

Talk Back to Racism

Purpose

This second activity asks participants to examine different media products specifically for the ways they represent different ethnic or racial groups. Participants use the *MediaBreaker* platform to edit one of these products in order to change whatever “slant” they perceived in the production. The activity encourages participants to analyze the various elements/techniques used to support stereotypes and to break these down. In using the different re-mix features, participants are encouraged to adjust media narratives and express new points of view.

Learning Goals

Participants will:

- Gain skills in online video, audio, and text editing
- Analyze production elements of media products that represent (and misrepresent) racial and ethnic groups
- Develop a deeper appreciation and a keener eye for the use of these elements in health, social, and politically-oriented media
- Create alternative representations in existing media products with these skills

Time

45 minutes to an hour

Supplies

- Computer with video/audio capabilities for each participant (if possible)
- Internet access

Facilitator Preparation

The facilitator will first need to collect materials (both video and audio) beforehand and upload these into the *MediaBreaker* platform.

For this activity, almost any media products can be used—advertisements, news stories, music videos, campaign speeches, soap opera episodes—that include descriptions or images of the general population or of different groups. Plan on uploading at least 3 to 5

media products. The time needed for this part of the preparation will depend on the facilitator’s skill in using this tool.

Step-by-step instructions for using the tools are provided at <https://www.ngoconnect.net/resource/media-breaker-studios-quick-start-guide-and-instructions>. If the facilitator has already carried out Activity 1, additional time should not be needed to become familiar with the *MediaBreaker* tools.

EXPRESS ACTIVITIES

Talk Back to Racism, *continued*

Introduce the Activity to Participants

Begin with several open-ended questions about the media's typical portrayal of different ethnic groups and races.

- When you see advertisements for different products, do you feel the people portrayed look and act like people in your community?
(Why/why not? Do they look wealthier/better dressed? Do they represent the same ethnic/racial mix as in your community? What stereotypes are common?)
- Have you noticed stereotypes of different races/ethnic groups in other media—for example, on news programs, in music videos, or on soap operas?

Launch the Activity

Tell participants that today they're going to use their new skills in "hacking" (or editing) to re-create some media products so they provide a more accurate representation of people in their community. Race and ethnicity are ways of seeing and understanding the world, and media play an influential role in shaping how we think about different groups in our everyday lives. In many countries, the media industry has made progress in representing more diverse populations, including minorities and more vulnerable groups. But stereotypical portrayals are still very common.

Part 1:

Screen one or more advertisements or news or entertainment items and ask participants to discuss whether the people presented look like their community or not. Did language or background music suggest specific groups? Ask what groups may be "missing," or how different groups are stereotyped.

Part 2:

Tell participants it is now their job to work with their teams to select any of the media products uploaded into *MediaBreaker* and alter different elements to create a more realistic looking and sounding world. They can use any of the different tools to achieve these effects. They can add titles or subtitles or even voice over to clarify a message, and they can cut and paste footage and images if they like.

They have 30 minutes to complete their re-mix.

Part 3:

Screen all of the re-mixes the participants produced and discuss for each one:

- What were the major technical changes made?
- Which population groups were initially over- and under-represented? Is the new product more representative?

Debrief and Reflect

End the activity with several open-ended questions to encourage sharing and reflection, such as:

- In what kinds of media do you find race/ethnicity are most often mis-represented? Do certain kinds of media (or certain producers) represent your community more realistically?
- If different races and ethnic groups are presented more realistically in the media, do you think this will be beneficial to the community?
(If so how? If not, why not?)
- Aside from race and ethnicity, what other kinds of diversity do you think should be better represented in the media?