**Tracie Powell**

My high was that we had funders in the room with a level playing field and we could actually talk to each other and speak honestly (in part because of the no pitch rules).

I don’t know what the resolutions are because I had to leave early so I have to wait for the report to come out to find out about solutions, but we had not found any before we left, so that was a low.

This gathering confirmed one thing for me that I’m already working on, an audit of the health of ethnic publications.

Even in that room we still had divisions and walls—we have to figure out how to knock them down. Independent media does not include ethnic media and that has to change. It reaffirmed the need for my work.

We are all in this together.

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I know this is going to be an ongoing conversation and I hope we will be part of that ongoing conversation and I hope we will invite more of those key constituencies into the room. We need to have the ethnic, black, and latino publications in the room. I am more than hap

**Sarah van Gelder**

The high points were the people I met—extraordinary people—and some of the best things were over meals and between sessions, one-on-one connections. A lot of great work went into bringing people together. I so appreciate the intentionality around the people invited. They were not the same old same old people, and the diversity was great. It was great to have people in positions of decision-making in the various sectors: foundations, outlets, freelancers.

For me, the mapping project didn't add a lot to the event; I thought we missed an opportunity to ground the discussion for the weekend in the actual challenges and opportunities of each of us and the various sectors we represent. In other words, if we had mapped the people who were there -- and what they most need, fear, are hoping for, are ready to commit to, we would have had a jump start on the work of the weekend. For example, many people in the room expressed concern that there is an immediate crisis in independent journalism. I didn't know they felt that way until well into the session, and I still don't feel I have the full picture. We at Yes! and our peers in the Media Consortium are not experiencing that. Likewise, I'd love to have the funders explain how they see their contribution and limitations.

I also was frustrated that we didn’t build on previous steps. We mapped Thursday night, then started with a blank sheet Friday morning. We had sessions Friday but then started with blank sheets Friday evening. And the same on Saturday morning.

Finally, I was surprised that even though this conference was designed using open space, once again the most real conversations happened on the edges—particularly the late Friday night conversation on diversity, which I missed.

The benefit I got from this gathering was the individual connections I made -- and that made it worth the trip. My thinking and my plans didn’t change—Yes! already went through in-depth racial diversity conversations many years ago and we are now in the midst of strengthening our recruitment of diverse writers and staff, and we are constantly diversifying our funding. But again, I very much appreciated the relationships I made, especially with those I had not had the opportunity to meet previously. I am very grateful that I could be part of such rich conversations.

**Barbara Raab**

I enjoyed meeting individuals and hearing about their work and considering the questions that came up.

What I found frustrating, and maybe because I wasn’t there for the last day, the discussion wasn’t focused. I heard a lot of the issues that are in the sector—people trying to keep a roof over their heads—but the discussion seemed diffuse. I didn’t come away with a new approach to my work. We talked about a million things, all of them relevant, but not focused.

I wish we had had plenary sessions with a moderator. Conversations should be focused on action items. For such a short amount of time and big topic there needs to be more clarity about what we are there to accomplish.

More pre-reading would have been helpful.

**Chris Faraone**

HIGH

General high point was having my eyes opened to the nonprofit world that is out there and seeing it as a universe unto itself instead of fractions here and there. I knew about INN, TMC, etc but I was floating and now I have a compass.

Specifically, everyone had been struggling with what does independent mean, and Michelle Garcia said you can apply all we are talking about to ethnic media outlets. It’s not just alt press and media.

Also, I really liked the session where Chris and Ricardo got to throw out a lot of real world examples of potential best practices that are being used and to bounce those off the talented and knowledgeable people in that room.

The session with funders broke down budgets, how they evaluate proposals… that helped me a lot. I could have spent a day just talking to each of those people getting info. So many best practices and failures to learn from.

LOW

The disappointment to a degree was a reluctance to look at tangible products and things that really happened. I was blown away that Richard Toeffel is in the room with a successful model, and I would have liked to have heard more from him. And from Yes!—what people are actually doing that is working. The maps we did on the first exercise were very hypothetical as opposed to something concrete. I wanted to know where the alts, the ethnics, the nationals, the regionals—where they cross over.

CHANGE

This changed everything. I knew this stuff was out there, but for me, my journey to save independent journalism in Boston has been going on for a long time, but I’ve realized that I have to do something different. I really started on this path in San Francisco at the joint AAN-TMC conference. AT Pocantico my eyes were opened. I need to do something bigger than the Dig. I’m going to raise money, incubate stories, get young journalists on, work with community outlets—already this week in the Dig I ran something from a grassroots pub in Roxbury.

I want to get $$ and resources to all these different community outlets. I want to pay for their dream investigations.

**Juana Ponce de Leon**

HIGH

In general, my experience of going to journalism conferences is that the ethnic community media is not part of the conversation. My job usually is to ask what thoughts have been given to foreign lanugage media, diversity, etc. So for me it was happily surprising that there would be a conversation about who is this media, how does it fit, etc.

The main thrust of the conference was to speak about sustainability, and my thought was that we had to think about the journalism and info flow as well as the money flow, and that defining community media on equal footing with independent media. It was good to look at the weaknesses of the sector and what we can do to address the quality of the journalism.

The size of the group was great because we could know everyone (even if we didn’t talk to everyone). That made this feel embraceable, manageable. The quality of the people there was impressive.

LOW

I felt that there were some people there who were very much looking at financial sustainability; I felt that the way the conference was organized, there weren’t enough moments for sharing. There were many parts of the break out groups that I had no idea had happened—I had no idea what was spoken there. It was like silos within the conference itself.

CHANGE

For me, nothing has changed. I’ve been knocking on the door for a long time, hey, let’s integrate, let’s look at resources, so what I contributed was something I’ve been thinking about for a long time.

In my present work, I am activating change with the New York city council.

What did change for me was thinking about your project.

OTHER

The facilitators were very nice, but the reference points they gave us were too new agey, too touchy-feely. The facilitators didn’t feel grounded in the process. I also am not too happy with all the notes that were taken; the model was a little soft at the edges.