, that's over. [agreement in background] That started because of the riots and stuff like that in the 60s. The Kerner Commission came out with their report that lack of

coverage of the inner cities was a contributing factor in myriads of white people being surprised by the fact that people were mad. That's over, as far as I can see. Now, you're talking about less than 500, you're actually probably talking about possibly less than 400 minority journalists in the U.S. At this point, what's happening is that that figure has stabilized. In other words, the ones that are leaving the profession are being replaced by minorities, but the number is not increasing significantly. In the United States, at this point, I believe there is one Black managing editor. He's in a small town in Ohio, somewhere. They have not been moving up into management positions as far as I can see.

What I see is Blacks moving into, for instance, positions of being editorial writers on a newspaper. That's a fairly powerful position because you are writing on the editorial page, setting policy and political positions for the paper as an institution. Moving beyond that, into positions of management, into positions where you're going to be hiring people, I don't see that. I don't know what the situation is in the media. In terms of the training, the last thing I wanted to get into that you were talking about was the training. If you think you're going to get in there and that you can't be fired, that's a false security. I know Marcus Wilshire, I heard him last week, he said he had some people save some people some jobs. Think about it. You can be fired...

AUDIENCE 3: [in background]

AO: But if you don't get fired, let's talk about that. If you don't get fired, what's your future? At this point for minority journalists, I think the average is about five years. That's what you're gonna last at. When you get in there [comment in background] I don't know what the situation is in Portland, but this is not just for minority reporters. For all reporters, the average is about five years, but the point is... in Portland it's a little odd because [when] you look on TV, you see some of these old cats on there. [laughter] Pretty old. They're growing old in their jobs, but in the rest of the country you don't see that. [laughter] You're only going to be in there for about five years and what's going to get you: either you get fired, you have your ethics [so] you're going to get disappointed. Stories you want to cover, you won't be able to for one reason or another. There will be editing done of your stories. Everyday there's editing done to your stories. There may be space limitations, time limitations, say you're doing a long story and at the end of it you want to say, "And so this shows, da dada da." Well, they may cut that out, right at the end.

TL: That's an editorial comment, that's the thing where...

AO: It's not just an editorial comment, but just the space. Let's say they got a Meier and Frank ad there, it's got to run. Your paragraph gets cut. Your manager gets his little exacto knife and just cuts it. You're going to have to deal with a lot of little different [things]. That's one level of editing and [the] editor's going to come back and say, "What do you mean here? This says 'because of his color,' so on and so forth, 'he couldn't get his job.' Is that documented? Is that really so?" and you're going to have to deal with it.

[59:12] So what I'm saying is...

TL: Let me just jump on and add quickly...

AO: Well, let me just... five last words. What I'm saying is when you get into the newsroom, you [have] got to be ready to deal. It's called "politics of the newsroom." That's what it's called.

AUDIENCE 4: I just want to ask a question about this, public service and the stories that get covered and who makes that selection? Why is it that... well, let me just give you an example of what happened to me. Several years ago, I was working for the state of Oregon and you put on a thing in the community that was sanctioned by the governor and the state. It was to raise funds for low income people for emergency purposes. The program was sponsored by Montgomery Ward. We went to the TV stations and the local news media and we got lots and lots of coverage. A couple years before that, we did another thing. It was not sanctioned by the state. It was not under the auspices of the state, it was just the Black Education Center school, which is very important to us in the community. We went to the stations/news media and we asked for coverage. We got very little coverage.

TL: How long ago was that?

AUDIENCE 4: That was back in '71.

TL: That may have been before the emphasis was really put on that. It may have been much easier back then to dismiss it as something that was a fluke and not really that important to the general news community. I don't think that would happen if you went to the stations now if there was any way they could cover it. But you also have to realize the limitations that we're under when you're trying to get publicity on something. First, the reporter does not usually make that determination, it's the assignment editor, and it's not—

CS: Or the public service director.

TL: Well, okay, at the TV station it's an assignment editor, and there is only one minority... no, there aren't any minority assignment editors in this city. There is one minority producer, but that's an 11 o' clock slot, and I don't really think that that's considered a position of power. All the rest of those are white males, if I'm correct, straight across the board. Beyond that, even when the decision is made, we're working under so many constrictions: time, do we have crews to do it on that particular day. If you're saying, "Come over today and do this," it's a lower chance. When you're...

AUDIENCE 4: No, we didn't say that.

TL: Okay, well I have a feeling it was just because they could get away without...

AUDIENCE 4: Us in the community...

TL: But there wasn't much of "your" culture in "our" media at that time.

[laughter]

AUDIENCE 4: Maybe not in '71 and '72.

TL: '71 is when I...

AUDIENCE 4: But it's still happening. I mean somebody can get shot in the community, or get raped, or killed, or whatever. I know about it because I live there, but who else knows about it? It's not that important. But if it happens in Southwest Portland, that some white woman is raped, or whatever, then it's going to be on the news, they're doing a special investigation, all this and that takes place, so I'm wondering...

TL: That's the bias of it. It really is.

AUDIENCE 4: ...what's happening?

TL: Somebody along the line is thinking, maybe subconsciously, "Well, that kind of thing always happens."

AUDIENCE 4: Can you influence what stories are put out there in the news?

TL: All you can do is go to the producer or the assignment editor and present a case, and if you happen to get them in a bad moment, they'll say, "No, I don't want it. Get out of here."  
Depends on...

CS: Timing is very important.

TL: Depends on the news day.

CS: Depends on timing, availability of staff, the nature of the story. There's a lot of variables there. If you're done asking your question, I'm gonna ask you a question.

TL: A lot of times we'll have...

CS: Go ahead.

TL: We'll have a story, an excellent example, recently, is the National Women's Conference. If it were some kind of political meeting or something, I'm sure we might have sent a reporter, but one woman reporter went in, wanted to go cover the National Women's Conference. Which would have been excellent! We could have sent back stories, but management said, "No." That's because they didn't consider it important enough that—over 50% of our audience happens to be women, but they did not consider it to be newsworthy enough to cover.

[1:03:49]

So those are the types of things you have to keep hitting at. You have to keep saying, "I've got a story here that maybe I could do," and then you keep trying to get them done. Eventually...

AUDIENCE 4: Is management going to change... ?

TL: No...

AUDIENCE 4: Three or four years from now, when you become the manager, are you going to be in a position to change—

AO: We just said that we're not going to be there...

A.M. 4: Because you're in the... decision making position: the position to say...



TL: [aside] We want to be.

AUDIENCE 4: ...what stories are going to be...

TL: Sure.

AUDIENCE 4: If your goal is to reach, to get at the top [of] the rating, once you get up there in that decision-making position, are your goals and objectives going to change? Because...

TL: They can. They can. I think that some people are going to modify their goals.

AUDIENCE 4: ...modify their ideas. All of that was you.

TL: But still, I think that the influence we have as women, as minorities, whatever, will come to bear when and if we get to those positions. Even though you're going to be modified somewhat, you can still pursue a lot of the things. I think coverage of things like you, perhaps, want covered has changed a lot in the last little while and I think it will continue to. As long as you get a good story...

A.M. 4: Well, both these stories were very good. They were both very meaningful and they meant something to us in the community.

AO: I have a question.

AUDIENCE 4: But the black thing, we only got one, two [...] on that. But the white thing, they really made it up.

AO: Did someone phone in these things? Do you know what the procedure...

A.M. 4: We sent letters. We sent letters and we called.

AO: Well, you know, there's...

AUDIENCE 4: We talked to Dick Mobile, if you want names.

AO: What you can do is... with a newspaper, there's time limitations. "I'm going out. I have other stories to do."

AUDIENCE 4: We had planned this six months prior to the time, so this time thing that you're talking about is irrelevant. We were not some idiots who planned something not knowing what they were doing. We were professional people. They guy who owns the school, he has a master's degree in education. I'm getting my education. I mean, we were people who knew what we were doing. We planned this thing six months prior to the time that it went on.

AO: Don't stop.

AUDIENCE 4: No, I'm not saying we're going to stop.

AO: Don't let it die.

AUDIENCE 4: My crew... however you say that, is because the news media did not give us adequate coverage.

AO: That's a fact.

TL: Was it a one-day event?

AUDIENCE 4: Both of them were one-evening events.

TL: Okay, there's the problem right there, I can tell you. Evening things do not get the coverage.

AUDIENCE 4: Honey, I'm not talking about you guys coming out, seeing what we're doing. I'm talking about advertisement.

TL: Oh, shoot! Did you go to the public affairs director? You're not talking about a news insert thing, you're talking about...

A.M. 4: No, I'm just talking about coverage. Anything that you want...

CS: Often times those kinds of decisions are made on what's going to have the largest audience appeal.

AUDIENCE 4: Going back to that decision making thing, when you get up there, are you going to be able to change that if your goals and objectives are for the ratings? Who cares about what the Black Education Center's doing except for the 200 Blacks that live in Albina? That's not going to help your television rating, right? Right.

CS: I hear what you're saying.

AUDIENCE 4: So you're not going to cover it.

BILL: Let her raise the point, because she works in public service anyway.

[1:07:33]

MA: Yeah, I'd like to add that a lot of times [...] depends on what else is going on in the community at the time. I don't agree with that either, but that's the way it goes. I think one of the effective things they could have is like what Channel 2 has: a calendar of events that they roll constantly throughout the day, and everything that is added [...] they'll put it on there. Because in a lot of cases where I work, something comes in and you might take a look at what's going on, that lead or whatever, and you run what has most importance, and if you don't get to the smaller stuff, it doesn't get on. I don't think it's fair because other people might be interested but I think what each station should have is a calendar of events that rolls three times a day [...] and that way, we get air coverage [...] a whole week or two weeks in advance.  
[inaudible]

AO: The other incident where you're talking about a crime or some incident like that, if you don't phone it in, don't assume that people know about it.

TL: Right.

AO: The thing is: a lot of the stories you see in the paper, you think, "Well, gee, they got all these folks in there. They just got the whole place covered so they know everything that's going [on]." That's not how it goes because individual reporters, they go out and they're looking for stuff and they're digging for stuff, and if they find it, then that's the story, but they may not find it so... just one last point, excuse me. So if you could just phone it in. If you see a reporter's name there, all you [have] got to do is call. Look up the *Oregonian* number in the phone book or the TV, and call up and say, "Let me talk to this guy. Let me talk to Alan or let me talk to somebody," and you say, "This is what happened."

MA: I think one of the important things is when you get someone on the phone, is make an appointment with the public affairs director. Come in and sit down and talk to one and lay it all out for us, "This is what we want. This is important to us," why you want it, and just detail it because I think a personal appearance would be a lot more effective. In some cases they get

phone [...] that they get ten of them that day. [...] It just depends, if you really want the air coverage, it could really help to come in and sit down and say, "Look, we want this. This is why it's important," and it will probably get air time.

TL: I think the key there is public affairs. A lot of times, news is looking for more news-type things, but public affairs can help you a lot faster on things like that than the news department.

AUDIENCE 4: And they can still cut it out if it's not going to enhance the...

TL: Public affairs has obligations to minorities. They have FCC requirements that they have to meet, so you're not going to get cut from public affairs as fast as you might from news.

AUDIENCE 4: That was going to be my next question to Chuck. Affirmative action, has that really helped to influence, to change some things there, employment opportunities, and did you answer that before I got here?

CS: First of all, let me say that affirmative action has been the biggest hoax played on the American people; it don't work simply because there's no commitment, and that's all I can say.

AUDIENCE 4: Well, what about the [...] system? How many Blacks are there working for [...] industry? [laughter] [...] Is there a job opening for me? [laughter]

CS: Well, there's a job opening... [laughter]

TL: I think as far as employment opportunities, more and more, it's not just the person that happens to fit a certain slot, but competition is very strong in all of those slots anymore. You find the competition very strong among Black reporters because the job market is really very, very limited, and there's competition everywhere, now.

AUDIENCE 5: Not that my mind is changed, but I'm having some career frustrations here about things I've heard this morning. Minorities have maybe a five or six year life expectancy in any given position. It is very unlikely that you're going to get into management [or] any decision making positions, so how much influence you're going to have over what's coming over the set, aside from putting your Black face on television, is questionable. This is what I'm picking up from what you said this morning. So why should I, as a minority student in communications, go into communications as opposed to joining a trade union or becoming a garbage man in New York City?

BILL: Well, because...

AUDIENCE 5: In terms of making an impact on society as opposed to just feeding my face?

BILL: Well, you're not going to go out there and conquer the world...

AUDIENCE 5: I'm not suggesting...

BILL: Listen to me.

AUDIENCE 5: I'm talking about in terms of going in and trying to do something. You're saying it is not worthwhile...

BILL: No, I'm not saying that. I don't think any of us are saying that.

[inaudible] [laughter]

TL: I'm saying that you can reach your goals but you have to work at it and you have to work through the system, but you can affect some changes. I've seen some changes, and very happily so, some changes just because the media did pick up on something and because they pursued it, the right prevailed, I mean, and *the right*. That's not a quote by Wright. That sounds idealistic but you can reach certain goals and you can affect change.

[1:13:23]

CS: In terms of competition, for example we talked about stiff competition in the media. Competition, in some instances, because the job market is so limited, the competition is going to be working with the garbage company, and you're going to have to: number 1, prove yourself as a professional. Proving yourself as a professional means that you can get the experience. Gaining the experience, is doing the job.

[many people speaking at once]

TL: I think I know what you mean...

AUDIENCE 5: I don't get the job because I can't write, I understand that. If I don't get promoted because I can't handle deadlines, I can understand that. But if I can handle deadlines, and I can put together a good story, and I can come across on the screen, can I get to a position where...

TL: If you are willing to do what's necessary. If you're willing to stick out five years of what can turn out to be very mind-boggling. I'm not saying that everybody is weeded out after five years. If you have the desire and you can stand it, and you let the management know that you want to move into assignment editor position, or you want to move into producer, there's nothing that says that you can't, it's just that it's a very, very... television reporting is a very trying time, and by after four or five years, unless you're a very goal-oriented, you may as well say...

MA: You're burned out.

TL: Yeah. That's it. So it's up to you. I'm sure there would be nothing stopping you, even in our station.

MA: Even in our station. [laughter]

TL: If you wanted to be assignment editor and you could handle it and you could stick it out, [then] you could get there and I think then, really affect some changes.

AO: The thing is that you missed the beginning. There's two areas where you can affect, you can do something when you get in there. Number one, when you go in there, the assignment editors are going to give you stories. You're going to get a story. You have a little bit of—well, he gives you a story on inflation; farm prices just went up 0.8%. How's this going to affect the housewife buying stuff in the grocery store? That's your story; you've got to go out and get it. Your own creativity comes in there where you're going to make your story. You can say, "Well, I'm going to go out to North Portland here, to Albertsons, and interview some of the ladies that come in here to buy groceries on Saturday." Now, they're Black, and you just did a story on consumer... and you just put some Black faces on the screen other than your own. That's just in a regular story; that's significant. I think that's significant because you're going to hear other things than if you went down over here into Beaverton or whatnot, to the Safeway or whatever.

AUDIENCE 5: Is that how it works when they give you a general topic?

TL: Yeah.

AO: And that's one thing.

AUDIENCE 5: So how come it's not getting covered?

AO: There's two things. Well, the second area is larger things, enterprise things where you want to start dealing with injustice. Then, the system is that you have to do memos. You have to learn how to write a memo. You say, "Hey Daniel," or whatever your editor's name is, "there's an interesting story here. I think if we start looking at the arrest rates in the North Portland police station, we may find... I've heard such and such. This may happen." You give that in to him and he's gonna... you get into the habit of giving him memos. You become a pro at that. That's part of your job, and eventually he's going to say, "Well, gee, there might be a possibility here." Then, that's your story, you suggested that story. In other words, what I'm saying is that you can do things creatively with stories you're assigned, and, occasionally, anyway, you can do your own stories. Deal with issues you want to deal with.

BILL: Okay, Mary, I know you've got a point.

MA [partly inaudible]: I was just going to say that being in the media, I find that there's some frustration as far as looking for advancement opportunities because a lot of—and this is what I said last week—but in a lot of cases, you're going to start at a low level or entry-level, and promotion is supposedly from within. But you may stay there a number of years and may never be promoted and it isn't determined by your ambition or effort. I think one of the problems is that [...] minorities are [...] at these places and so they say, "You don't have experience for this job or that." You ask how you get the experience, and they say, "You have to wait for a training position to open," but then a position never becomes available. Now, I found myself [...] with that problem. In a lot of the cases [...] reporting never had any experience, so I even offered to do stuff on my own time, like go out [...] sit out there and do some of the dirty work, if that could be arranged [...] So you find yourself in a vicious circle. How are you going to get the experience if you can't get a job without the experience? So it's just one of those same old stories. I think what they should do is set up training programs [and] say, "If you get through this field and camera training program, and we'll let you know exactly what the steps are to become a full-fledged reporter." I think you'd find that the minorities or any other people in there are staying longer, writing a lot more, and you have a more successful product that's going to turn out in the end [...] companies.

CS: To some extent what you [are] suggesting, would really knock out the old boys' school, and that's how most things operate: old boys. The [...] really don't know people so to that extent, they don't get the job because they haven't done [...] to the system.

MA: That's right.

CS: To deal with this by any other way is absurd and so, to that extent, we do face a problem. Not in terms of how much ambition you've got or how many [...] you got; it's what kind of contacts you've got and who you know.

MA: That's true.

CS: I think that plays a very major role, and one of the things that we began to see right now, in terms of the state, is that very few people, very few minorities understand that relationship to jobs and so they're politically unaware. We go back to politics again. I'm a political scientist. [laughter] That's part of the problem also, I think that's another thing. I think that TTW got about, probably the largest minority...

MA: Within KGW.

CS: Yeah, they got probably the largest minority employment and they probably aren't moving any or anybody to stay...

MA: Management—

CS: Dominant.

MA: ...a lot of them have college degrees, which I guess that wouldn't mean a thing that much in New York, but the thing that really kills me, I say, "If this is the way it is, fine. Let it remain that way." But then you see all these exceptions come along. Recently, we hired two trainees, and nobody in the building was contacted. We hired another guy where they created a position for him, hired him from out of state, trained him, and he still didn't get a job. They have people who have been there, some of the engineers (18 years) have not even been [...]. You see this going on and you feel like, "Wow, I'm not going to sit around 18 years for somebody to give me a golden arch and train some young person and say, 'Okay, here, you do this.'" And in most cases, especially in reporting, the reporters come from a wealthy or solid, sound background. You don't normally see a person off the street being a reporter unless it happened during the six o'clock.

[1:21:00]

TL: You might in a smaller market. The problem, like with Portland, is it's a fairly large market so that means you have a lot of people with experience wanting to get to a larger market. [The idea is to progress from the market. A lot of times, to get the experience, you do have to go to smaller markets.



MA: I can't imagine any place smaller...

MA and CS [together]: ...than Portland.

[laughter; talking at once]

TL: Listen! I came from Idaho Falls, Idaho.

BILL: Portland is a fairly large market.

TL: Portland is a fairly large market. It might seem small to you but...

BILL: It's number 23 [or] 24...

TL: Yes. As far as getting into the business, it's a fairly large market.

MA: What I'm trying to say is regardless of whether a market is small or large, I think that if you have young people in the company, who want to be promoted, moved up to leadership...

TL: Right.

MA: They should have training programs to keep those people and make sure they are surely qualified, and by the time they get to that position they want, you're definitely guaranteed that you're going to have a successful reporter. But they don't do that. They get young people in, get them in clerical positions, paid very low pay, so there's nothing really motivating you to stay, and you're not really learning anything, so you might look around and say, "Hey, I'm going to check this out." Whereas when a position becomes available that you want, you might have spent two or three years there, they hire another person from outside with the experience. Whereas if they had a training program train you, they wouldn't have had to do that.

CS: Here again, it's how you make management responsive to the needs of the community. We've gone over it several times, of having minorities in management named positions, where they make a decision. Accountability. If we could bring some pressure to bear on the decision makers to make them accountable for the actions...

MA: That's the first step.

CS: That's the first step.

MA: If you had a personnel manager who was in the same circumstance, say, as you or someone else, they would probably be much more responsive to looking around in the company. But you may have someone in that position who just got the job from somewhere else by sending out 100 resumes, and was wonderfully qualified and chose it out of four or five job offers. That person may not really be looking around that company to see if there's someone who really needs the break and really wants to do that, and that's management's fault.

[1:23:18]

TL: Now we have had in the past a training position where somebody without experience can apply for the training position. Unfortunately, it's always been somebody hired from outside, but without experience, I might add. The people that we've hired and gone through the training program have not had any experience in television prior to that, which is a good point.

MA: That's the purpose of training.

TL: That's what the training program is for but I think one thing that really is a problem is that a lot of people that finally do—women, Blacks, minority reporters—they finally get in and say, "Whew! I made it!" Then they forget or they don't want to destroy their own uniqueness by helping other people. One thing that we need to do is once we get people in positions, then we've got to proliferate and help other people.

MA: I think the reason for that, I'd like to add, is that there's so many... so few minorities in [...] positions that that person might go out [...] they help another one...

TL: It's going to be a threat to them.

MA: ...to their job and that shouldn't even be the case. It should be so readily accessible for any person regardless of race to get a position that that person wouldn't feel threatened to help another person.

[audience member speaking in background]

AUDIENCE 6: I heard somebody earlier say that if there is a minority they're gonna hire, you're going to have two Black people working at the station and if they've got two Black people

working at the station, they're not going to hire more than two Black people at the station. Unless you're a manager, you can't affect that decision because all you doing, is you just a reporter and all you can do is go out and cover the stories. You can't walk into a meeting [...] saying, "I think you should hire so and so," because you think they're a good reporter, and they're going to say, "Well, that may be but we got y'all, so we aren't hiring anybody else."

MA: Well, I don't know.

AUDIENCE 6: It could make a difference whether... they could be the best person there!

TL: I think if that person is talented, if they have the wherewithal to do it, they're not going to say, "Well, we're not going to hire that person because we have our slots filled."

AUDIENCE 6: One of you two said that earlier...

TL: That's what one of the people who's looking for a job has seen, and I think that there is still some of that feeling, but if there were five applicants for just *a* position and by far the best qualified was a minority, they would probably...

A.M. 6: "By far." So you got to be super, super...

TL: Yeah! Yeah, that may be the case.

CS: That is the case. [laughter] I would be sure of that. I think that's the same thing, not in media. I think that's a chronic condition throughout the whole aspect of society, and with regard to what profession, be it teaching, professors, well... it seems the schoolteachers got more Black students than anything else, but other professional areas, be it law, any sort of professional fields, you have very few minorities in the field and in order to get the job, you have to be super, very super, and know someone. Not only be super, you have to be super *and* know somebody. Then you'll probably get a job.

TL: That's true. In the media right now that's true with anybody. Anybody. Really. It's not that easy to get a job.

BILL: It's not that true that they have to be super, because we [have] seen a lot of duds on TV.

[laughter]

TL: Yeah, right.

AUDIENCE 6: But they knew somebody.

BILL: Yeah, they knew somebody.

TL: That's right. We have a couple examples at our station.

AUDIENCE 7: How much crossover is there between people that are in the engineering aspect of media into the talent aspect of media?

TL: Not much in this market. Maybe in a smaller market, in a very small town there might be, but doing one doesn't in any way qualify you for doing the other. It would just be if you wanted to, if you got your foot in the door by working in engineering and everyone knew that you wanted the job then maybe you could cross over.

AUDIENCE 7: Okay. Would you recommend that minorities in communication get a background in both production directing and engineering? The reason I asked this [...] question, I'm sorry, is that a friend of mine is going around trying to find a job. She's about to graduate. She went to two stations where they said, "You're a Black woman. We don't have any... you have your degree, but we don't have any positions open in talent, producing, directing, that aspect of it, but if you had your license, we could hire you like that." [snaps fingers]

TL: Yeah.

AUDIENCE 7: "And then once you're in here then it's easier to promote because there's a higher demand for minorities in the engineering aspect."

TL: That's true.

AUDIENCE 7: "...than there is any place else." In most other aspects, the media has so few people that go into engineering aspect.

TL: It's probably a real practical thing to do.

AUDIENCE 7: If you already have your degree, so you're going to have an understanding of the rest of the field, then I guess offering it as a suggestion when you're talking to minorities, and [...] suggest that it's a consideration that will take some more time, but it certainly increases your job opportunities in the media and getting a chance to know people who can get [you] inside the door to get to the point where you can try and move around inside.

TL: We have... there are very few minority people working technical and downstairs, and that's something that they know they have to do something about, but it is very hard to find people with those qualifications. I think the thing again that would determine...

AUDIENCE 7: They train people to do that.

TL: They have trained positions and they're always filled by minorities at our station. But then sometimes, some stations have problems with keeping them. Like either they can't catch on-- it's a very hard thing to catch onto in six months. You're working with these huge electronic machines, and sometimes I wonder if that might be a couple strikes against you to begin with, hiring somebody who knows hardly anything about it and expecting them to come through in that situation. [It would] be good to go in with some experience.

BILL: One thing is I think our university and throughout the country... I went to University of Washington, I haven't been educated in Oregon, which is a good thing [laughter] but to that extent that they did have people training in these [...] TV stations and as engineers and other sorts of things. Probably contacting various universities and advising them [...]. I'm not so sure they're making a concerted effort to try to improve and bring them into the station that are really in that area.

[1:30:04]

TL: We have it at our station. I can't speak for all of them but we have a woman that went from, I think she started out as a cameraman of some sort or cameraperson [laughter], floor director, and she's worked herself up into being a director. I think she's about the only woman director in the town, in the city... and every time that training position's been open, it's either been a woman, Black, or Chicano that's been hired.

CS: I don't know Bill, that I agree that people educated in Washington are [laughter] are better off than people educated in Oregon. [laughter] I think that anyone interested in a career in the media should get as much experience or get as much of a background as they can. If it entails a background in engineering and then switching over to the talent, then that's what they should do, because the end result is going to be that you are going to move a little faster and you're going to be the first, for example, considered to be put into a management position because you've sort of come up through the ranks. You can handle it all. You can go out on a remote site and read the meters and change the tubes and when a certain time comes you can get on the air, then evening, that kind of thing.

I don't know. I guess there's no easy answer. We could sit here all day and talk about what could be done and what should be done, but the underlying thing here is it's not being done and I suppose that's what we're here to talk about, what some of the reason is. There's a lot of reasons why it's not being done.

BILL: Let me start with your comment about education. I put it in as a little gesture but I think there is some significance to that in terms of...

CS: I was being facetious.

BILL: I know, but in terms of Oregon. [laughter] I think one would think you've got to understand here in terms of the media sort of thing, it's that to a large extent, Oregon, the whole state education system hasn't really paid any attention to training minorities for this field, per se, they haven't really...

[1:32:20]

CS: Well, it's the whole country, Bill. The whole United States. This problem, the problem that exists in Oregon, exists in all 50 states, in terms of minorities.

Bill: Not to the same magnitude as here.

CS: That's because of numbers.

AUDIENCE 7: I agree.

CS: But if you look at it percentage-wise, the percentage is there. For example, there's more Blacks in Philadelphia than there are in Portland, but if you look at the percentage of minority participation in the media, I'll bet you it's about the same, if not less.

BILL: I don't have any figures.

[1:33:00]

AUDIENCE 7: We can talk about management, why don't you talk about ownership? For instance, to my knowledge, there's only one Black-owned television station in the entirety of... you know, when you get down to look at even radio stations, unless they're cities with large Black populations, you're not going to have any Black-owned radio stations, and those that you

do have are catering to one type of music. They're perpetuating their particular culture just as whites are perpetuating theirs. The problem of ownership is what I see as a remedy to a lot of this stuff. I'm not that concerned that white people bend over backwards to portray me on their news media. I happen to know that most Blacks who work in any type of form of media are working for Black newspapers or other articles, items of publication, and they're not on the electronic media with the exception of rock and roll, I mean blues DJs, on radio stations. So the whole nation has a problem in terms of mass media. The whole nation has a problem from national programs, and when we talk about looking at TV in the evening, whether you're in Oregon, Washington, or New York, we're seeing Huntly, and Brinckley... well, one of those is dead now, but we're not seeing Black newsmen, anchormen, and that type of thing. We might see one make a special report on something.

TL: Ed Bradley anchors the Sunday night news on... [laughing]

AUDIENCE 7: Yeah, that's one night. Who is looking at that [interruption] We're talking about...

TL: that's a step up, though. That's more than they had...

AUDIENCE 7: 6 and 7 are prime time TV news. So. That's the problem. Now when we get down to local places, this is when the Black anchormen come into play. Incidentally we've lost the one we had here, now. I don't see a big vocal on that prime time anymore. We talk about educational TV, which is supposedly publicly owned. I don't see Black and other minority programs represented in that whole repertoire, so ownership is a very important aspect of this thing, and as long as you deal in terms of politics and economics, I don't see any means where we're going significantly make any impact of change on this mass media set up.

BILL: Let Linda respond to your question. I won't respond to it.

LINDA [audience member]: I came in on the tail end, but I kind of would like to disagree with what Chuck said and to some extent what you said, because I observe television across the country and when you talk in terms of vicinities, I don't care if there are only 20 Black... if there are 200 Black people in the state of Oregon, there should be some Black person on some program that can represent those 200 Black persons. And in some cities across the country there are some television stations where we have programs and they talk about nothing except for the Black problems and concerns and issues, and they're hosted by Blacks. A lot of times, these programs are consistent, Blacks from the Urban League, from all different types of social programs; you're only there to view their concerns and discuss the issues.

When you talk about Black ownership, it takes a lot of money to purchase a radio station and television station. Out of... there's only one Black television station in the entire country and we know that that station is in Detroit, Michigan, and right now they're in financial trouble. It takes a long time to build up assets in terms of a television station, but in terms of what we can do about it, the airwaves are owned by people; they're not owned by broadcasters, they simply have a license to operate. Yes, we can do something about it. We can petition those licenses because we can have those licenses taken away, and it has been done. It's still being done so we can't sit here and say, "No, we can't do anything about it." We damn well can do something about it.

AUDIENCE 7: Okay, I...

[all talking at once]

CS: When I was a reporter...

AUDIENCE 7: That's a lot of theoretical stuff.

CS: What?

[inaudible; many voices at once]

AUDIENCE 7: When you look at how many rights have been taken away, how many [law]suits have been successful, and the type of things that replace those that were dropped, it was more white folks with similar programming. Those stations that lost their license were not... for reasons you said (lack of money), they were not taken over by Black and minority groups. They were replaced by other white people with money who began to perpetuate the same damn thing. Now, just because there is not Black shows of the nature that you speak of here presently, that does not mean there haven't been any here in Portland. We've had a number of these programs prior to you coming here, okay?

CS: I was talking about percentage of population. What's your name? Linda?

LINDA: Linda.

CS: I was talking about percentage of population, Linda, and I'll stick to that.

LINDA: I'd still say you're wrong.



MA: I just want to add one example to what [...] was saying, and I can see where you're saying that is an example [...] Now, KOIN's license was not approved since 1975, wasn't it? Because of that lawsuit...

LINDA: Right. It was...

MA: Now, actually after the ownership changed, [...] dropped the suit and the license was approved, so...

TL: No they didn't drop the suit, they settled it.

CS: They settled it.

TL: They settled it and we got... [...] got a lot of concessions.

CS: Concessions.

TL: A lot of them.

MA: But, I mean, since '75 when the license was challenged, and it wasn't approved to operate since [...], so, in a way, I can see these petitions whether you... have a legitimate cause, they can still operate through the same thing...

TL: But the idea [MA still talking but inaudible] is not to shut the station down, but the idea is to get changes and to get the programming, which is what's happening...

MA: There haven't been any changes since '75, major changes.

TL: There will be as soon as we start implementing what the suit... what was settled by the suit

MA: But... [inaudible] ...In that two year period, were there any major changes as far as employment in minority?

TL: Yes, there were [...] In fact, I think I was hired because of that now.

LINDA: That's right. The only change is you. There are no Black people in any responsible positions at KOIN...

TL: There aren't any women in responsible positions.

LINDA: But you're there, you're on...

TL: Okay, we also hire Blacks.

LINDA: Okay, yeah, you hire Blacks, but I'm saying KOIN hired Blacks but they're not in responsible decision-making positions. That's what we need: Blacks in programs who can control what goes on the air. And we know that, white folks realize that. Sure, you are there because of the [...] suit, but are there any Blacks in any positions that are of any significance? No there aren't.

TL: [quietly] I don't know there are anywhere. Maybe channel 8.

LINDA: ...Listen! I was a promotions person for a CBS affiliate in New York. There are some Blacks...

TL: Not in Portland, Oregon.

LINDA: Oh, not in Portland.

MA: Not in Oregon at all.

[1:40:22]

BILL: This fella got a question.

AUDIENCE 9: Can I just make an observation about the media here in Portland? I had a chance to go to some meetings back in May with the owners and operators of virtually all the radio and TV stations here in town. Every one of them is an upper-middle class white male who is over 50 years old, and you've got to realize is that is what you're up against. And the only... and there's a time element involved, because you're not going to move those guys out and you know that they are not going to hire Black people unless you lean on them. One way you can lean on them is by doing what you [Linda] said, challenge the license. But another thing is you realize that the only way you're going to make progress is through attrition. It's going to take another 10 years until those guys leave! The only way that responsible people can get into management is from the bottom up, and there's no way that you can just flip a light switch and tomorrow you've got your people in the action; it just doesn't work that way. I wish it did, but it doesn't. What I

realized is that the people running the media in this town and virtually all across the country are upper class white males and they don't care! They don't care.

CS: Let me respond to that because I don't really think that's entirely true. I have seen some very illiterate white men running radio and TV stations that couldn't properly formulate their sentences whatsoever, structurally, in terms of any content, but basically they still control, and you've still got your religious mafia [...] and they control a whole host of radio stations. And to that extent, they're not really reflective of that model. They have different types of people that... [inaudible]

AUDIENCE 9: ...that was the impression I got.

CS: ...and they still... Also, there is a possibility when you begin to deal with... Black folks are being trained in certain areas of management, in terms of small stations. I think that, to a great extent, it shouldn't take 10 years, it seems to me it should take a political sort of solution to this problem.

AUDIENCE 9: What's going to happen to that guy who's sitting in the office and knows he's got another 10 years of a cushy job and high salaries? Are you...

MA: But you know you can't assume that because in television, there's a high turnover rate. Just because...

AUDIENCE 9: Not at the top [...]

MA: When the ratings go down, that man is out.

AUDIENCE 9: What about the top management here in Portland?

MA: Alright, well... The management here in Portland... General managers have a high turnover rate, also.

TL: Not...

MA: It's not how you think of it... they have a responsible job. You can't look for the next 10 years and assume that you're going to be there because somebody could [...] in a minute.

CS: Not only that. If they're good then they're going to move around because salaries are going to be more attractive.

MA: That's true, but I think what you're saying, and I can kind of see it, is automatically assuming that if there's a general manager sitting at KGW today that's white, [...] [inaudible] and that tomorrow, or say a month or so from now, there'll be a Black general manager, because that would never happen because there aren't Blacks in any responsible positions right now.

[CW talking simultaneously]

MA: ...and you'll never get Blacks in the highest position possible when there aren't any Blacks in any management or any other decision-making positions like that, and that's what we have to stop. We have some Blacks and—I'm going to say Blacks because I'm speaking from that standpoint—a Black woman in a responsible position right now unless you can [...] to me because I have to see someone representing me, and it's not an insult to white women, but what I'm saying is that Black people are going to have to get into some management positions and decision-making positions in order to move from there. I think you can't expect to get a Black person walking in the door to be a general manager, that will never happen. [...]

TL: That shouldn't take 10 years.

CS: But I raise another question, and the question we just talked about in terms of Linda, because obviously the people in management positions are not going to respond to people that work for them. They're going to have to respond to outside pressure, and outside pressure seems to be a citizen group that can begin to use litigation and file petitions with the FCC in order to get some response to their grievances in terms of the practices of the TV and radio stations, and so far we don't seem to begin to want to deal with that sort of question because obviously, there's nothing that can be done, and once we take the position that nothing can be done, ain't nothing going to be done!

AUDIENCE 4: Well, something can be done so, mind you, the Black Education Center will be contacting the... who was it? The public service coverage [...], and contacting those of you who are in the position to influence so that we can have our needs met.

TL: Karen Lee at KOIN. One of the management positions filled by a woman.

AUDIENCE 4: Do you ever go out to the high schools and encourage the kids there to maybe choose this field to go into and let them know what classes they should be taking, or [...]?

CS: I have when I was asked. I've done it a couple times. But simply because I was asked to.

AO: It's kind of like encouraging a kid to go into professional sports though, it seems to me.

TL: Yeah, it's not something that everybody can do...

AO: Unless you... it's something you [have] really got to be motivated for, I think.

AUDIENCE 4: Well, some of the high schools have television, not programs, but they study TV and camera and that sort of thing, and I was wondering if maybe there was a connection, if maybe they used any of the stations as a resource and you could come out and talk to the kids in grade school. Firemen go out and talk to the kids about what a good fireman is like, you know, with second and third grade kids. So I was wondering if, on high school secondary level, do you ever go out and offer any information.

[1:46:40]

AUDIENCE: [...] If you don't have a—I think I mentioned this earlier, too—an outside body who is interested in particular in the media, all aspects of the media: conducting research, having meetings regularly, having some resolutions, doing a study on what's happening in the practices here. This is a good start in that direction, but a sustained effort over a long period of time, bringing in reporters, we've done a lot of talk and I don't see many statistics in that and I haven't... I'd really like to see what I'm talking about in the paper. Meeting for the purpose of trying to analyze where Blacks and other minorities, women if you may, have been in terms of the media here in the state of Oregon, and the current situation and what the future looks like. If the future looks like it has been in the past and is currently now, then I think that people need to be moving in terms of bringing political questions to bear now. I know it's long, drawn-out types of things, but something can be done.

AUDIENCE: It's not that hard. Marcus Wilshire said last week, and I'm sure you could get the address, and how to contact him from Bill, he's willing to bring a national Black media coalition in to work with any group in Portland to start studying the media, monitoring the media, and teaching people how to file petitions and how to deal with the media on a political level. He said his organization is there and he's ready to get together with anybody that wants to so it's not like it's not there.

CS: Oftentimes, there's a... there's a lack of a... there's apathy on the part of the community in putting pressure on management in order to change some of these decisions or to get their heads screwed on right, so to speak. A lot of people, Black people, in the community, don't... in many cases, don't respond to the type of program that's being done in the media. For example, I've done a number of minority programs... I've never got... you know, that many comments about what kinds of programs we were doing. I sent out surveys; asked people to respond. I sent out 20-some, 22, 23 surveys to people in responsible positions. I got three surveys back! So people, you know, I think it has to start at the grassroots level. The Black leaders, responsible leaders, have got to go to these stations and say, "There's an inequity here and we'd like for you to correct this."

AUDIENCE 7: Chuck, the responsibility to do battle in the city of Portland... [...] My idea of grassroots is a little bit different from those leaders. I don't think that any decision's going to come from them, because [...] of the people in the community to approach these people. So, if we talk about the [voices talking at once; unintelligible] ...in this particular thing, why not say students because they have some immunity. First of all, people think students are dumb. They're trying to learn something that they don't know, and they don't give them as much credit. Secondly, they don't have as much to lose in terms of their image and position in society so if students could figure out some kind of way to work in coalition with other people in the community than [...] I don't think— I don't look personally towards the leaders that I know to do what you were talking about doing.

CS: But I mean, in theory, this is what should be done in order to get anything done because, let's face it... there probably will be some kind of a response because after all, it's all about making money, who's watching me at certain times, etc. So until those kinds of things can be done, then I guess we'll just have to rely on challenging licenses, but I can't even... I don't even know of three or four instances where licenses in this area have been challenged, and if they are! You see, there's a lot of things involved and number one is economics. You gotta hire a lawyer... There's a lot of economics involved there. So the problem that I said before, is a mess, and there's no easy solution.

BILL: Let Linda respond to that.

LINDA: I was gonna agree to your saying there's a lot of apathy on the part of Oregonians, I guess you were referring to, but in terms of challenging licenses, as this young man indicated, Marcus Wilshire and I, we said to all of you last Saturday, who've been here. You don't need a lot of money to file a petition to challenge a station [...]. Now, if you go through long litigations, sure, you will need attorneys, but that's what the National Black Media Coalition is all about. They have attorneys that are working with those attorneys in Washington D.C. They are very in

tune with what's happening in the broadcasting industry, and one of the problems, as we talked about last Saturday, is that those Blacks that are in broadcasting who are sitting there frustrated not doing a damn thing and can't do anything about it, don't want to do anything about it. We have people like my staff who are working with the media group and trying to do something about it, but we need some input from those of you who've been on the inside of the industry, and as a result of the NOW [...], you have those people that are sitting up there now. I don't think that you've—I'm sorry, I didn't get your name—I don't think that you've been at KOIN very long. That's the result of the NOW...

TL: I've been there almost two and a half years.

LINDA: Two and a half years, okay, well, that's the result of the NOW suit. When Blacks start following suit, you're gonna see some changes. You're gonna see some very positive changes. You're gonna see some Black faces appearing on the screen. White folks are very slick; they think and they know that a lot of Black people are under the assumption, "Well, gee, Channel 2 now has a female reporter, or a Black reporter. Who's on the inside? What about those people that are in management positions?" It doesn't take a lot of money to challenge a station's license, all it takes is some cohesive proof that to get, you gotta do the research, present the facts, and that's all you need.

BILL: I agree Linda, and I was here last week and you came in late today so we're...

CS: Linda, why don't you talk to us about KING-TV, the suit that [...] they have currently going? Because I think that will respond to something somebody else mentioned.

LINDA: I talked to a guy out of Las... in Berkeley, California, Marcus Wilshire, who was the National Black Media Coalition vice president for the West Coast region, and we were talking about getting him here to talk to our organization about what we can do about the media problem. In the course of the conversation, he had indicated that KING Broadcasting Company, which owns KING in Seattle and KGW in Portland, were in the process of buying a station in California, and this coalition, the National Black Media Coalition, challenged that station as they sought to pursue the license for that station. And I told Marcus, I said, "Well, for one thing, KING Broadcasting Company should not be allowed to [...] another station because they have Black [...] in the station in Portland that are not in any responsible positions, not any Blacks in any management level positions. Why would the FCC allow this company to purchase another outlet when they have inequities already existing in their own... in the company already?" So he talked among the vice presidents of KING Broadcasting Company, and he said, "Hey, what's happening with [...] in Portland, Oregon. There seems to be some problems there. What are you going to do about it?" and this vice... this president, or vice-president indicated, "Well, you

know, we're gonna make some changes." And as a result of that, they finally made an agreement that they would put Blacks in responsible positions, not only in the station in California, but throughout the KING Broadcasting Company. And they were very surprised to find out how many of the markets throughout the [...] knew about what was happening here in Portland and they were very much concerned about that. And...

[inaudible]

LINDA: That's right. They had an eighteen-month time limit in which to put some Blacks into responsible positions. If there's a media group, and they're concerned, we can maintain some control, so don't throw it out of the line as something impossible, it is very possible.

BILL: Are there any more questions? Then we can adjourn until the afternoon session!

[program ends]