

Strategic Partnerships in Research on Aboriginality and Journalism in Canada

Brenda Nadjiwan and Minelle Mahtani

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Cosmopolitan Civil Societies Research Centre
University of Technology Sydney



UNIVERSITY OF
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Outline

- Our research partnership
- Who is SABAR (Strategic Alliance of Broadcasters for Aboriginal Reflection)?
- Proposed research project: Aboriginality and Journalism: From the Classroom to the Newsroom
- Three Rs: recruitment, retention and reflection of Aboriginal people in Canadian journalism
- Issues to consider regarding international collaboration



Representations of Aboriginality in Canadian Journalism

Can fall into three recurring patterns of portrayal:

- **R**esentment (because of scandals or social problems)
- **R**ejection (because of Aboriginal people's demands and claims)
- **R**esistance (ranging from blockades to standoffs and protests)

The Canadian legislative context

Consistent with subparagraph 3(1)(d)(iii) of the 1991 *Broadcasting Act*, the Canadian broadcasting system should:

- Through its programming and the employment opportunities arising out of its operations, serve the needs and interests, and reflect the circumstances and aspirations of Canadian men, women and children, including equal rights... and multicultural and multiracial nature of Canadian society and **the special place of Aboriginal peoples within that society.**



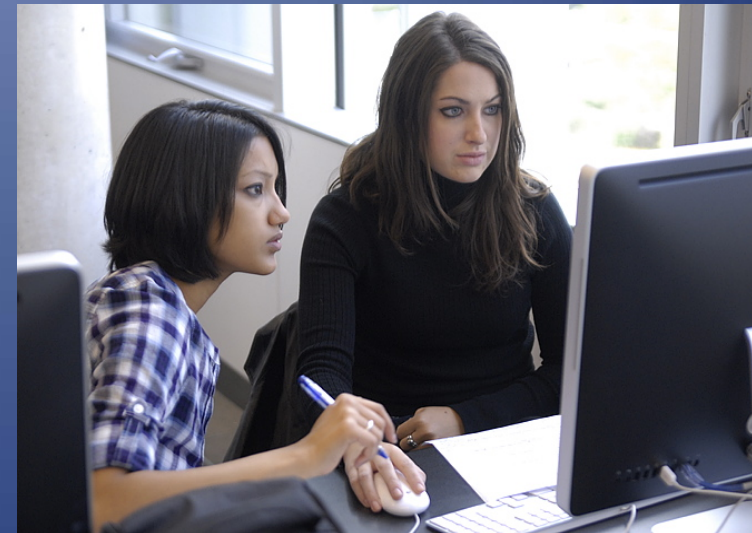
CRTC Policies and Regulation Public Notice CRTC 2010

Canadian Journalism School Curriculum and Epistemology

No dedicated course on Aboriginality & journalism

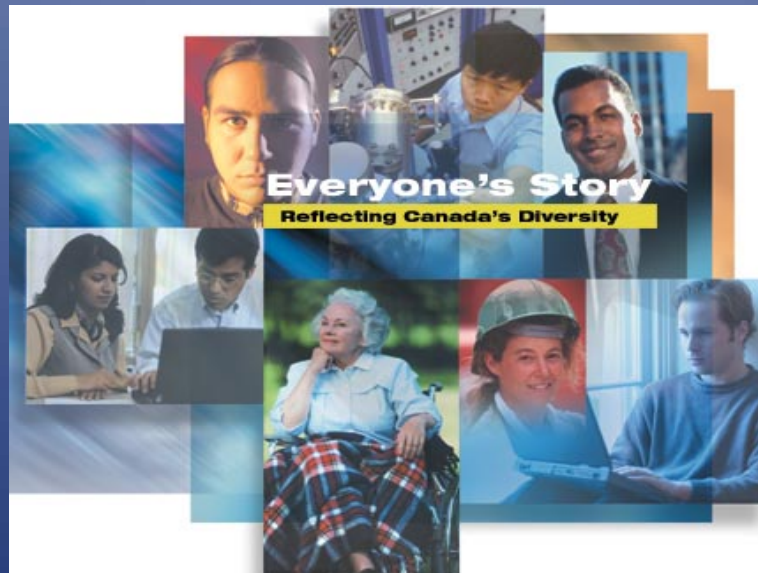
Few Aboriginal professors teaching at journalism schools

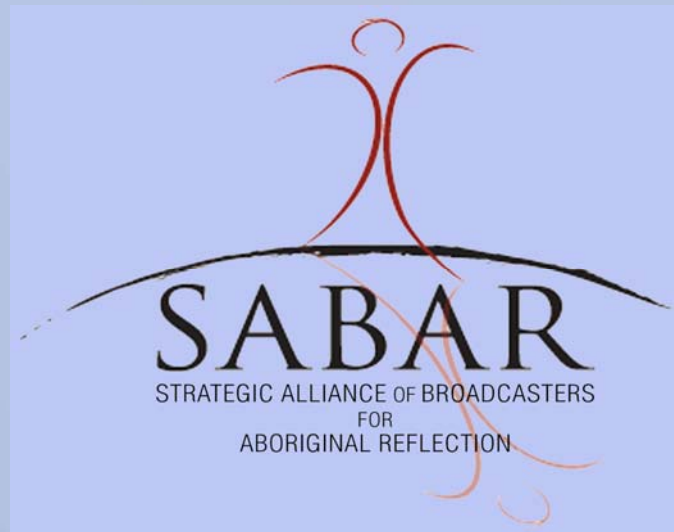
Few (if any) Aboriginal students in undergraduate journalism schools



Attempts to diversify

- Innoversity
- Task Force for Cultural Diversity
- RTNDA





SABAR is a group of well known broadcasters dedicated to working with Aboriginal media organizations to increase the contribution and participation of Aboriginal people on-air and behind the scenes in all aspects of the Canadian broadcasting industry





Broadcasters came together because they see the value in promoting the positive reflection of Aboriginal people in radio and television

We have been working together since February 2003





SABAR Appreciates the business relevance:

4 % of the population (about 1.7 m)

48 % are under the age of 25

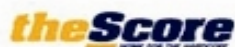
Approx. 700,000 First Nation's people

63 Bands; 52 Nations; 60 distinct languages



They believe positive reflection can best be accomplished by working towards increasing Aboriginal participation in the media, in all areas of broadcasting

Focus on recruitment, retention and advancement of Aboriginal participation in broadcasting



SABAR's Members are:

Aboriginal Peoples Television Network

Astral

CBC

Corus

Citytv

CTVGlobe Media

CanWest Global

OMNI

Rogers

The Score Television Network

S-Vox

The Weather Network

Aboriginal Multi-Media Society (AMMSA)

First Nations Technical Institute

Indigenous Culture and Media Innovations

National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation

Broadcast Educators Association of Canada

University of Toronto

CRTC





SABAR feels that each of the following components, individually and together, reflect its organization's ultimate goal of increasing the inclusion and participation of Aboriginal Peoples in the Canadian broadcasting system:

Initiatives have included:

- Internships
- Job placement
- Participation in career fairs and conferences
- Curriculum development
- Labour exchange



SABAR also hopes to work toward the establishment of a "summer camp" program, devoted to hands-on broadcast teaching

SABAR is also working on a “toolkit” for newsrooms across the country to use as a reference for terminology, contacts, and customs



www.SABAR.ca

acts as a portal for Aboriginal youth,
broadcast educators, and broadcasters

Here you will find our membership





SABAR seeks ways to use the media to support cultural empowerment.

SABAR seeks to advance the relationship between Canada and the Aboriginal people who live in Canada.

SABAR embraces the idea of fashioning a national consciousness of Aboriginal contributions to Canadian Society.

This will be made easier if we learn what each other has to contribute to making Canada a better place

So far Aboriginal people have not always had a lot of say in the matter - in this way one might say SABAR is an agent of change



What others are saying...

- “A massive flood in Peterborough. -65 degrees in Eureka. An historical international gathering in Montreal. And so much more. But I would have never experienced these things, and I would never had the chance to tell people the stories around them if the Weather Network hadn’t taken a chance on me – a long-haired, tattooed kid from the Rez. Storytelling is my passion...you saw that early on and nurtured it throughout my time here.” (Waub Rice, Aboriginal journalist who benefitted from SABAR’s relationships)
- “The Weather Network is honoured to tell wonderful stories about talented Aboriginal students succeeding in the Canadian Broadcasting industry. As educators, you have the ability to inspire, teach and coach Aboriginal students. Together, you can help make success stories such as Waub’s the norm. There are a lot of talented Aboriginal students in our communities. Believing in them and providing support and courage goes a long way. Commit to them and they will commit to you.” (Michelle Kaye, HR Manager, The Weather Network)
- “Our involvement in SABAR over the last few years has helped by addressing the needs of Aboriginal students while utilizing its incredible group of media partners” (Laurel-Ann Hardie, President, BEAC – Broadcasting Educators Association of Canada)



What others are saying...

- “We are very proud of our relationship with SABAR...the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation is working with SABAR and our partners to strengthen NAAF’s relationship with the Canadian broadcasting industry and to provide a solid platform to inspire Aboriginal youth into the diverse careers in broadcasting” (Roberta Jamieson, President and CEO of NAAF)
- “APTN and OMNI have provided exchanges for their employees that have benefitted both organizations. APTN’s environment is quite unlike many other regular work environments...allowing staff to work in a workplace that has different expectations and challenges...which is beneficial for our employees and, we hope, OMNI’s staff as well. Solid partnerships, such as the one between OMNI and APTN, has the potential to offer numerous opportunities, generate positive arrangements and outcomes, providing many benefits to those involved.” (Jean LaRose, CEO, APTN)
- “The partnership with APTN and specifically the labour exchange enabled OMNI’s newsroom station to gain insight, through interchange, into Aboriginal perspective, issues and editorial position. Values of diversity as they transcend story development was a shared experience, benefitting both multilingual and Aboriginal journalists alike.” (Madeline Ziniak, Vice President, Station Manager, OMNI TV)

What others are saying...



- “An important aspect of such an approach would be the development of partnerships to share expertise and foster relationships with communities. For example, the Strategic Alliance of Broadcasters for Aboriginal Reflection (SABAR) is a network of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal broadcasters, producers and educators whose objective is to facilitate opportunities for increasing Aboriginal participation in all aspects of the Canadian broadcasting industry, both on and off screen. Pursuing partnerships in this manner is just one of many approaches available to the industry” (Broadcasting Public Notice CRTC 2005-24 Ottawa, 21 March 2005 Commission's response to the report of the Task Force for Cultural Diversity on Television)

Aboriginality and Journalism: From the Classroom to the Newsroom

- Whitewashing in journalism –adding new diverse faces not the answer
- Changes in admissions policies necessary
- Corresponding change in policies and curriculum at all scales



Storytelling

- **How can Aboriginal ways of knowing contribute to a critical pedagogical approach to storytelling at journalism schools in Canada?**
- **Dibwewin**
- **Mamatowisowin**
- **Writing our own truths**

Research Project on Aboriginality and Journalism in Canadian Journalism Schools

- The other three Rs: Reflection, Recruitment and Retention
- Benchmarking (curriculum and stats)
- Leading examples of “wise practices” in Aboriginal journalism
- Interviews with journalists and journalism professors
- New syllabi and award for excellence in Aboriginal Reflection in Journalism

Issues to consider

- Best practices models
- Diversity as a business model
- Ethnic audience and Aboriginal audience issues
- Curriculum development
- Boiler plate syndrome
- Calendar journalism solutions
- Applying for research funding on Aboriginal peoples