

Tom Brokaw's Blooper(s)

by Gary Fouse



Tom Brokaw, who used to be a big shot at NBC, is now on his [apology](#) tour for stating that Hispanics “should work harder at assimilation”. He is afraid that his remarks were offensive to Hispanics, and he is walking around in the traditional sack cloth and ashes.

However, if Brokaw offended some Hispanics, he also offended others by saying that white Americans had hangups about having brown grandchildren, a reference to mixed marriages (which are a by-product of assimilation).

I would like to address both statements, having grown up in Southern California among Hispanics and being married to a Mexican woman with whom we have produced two grown children and three grandchildren.

First of all, who is Brokaw talking about who don't want to have brown grandchildren? He isn't talking about anybody in my family, certainly not my mother, who loved my wife as the daughter she never had. Our two children have never had any

issues or problems being half-Mexican in origin. I recognize that there are a few KKK types out there who might have those feelings, but they don't represent more than a small fringe. The fact is that intermarriage between whites and Hispanics is quite common in the US as are other forms of intermarriage (white/black, white/Asian etc.) Culture clashes are generally not a major problem among couples who have intermarried since they have made a conscious choice to put those things aside. Ironically, this portion of Brokaw's commentary is being ignored by the media since they don't consider that as being offensive just a statement of fact (which it isn't).

As to his comments about assimilation, it should be asked which Hispanics he is talking about. Brokaw has spent enough time in California to know better. When he was a young journalist, he used to give the local news on one of the Los Angeles stations. I know because I used to watch him. I really don't think there is a problem of assimilation with Hispanics who are US-born or even naturalized citizens. Hispanics who are US citizens have no problems speaking English. I should add that I am much more familiar with the Mexican-American community of the Southwest than I am with Cuban-Americans in Florida or Puerto Ricans in New York, but it is my belief that the assimilation problems and the English language problems exist chiefly within the illegal alien communities. It is those children who land in elementary school having no English ability.

This kind of thinking is typical of those who lump illegal migrants together with Hispanic-Americans as being the same. For example, we have a situation where people are crossing the border illegally who are by definition poor. How convenient to lump them together with US-born Mexican-Americans when you want to make the case that income levels are lower for Hispanics, hence, that proves discrimination.

I don't think Brokaw is racist towards Hispanics at all. The man is getting up there in years and simply misspoke or worded

his words wrongly at least as far as the assimilation angle was concerned. He apparently believes that immigrants should assimilate, and I agree with him on that. He should not confuse illegal migrants with established Hispanics who are, in fact, assimilated, educated and fully able to speak English. By the third generation, English is the native language and eventually, Spanish language capability dwindles. Intermarriage and inter-racial babies are simply one part of assimilation. Over the long term, they will help Americans put our ethnic differences aside

I have a greater objection with his categorizing white people as fearing brown grandchildren. That is absurd. I would advise Brokaw to make his peace with whomever he thinks he has offended and make his retirement full-time. In other words, it's over, Tom.