

Top Ten Diversity and Ethics

1. Practicing mainstream journalists have their industry's codes of ethics. These inform how they do their jobs. As important as they are there is still a need to bring personal ethics into how each individual in the media industry deals with complex situations.
2. There have been some great developments within the industry eg. The MDA report, the commitment for visible diversity on the ABC, SBS and NITV. The Judith Neilsen Institute has championed the power of story-telling from journalists. In addition, the Australian Multicultural Foundation has been training community members to be comfortable in responding to media requests. Many have been trained by journalists from mainstream media.
3. Media organisations are embracing diversity with more than 110 languages on community radio, 70+ languages on SBS etc. In the recent Framework for Agency Inclusion and Representation Report, almost all (97%) of the respondents from the public relations and communications sector believe that cultural diversity is very important to extremely important in the industry.
4. Many journalists are changing their approach. They want to know what is happening, who are the best people to talk to and they put an emphasis on getting the right stories. There is a shift to understanding diversity. Bridges are being built with community. It is creating synergies within news agencies and strengthening the community sector too.
5. There is still work to be done particularly at management levels. There is more reflection of the breadth of diversity and more inclusive processes but there is room for better integration into the media organisations.
6. The problems arrive with those receiving news about Australia from overseas channels. The receivers are missing out, they are not learning about the real Australia. We have built an expectation that Australia is representative of our cultural diversity which has been created by the narrative that "you are reflected in society" and then if they don't see it, it validates that Australia doesn't care.
7. The editing process can make or break how a news report or story is presented and received. This includes the allocation of a headline. Care needs to be taken so that the story, or the people who are a part of that story, is not taken out of context.

8. During Covid19, information has been offered formally in over 70 different languages and informally in many more but there needs to be many other layers to combat Facebook and its like along with the home channels? In normal times, we have time but, in a crisis, you need to act quickly, you need those layers and to be able to quickly address misinformation. Telling a story requires layers to fully represent Australia's diversity.
9. Any news story deserves to be representative of all sides but how they are told is the responsibility of the journalist. A journalist has the power to confuse or distort but they also have the power to bring insight and nuance.
10. In engaging with communities, we need to listen, take time, focus on facts and the stories and not present opinion.