

## **Diversity Checklist:**

### **Top Ten Hints for Getting the “Other Voices” into Political Stories**

**1. Once again: Know thy community.**

Who are the “other voices”? Who gets left out? Why?

**2. Break out of your social routines.**

Go for dinner or lunch at local places outside of your usual haunts. Find ways to meet people who aren't like you: Different churches, different festivals, different hang-outs. Join a social group with an interest unlike any of yours. Take the bus some place once a month.

**3. Read ethnic, alternative and community newsletters, newspapers, Websites. Listen to/ watch electronic news outlets that serve different groups, interests, perspectives.**

These at least tell you what some members of the different groups/communities consider important to their audiences.

**4. Find other “windows” into different communities:** A barber shop. A coffee shop. A gas station.

**5. Create a database / file / “source book” of folks from different communities, with different perspectives.**

Call them occasionally. Go out for coffee, drinks, lunch. Invite them to dinner with you and friends. Ask them about story ideas. Discuss what's in the news – do they know something you don't?

**6. Take care with your language – but don't become a hostage in the “language wars.”**

Is it “Latino” or “Hispanic”? Is it “pro-life” or “anti-abortion” or “anti-abortion rights”? Is Katie Couric “perkie”?

**7. Be aware of your own stereotypes – and ALWAYS question them.**

She has a Southern accent: She must be bigoted, ignorant or at least poorly educated. Right? Asian women are short, right?

**8. For every issue or story, ask: Who are the stakeholders?**

Who's affected by this? How? Are they represented in my story?

**9. Beware of the “subtext” in images and stories.**

If minorities are only in the news as victims or as those accused of crimes, that's a distorted image of them – and of society.

**10. Remember that diversity means more than race and ethnicity:** It's gender, socio-economic status, culture, geography, attitudes.

Attitudes toward guns, for example, often differ by geography and gender. But not every woman is a gun-hating nurturer.