



# DIALOGUE ON DIVERSITY

OVER TWENTY FIVE YEARS OF SERVICE TO AMERICA'S DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

NEWS ADVISORY

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## TECHNOLOGY AND THE SHIELD OF PRIVACY – PRIVACY AS A CIVIL RIGHT

Washington, D.C. – February 28, 2018 Dialogue on Diversity's continuing discourse on the omnipresent influence of contemporary information technology, and its counterpoint in the often precarious shields of our privacy, was highlighted in its 2018 edition on February 21<sup>st</sup> by the penetrating overview of these fields of learning and debate by the subtly argued presentation of **Travis Hall** of the National Telecommunication and Information Administration (NTIA). Mr. Hall is conversant with the swiftly proliferating fields of IT science and engineering, but also has come to be well versed, through the stages of his still very young intellectual career, in the more contemplative realms of moral philosophy. In his remarks he tied into the tasks of broadening the reach of internet access among corners of the national population that otherwise are apt to be left languishing un- or under-served in stilled eddies along these streams of progress. The work of the NTIA is that of apprehending the cutting edge potential of IT in its varied branches, and mustering support for these applications among the underserved through governmental or private-sector interventions. Not far from the purposes of our Dialogue.

**Joseph Miller**, one of the leadership figures of the 2000s in the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, an entity designed to serve as the well-tempered voice for the country's African American (and later pan-minority) intellectual community, is now moderator of the weekly podcast *WashingTECH*. Mr. Miller, as moderator, queried Colloquium panelists **Carmen Scurato** and **Yosef Getachew** on a series of points in the sharply focused debate on the Net Neutrality mode of internet governance. Ms. Scurato, the National Hispanic Media Coalition's Vice President and General Counsel, heading policy and government affairs in its Washington office, has written extensively, not only pleadings for numerous official proceedings, but online articles as well, detailing the convoluted legal questions, whether, for example, Title II regulation of the tech companies as common carriers, with attendant duties of non-discrimination. Mr. Getachew, who has just taken the post of Media and Democracy Director at Common Cause, reviewed the clash of interests and views among the several parties to the economics of the internet, all against the backdrop of the initiative put in play by the present FCC Chair, Commissioner Ajit Pai, to scrap most of the apparatus of Net Neutrality rules in favor of a régime that would permit structural determinations to be made by the play of competitive forces among the tech giants.

A vigorous discussion, moderated by **Jessica Tuñón**, Dialogue on Diversity advisor, dealing with the proliferation of uses that IT has generated in the milieu of commerce and business organization, was launched by panelists **William J. McBorough**, founder and Executive Director of MGlobalTECH, a broad-gauge IT systems designer for governmental and private sector firms across a gamut of industrial types, with attention to the regulatory compliance needs of each; **Katherine Mereand**, manager of the office for Technological Innovation and Small Business Development, part of the ambitious newly minted small business initiative of the D.C. government; and the up and coming thinker on the philosophy of a vigorous business establishment in a liberal society, **Miranda Bogen** of the UPTURN think tank. Ms. Bogen spoke under the title: Digital Ad Targeting Beyond Privacy, a spirited discourse on the pleasures and perils of untrammelled internet usage in the unruly world of consumer profiling and buyer targeting that are silently shaping the ethos of commerce in the U.S. and, to a lesser extent, in Europe.

The 2018 Colloquium was presented at the G Street offices of The Raben Group. The commodious conference space afforded by the generosity of **Robert Raben** and his remarkable staff fostered an informal and conversational atmosphere for the encounter of an ethnically, but, more important, professionally and intellectually diverse audience of the Dialogue's members and friends. Sponsors for the 2018 Colloquium include **Southwest Airlines**, the **Mayor's Office on Latino Affairs**, **EccoSelect**, **New York Life**, and assorted **Angels**.

Dialogue on Diversity's next program, to be held in mid-April, is to be its Public Policy Forum with the themes of women's interests and causes celebrated in Women's History Month.