**TOPIC**: Movement driven media / Journalism vs. Activism / [New Code of Journalism]

Clarify Purpose:

What is the journalism we need to advance change?

**Participants**

Anna, Scalliwag\* (note taker – paper)

Bill, Journalism that Matters (co-facilitator)

Linda Ju, Williams Center for Independent Journalism (co-facilitator)

Christine Hanna, YES! Magazine\* (note taker, online)

Elijiah McKinnon, Open TV

Sanjay Goel, Scribd

Monica, Laura Flanders Show

Michelle…

Joseph Torres, Free Press

Carmen, National Hispanic Media Center

Peggy Holman, Journalism That Matters

Joanna, Care2

Ivan, freelance, coordinating committee of TMS

Stephanie, Feet in Two Worlds … ?

Chris Walker, Open TV

**Key takeaways / Insights**

Many terms: “Advocacy Journalism” “Movement Journalism” “People Driven Journalism”

Linda: Have to tell the truth, and it has to be bullet proof to not be cast as ‘biased’

Peggy: If we go after ‘truth’ we lose, because people will ignore the truth if it interrupts their worldview. We have to focus on inquiry with goal of understanding, that’s how we get to truth.

Alternative media not seen as credible. Need to raise visibility of this sector.

Different interpretations of the divide:

POCs are accused of not being credible b/c they’re writing about issues in their own community.

Actual practice of e.g. writing a press release for an action, then covering that action as

Is it okay to work tactically and strategically on behalf of the movement? How is

**Problem**: current “code of journalism” is not working. Need a new code we can all agree on, and hold up and be proud of. But for who?

Some uncorking done here, but it’s a messy chaotic conversation that may not be ready to be framed as “problem -> solution”

So, let’s start with: **What are we currently doing (our internal guideposts) to navigate the space that includes journalistic integrity and advocacy, as a starting place for developing a new code? Has that shifted over the last year?**

**Other Questions / Thoughts:**

How do we blend tech and business to improve indi journalism and advance change?

Would like create a platform that looks at filling the cultural void of mythology vs. facts.

Journalists as activists have been the norm in POC marginalizes / communities b/c it was always about advocating for change. Mainstream media was not a trusted source for those communities. Happening again with millennial activists and internet –they are media makers. Is the answer to the future of journalism there?

**Resources**

Color of Change

Make the Road

**ROUND TWO**

Discussion & Participants

**Bill:** For him, he got in to journalism because he cared about change. Always conflicted w/ how he actually operated as a journalist. Inherent in all journalism that writer sees a problem or solution and wants to be an agent.

**Linda:** Activist background is why she came into journalism. Younger group thinks of themselves as activist first, and trying to figure out how to use journalism to advance advocacy.

**Anna:** Has been doing practices that have inherent conflicts of interest (writing release on a protest then covering that protest as a journalist).

**Jim Spilane:** Worker Independence News: Never pretended to be a journalist, but used journalistic principles. Clear writing, citing sources, not parroting party line. Reality is that funders influence. Good principles are universal no matter what.

Bill: If we are transparent about our bias, that’s enough.

Norm Stockwell: Focus on fairness and honesty when reporting on what’s happening. No such thing as objectivity.

**Rory**: Want to make a case that journalism should be about advocacy. Jeff Jarvis “Isn’t advocacy the true test of journalism?” Don’t we believe that…” (get quote). Pat O at AU: “Objectivity is a shortcut for (xyz).. if you’re doing that you’re advocating for public (good)”

**Zoe** (Earth Island Journal): Advocacy Journalism – call to action at the bottom, etc. We embrace it.

**Joe:** Journalism needs to provide a voice for those who don’t have one. Journalists are failing that so people get their information from activists from “media makers”

**[name]:** divide b/t unions (vote Clinton) and the on the floor workers (voted for Trump)

**Joe:** B/C the left doesn’t use race enough to demonstrate that poor white people are oppressed by the same systems as latino immigrants.

**Linda**: Being called biased has made journalists scurry. For her, no divide if you’re clear about what you’re trying to do.

**[name]:** how do we get our advocacy message out to audience who needs to hear it.

**Michael** (the update): start with core values.

**Joanna**: similar discussion in scientific community.

Is there a role to create pathways/pipelines for young “media makers” to help them make their work more ‘journalistic.’ ?

**KEY TAKEAWAYS**

1. We should embrace role of journalists in advocacy rather than dance around it.
2. We should name it, define it, own it.
3. Should develop a new code, collectively.
4. Potential for ‘branding’ our orgs as adopters of this code. Perhaps via TMC. Where T=Transformational.

Code for New Journalism might include:

* Relentlessly fact driven
* Address root cause (especially, follow the money).
* Transparent disclosure about role or point of view
* Should state the problem, and why we should care
* Can state a solution, and then advocate for it.
* Being clear about your own biases

**NEXT STEPS**

1. See if there’s interest in developing a new code among TMC members.
2. If yes, could continue conversation at Portland conference (JMT/Agora)