

I'm Bob Rucker and I'm African-American and part Native American.

Media portrayals of cultural groups in America today are very shallow and in many cases still reinforce stereotypes.

News reports focus much too much on the crimes ethnic groups commit or the poverty hardships we endure, rather than showcasing the many accomplishments and the hope within the black community.

Movies and entertainment treat us more like delicate little children who can't handle tough or challenging topics. It was refreshing to me to see the film **PRECIOUS** nominated for an academy award with movies like **AVATAR**. Not all movie watchers want to constantly escape reality and hide in the world of make-believe. Some of us want our painful stories told by media professional who do their homework and show some guts telling it like it is.

In my Diversity in Media class, I am learning the importance of doing more than taking credit for diversity simply because I go to a college with many diverse

cultures. Most of us have never taken time to really talk in depth with one another or ask about our individual family histories. As a result when racial conflicts arise, it's no surprise everyone gets so tense and worked up, then try quickly to quiet things down. What are we so scared about, especially in places of higher education?

If we all just took time to listen and learn from or about other cultures, like watching PBS specials that trace ethnic roots, and connect painful hardships of peoples' pasts, or saw documentaries, movies or news stories which dare to go deeper into sensitive issues or race, gender, sexual orientation, religion or disability, maybe we would not be so quick to shoot off our mouths before our brains are loaded. Maybe instead of watching a string of emotional outbursts be presented as news, why not try to offer more context so all of us would better understand why anger builds up in some people, and then explodes into headlines when some just can't take the disrespect anymore.

I'm Bob Rucker. That's my point of view.