



# Chumir Ethics Forum



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## President's Message

The past few months have been extraordinarily busy ones for the Chumir Foundation, culminating in the very successful Symposium "Community Values in an Age of Globalization" held on the weekend of April 26-28, 2002. You will read in this edition of the newsletter about the Symposium, which brought to Calgary a stellar cast of speakers that engaged the audience of over three hundred people in a discussion of thoughts and actions of critical importance to the world today and to how we live our lives in it.

The excitement generated by the Symposium and the wonderful flow of ideas we all experienced was, I think, an exemplification of what the Sheldon Chumir Foundation is all about. Our Vision is: *An active, involved citizenry in a society characterized by principled and trustworthy leadership* – "'tis a consummation devoutly to be wished", as Hamlet might say, particularly as tales of less-than-principled and less-than-trustworthy leadership swirl around us.

But how do we, as a community and as a society, achieve this vision, especially in the face of the many forces militating against meaningful involvement and trustworthy leadership? And what specific role can the Foundation play?

Clearly, we must begin with education and reasoned dis-

ussion. Our mandate is, broadly speaking, educational: we seek to focus attention on issues and areas of public life which have an ethical dimension and in which there are significant questions about the ethical consequences of the choices and actions of groups and their leaders. We do this through a range of activities such as our Internship and Fellowships, our publications and various public education initiatives such as our forums and symposia. Our aim is always to encourage informed discussion of important issues in education, health care, public policy, professional and corporate conduct and the like.

The key is that the discussion be *informed*, respectful and non-partisan and that the intended outcomes be better and more participatory communities. We support the open expression of ideas and tolerant discussion, seeking to expose prejudice where we find it and focus on fairness to all members of the community. Inevitably there will be disagreements about the substance of the values that groups or communities should espouse and we take one of our roles to be to provide a forum for discussion of these disagreements in an atmosphere of light rather than heat.

One of the comments we received most frequently from those in attendance at the April

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Sheldon M. Chumir

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A meeting of minds and opportunity to exchange ideas

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Symposium (and, for that matter, those who have attended our various forums) was how much they appreciated the range and diversity of views expressed by speakers and audience alike. But we have also, on occasion, been taken to task for our stance as an educational organization rather than an activist one. Understandably, there are people who believe that our role should be a more political and partisan one; but it remains our conviction that our specific focus on ethics and community-mindedness and our commitment to civil and non-violent debate will, in the long term, have a more positive effect on our communities. It is our view that ethical leadership goes well beyond integrity, important though that is, to encompass support for programs and projects that enhance the public good, and it is this focus that, we believe, will ultimately make a difference.

On behalf of the Foundation, I extend best wishes for a safe and enjoyable summer.

Marsha Hanen



... and the importance of maintaining a sense of humour

## Community Values in an Age of Globalization

a Report by David Hughes and Alex Barber

The idea for the Chumir Foundation's second major event grew out of both the tragic events of September 11<sup>th</sup>, and the need to come to terms with the effects of a rapidly changing world on community values and ethics. The event, entitled "Community Values in an Age of Globalization", was held on April 26<sup>th</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup>, 2002 in Calgary. We hoped that the Symposium might serve as a useful starting point for informed public debate about issues surrounding globalization prior to the G8 meetings scheduled to take place two months later in Kananaskis, Alberta. All those who attended were treated to an enlightening weekend of animated discussion and thoughtful reflection.

Friday night's session featured Professors Benjamin Barber and David Schneiderman. Dr. Barber, in his remarks, contrasted the old world of community with the new world of globalization that has developed over the past fifty to a hundred years. According to Barber, the role of the nation-state in protecting communities has become so diminished in recent years that no state in an age of globalization can truly control its destiny. This point was driven home by the attacks of September 11<sup>th</sup>, which shattered "the great U.S. myth that we could be separate from the world." Barber argued that communities have traditionally played an important role in tempering the pernicious effects of capitalism. However, in the new global order individuals and communities no longer have the ability they once had to balance the efficiencies of the marketplace with the communal need for social justice. Somewhat provocatively, Dr. Barber concluded by suggesting that new and transitional states start with a "Declaration of Interdependence," according to which people "as members of distinct communities and nations" would pledge themselves to be "citizens of one world."

Barber's outstanding address was followed up by a brief presentation by Professor Schneiderman who outlined some of the challenges to local citizenship in an age of economic globalization. Specifically, Schneiderman addressed the difficulties citizens and communities were having contending with the loss of local control engendered by the regulatory demands of regional and transnational trading arrangements. The excitement generated by our two speakers is reflected in the feedback the Foundation received:

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This was a very stimulating address. It forced me personally to reconsider my attitude to the nation-state. The description of a deregulated global economy as “anarchy” was a telling criticism. I thought the questions of how we go about creating a new global order was not satisfactorily addressed.

Excellent Presentation! A ‘make you think’ presentation that set a great context for the weekend. Very stimulating!

A rather heavy introduction to a long weekend of listening, thinking and some contributing. However it must have worked because it all became easier as the process proceeded. I trust it will continue to percolate over the next few years. Benjamin Barber seems to thrive on speaking and sharing. His enthusiasm was catching.

The Saturday morning session featured Gretchen Mann Brewin, Lynn Foster, Brian MacNeill, Reverend Margaret Waterchief and Russell Hemenway discussing local and regional perspectives on globalization, community values and democratic participation.

Ms. Brewin began the morning with a rendition of her experiences in local and provincial politics. She concluded that the mechanisms of local or civic governance could produce a surprising abundance of opportunities for citizens to shape the environment in which they live. Brian MacNeill, former CEO of Enbridge, spoke about the alarming lack of democratic participation and volunteerism in Canada. According to MacNeill, what is demanded by businesses today is creative leaders and not just those who tend to follow-the-pack.

Reverend Margaret Waterchief described, in her address, the need for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal reconciliation and dialogue in Canada. Lynn Foster, coordinator for the G6B, spoke about the ravages and inequalities fostered by global capitalism and the event she was helping to organize. According to Foster, the disparities between the First and Third World were increasing and must be arrested if the benefits of globalization are to be distributed equally. Finally, Russell Hemenway, the Director of the National Committee for an Effective Congress, addressed the need for democratic participation

and structural political reform. He cited the recent business scandals in the U.S. as a reason why campaign finance reform legislation was finally enacted after years of grassroots lobbying. Hemenway hoped that this might be the first step in halting the alarming drift in the U.S. over the past forty years towards cynicism and civic inaction. The variety of perspectives in the session was impressive and the audience appreciated the quality of the remarks of the presenters:

Excellent variety of speakers, thought provoking. Ranged from philosophical to practical. Moderator excellent.

Brian MacNeill and Margaret Waterchief made me acutely aware of my role in community in terms of educating youth on a number of fronts and relationship building. They built for me a link to globalization and what I might be able to do.

Russell Hemenway is truly a national treasure! His “irreverent” voice was just what was needed to stir up our Canadian reluctance to speak up and be heard when wrongs must be righted.

***“What is required is a resonating new Declaration of Interdependence to symbolize our entry into a period when democratizing globalization is not a dream of idealists but a necessity for realists.”***

Benjamin Barber

At the Saturday lunch session, Stephen Lewis; the UN’s representative for HIV/AIDS in Africa gave a particularly moving speech. According to Lewis “there’s an astounding moral delinquency where official development assistance is concerned. What globalization is doing on this front is to sanctify poverty, inequality and injustice” Lewis cited numerous examples that showed that globalization has not been able to deal with poverty, conflict or disease. According to Lewis, the key to improving the situation in Africa is better funding for health care.

Without adequate health care, economic growth will never occur. “I want to know what’s wrong with this world. I want somebody to tell me what price this globalization we all talk about. What’s gone wrong? What is it about our inability to respond to the human condition? Kofi Annan has asked for seven to ten billion dollars a year for a global fund to fight AIDS and everybody agrees that’s the minimum. The global fund has raised from governments two billion dollars over three years. The government of Canada has offered a hundred mil-

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lion dollars over the three years. Juxtapose that again to the cost of the forthcoming summit. Am I totally deranged or is something wildly out of whack? ... I want to simply say that globalization is failing.”

Those attending were captivated by the force and eloquence of Lewis’ convictions:

Stephen Lewis was worth the expenditures on this conference. Could have used a morning or afternoon session in conversation with him alone. Alberta needs to hear his voice. Thank you for bringing him to the conference.

Truly outstanding. Stephen Lewis is a passionate speaker with welcome facts that encourage action.

Stephen Lewis – wow!

The Saturday afternoon session on “Globalization, Community Values and Democratic Participation: National and International Perspectives” featured Ambassador Robert Fowler, the Prime Minister’s personal representative for the G8, author and activist Naomi Klein, and economist John Curtis. It continued the debate over the issues raised in the morning session and luncheon address.

Ambassador Fowler attempted to counter some of Lewis’ criticisms of globalization, though he conceded that Canada’s approach to international development has not worked as well as it could. Ambassador Fowler went on to describe the “dynamic tension” in CIDA between the ‘pragmatists’ and the ‘missionaries’. According to Fowler, the missionary approach which believes in “alleviating the suffering of those who most need assistance” has not worked over the years. “The



Elaine Wojtkiw (l) and Linda Van Dyke with Aron Eichler at the Symposium

bottom line is that virtually every fundamental trend line, every indicator with regard to life in Africa is trending downwards at the moment – and I am quite convinced that if we continue to do the same as we’ve been doing, we will not change the direction of those trend lines despite those significant additional billions I have mentioned...”

Ambassador Fowler contrasted this approach with that taken in NEPAD (New Partnership for Africa’s Development), which “commits Africa’s leaders to forming first and foremost a new partnership among themselves... it acknowledges that there is no foreseeable amount of Official Development Assistance that’s going to make Africa significantly better... that it is up to Africans to change the way they govern.” Ambassador Fowler concluded by saying he was hopeful that the mistakes of the past could be rectified through dialogue and targeted assistance.

Naomi Klein took issue with Fowler’s position, arguing that globalization has not worked and that the pragmatist solution – structural adjustments and greater private involvement in national economies – has been an abject failure in a number of countries, e.g. Argentina. According to Klein, the current crisis of faith in the political system in Canada and elsewhere has been born of frustration. “You are dealing with a generation of young people who have never seen the government do anything particularly positive. Who have never been part of a process of inventing something new and exciting and ambitious... I still find it shocking that when you meet



Enthusiastic participants from the University of Calgary

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eighteen-year old university activists here in Calgary, they will take it absolutely for granted that if they go to a protest, they should take a bandana soaked in vinegar. Because they think that when you express dissent you get gassed.”

John Curtis, an economist with the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, rounded out the panel. Mr. Curtis spoke about the difficulties with grouping the complex array of factors which are seen as driving global trade and investment under the rubric of “globalization”. The feedback from the audience tended to be as divided as the views of the panelists:

The interplay between panel members was informative and entertaining. Ms Klein speaks to all generations but has an incredible grasp of what the under 35s/40s need to hear and understand.

Robert Fowler – an eye into the G8 from his government’s perspective – nice to have that perspective to make more informed decisions. Naomi Klein – wonderful to see one of our youth be so active in spreading the message that globalization is not working as we previously thought it should.

On Sunday morning Len Findlay, Harvey Weingarten and Stuart Walker discussed “The Role of Education in Shaping Community Values”. Dr. Weingarten, President of the University of Calgary, spoke about the



The Honourable Lloyd Axworthy (l) and Foundation Board Chair Joel Bell (r)

importance of the critical relationship of education to community values. According to Weingarten, Alberta’s blend of economic dynamism and political uniqueness gives students a first-rate educational experience that emphasizes tolerance and responsibility.



The Honourable Ron Ghitter

Stuart Walker, Director of the Lester B. Pearson College of the Pacific, discussed the importance of community values to global educational institutions. Pearson Colleges, a member of the United World College system, enrolls students from over eighty countries, all of them on scholarship. Therefore, the goal of the College is to identify and foster not only community values but values that may succeed in uniting disparate groups from around the world.

Finally, Dr. Len Findlay gave a lively acerbic paper in which he argued that “as higher education goes, so goes democracy.” According to Findlay, the suppression of community

or academic activism at some Canadian universities is emblematic of the influence of funding concerns on institutions of higher learning. Findlay argues this is incredibly dangerous. The health of academic freedom in the humanities is a strong signifier “of defining freedoms we think we no longer have to fight for.” Some comments from those who attended the session were as follows:

Len Findlay was exceptional...He gave the best paper of the conference. Stuart Walker provided a fine description of an ideal secondary educational institution. Does it correspond with reality? Weingarten presented a balanced view of education’s relationship to society.

Len Findlay of special appeal – the cunning of education – a provocative phrase but induces critical examination. Stuart Walker and Pearson College carries a great deal of responsibility. Dr. Weingarten – informative but not challenging.

The Sunday lunch session revolved around a series of roundtables. Eighteen facilitators were chosen in advance of the conference and submitted questions for participants to consider. Table discussions topics ranged from “Media, Democracy and Globalization” to “Aboriginal Education” to “Using Human Rights to

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Build Healthier Communities”. The lunch session gave an opportunity for a deeper form of participation than the traditional question and answer session. The feedback was extremely positive:

Very fine discussion. We gained insight into each person’s concern to act locally. Listening to others gave me a sense of validation in the work I am doing.

Excellent format – appreciated opportunity for small group discussion.

We had an animated, courteous and useful discussion, but it was all too short.

Very good session and welcomed the opportunity to provide input.

Sunday afternoon featured Michael Valpy, John Stackhouse and Bronwyn Drainie on “Media, Democracy and Responsibility”. Ms. Drainie began the session with a description of the work of the Institute for Media, Policy, and Civil Society (IMPACS) with media in developing countries. *Globe and Mail* writer John Stackhouse gave an account of ethical problems currently besetting the media. Specifically, Mr. Stackhouse worried that the increasing corporatization, commoditization, commercialization, and quickness of the news media was eroding journalistic standards and ethics particularly in terms of its coverage of events in the developing world. Finally Michael Valpy, *Globe and Mail* ethics commentator, completed the session with description of the ways in which young people and average Canadians were beginning to find new outlets for expressing their concerns over the path globalization was taking. Comments included:

Each speaker made a fine contribution. I appreciated the fact that each speaker had a written text. John Stackhouse was a highlight.

It was very instructive to hear well-known journalists struggle with ethical problems that beset them in the course of their everyday labours.

We were delighted, thanks to the generosity of a number of supporters, to be able to invite a substantial number of students to participate in the symposium. Their involvement was a tremendous asset to the deliberations, and their engagement made it clear that it is, indeed, possible to have meaningful civic participation across all age groups in the community. Here are some

of their comments:

I am very glad to have been able to participate in this year’s Chumir Foundation symposium... it was a tremendous opportunity to hear such qualified and engaging speakers as Benjamin Barber, Stephen Lewis, and Lloyd Axworthy, among others. All of the weekend’s presentations were inspiring and thought-provoking – we are indeed fortunate to have speakers of this calibre visit us here in Calgary.

The conference was nothing but positive and enlightening; to hear such scholars as Dr. Barber speak with such passion is something I’ll remember for the rest of my life... It was really a remarkable weekend.

I thank you very much for providing me with the opportunity to attend... Not often do you find such an informed and engaged mix of people willing to share ideas, discuss and dispute issues that they obviously care about passionately.

The Gala Dinner brought the weekend to a close with a passionate speech on the topic of “Global Governance and Institutional Legitimacy” by the Honourable Lloyd Axworthy. Dr. Axworthy, Canada’s former Minister of Foreign Affairs, talked of the importance of ethical values in international relations. He cited various examples of how the work of just one individual has had a profound influence on the ways in which the global community responds to international criminal activity. Furthermore, according to Axworthy, Canada has an important role to play in the international community. Indeed, it was Canadian leadership and initiative which paved the way for international cooperation in areas such as the Landmines Treaty and the International Criminal Court.

The weekend, although intellectually and physically exhausting, concentrated our attention on a number of critical issues, thus helping to fulfill the Foundation’s mandate of providing a forum for discussion of contentious issues that is informed, civil, and mindful of a plurality of perspectives.

#### join our email list

We would be pleased to inform you of upcoming forums, symposia and events throughout the year.

To join our email list, please contact Elaine at:

[elaine@chumirethicsfoundation.ca](mailto:elaine@chumirethicsfoundation.ca)

See you on-line!

## **Beyond Window Dressing**

by Jennifer Williams

Sheldon Chumir Foundation 2001—2002 Media Fellow

“Optics has replaced ethics,” said Arthur Levitt, former Chairman of the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission shortly after the Enron crisis. Watching the latest public relations contortions of politicians and CEOs following reports of scandals does raise the question of what is being done to prevent ethical misdeeds in the first place.

Enron did everything by the ethics consultant’s book, at least. They had a code of conduct booklet that included a letter of endorsement signed by its former CEO Kenneth Lay himself.

Ethics is big business. Close to 95% of Fortune 500 companies now teach ethics to their employees. By the mid-1990s more than 80% of large companies had codes of corporate conduct, and more than a third of companies had a corporate ethics officer. In a KPMG Ethics Survey, released in 2000, of Canadian companies and public sector organizations, 70% of respondents said that their organization’s ethics document was created in the last 5 years.

How effective are the codes of conduct and ethics programs that have become so popular within organizations? Significantly, only 14.3% of those surveyed had evaluated their ethical performance to date, according to the KPMG report. And just 27.3% had looked at alignment between their “ethical principle set forward and policies and practices.” Less than half the organizations surveyed had a senior-level manager whose re-



Pearson College students apply their ethics perspectives to the Symposium



Media Fellow Jennifer Williams (l) and Ruth Buchanan enjoy the Gala Dinner at the Symposium

sponsibilities included implementation, monitoring, or assurance of ethics initiatives. Of those managers with such responsibilities, 31.3% said they spent 5% or less of their time each year on ethics responsibilities (about 3 to 12 work days a year)

Is there any incentive built-in for employees to behave more ethically? Reward and promotions were linked to ethical performance for personnel among 15.6% of respondents and 27.9% in the case of managers.

In some cases, employees are required to behave ethically by reporting fraud, for example, but are not necessarily protected from retaliation. In KPMG’s Business Ethics Survey (1998), close to two-thirds of respondents said they had a written policy that requires employees “to report fraud or misconduct in the workplace” and 90% of respondents were confident that employees would comply. These respondents ranked retaliation against internal whistleblowers as “least likely to occur of all the items measured in the Business Ethics survey.”

Unfortunately, the employers’ commitments to employees in terms of actual protection of whistleblowers is not as solid as they would like to believe. Neil Shankman, author of an article called “Whistleblowing Can Be a Loser Move,” summarized the surveys’ findings:

Protection of internal whistleblowers was ranked among the least 10 areas addressed by written policies and only 40% of respondents reported having formal systems designed to protect in-

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ternal whistleblowers from retaliation. One-fifth of respondents do not have any type of protection system, and the rest rely only on informal measures to protect whistleblowers from retaliation.

Shankman, a professor at York University's Schulich School of Business, believes the KPMG surveys "reveal that corporate self-interest is taking precedence over obligations to employees due to faulty assumptions about the likelihood of retaliation, and by ignoring harm to others." He concludes that while loyalty is expected from employees, it's not generally reciprocated by providing protection for whistleblowers.

Given these conditions, is it any wonder documents are leaked?

Mark Wexler, professor of business ethics at Simon Fraser University, believes that "In the 70s you have this notion that they [codes of conduct] are useful, in the 80s they're a panacea and in the 90s they're an insurance policy" in case the organization is ever taken to court. After the fall of Enron, copies of its code of conduct popped up on Ebay with the cheeky tag line "never been opened."

Following the largest bankruptcy in U.S. history, there has been a great deal of discussion about the need to tighten accounting regulations and bolster enforcement mechanisms and much hand-wringing over values. Yes, trust has been broken. Yes, there was a lack



Raj Dhanarajan and Brian Long of the Commonwealth of Learning discuss globalization



participants converse at the Symposium

of integrity. No, you can't legislate either or cover every possible contingency. But the "bankruptcy of character" that Missouri Senator Jean Carnahan referred to does not extend to every Enron employee nor should it be applied to every federal government employee.

One solution is to protect those on the inside who know what is going on. The British figured this out in the mid-90s when public inquiries into a number of scandals reported that many lives and jobs could have been saved had employees felt they could speak out without fear of retaliation. Their *Public Interest Disclosure Act*, which came into effect in 1999, covers both public and private sector employees and is considered among the most far reaching whistleblower protection in the world.

In Canada, protection is spotty. At least half a dozen private members' bills calling for whistleblower protection have died on the order paper in the last decade. This year, following hearings from coast to coast, the Canadian Democracy and Corporate Accountability Commission headed by Ed Broadbent and Avie Bennett published a report that recommended whistleblower legislation "protecting employees from discharge, suspension, demotion, harassment, blacklisting, or other adverse employment action taken against an employee for the disclosure of alleged criminal or fraudulent acts committed by their employers, in the public or private sector."

Optics doesn't have to replace ethics but the savvy Canadian employee and potential whistleblower, well aware of the limitations of ethics codes and legislation, doesn't want the story to change to his or her career going down in flames.

## **The Politics of Violence**

by Alex Barber

Research Associate with the Chumir Foundation

During the 1980s, B.C. lawyer and human rights activist Ujjal Dosanjh became renowned for his strong public stand against the use of violence by Sikh nationalists in India. His beliefs earned him the enmity of various radical Sikh factions and a beating with a crowbar, resulting in 80 stitches. Dosanjh would recover and go on to lead the B.C. New Democratic Party, eventually becoming Canada's first Indo-Canadian premier in 2000.

In May of 2002 Pim Fortuyn, the gay populist leader of a newly created Dutch right-wing political party, was shot six times outside a radio station nine days before elections. Fortuyn was subsequently elected posthumously and his party, in a coalition with Christian Democrats, went on to defeat the Labour government in one of the most bizarre episodes in the Netherlands' political history.

On the surface these incidents may seem to have nothing more in common than the use of violence by disturbed individuals to symbolize dissatisfaction with the public utterances of their victims. It is convenient to locate Dosanjh on the Left and Fortuyn on the Right of the political spectrum. However, it is impossible and unfair to dissect the ideological motivations of individuals who commit violent acts against public officials. It would not be reasonable to claim that such individuals can be said to be representative of the associations for whom they claim to speak. Political movements tend to attract a wide range of people with varying interests, who are not all convinced of the utility of non-violent grassroots organizing as an instrument for political reform.

What does this say about politics in mature liberal democracies? It is often comforting to think of democracy in Canada today as passionate and resolute but generally harmless and non-violent. During the 1990s, the possibility of a violent U.S. type civil war scenario after Quebec's political separation was often scoffed at by federalist and separatist alike. Yet Canadian political history is by no means free of instances of brutal violence directed against political, racial, and ethnic minorities.

Even today violence between protestors and police seems to be a permanent feature of any international gathering of policy-makers and political leaders in Canada. Events leading up to the G8 Summit in Kananaskis have produced an abundance of arrests, tear gas, and bit-

ter feelings. Law enforcement authorities and protestors, egged on by members of eager media, usually succeed in creating great television rather than useful public information about issues surrounding globalization and democracy.

The point here is that the words and rhetoric used by the leaders of organized groups often have special significance. Too often those in the public eye do not perceive that they have an ethical obligation to stress the importance of non-violent expression as a basis for political or social change. This is not to say that there ought to be legal limits on those who desire to express dissent. Rather, it is important to remind leaders of their responsibilities not only to their followers, but to the wider community they seek to influence. Ultimately it is in the interest of every organized group to promote and maintain an atmosphere of civil and principled debate.

The G8 is no longer just a forum for macroeconomic policy coordination. The actions and decisions of the leaders of the states involved have ramifications far beyond their own borders. Thus politicians, policy-makers, protestors, and police all have legitimate functions and duties at G8 meetings. Yet if progress is to be made on the issues of concern to all the groups involved, state and non-state actors must be willing to consider the views of their detractors and renounce the use of violence as a means to control or limit dissent.

Violence is an easy escape route from the intellectual rigor demanded by the requirements of governance in an interdependent world. All sides concerned with debates about the implications of globalization can and have accused others of instigating violence and there appears to be no reason why this trend cannot continue. Meanwhile an omnipresent media stands by, ready to construct the next simplistic narrative. A more structured role for the myriad of civil society groups at international gatherings should be the next step for generating informed non-violent public debate.

Both the beating of Dosanjh and the murder of Fortuyn took place in a political milieu of inflamed political rhetoric and anger. It should be said that violence in modern Canadian political history is the exception rather than the norm. However, since democracies by definition will always contain different groups with competing interests the importance of non-violent dialogue must be stressed repeatedly and not just after the next violent incident.

**Diversity or Disappearance?**  
**Building Better Relationships**  
**Among all Calgaryians**

by David Hughes

Chumir Foundation Intern for 2001-2002

I came to this internship hoping to contribute to building better relationships among all Calgaryians. Prior to the internship one of my academic areas of interest was understanding the relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in Canada.

Statistics about Aboriginal people in Canada are depressing. The per capita rates of imprisonment, the lack of safe drinking water on many reserves, unemployment, infant mortality, high drop-out rates from educational situations... the list goes on. Over the course of the internship I have been fortunate to meet many exceptional people working on Aboriginal issues in Calgary. I have also been able to visit the Nakoda, Tsuu T'ina and Alexis First Nations and speak to people there. Nothing I have seen or heard this year has dissuaded me from the conviction that improving Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal relationships is the most critical social issue facing Canadians.

There can be no doubt that, for a variety of reasons, Aboriginal people have become the most marginalized group in Canada. As Reverend Margaret Waterchief said at the recent Chumir Foundation Symposium "I would still say the majority of us have no idea [about globalization] and are not really preparing." That is a striking statement. While a group of Canadians invest a great deal of time and energy campaigning for social justice by protesting the G8 and globalization, there is a group of people in our country who have little idea about what globalization means. There is some bitter irony in this fact.

What can Aboriginal people do to improve their situations? What role should non-Aboriginal people play? A starting point has to be sitting down and discussing these questions with one another. However, these are very touchy issues and just sitting down together seems to be difficult. In many parts of western Canada there exists a thinly-veiled conflict between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. The dialogue has become too politicized; discussions have been overtaken by rhetoric from all sides and many non-Aboriginals feel that Aboriginals have chosen their solitude. This is a dangerous situation. When we cease to talk to people we de-humanize them. Because we feel uncomfortable, or

irritated, we tend to ignore these people – we wish they would disappear.

Recently I attended a planning session for Diversity Calgary, which grew out of the City's Task Force on Cultural and Racial Diversity. A noble initiative whose vision is "a Calgary free of cultural and racial barriers where all people are valued and respected", Diversity Calgary's May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2002 meeting took a major step toward improving the quality of life in our city. Yet, unfortunately, I only met one person at the meeting who identified themselves as Aboriginal. The lack of Aboriginal participation in this crucial meeting astounded and disappointed many people in attendance. The organizers explained this absence by referring participants to a letter from Carrie Neilson, the Issue Strategist for the City of Calgary. In her letter Neilson wrote that:

Many have expressed concern that there appears to be no inclusion or participation of the Calgary urban Aboriginal community in the Diversity Calgary Initiative. The Diversity Calgary Initiative recognizes and affirms the unique historical and cultural status of Aboriginal citizens. It recognizes that the Aboriginal community has a right to self-determination. This requires an ongoing and unique process distinct from the work of Diversity Calgary.

In a conversation after the conference, Ms. Neilson explained that the city of Calgary has already invested a lot of time and money in a separate Aboriginal process under RCAP (the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples) and that the Aboriginal leaders that the City consulted had expressed no interest in being involved in Diversity Calgary.

There is still something troubling about this. Just because *some* Aboriginal leaders have chosen not to be involved in the Diversity Calgary initiative does not mean that the majority of Aboriginals are not interested. There is no guarantee that the Aboriginal leaders consulted, whose interests may be primarily in self-governance, accurately reflect the interests of those Aboriginals they claim to speak for. But even assuming that these leaders did speak for all Aboriginals, should Aboriginals be able to unilaterally excuse themselves from this process? I think the answer is 'no'. The issue is not just an Aboriginal one, it is about how all people in Calgary should live together and as citizens of Calgary we all have an obligation to take part in that discussion.

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The media and academia do little to shed this isolationist image in the eyes of the average Canadian. Any Aboriginal presence in the media is usually confined to land claims and Native protesters leaving the average Canadian with a skewed picture. How many people have actually tried *talking* to ordinary Aboriginal people about their lives? As Waterchief explains, “even us adults, we can live side-by-side in towns, as neighbours, but we never bother to visit, or to inform each other about our ways of life, our culture – and just how we’re doing.”

This picture of Aboriginals demanding self-determination and isolation is a very different picture from the one I have discovered on the reserves I have been to. Not one young person I met there listed “self-governance” as his or her top priority. All of them spoke about their desire for better education, to feel they could get a job in Calgary or Edmonton, to feel they could fit in, both in the city as well as on the reserve. Self-governance and land claims are big issues that must and will be dealt with. But this is a slow, high-level, process and the danger is that in concentrating exclusively on the dramatic, legal, political issues, we miss the most crucial everyday issues that affect most Aboriginal people. Diversity Calgary’s programs, curriculum changes and partnerships are as applicable to Aboriginals as to members of other groups.

What was perhaps most disturbing about the Diversity Calgary meeting was not the lack of Aboriginal representation, but the fact that people just accepted the reasons given. It was unfortunate, but oh well, what could one do if ‘they’ didn’t want to be involved?

There is a lot that one can do. As a starting point, I suggest that anyone who reads this and is concerned about trying to increase understanding in Calgary telephone, email or write to the City of Calgary and Diversity Calgary letting them know this. If “all people” are to be valued and respected, then “all people” must be included in the discussion. Otherwise we risk become a city of two solitudes – Calgarians from all walks of life with backgrounds in various countries and religions in one corner; and Aboriginals in another. Is this the type of city we want?

City of Calgary Aboriginal Services (403) 268-5111	Diversity Calgary, Springboard Consulting Inc. 1420-5 Street NW Calgary AB T2M 3B9 (403) 234-0797 melnykj@cadvision.com
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*Book Release*

**Community Values  
in an age of  
Globalization**

The proceedings of the Chumir Foundation’s major Symposium held April 26 — 28, 2002 in Calgary, are now available in book form. Copies at \$12.50 each, plus shipping and GST, are available by calling Elaine at the Foundation office:

(403) 244-6666

The book may also be ordered by email:  
info@chumirethicsfoundation.ca

or by fax: (403) 244-5596

or by mail: Suite 200, 850 - 16 Ave SW,  
Calgary, AB T2R 0S9

*Other Publications*

**The Ethics of Corporate Social Responsibility:  
Management Trend of the New Millennium?**

and

**GLOBALIZATION:  
The Path to Liberty, the Path to Captivity**

by Alison (Jeffrey) Azer  
Chumir Foundation 2001-2002 Public Policy Fellow

**EXPOSING THE BOSS  
A Study In Canadian  
Journalism Ethics**

by Bob Bergen  
Chumir Foundation 2001-2002 Media Fellow

All texts are available on the Foundation web site at  
www.chumirethicsfoundation.ca

*in memoriam*

**Dr. E.A. Flagler**

It is with great regret and sadness that the Foundation announces the death of one of our founding Board members, Dr. Elizabeth Ann (Betty) Flagler, an outstanding physician and surgeon, on May 12, 2002. Betty was devoted to the trust placed in her by her close friend, Sheldon Chumir, to participate in establishing the Foundation, defining its mandate and directing its operations; and she carried out that trust with enthusiasm, energy and wisdom right up until her death.

The Foundation plans to establish a lasting memorial to this extraordinary friend and colleague. She will be very much missed.

## Announcements

### **Appointment of Media Fellow: Douglas Todd**

The Sheldon M. Chumir Foundation for Ethics in Leadership takes pleasure in announcing the appointment of **Douglas Todd**, as its **2002 - 2003 Media Fellow**.

Mr. Todd will explore how community leaders can best create a civil society that respects "the other" and balances freedom of expression against the need to separate religion and state. He asks, "What should the public face of religion look like in a healthy society?... Religious leaders regularly impose harsh values on unwilling populations. In Western secular societies, prominent officials from different religions complain they're being ghettoized, their contributions restricted." The results of his work will be widely available for publication in newspapers, radio and internet.

Mr. Todd is an award winning journalist who now writes about ethics and religion for *The Vancouver Sun*. Following studies in world religions and philosophy of religion, he obtained his journalism degree from Langara College in 1980. In 1993 he received the Templeton Reporter of the Year Award, honouring him as the best religion writer at any secular newspaper or magazine in North America.

In addition to our Media Fellowship, the Foundation is also delighted this year, for the first time, to be able to provide two grants in aid of research projects in ethics in media in the developing world. The two recipients for 2002 - 2003 are Mildred Ngesa Arackha of Nairobi, Kenya for a project entitled: "The Injustices of 'Justice': A Case of Torture and Police Brutality in Kenya" and Kajal Basu of New Delhi, India for a project entitled "The Ethics of 'Sting' Journalism in Developing Nations."

### **SHELDON CHUMIR FOUNDATION FOR ETHICS IN LEADERSHIP**

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web site: [www.chumirethicsfoundation.ca](http://www.chumirethicsfoundation.ca)

### **Appointment of Intern: DJ Guzda**

The Sheldon Chumir Foundation for Ethics in Leadership takes pleasure in announcing the appointment of **Donald James "DJ" Guzda** as its **Intern** for 2002 - 2003. Mr. Guzda will take up his internship in the fall of 2002.

Mr. Guzda is currently working toward his Masters Degree in Political Science at the University of Alberta, where he specializes in International Political Economy. His undergraduate studies were in international relations and political philosophy. He plans to pursue a legal career, promoting women's and minority rights through education.

DJ is the recipient of several awards for his active involvement in campus life. He says "the whole of my university career has focused on maintaining a balance between academics and involvement in my community in various capacities."

The Foundation looks forward to Mr. Guzda's contributions of to our mission of enhancing ethics in leadership.

### **Appointment of Public Policy Fellow: John Harker**

The Sheldon M. Chumir Foundation for Ethics in Leadership takes pleasure in announcing the appointment of John Harker, as its 2002 - 2003 Public Policy Fellow.

"Public Policy, Private Power: Ethical Leadership in the Conduct of Canada's Extractive Industries Abroad" will examine how one corporation's experience and one country's response will contribute to a general understanding of how a culture of ethical conduct can be fostered in extractive corporations, and in the public services which regulate, support, or protect them.

Mr. Harker was appointed by the Canadian government to advise on whether or not oil investment by a Canadian company was exacerbating the civil war in Sudan. He serves as a member of the international Advisory Board of Oil and Gas Online, as a Fellow of the Institute for African and Asian Studies at the University of Khartoum, and devotes much of his time to public discussion at universities. He also advises the Peacebuilding Unit of the Canadian International Development Agency on Sudan, the Commonwealth Business Council, and assists various NGOs.