



## Press Club defends against criticism

By Peter Johnson

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Despite a request from black and Hispanic journalists to rescind it, the National Press Club on Monday gave an award to the author of a controversial book that argues that the crusade for diversity in the media has corrupted American journalism.

In *Coloring the News* (Encounter, \$25.95), William McGowan says that well-intentioned attempts by the media to accommodate minorities and their views are infected by political correctness.

Richard Prince, a *Washington Post* editor and member of the National Association of Black Journalists, said the book is full of "half-truths, spin and inaccuracies and is not worthy of an award from a journalistic organization."

Juan Gonzalez, a New York *Daily News* columnist who heads the National Association of Hispanic Journalists, said, "This insulting book is a poorly argued indictment of the need to ensure diversity in America's newsrooms, in the pages of its newspapers and magazines, and in the images on the nightly news."

Press Club chairman Jonathan Salant said the board reviewed its decision and chose to give McGowan its press criticism award even though some members had serious misgivings. The book "prompted a self-examination and reaffirmation by some news organizations historically committed to diversity."

McGowan said Monday that his book "tackles a very emotionally difficult issue with fairness, historical perspective and compassion."

He says diversity in the media is a "historically overdue, fundamentally well-intentioned effort that has run off the rails in its implementation."

