

Teaching ethics to journalists: Are we reinventing the wheel?
Final report – July 25 2007

**TEACHING ETHICS TO JOURNALISTS
PART ONE: ARE WE REINVENTING THE WHEEL?**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Chumir Foundation for Ethics in Leadership has a mandate to raise awareness of the ethical consequences of choices and actions. The foundation does this by making information available and promoting discussion, in the hope that this will spark public demand for ethically motivated behaviour by leaders in all fields. Given that journalists play a key role in providing information to the public, the foundation is exploring the idea of supporting training for journalists in ethics, so they can frame ethical questions in an informed way for their readers, viewers and listeners.

A first step in this process is to determine whether such training exists, who is conducting it, and what content is provided. This report answers those questions. Given the foundation's interest in reaching out to foreign journalists, the report also looks at what training of foreign media is being done by Canadians, both in Canada and abroad. Should the foundation decide it has a role to play in teaching ethics to journalists, further work is required to develop course form and content, find partners, and identify funders.

A survey of selected media organizations, journalism schools, and media associations in Canada indicates that while ethics is taught in journalism schools, only the rare employer offers ethical training to working journalists. Courses are available at some professional development events sponsored by journalist associations, but these events occur infrequently and are attended by a small fraction of working Canadian journalists.

Journalism schools have expertise in media ethics, but do little outreach to working media. Also, there is very little co-operation between ethics schools and journalism schools, even when both exist within the same educational institution.

Almost all of the training on offer, both to students and to working journalists, focuses narrowly on ethical challenges that arise in the practice of journalism (i.e. When is it appropriate to invade someone's privacy? Should graphic videos be used to illustrate a story?), and not on broader ethical theory. There appears to be reluctance among journalism schools and journalist associations to delve too deeply into ethical theory on grounds that practical advice on media ethics is more important.

All of the major media organizations contacted have a manual that covers media ethics. Most rely on these manuals and feedback from editors to convey advice to journalists. Two exceptions were found: CBC/Radio-Canada, which conducts sessions on media ethics and encourages all journalists, regardless of seniority, to attend, and Brunswick News, which has a session on ethics in its in-house training program.

Despite all of the above, there appears to be widespread interest in more ethics training, depending on where and when it is offered, and the course content. Should the Chumir Foundation choose to become involved in this area, it would not be reinventing the wheel and would find willing partners.

Regarding the training of foreign journalists by Canadians, there is more activity abroad than in Canada. Even abroad, there are only four Canadian organizations of any size involved in this activity. With the exception of a fellowship at Massey College in Toronto, the training in Canada is ad hoc and mostly planned around a particular event. Some of the journalism schools expressed interest in developing a partnership in this area. It will be tricky, but not impossible, to combine the Chumir Foundation's desire to teach ethics to Canadian journalists with its desire to involve foreign journalists in this endeavour.

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INTRODUCTION

The Chumir Foundation is exploring the idea of training journalists, both Canadian and foreign, in the field of ethics. The foundation would like journalists to be able to frame ethical questions in an informed way that prompts readers to think. The idea is to focus the training on what role the journalist plays in reporting on events and people and whether that role is a constructive one in promoting democratic development.

A first step in this process is to see what training in ethics (in the broadest sense) is currently available to working Canadian journalists and what that training consists of in terms of content. Given that the foundation is also interested in the training of foreign journalists, this step includes a survey of Canadian organizations that train foreign journalists, both in Canada and abroad, and whether this training covers ethical issues.

Should the foundation choose to proceed, the second step would be to explore possible involvement in this area. This would include the form of such training, the content, and potential partners. The final step would be to look for potential funders.

This report deals with step one. However, in the course of the research, some suggestions were made on the possible shape of program and potential partners. These are offered in this report as preliminary observations only.

Methodology

As a first step, the major journalism schools at Canadian universities offering post-graduate courses were contacted. They were selected on the basis of their standing in the media world (some programs are more respected than others), and on whether the university had a school of ethics. This second criteria was included because of the desire of the foundation to explore whether faculty from schools of journalism and ethics could work together on ethics training. An attempt was made to contact the schools of ethics at these universities.

The two main journalist associations in Canada, one for English-speaking journalists and the other for French-speaking journalists, were contacted, as were various sub-groups representing print or broadcast journalists. This was done in the belief that the associations might be providing such training themselves, or would be aware of what was being done in this field. The main media organizations were then approached to see whether they offered training to their journalists.

Some non-journalistic associations and companies were contacted to see if they did outreach to journalists covering fields where ethics was publicly identified as an issue, such as law or medicine. Only one foreign group, the Poynter Institute in the US, was included in this survey. While the focus of this report is Canada, the Poynter Institute has provided some training in Canada. As well, respondents mentioned Poynter repeatedly as the main group involved in the field of media ethics in North America.

In May and June, 45 questionnaires were sent out (see Appendix One for sample questionnaires and Appendix Two for the contact details of respondents). Responses were received from 39 people. Follow-up interviews were done with 19 people in June, in order to explore the questions more deeply. Repeated attempts were made by phone and email to contact those who failed to respond.

WHO IS DOING WHAT (ETHICS):

Journalism schools

There are 45 post-secondary institutions in Canada (26 colleges and 19 universities) offering some form of journalism training. Of these, 18 have both post-secondary and post-graduate programs and one (the University of British Columbia) offers only a post-graduate program. A survey done by Paul Knox, chair of the school of journalism at Ryerson University, indicated that almost all of the universities and just over half of the colleges include a course on media ethics in their curriculum.¹ However, these courses are aimed solely at journalism students and not at working journalists.

Content: Almost all of the courses focus on ethical questions that arise in the practice of journalism (When is it right to invade someone's privacy? Should a graphic photo of a murder victim be used? Is it right to use an anonymous source?), and not on broader ethical questions concerning leadership or democracy. In some cases, courses combine legal issues for journalists with ethical issues. Much of the teaching involves the discussion of anecdotal problems, rather broader ethical reasoning. "In a perfect world, they would get that grounding," said Mr. Knox of Ryerson. However, a 13-week course is not even enough time to cover journalism ethics in its entirety, he said. This view, while widespread, was not unanimous. Stephen Ward, associate professor of journalism ethics at the University of British Columbia, said theory and practice should be taught together. Marc-François Bernier, who teaches media ethics at the University of Ottawa, also includes theory in his course for journalism students. They appear to be the exceptions.

Outreach: There is limited outreach to working journalists by the journalism schools surveyed. This pertains not just to ethics but also to other aspects of journalism. Those who offer masters programs, including Carleton University and the University of British Columbia, point out that many of the students in these programs are veteran journalists who have decided to return to school. However, this is a limited number and not all of these students return to journalism. Some schools, such as Ryerson, organize a professional development event once a year to which working journalists are invited. In some years, a workshop on ethics has been included. Media@McGill, a Montreal institute whose mission statement and chair in media ethics would seem to make it a natural for such outreach, does none (and does not appear at all interested in the topic).² Florian Sauvageau, head of the journalism program at Laval University in Quebec City, said his school tried in the past to organize seminars for working journalists but found there was not enough interest.

Among the journalism schools surveyed, there were a few exceptions when it came to outreach. The school of journalism at the University of King's College in Halifax is the most systematic in its outreach. The school has developed a program where it sends a team of professors to a media organization to deliver short courses. Media law and research methods were offered this year. Computer-assisted reporting will be added next year.³ Kim Kierans, the school's director, said they would be interested in adding ethics at some point. In an example of a different type of outreach, Prof. Ward at UBC has set up a website, Journalism Ethics for the Global Citizen, which contains articles and other information about media ethics. Prof. Ward also edits the ethics page on a broader

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journalism website called j-source.ca, which is supported by the Canadian Journalism Foundation, he delivers ethics sessions at national conferences of the Canadian Association of Journalists, the main association for English-speaking journalists in Canada, and he answers questions informally when he is contacted by working journalists. Prof. Bernier at the University of Ottawa has conducted ethics workshops at conferences organized by La Fédération professionnelle des journalistes du Québec, the main association for French-speaking journalists in Canada, and he edits the ethics page on ProjetJ.ca, the French language version of j-source.ca.

Section summary: Ethics is broadly taught in the journalism schools, but the content is narrowly restricted for the most part to journalism ethics. In a few cases, theory is taught. Most of the teachers are former journalists, or journalism professors, not philosophers or ethicists. With only a few exceptions, there is little outreach by the journalism schools to working journalists.

Box 1
What journalists perceive to be ethical issues

Larry Cornies holds the Maclean-Hunter Chair in Communications Ethics at Ryerson University. In 2006-2007, his students asked 200 working journalists the following question: “What is the most pressing ethical issue you routinely face as a journalist working in Canada?” There were 98 responses.

- Pressure to invade personal privacy (24 respondents)
- Fairness and accuracy in the face of pressure to torque (12)
- Use of unverified information caused by pressure to deliver (10)
- Advertiser influence on the news agenda (8)
- Small-town conflicts of interest (7)
- Undue influence in the newsroom of owners/proprietors (6)
- Sensationalism (5)
- Maintaining objectivity (5)
- Dealing with off-the-record information (4)
- Dealing with increasingly sophisticated corporate spin (4)
- Use of anonymous sources (3)
- Lack of cultural/racial sensitivities in the newsroom (2)
- Balancing personal life with professional life (2)
- Trend toward coverage of celebrities rather than news (1)
- Embedded journalism (1)

Source: Cornies, Larry. “Journalists question need to invade personal privacy for stories.” Posted June 9 2007 www.j-source.ca

Ethics schools

There were disappointingly few responses from the various ethics schools, although that may have more to do with the time of year than with a lack of interest. To get around this problem, all the respondents from journalism schools were asked about their involvement with the ethics faculty at their institution.

There appears to be little cross-faculty co-operation on teaching ethics to journalism students or on outreach to working journalists. The main reason cited (by both journalism and ethics professors) was a lack of interest on the part of journalism schools to involve the ethics faculty in their courses. The experience of Steven Davis at the Centre on Values and Ethics (COVE) at Carleton University is indicative of this experience. Prof. Davis said he tried to engage the journalism faculty at Carleton in various events at COVE over the years, including asking the school to co-sponsor a conference on the ethics of journalism in a globalized world. He was unsuccessful in all these attempts and eventually gave up. “I don't know whether the behaviour represents (all) schools of journalism, but I find it quite surprising,” he said. “Journalists are constantly making ethical/value judgments, either explicitly or implicitly.”

The W. Maurice Young Centre for Applied Ethics at the University of British Columbia has links with the journalism school at UBC in that Prof. Ward of the journalism school is on the centre's board. Michael McDonald, who holds the Maurice Young Chair of Applied Ethics, said that he has helped journalists on an individual basis work through an ethical issue. As well, the centre trains its faculty in how to help journalists understand ethical issues. But he said this is not systematic outreach to working journalists, but rather an attempt to help faculty understand the media.

The Ethics Network at Ryerson University is not a fully-fledged centre (it has no funding base) and has only undertaken one initiative – the Ethics@Ryerson Speaker Series in 2006-07. According to Alex Wellington of the Ethics Network, the series looked at human rights across a number of professions, including journalism. As well, a professor from the philosophy department at Ryerson taught part of the media ethics and law course at the journalism school, along with two lawyers.

In speaking to professors from various journalism schools, it became apparent that they are reluctant to engage with the ethics faculty. Various reasons were given: only journalists understand the ethical problems they face; general ethical courses are too theoretical to be useful; and, while it would be nice for students to have a broader understanding of ethics, there is not enough time to cover everything and so the focus must be on immediate problems faced by journalists.

Prof. Evan Potter of the School of Communications at the University of Ottawa noted that cross-faculty work can be difficult to arrange, especially if it means the professor must take on an extra course, or if his or her department head is reluctant to spare them for work in another faculty. John Fraser, chair of the Canadian Journalism Foundation and master of Massey College (which offers a number of fellowships to working journalists each year), said that teaching ethics of any sort to working journalists can be tricky because it risks being misunderstood by the journalists as some form of policing. He added that ethics is a *leitmotif* in the fellowship program at Massey College.

Section summary: There is little co-operation between the ethics and journalism faculties in teaching ethics to journalism students. This is not because the ethics faculty is unwilling, but because members of the journalism faculty perceive general ethics instruction to be too theoretical to be useful. As well, the structure of can make cross-faculty co-operation difficult, even when both schools are interested in co-operating. (This does not appear to be the case with ethics training for journalists.) There is little outreach by the ethics schools to working journalists, except on an individual basis.

Journalist associations

There are two main journalist associations in Canada: The Canadian Association of Journalists (CAJ), which represents English-speaking print and broadcast journalists, and La Fédération professionnelle des journalistes du Québec (FPJQ), which represents French-speaking journalists. They each take a different approach on ethics.

In terms of providing training for working journalists, the CAJ has included sessions on journalism ethics at its annual professional development conference in each of the last two years. Prof. Ward of UBC conducted both sessions and he said both were well attended. In addition, the CAJ set up an ethics advisory committee in 2005 following the negative reaction by some members to a decision by the association to censure a journalist for her activities.⁴ “There was a feeling that there were lessons to be learned about how to deal with situations when ethics were involved,” said Paul Schneidereit, immediate past president of the CAJ.

When the CAJ first announced the committee, the association said it was intended “to educate and help journalists resolve some of the ethical dilemmas they face and act as a sounding board for journalists who believe they are facing an ethical conflict” as well as to “provide advice to the CAJ board and its members when questions of journalistic ethics are raised in public.”⁵ There was an idea that it would act much like Poynter On Call, a service offered by the US Poynter Institute. This service allows working journalists to call experts for immediate advice on ethical problems. The CAJ currently does not provide this service. Limited time and resources were cited as the reason why. Mr. Schneidereit said the advisory committee is still working out how it will operate.⁶ The chair of the committee is Prof. Ward of UBC.

La Fédération professionnelle des journalistes du Québec offered ethics courses to its members in the past but stopped because the workshops were not well attended. Alain Gravel, the president of the federation, said this might be because the courses were offered in the evening, or because federation members debate ethical issues in plenary at its conferences. As well, he said that journalists employed by CBC/Radio Canada already had access to such training at work and may not see the need for further training. However, he thought the need for such training had grown in recent years.

The other journalist associations contacted offered ethics training on an ad hoc basis at annual professional development events. For example, the recent conference of the Association of Electronic Journalists in Canada (RTNDA) in June had two sessions devoted to journalism ethics, one delivered by the Poynter Institute and one involving a panel of three electronic news editors. All of the associations contacted had a code of ethics for journalists.

Section summary: Journalist associations in Canada offer media ethics training on an ad hoc basis to their members at professional development events, with the exception of the Fédération professionnelle des journalistes du Québec, whose members debate ethical questions in plenary at conferences. The Canadian Association of Journalists has set up an ethics advisory committee, which is intended to respond to questions and complaints involving ethics. However, the committee is still new and lacks the time and resources to provide the sort of immediate feedback that the Poynter Institute in the US provides.

Major media organizations

All of the major media organizations contacted said they either had a separate ethics manual, or had a section on ethics in the manual given to journalists when they are first hired.⁷ Many of them have a code of ethics or code of conduct on their website. Only one organization – CBC/Radio-Canada – provides ongoing training specifically on ethics to its journalists on a systematic basis.

Elzbieta Olechowska, editor-in-chief of the Canadian Institute for Training in Public Broadcasting at CBC/Radio-Canada, said the ethics course is conducted by in-house trainers and consists of one and a half days devoted to theoretical and practical media ethics. Sessions take place across the country and usually involve 8-12 journalists at each location. She said CBC/Radio-Canada also offers training through its website, of which ethics is a component. Mr. Gravel, who is a Radio Canada employee as well as president of the Fédération professionnelle des journalistes du Québec, confirmed that even veteran journalists are encouraged to attend ethics courses.

Both CBC/Radio-Canada and the Toronto Star have ombudsmen (these organizations are the only two Canadian members of the US-based Organization of News Ombudsmen.⁸ These ombudsmen investigate complaints from readers, listeners, and viewers. They are mentioned here because many of these complaints deal with ethical issues and the follow-up to the investigation can include one-on-one ethical guidance for the journalist involved. The Toronto Star has no formal ethics training. However, Sharon Burnside, the head of training at the newspaper, said she would arrange for an outside trainer to deliver a course on a certain aspect of ethics if she thought journalists were confused about it. She mentioned that summer students and interns receive legal training, which very often leads to a discussion of ethics.⁹

Brunswick News, which owns the Saint John Telegraph-Journal, the Times and Transcript in Moncton, the Fredericton Daily Gleaner, plus a number of weekly newspapers, runs a formal coaching series for its journalists. Edith Robb of Brunswick News says the coaching is done every Wednesday for eight weeks and includes a session on ethics. About 16 journalists are trained each year.

Somewhat surprisingly, neither The Globe and Mail, nor CTV (both owned by CTVglobemedia, offer any ethics training, although both provide new hires with a manual which includes media ethics. Similarly, CanWest, which owns Global Television and a string of major newspapers across the country, does not provide ethics training to its journalists. At most of these organizations, the people interviewed said there was a need for more ethics training. It should be noted that the general lack of employee

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training is not confined to the media world. A recent Conference Board of Canada report noted that employer spending on training, learning and development in Canada is stagnant.¹⁰

Section summary: It is the exception, rather than the rule, for a media organization to offer training in ethics to its journalists. The exceptions include CBC/Radio-Canada, and, to a lesser extent, Brunswick News in New Brunswick. Most media organizations say they have an ethics manual that journalists are expected to use. Only two of the respondents had an ombudsman, whose investigations into specific complaints can lead to some form of individual ethics training. A lack of investment in employee training is not confined to the media world.

Non-journalistic groups

A number of non-journalistic professional organizations and companies were contacted to see if they attempted to educate journalists in ethical issues specific to their industry. This was not meant to be a comprehensive survey. The organizations were selected on the basis that the profession was involved in an ethical debate in the recent past, or that they had been involved in some sort of media outreach. They were: the Canadian Medical Association, the Canadian Bar Association, and Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd.¹¹ All said that while they had supported some media training in the past (not necessarily to do with ethics), they do not provide media training currently and are not contemplating any in future.

Foreign organizations

The focus of this report is on Canada, but the Poynter Institute for Media Studies in the US was mentioned so frequently by respondents, that the institute was contacted to find out about their work in Canada and the US. Nelson Poynter, the owner of the St. Petersburg Times in Florida, founded the institute in 1969 to encourage journalistic excellence. Profits from the newspaper and the Congressional Quarterly in the US are used to support the institute, which runs training courses for journalists in newsrooms, at conferences, by video conference, and online. Al Tompkins of the institute said Poynter does more ethics training in the US than anyone else. Its involvement in Canada to date has been minor, but is growing. Poynter staff members have been invited to conduct courses at various media conferences, including the recent meeting in Vancouver of the Association of Electronic Journalists in Canada (RTNDA). The focus of these sessions has been media ethics. He said a number of Canadian journalists have also attended Poynter courses in the US. It was the institute's ethics hotline that was cited by a number of respondents as a possible model for the CAJ ethics advisory committee.

Section summary: Professional organizations, such as the Canadian Bar Association and the Canadian Medical Association, have offered training to journalists on issues specific to their members (not necessarily ethics) in the past, but are not currently involved in media outreach. The Poynter Institute for Media Studies in the US, which is active in the media ethics field, has a growing presence in Canada and is seen as a possible model for work being done by the Canadian Association of Journalists.

WHO IS DOING WHAT (TRAINING FOREIGN JOURNALISTS):

Abroad

Training organizations

There are only a few main Canadian groups engaged in training journalists abroad, although many more individual journalists work as trainers for international organizations, such as the UNDP, or the Open Society. Among the organized training groups in Canada, the Canadian Institute for Training in Public Broadcasting, which is part of CBC/Radio-Canada, has the most organizational heft. It was established in 2004 and has worked with broadcasters in Ivory Coast, Niger, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Benin and Algeria. It draws on the journalistic resources of CBC/Radio-Canada, which are vast in comparison with all the other Canadian groups working in this area. The institute, whose work is funded by CIDA, among other funders, sends a team to work in a specific newsroom and tailors its training to local needs. Ethics is included, but is not the focus of the training, which is to bring the local newsroom up to professional standards. The training is mostly for broadcast journalists, although it can include digital media.

Three other much smaller groups are active in the training of foreign journalists abroad: Réseau Liberté (based in Montreal), Journalists for Human Rights (Toronto), and Media and Democracy (Vancouver). They operate on a similar model, with a very small headquarters staff, which organizes contracts and funding. Freelance trainers are mostly hired to do a particular contract, usually in partnership with an organization in the country where the training is taking place.

Réseau Liberté is the veteran of this group. It has been around since 1996 and has done projects in Lebanon, Egypt, Jordan, Haiti, Cameroon, Guinea, and Iraq. Paul Breton, director of international programs, said ethics is incorporated in the training, as is how journalists can contribute to good governance. The trainers tend to be veteran Canadian journalists who are paid for their work. All projects have outside funding. Réseau Liberté sometimes works with other Canadian groups to deliver training, such as the Canadian Institute for Training in Public Broadcasting, mentioned above.

Journalists for Human Rights is a relatively new arrival. It was established in 2002 with the stated aim of teaching African journalists on how to report on human rights. It began with a program in Ghana. Canadian university students and some journalists delivered a series of training sessions in the African country. The group has since expanded its work to 15 other countries in Africa. In Canada, it has established chapters across the country. It has also set up an office in the US. The group is strong on fundraising and raising awareness of human rights. All projects receive outside funding. Trainers are not paid, although the group covers their travel and accommodation.

Media and Democracy was established in 2005. It is a network of eight journalists involved in media training abroad. To date it has worked in Sudan on community radio and in Haiti on elections training.

The only foreign training done by a media organization revealed in this survey was a recent effort by The Globe and Mail and funded by the Aga Khan Foundation of Canada to work with journalists in Afghanistan. The Toronto Star said it supports foreign training by offering generous leaves to its journalists doing such work for others.

Journalism schools

Training abroad by journalism schools is generally done by individual professors with an interest in the area, rather than as an institutional initiative. The only program of any size uncovered in this survey was the Rwanda Initiative, set up by Prof. Allan Thompson at Carleton University, under which seasoned journalists and journalism professors work with students at Butare University in Rwanda. The Canadian trainers rotate, with spending weeks and sometimes months in Rwanda. More recently, the Rwanda Initiative has started to work with media organizations in the African country, sending trainers to work in specific newsrooms for a period of time. While ethics can form part of the curriculum, it is not the main focus. As an example of work done by individual professors, Kim Kierans, head of the school of journalism at King's College in Halifax, teaches an online course on broadcasting to journalists at Ateneo de Manila University in the Philippines. Most of this work is done through the Internet, although Ms Kierans travels to the Philippines once a year to meet with her students. Her work is supported by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation in Germany and not by King's College.

Government

The Canadian International Development Agency is the main government department involved in the training of foreign journalists. That said, the work is not co-ordinated through any particular office within CIDA. Initiatives tend to come from desk officers responsible for a particular country, or from requests for funding by outside organizations. There is currently no institutional policy on media training. While ethics and good governance can form part of the curriculum, the main focus is usually on improving the practical skills of foreign journalists or improving their knowledge in a particular area. CIDA does not deliver any media training itself, but acts as the main funder for this work abroad. In the last 10 years, CIDA has funded a total of 180 projects that contained some element of foreign journalism training. These include the Ghana program for Journalists for Human Rights mentioned above, which is focused entirely on media training, but also projects such as a conference on education in India in 2004 to which local media were invited.

The Department of Foreign Affairs also funds media training, but its approach is short-term and ad hoc. In the past, high commissions and embassies abroad sometimes used money to support media projects in various countries, such as training Zambian journalists to write about business and economics. Projects and funding can also result from staff at headquarters wanting to create a project, such as a community radio training program in Sudan. These projects tend to be one-off and do not fit within any particular institutional strategy.

Finally, other departments become involved in the training of foreign journalists from time to time, depending on their priorities. Elections Canada has hired Canadian trainers in the past to train journalists in South Africa and Haiti on how to cover an election. Again, these projects tend to be one-off and do not appear to fit within an institutional strategy.

In Canada

All organizations

There is some training of foreign journalists done in Canada, but it tends to be ad hoc and often organized around a particular event. The exception to this rule is the Gordon N. Fisher Fellowship offered each year to a journalist from a Commonwealth country to study for one year at Massey College at the University of Toronto. This survey did not uncover any other long-term programs for foreign journalists in Canada.

The examples of short-term training include a session for foreign journalists conducted by the Canadian Institute for Training in Public Broadcasting in advance of the International AIDS Conference in Toronto in August 2006. During the Montreal trial of a Rwandan accused of crimes against humanity in 2007, the Montreal Gazette sponsored a Rwandan journalist, who came to Canada to report on the trial. In addition, the Department of Foreign Affairs organizes educational visits by groups of foreign journalists, usually around a particular event.

Massey College used to have a fellowship for foreign journalists at risk. The Donner Foundation funded this fellowship for three years. The foundation has since withdrawn its support.

Some of the journalism schools contacted, such as Ryerson, said they were interested in having foreign students, but faced problems with funding for these spots and with visas for the foreign journalists.

Section summary: A small number of organizations in Canada are involved in training foreign journalists abroad, although many more individual journalists and teachers are active in training programs offered by foreign and international groups. The Canadian Institute for Training in Public Broadcasting, which is part of CBC/Radio-Canada has the most institutional heft and resources. Three much smaller groups are active in this field, with Réseau Liberté of Montreal the most established of the three. Training tends to be on practical aspects of journalism, although all say that ethics and the role of the journalist in good governance are themes that run throughout the training. Within Canada, the only long-term attempt at training a foreign journalist revealed by this survey was the Gordon N. Fisher Fellowship at Massey College at the University of Toronto. Media organizations, training organizations, and government departments offer ad hoc programs, usually organized around a particular event.

CONCLUSIONS

Main conclusions

While all the major journalism schools provide media ethics courses to their students, once a journalist enters the working world he or she has very little access to ethics training. Journalism schools do little outreach to working journalists. Associations representing journalists offer some ethics courses at annual events. With only a few exceptions, media organizations do not provide ethics training to their journalists, although most have manuals or codes of conduct covering ethics. As well, ethical dilemmas are discussed on a one-to-one basis between editors and journalists.

There are a number of reasons for this situation: Canadian employers, in general, do not spend as much as their counterparts in other countries on staff training. Time is also an important factor in the media world, where the advent of the internet has meant that all journalists are being asked to do more and do it more quickly than before, leaving little time or energy for training. Nevertheless, a few employers have found the time and money to deliver training in ethics.

Journalism schools and journalist associations, the two groups that currently provide training in media ethics, are reluctant to broaden ethics training beyond that which is immediately practical for journalists. In the case of journalism schools, there is also a reluctance to draw on the expertise available at schools of ethics, even when they exist within the same institution. The reasons given for this reluctance include the need to cover what they consider to be the most important issues in a limited period of time, the difficulty academics face in doing cross-faculty work, and a vaguely expressed sentiment among some journalists that philosophers are not in touch with the real world and can offer little practical advice by journalists.

There is a definite gap to be filled by the Chumir Foundation, but it will take some skill in persuading journalists and their employers to make it a priority. Without strong employer support, it will not succeed. Much depends on the content of the course, and how it is delivered (more on both in the section below).

There are only a few main players involved in training foreign journalists, either abroad or in Canada. Most of the emphasis is on sending Canadian trainers abroad, rather than bringing foreign journalists to Canada for training. Funding and visa problems were cited as reasons – it appears to be easier to receive funding for training abroad. That said, some of the journalism schools were interested in finding a way to bring working journalists to Canada, perhaps as part of a master's program that would also include experienced Canadian journalists. It will be tricky, but not impossible, to combine the Chumir Foundation's desire to teach ethics to Canadian journalists with its desire to involve foreign journalists in this endeavour. Much depends on the shape of the training.

Some ideas on the way forward

It was not the intent for this report to explore the form, content and potential partners for future training. Nevertheless, some comments made in interviews suggest several routes that could be explored if the Chumir Foundation decides to proceed. They are dealt with here as preliminary comments only.

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Content: There is an apparent conflict between the Chumir Foundation's desire to expose journalists to broader ethical issues and the reluctance expressed by some journalists and journalism professors to stray beyond media ethics. It is possible to include broader issues in the training, but it must be done while keeping the specific needs and interests of journalists in mind. The short-term nature of journalism means that interest is greatest in matters that appear immediately relevant to journalists. This is not an impossible task. It just means that the course content must be compiled with care. This should be done by a team, rather than by an individual. The core members should be a journalism instructor specializing in media ethics and an ethicist with a background in applied ethics. If foreign journalists are to be included in the training, a third person experienced in training foreign journalists and knowledgeable about ethical issues abroad should be part of the core team. The individual team members must be selected with an eye to those who are open to co-operation between ethicists and journalism instructors. Many of those interviewed held rigid views on what non-journalists could bring to the table.

Possible models: There are many models to choose from in delivering such training, ranging from courses given in newsrooms by a mobile team of trainers; online and video training; training sessions included in professional development events; courses delivered through existing journalism schools; or a speakers' series. Each has its advantages and disadvantages and some are more suited than others to the involvement of foreign journalists. Supporting and contributing to an existing endeavour in Canada, such as the work being done by Prof. Stephen Ward at UBC is another possibility. To a certain extent, the delivery mechanism will be dictated by target audience, partners, and funding. The Poynter Institute in the US offers one possible model that should be looked at more closely.

Possible partners: In the course of this research, a number of individuals expressed interest in partnering with the Chumir Foundation either on ethics training or on the training of foreign journalists. Each had a particular aim in mind and none was a perfect fit with what the Chumir Foundation was considering. This does not preclude going back to them and suggesting a partnership with a different goal than the one they envisaged. For example, Paul Knox of Ryerson University wants to find a way to bring foreign journalists to Canada to participate in the new master's program at the journalism school. He also wants to expand the professional development events offered by the school, which would include ethics. John Fraser of Massey College was interested in funding for the discontinued journalist-at-risk fellowship at the college for foreign journalists. That said, he also expressed interest in the foundation working with the Canadian Journalism Foundation on media ethics. Evan Potter of Ottawa University suggested the foundation fund a chair in media ethics at the university. Stephen Ward of UBC is looking for ways to advance ethics training in general among working journalists. Chris Waddell of Carleton voiced interest in being involved in a course that could be delivered at the university during the summer break. If the Chumir Foundation decides to proceed, there are many willing partners at the journalism schools.

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Further research: One key question that needs to be answered before the Chumir Foundation commits time and money to ethics training is whether the main media organizations would back the training by encouraging their journalists to take part and, just as importantly, give them the time off to do so. While most of those contacted said there was a need for more training and expressed interest in the idea, this interest should be probed to assess its depth. If the media organizations do not provide encouragement and time, the training would not reach its intended target. Of course, media organizations would want to know exactly what is being proposed before they give a commitment. So a certain amount of thought would have to be given to content and delivery before the approach was made.

One final thought on further research: If foreign journalists are to be included, it would be useful to know more about what ethical challenges they face in their daily work and in the countries they are reporting on. One way of doing this would be for future Chumir fellows from other countries to research this topic. Such information would be valuable in shaping course content so that it is relevant to both Canadian and foreign journalists.

APPENDICES

Appendix One – Questionnaires

The questionnaires varied, depending on whether they were being sent to a journalism school, a journalists' association, or a media organization.

Questionnaire for journalism schools and associations:

1. Does your institution offer courses in ethics to practising Canadian journalists?
2. If not, do you know of any schools or groups in your area that offer ethics courses to practising journalists?
3. Does your institution also offer courses in applied ethics (not associated with the school of journalism)?
4. Does your institution, or individuals within your institution, teach practising foreign journalists (either in Canada or abroad)?
5. What kind of ethics is being taught (is it focussed on journalism, or does it tackle broader ethical issues in society, business or politics?)
6. Could you give a brief overview of the course content?
7. What is the duration of the courses or workshops you offer?
8. How many practising journalists are trained each year?
9. Are the ethics courses funded by your institution, or by an outside body? (for example, some medical associations fund courses for journalists in medical ethics)
10. Does your institution have connections having to do with ethics courses with other journalism schools, journalist associations, or other groups either in Canada or abroad? (for example, a medical association interested in supporting courses in medical ethics, a foreign journalism school or institute)
11. Who is the main person associated with teaching ethics at your institution?

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Media organization questionnaire:

1. Does your organization offer courses in ethics to working journalists, either in-house or through an outside organization?
2. If not, do you know of any schools, associations, media organizations, or groups in your area that offer ethics courses to working journalists?
3. If yes, what kind of ethics is being taught (is it focused on journalism, or does it tackle broader ethical issues in society, business or politics)?
4. If yes, how many working journalists are trained each year?
5. If not, do you perceive a need for such training?
6. Do you have an ethics manual?
7. Is your organization, or individuals within your organization, involved in teaching working foreign journalists (either in Canada or abroad)?
8. Does your organization have connections having to do with ethics courses with other journalism schools, journalist associations, or other groups either in Canada or abroad? (for example, a medical association interested in supporting courses in medical ethics, a foreign journalism school or institute)
9. Who is the main person associated with ethics training at your institution?

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Appendix Two – Contact details for respondents

JOURNALISM SCHOOLS:

Carleton University (Ottawa)

Chris Waddell
Associate Director, Journalism and
Communication,
Carty Chair in Business and Financial
Journalism
chris_waddell@carleton.ca
(613) 520-2600 x 8495
Type of contact: Interview

Concordia (Montreal)

Dr. Mike Gasher
Chair of Journalism
514-848-2424, ext. 2474
gashmj8590@yahoo.ca
Type of contact: Email

Ryerson University (Toronto)

Paul Knox
Chair
School of Journalism
(416) 979-5318
paulknox@ryerson.ca
Type of contact: Interview

Larry Cornies
Maclean-Hunter Chair of Media Ethics
(also an editor at The Globe)
LCornies@globeandmail.com
519-854-9204 (cell)
Type of contact: Interview

Universite Laval

Centre d'études sur les médias
Florian Sauvageau
(418) 656-3235
Florian.Sauvageau@com.ulaval.ca
Type of contact: Interview

University of King's College (Halifax)

Kim Kierans
Director of the school of Journalism
Email: kim.kierans@ukings.ns.ca
Phone: 902-422-1271 ext. 164
Type of contact: Interview

University of British Columbia (Vancouver)

Stephen Ward
Direct, Master of Journalism Program
And associate professor of journalism ethics
sjward@interchange.ubc.ca
(604) 822-6682
Type of contact: Interview

University of Ottawa

Marc-Francois Bernier
Coordonnateur du programme de journalisme
Département de communication
Professor of
media ethics
418-666-8264 (h)
(613) 562-5800 (3828)
mbernier@uottawa.ca
Type of contact: Interview

ETHICS SCHOOLS:

Carleton University (Ottawa)

Centre on Values and Ethics
Steven Davis
Tel: (613) 520-2110
Fax: (613) 520-3962
sdavis@ccs.carleton.ca
Type of contact: Email

Ryerson University (Toronto)

Alex Wellington
Acting Director, The Ethics Network,
Department of Philosophy,
350 Victoria Street,
Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5B 2K3
Tel: 416.979.5000 x 4057
awelling@ryerson.ca
Type of contact: Email

University of British Columbia (Vancouver)

Michael McDonald
W. Maurice Young Centre for Applied Ethics
604-822-8626 (h)
mcdonald@interchange.ubc.ca
Type of contact: Interview

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JOURNALISM ASSOCIATIONS:

**Canadian Association of Broadcasters
(Ottawa)**

Kevin Desjardins
Manager, Communications
(613) 233-4035 ext. 331
Mobile : 613-796-4462
(kdesjardins@cab-acr.ca)
Type of contact: Interview

Canadian Association of Journalists (Halifax)

Paul Schneidereit
Past President
The Chronicle-Herald – Halifax
902-426-2811
Pauls@herald.ca
Type of contact: Interview

Canadian Journalism Foundation (Toronto)

John Fraser, chair
(Also master of Massey College)
416-978-2549
ja.fraser@utoronto.ca
Type of contact: Interview

Canadian Newspaper Association (Ottawa)

David Gollob
Vice-president of public affairs
613 841-3120 (o)
613 301-6162 (cell)
dgollob@cna-acj.ca
Type of contact: Interview

**Federation professionnelle des journalistes du
Quebec (Montreal)**

Alain Gravel
Président
Radio-Canada
(514) 597-4780
alain_gravel@radio-canada.ca
Type of contact: Interview

MEDIA ORGANIZATIONS:

Brunswick Newspapers

Edith Robbe
Assistant Managing Editor
Moncton
1-888-923-4900
robbe@timestranscript.com
Type of contact: Email

CanWest Publications (Toronto)

Michelle Hall
v-p human resources
416-383-2300 ex 3790
mhall@canwest.com
Type of contact: Interview

CBC/Radio Canada (Montreal)

Elzbieta Olechowska
Editor in Chief, Canadian Institute for Training
in Public Broadcasting
514-597-7502
elzbieta_olechowska@radio-canada.ca
Type of contact: Interview

CTV (Toronto)

Joanne MacDonald
Vice president News
416-332-7400
Type of contact: Interview

Global Television (Vancouver)

Steve Wyatt
Senior Vice President of News and Information
604-420-2288 (o)
Type of contact: Interview

La Presse (Montreal)

André Pratte
Éditorialiste en chef
Tél.: 514-285-7027
apratte@lapresse.ca
Type of contact: Email

Ottawa Citizen

Ruth Dunley
In charge of training
613-596-3723
rdunley@thecitizen.canwest.com
Type of contact: Email

The Globe and Mail (Toronto)

Sylvia Stead
Deputy editor (in charge of training)
416-585-5000
sstead@globeandmail.com
Type of contact: Email

Jim Jennings
Involved in media program in Afghanistan
416-585-5000
jjennings@globeandmail.com
Type of contact: Email

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Toronto Star

Sharon Burnside
Assistant Managing Editor of Training and
Development
416-869-4300
Type of contact: Interview

Concordia (Montreal)

Dr. Leslie Regan Shade
Program director, MA in Media Studies
514 848-2424 ext. 2550
lshade@alcor.concordia.ca
Type of contact: Email

OTHER:

Aga Khan Foundation (Ottawa)

Jennifer Morrow
Manager of communications
613 237-2532 x 107
Type of contact: Interview

**Foreign Affairs and International Trade
(Ottawa)**

Evan Potter
(also teaches at the University of Ottawa)
613-943-3932
epotter@uottawa.ca
Type of contact: Interview

Atomic Energy of Canada (Mississauga)

Dale Coffin
Director, Corporate Communications
AECL
905 403-7457
coffind@aecl.ca
Type of contact: Email

McGill University (Montreal)

Marc Raboy
Beaverbrook Chair in Ethics, Media and
Communications (Chair)
Department of Art History and Communication
Studies
514 398-2211
marc.raboy@mcgill.ca
Type of contact: Email

Canadian Bar Association (Ottawa)

Emily Porter,
(613) 237-2925, ext. 155;
E-mail: emilyp@cba.org
Type of contact: Email

Poynter Institute (Florida)

Al Tompkins
Broadcast/Online Group Leader
The Poynter Institute, Florida
Phone: 727-821-9494
Cell: 727-409-9717
tompkins@poynter.org
Type of contact: Interview

**Canadian International Development Agency
(Ottawa)**

Murray Thorpe
International Development Program Manager
819-934-4194
Type of contact: Email

Reseau Liberte (Montreal)

Paul Breton
Directeur des programmes internationaux
514.858.7448 (o)
450-661-6240 (h)
www.reseauliberte.com
paulbreton@reseauliberte.com
Type of contact: Interview

Canadian Medical Association (Ottawa)

Lucie Boileau
Manager, Media Relations
613 731.8610 x1266
Type of contact: Interview

**Centre for International Governance
Innovation (Waterloo)**

Colleen Fitzpatrick
Public Relations Manager
519-885-2444 ex 281
CFitzpatrick@cigionline.org
Type of contact: Interview

University of Calgary

David Taras
Faculty of Communication and Culture
(403) 220-7575 (o)
(403) 281-7368 (h)
dtaras@ucalgary.ca
Type of contact: Interview

Appendix Three – Funders active in journalism training (preliminary list)

Beaverbrook Canadian Foundation

Funds Media@McGill, which bills itself as a hub of research, scholarship, and public outreach on issues and controversies in media, technology, and culture; and The Beaverbrook chair in Ethics, Media and Communications at McGill

The Ford Foundation

Sponsored an interactive session at the 2005 RTNDA national conference titled Tough Calls, Let's Talk Ethics

Arthur J.E. Child Foundation

Mentioned by John Fraser of Massey College as a possible source of funds.

The Alva Foundation

The Donner Canadian Foundation

The Kahanoff Foundation

The R. Howard Webster Foundation

The estate of the late Mr. St. Clair Balfour

Provide funding for the Canadian Journalism Fellowships at Massey College, U of T

Konrad Adenauer Foundation (Germany)

Funds an online journalism program on broadcasting offered at Ateneo de Manila University, the Philippines

The Kaiser Family Foundation

Funded a workshop for foreign journalists attending the International AIDS conference in Toronto. The workshop was conducted by the Canadian Institute for Training in Public Broadcasting and included a session on ethics in health journalism

Aga Khan Foundation Canada

Funding a project involving Globe and Mail journalists to work with journalists in Afghanistan.

Appendix Four – Universities offering journalism programs in Canada

Offering stand-alone programs only:

Carleton University (Ottawa)
Concordia University (Montreal)
Ryerson University (Toronto)
Thompson Rivers University (Kamloops)
Université de Québec à Montréal (Montreal)
Université Laval (Québec)
University of British Columbia (Vancouver)
University of King's College (Halifax)
University of Regina (Regina)
Wilfrid Laurier University (Brantford)

Stand-alone and hybrid programs*:

St. Thomas University (Fredericton) *with New Brunswick Community College*
University of Western Ontario (London) *with Fanshawe College*

Offering hybrid programs only:

Laurentian University (Sudbury) *with Cambrian College*
University of Guelph (Toronto) *with Humber College*
University of Ottawa (Ottawa) *with Algonquin College and La Cité Collegiale*
University of Prince Edward Island (Charlottetown) *with Holland College*
University of Toronto (Toronto) *with Centennial College*
University of Winnipeg (Winnipeg) *with Red River College*
York University (Toronto) *with Seneca College*

**Hybrid programs are delivered jointly by a university and a college, with the college offering courses on the practice of journalism, and the university delivering academic courses.*

Source: Paul Knox, Journalism Education in Canada, June 2007.

Appendix Five – Selected web resources on ethics for journalists

Canadian

Journalism Ethics for the Global Citizen:
School of Journalism, UBC
www.journalismethics.ca
Contact: Prof. Stephen Ward
604-822-6682

The Canadian Journalism Project, Ethics Page
www.j-source.ca/english_new/category.php?catid=2
Contact: Prof. Stephen Ward
604-822-6682

The Ethics Network,
Online Resources in Professional Ethics
Ryerson University
(A listing of websites in Canada and the US dealing with professional ethics)
www.ryerson.ca/ethicsnetwork/resources/professional_ethics/index.html

Foreign

The RTNDF Journalism Ethics Project
Radio-Television News Directors Association and Foundation
www.rtnda.org/ethics/fepcg.shtml
Contact: Kathleen Graham
Vice President of Foundation Programs
Phone: 202-467-5216
Email: kathleeng@rtndf.org

Poynteronline, Ethics Page
Poynter Institute
www.poynter.org/subject.asp?id=32
Contact: Al Tompkins
Phone: 727-409-9717
Email: atompkins@poynter.org

Poynteronline, Media Ethics Bibliography
www.poynter.org/content/content_view.asp?id=1208&sid=32
Contact: David Shedden, Library director Poynter Institute
Email: dshedden@poynter.org
Phone: (727) 456-2349

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Journalism Ethics Cases Online
Indiana University, School of Journalism
www.journalism.indiana.edu/gallery/Ethics/
Contact: David Boeyink, Associate professor
Phone: (812) 855-9821

Journal of Mass Media Ethics
www.jmme.org
Contact: Jay Black, University of South Florida, St Petersburg
Email: black@stpt.usf.edu
Phone: 727-553-4579

Organization of News Ombudsmen
(US-based organization with two Canadian members: CBC and Toronto Star)
www.newsombudsmen.org
Contact: Gina Lubrano, Executive Secretary
Email: news.ombudsmen@gmail.com
Phone: (858) 292-1594

MediaWise Trust
(UK-based organization founded to hold media to account)
www.mediawise.org.uk
Contact: Mike Jempson, director
Phone: 44 (0) 117 939 9333
Email: info@mediawise.org.uk

Appendix Six – Expressions of Interest

The following respondents expressed an interest in discussing some sort of partnership with the Chumir Foundation on ethics training (their contact details are in Appendix Two):

1. John Fraser, Massey College*
2. Kim Kierans, King's College
3. Paul Knox, Ryerson University*
4. Evan Potter, University of Ottawa
5. Chris Waddell, Carleton University*
6. Stephen Ward, UBC

**Also interested in partnership on training foreign journalists*

ENDNOTES

¹ Knox, Paul (June 2007). Journalism education in Canada: Size and scope. Survey prepared for the World Journalism Education Congress, Singapore, June 2007.

² Email exchange with Marc Raboy, who holds the Beaverbrook chair in Ethics, Media and Communications, June 12 2007.

³ The school charges media organizations \$500 a day, plus travel and accommodation for the training, which generally includes two two-hour sessions, plus some mentoring afterward. Interview with Kim Kierans, director of the school of journalism, University of King's College, June 1, 2007.

⁴ The CAJ decided to set up the committee after it was criticized for publicly censuring journalist Stevie Cameron for giving information to the police. Reaction against the CAJ was such that the association set up an internal committee to produce a policy on when and how the association should censure journalists. That committee recommended that an Ethics Advisory Committee be established. See: "Minutes of the AGM– May 9, 2004" available at www.caj.ca/board/minutes-may-2004.htm

⁵ "Ethics Advisory Committee Approved." The Wire, the newsletter of the Canadian Association of Journalists, Fall/Winter 2005/2006

⁶ The committee chair is Prof. Stephen Ward of UBC. Its other members are: Sharon Burnside, head of training at The Toronto Star; photojournalist Brian Gavriloff of the Edmonton Journal; independent investigative journalist Julian Sher; Kirk Lapointe, managing editor of the Vancouver Sun; Ken Regan, general manager of CKUA radio in Edmonton; Kim Kierans, director of the King's College school of journalism in Halifax; Scott White, editor-in-chief of the Canadian Press; Sadia Zaman, Director of In-House Production Vision TV; Ethan Faber, CTV's managing editor in B.C.; investigative journalist Linden MacIntyre of CBC; Ellen van Wageningen Metro Editor of the Windsor Star; Pierre Vennat of Montreal's La Presse, Marc-Francois Bernier, media ethicist at the University of Ottawa and Toronto-based media lawyer Bert Bruser. See: Seth, Angie. "Formation of new CAJ committee puts emphasis on strong ethics." The Wire, Spring 2007, available at www.caj.ca

⁷ The major media organizations contacted were: CanWest Media, CBC/Radio-Canada, CTV, Brunswick Newspapers, Global Television, The Globe and Mail, the Halifax Chronicle-Herald, The Ottawa Citizen, La Presse (Montreal), and The Toronto Star.

⁸ See www.newsombudsmen.org

⁹ Ms Burnside said this happens when something is not illegal but may be questioned on ethical grounds.

¹⁰ "Learning and Development Outlook 2007: Are We Learning Enough? April 2007, Conference Board of Canada.

¹¹ AECL was contacted because Edith Robb of Brunswick News said the Atomic Energy Association of Canada had supported an ethics program in the past aimed at students of journalism, public relations and science. The program ended last year because of funding cuts, she said.