



Chumir Ethics Forum



Sheldon Chumir Foundation for Ethics in Leadership

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President's Message

The business pages of Canada's newspapers provide daily comment on public concern about issues of ethics in leadership. Whether it is an article about problems of corporate governance, worries from MBA students that their programs are not sufficiently directed toward learning how to deal with ethical problems in the corporate world, simplified "cases" raising questions relating to ethics in the workplace or yet another conference on corporate responsibility, we seem to be experiencing a hunger for answers to questions about how to behave ethically and how to avoid ethical pitfalls in business, both locally and internationally.

One difficulty is that there is no simple template to apply against ethical dilemmas that will grind out the right answer every time. When, at the Foundation, we are asked to help organizations deal with some of these issues, we find that it is the process of thinking through the issues and applying that thinking to new cases that can move us forward. In this, as in other areas, practice can help to make perfect.

In this context, we should remember that the aim is not to promulgate rules of conduct and ensure compliance, but to foster in organizations an ethical culture which forms the basis of their integrity and reputation. Openness and accountability are key, as is recognizing responsibilities as the other side of rights, and building trust both within the organization,

and among a broad range of stakeholders. Rules, principles or guidelines are but a means to this end, and which means work best may depend upon the particular context in which we are operating.

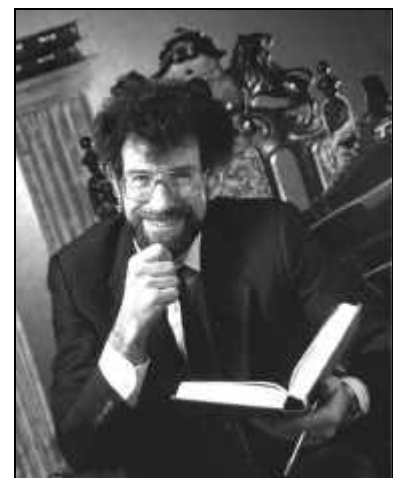
Of course, the corporate context is but one among many in which ethical issues arise. Two articles in this newsletter illustrate some approaches to ethical issues that cry out for thoughtful public discussion. Last year's Media Fellow, Jennifer Williams, introduces us to her research on whistleblowing – a phenomenon that has captured much media attention, even to having noted whistleblowers selected as "persons of the year" by a national magazine. But, rather than glorifying whistleblowers in the media, perhaps we should see the need for their activities as pointing to a lack of an ethical culture at the foundation of our organizations. This is a topic we will be exploring in two half-day seminars (in Calgary and Toronto) in the fall.

Secondly, our current Media Fellow Douglas Todd, raises a number of interesting questions about the role of religion and ethics in Canadian society. There is much that is provocative in Todd's article, and readers may want to question some of the assumptions on which it is based. The completed projects of our Fellows will appear, in due course, on

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Sheldon M. Chumir

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our website -- an illustration of the role of the Chumir Foundation in fostering informed and principled discussion of important public issues that have an ethical dimension.

With this issue we say farewell and thank you to this year's Intern, DJ Guzda, who returns in the autumn to the University of Alberta to complete his MA in Political Science. We wish him well in this venture.

Many of you who have been attending our public events and forums have asked about some of the other work that we do, so we have, in this issue, outlined a number of collaborative projects in which we are currently engaged. You read, in our last issue, about several collaborations on voter apathy and attempts to foster, among citizens, and especially younger people, increased participation in the political process. The outline in this issue (p.5), will give you an idea not only of the range of issues around ethics in leadership in which we are involved, but also should provide a sense of how we attempt to leverage the work we do through partnerships and connections that concentrate resources and avoid duplication. It is one way of making a difference, and we're committed to that.

As always, we welcome your comments and suggestions. I wish you a healthy, happy and refreshing summer.

Marsha Hanen, President
Sheldon Chumir Foundation
for Ethics in Leadership



Marsha Hanen speaks at the April Foreign Policy Forum

Foreign Policy: Is there an ethical way forward?



The ethical considerations associated with Foreign Policy are of great importance to many Canadians. With the Foundation's capacity to organize an opportunity for dialogue, we felt it appropriate and potentially instructive for the Foundation to convene a public forum focusing on the ethical dimension of Can-

ada's Foreign Policy during the Dialogue on Foreign Policy (the "Dialogue") led by Bill Graham, Minister of Foreign Affairs. The event was structured so that there would be output from the event capable of submission to Minister Graham's Dialogue. The event was held in Calgary, Alberta on the evening of Tuesday 29th April, 2003.

Those attending the forum heard from, and engaged with, panellists selected for their expertise and the fact that they presented a range of perspectives outside the traditional foreign policy setting milieu: an expert on business ethics in a globalized economy, a member of the media, an expert in military/strategic studies and a former Foreign Policy practitioner. Their perspectives on the ethical dimensions of Foreign Policy in an increasingly complex international arena provided insights into the opportunities and challenges for Canada to chart an ethical course without losing sight of fundamental Canadian principles and values.

The panel comprised: Prof. Wesley Cragg, Schulich School of Business York University, Chair/President Transparency International Canada (Toronto); Dr. John R. Ferris, Professor, Department of History, University of Calgary (Calgary); Mr. Ross Howard, Journalist, Associate - Institute for Media, Policy and Civil Society (IMPACS) - (Vancouver); and Mr. William T. Warden, former Ambassador and High Commissioner with the Government of Canada, former Executive Director of International Centre - University of Calgary. Dr. Stephen J. Randall, Dean of Social Sciences - University of Calgary moderated and Mr. John Harker, 2002-2003 Sheldon Chumir Foundation Public Policy Fellow, provided the opening remarks.

Alison Dempsey
Program Director

What should the public face of religion look like in a healthy society?



Religion, like sex, is a volatile force. In the wrong hands, it can be used to overpower and oppress. The news bursts forth daily with grim reminders of how religious leaders - in Afghanistan, India, Ireland and elsewhere - impose fear of God and a harsh morality on

cowed populations. In Canada, we feel suspicious when politicians appear to haul out the name of the Supreme Being to gather support. In the right hands, however, religion, and the related subjects of spirituality and ethics, can be a source of rich values that will contribute to a civilized society. What should the public face of religion look like in a healthy society? Should God be brought into the cultural marketplace?

Yes. Creative, non-coercive ways can be found to better integrate religious, spiritual and moral sensibilities into four spheres of Canadian life: politics and public policy, education, the news media and mass entertainment.

Different forces still work to keep formal religion, as well as less institutionalized spirituality and values, out of the public realm. Some strong-minded secularists believe organized religion is irrational and destructive; it should definitely never be imposed on them in a public forum.

Ironically, perhaps, many zealous religious people also don't want public spirituality. If their own brand of orthodoxy (in Canada, it's typically Christianity) is not able to dominate, then they think the square should simply be washed clean of religion, especially threatening minority religions and New Age spiritualities. In addition, some financial powers don't want religion, spirituality and ethics to be seriously integrated into public discussion. Perhaps without realizing it, they worry the widespread expression of

spiritual perspectives in the marketplace will threaten what they see as the ultimacy of the economic bottom-line.

Without dismissing these groups' partly valid worries (I also don't want to live in a theocracy run by priests or mullahs), this project points to how Canada could become a more culturally complex and, frankly, interesting, country if we loosened the headlock there is on public spirituality. We could, as Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor suggests, better resist an increasingly empty consumer culture, as well as embrace "wider horizons of meaning."

This report, as well as reflecting my own journey, will feature some of the best minds in the field of spirituality and culture, as well as the voices of everyday Christians, Muslims, Jews, atheists, agnostics and searchers. For enlightenment and fun, it will also examine popular culture, looking at how movies, TV shows and songs have handled spiritual themes in creative ways.

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The project begins with a special emphasis on the Netherlands, arguably the most experimental democracy in the world when it comes to balancing the needs of religious and spiritual people with a basically secular state. The Netherlands, which is famous for its tolerant attitude to drugs, prostitution, euthanasia and homosexuality, has decided the best way to recognize and integrate religious groups is to fully fund their schools. As a result, a large majority of Dutch students now attend religious-based schools, even though most of the country's students are atheists or agnostics or religiously unaffiliated. Should that be a model for us?

The Netherlands is also currently hot news because it's at a turning point regarding issues of religion and state. The assassination in 2002 of maverick Dutch political leader Pim Fortuyn, an openly homosexual man with radical ideas about Muslims, has thrown the country into an identity crisis. Fortuyn was opposed to Islam because he thought it intolerant. Now revered by a large number of Dutch as a martyr, Fortuyn's ideas about restrict-

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ing Muslim immigration and imposing limits on Muslim expression have been gathering steam. The country's fault lines are showing.

In addition to exploring what Canada can learn from the Netherlands, the project also looks at ways our dramatically multicultural, multifaith nation could improve on the European way of doing things.

Public Policy

In the sphere of politics and government, I'll suggest how, without becoming a theocracy, the role of religious and spiritual people could be creatively expanded in Canada - where roughly one of three Canadians attends a religious institution at least once a month and where more than four out of five believe in some sort of Supreme Being. Spiritual values, even philosophies of life, can hardly be openly discussed by Canadian politicians today, except in the most hackneyed ways (such as "I believe in democracy."). This project will show how Canada has been heavily shaped by religion and how it still influences our political choices. Still, some argue cogently that Canada has not become a truly pluralistic culture.

While Christian norms were dominant until the 60s, now secularism reigns as the supreme ideology. And while Canadians definitely don't need a state-established religion, public debate could be enhanced if policy makers took seriously Canadian Catholics, United Church members, evangelicals, Jews and Muslims when they pressed for change on a wide range of issues (not just sexual morality), such as free trade, war, gun control and genetic technology. With more spiritual and ethical discussion at the governmental level, we'll go a long way to resisting the deadening effect of mass culture, which concentrates on who's winning rather than what's good, true and beautiful.

Education

In the realm of education, I'll look at how most teachers are afraid to touch religious, spiritual and ethical topics. They're too complex and too contentious; teachers aren't trained to handle them and they fear they'll be accused of indoctrination if they do. As a result, Canadian students remain largely ignorant about one of the most powerful cultural forces in history. Like many of their parents, they have virtually no religious literacy.

News Media

When it comes to the news media, this re-

port suggests religion, spirituality and ethics - when not being ignored by the Canadian news media, are at best ghettoized. While more Canadians attend a church, mosque, temple or synagogue every week than go to a professional sports event, Canadian media outlets have hundreds of sports reporters but only a handful of specialists covering the complexities and controversies of religion. Particularly in an era when mistrust of Muslims is rising, many are arguing now is the most important time to provide fair and accurate looks at minority religions.

Entertainment Industry

The last part of the report digs into how to improve the relationship between religion and the mass entertainment industry, including advertising. This is a realm typically obsessed with sexuality, violence and cynicism. But there can be spiritual wheat amongst the entertainment industry's chaff. This section will illustrate how scriptwriters can explore spiritual themes in non-sentimental and non-pious ways. It shows, for example, how TV shows such as *The West Wing* and *The Sopranos* have imaginatively and artistically lifted up spiritual and ethical themes.

What, finally, is the value of public religion - especially when it's gone so wrong in earlier times and still can in contemporary authoritarian cultures?

Organized religion, spirituality and ethics, at their best, are ways to touch something larger than ourselves. They can be an antidote to a society that increasingly finds meaning in status, power and success. The more that wider horizons of meaning are part of Canadians' public consciousness the more likely we are to build a civilization that's committed to something beyond following the money.

Douglas Todd

2002-2003 Media Fellow



Official opening of the Kahanoff Centre for non-profits

Connections and Collaborations

Much of the Foundation's work results in lasting partnerships with other organizations. We have described various such projects in previous newsletters; here we outline a few of our current collaborations.

Ethical Citizenship in the Schools

We are engaged, with our partner organization, Citizenship Matters, in a project designed to develop a profile of the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that Canadians should be able to expect of students graduating from high school. The intent is that the profile be used to guide civics curricula in Canadian schools.

Our two organizations, together with Historica, based in Toronto, are also developing a curriculum project to teach citizenship and ethics, building upon visual materials (the well-known Heritage Minutes) which highlight important figures in Canadian history. The curriculum materials – print and electronic – will be made available to schools and teachers through Historica's wide networks.

Another partnership involves work with the Pearson College. The Pearson Ethics Initiative (PEI) seeks to promote ethical inquiry at the high school level through respectful discussion and participation in community projects, addressing commitment to cultural diversity and global ideals of justice and peace. The Pearson project is developing curriculum that will be shared with other schools interested in promoting ethics education, thus disseminating ethical ideas well beyond local schools or school districts.

Africa-related Projects

Corporate Social Responsibility & Business Renaissance in Africa – Kananaskis Plus One (June 2003): We have been involved in organising a two day conference in Calgary. The event is intended to help to build some consensus on ethical, sustainable and responsible business practices for Canadian companies operating abroad, the government, and other organizations. We hope it will be a valuable opportunity for organizations which share values and objectives in this area to share experience, ideas and knowledge.

Together with several other partners, we are engaged in an Ethics Promotion Project aimed at capacity building in the civil service in Tanzania. Two elements of this program involve host-

ing a group of fourteen senior members of the Tanzanian civil service for a study week in Calgary in August, 2003. During the eight succeeding months, we expect to have eight Tanzanian fellowship holders each spending two weeks to a month with the Foundation learning about some of the work we do and, in turn, informing us, and the community, about their work.

Ethics and Business

Ottawa Codes Dialogue (June 2003): We are participating in an invitation only session intended to stimulate and guide an agenda-setting dialogue on the business standards that should govern the conduct of Canadian corporations in international commerce. The project includes both Canadian and international participants from business, government, NGO's, environmental and human rights organizations, labour and academia.

Ethics in the Workplace (Autumn 2003): We have developed a half-day event that builds on a key theme to explore the importance and practice of creating and fostering an ethical organizational culture. We plan to hold this event in both Calgary and Toronto later in the year and have initiated a collaboration with a Toronto based non-profit ethics organization in this regard.

Research Collaborations

CPRN: During the autumn and winter of 2003, the Foundation will be involved in the two rounds of external consultations relating to a project led by the Canadian Policy Research Network's (CPRN) on ethics and intergenerational equity in health care.

We are also participating in a large project entitled "on identity, anonymity and privacy." The project includes collaborators from academia, public and private sector organizations. Our roles involve research on the ethical challenges posed by a full understanding of privacy and anonymity, and conducting public forums to gather feedback on some of the issues.

Enhancing the Not for Profit Sector

In the not for profit context, we are pursuing a number of innovative collaborative projects addressing the ethics, governance and accountability challenges and opportunities for this sector. We expect a range of outcomes from this work, including holding seminars on these issues for appropriate interested organizations.

What is a Whistleblower?



What is a whistleblower? An editorial in the *New York Observer* (Jan. 6th, 2003) criticized *Time* magazine's inclusion of Enron's vice-president of corporate development Sherron Watkins in its cover story of "Persons of the Year." The *Observer* editorial writers felt that Watkins

did not qualify as a whistleblower because she did not go public, report the problem to the authorities or get fired from her job.

Whistleblower means many things to different people. To some it connotes "snitch," to others "hero." A whistleblower is a spoilsport who calls an end to the game over an infraction — or the consummate team player who believes everyone should play fair and who has the big picture in mind. In much of the literature on the subject, a whistleblower is defined as an employee, or former employee, who calls attention to unethical behaviour damaging to the public interest, be it wasteful spending of tax dollars, health hazards, corruption or other criminal activity. However, the media and the general public sometimes apply the term to anyone who speaks out, especially if he or she appears to be a lone voice taking on the powers that be.

Many articles in the business sections of newspapers have asked "Why didn't analysts blow the whistle?" on Enron. Erin Brockovich has been hailed as a whistleblower in this spirit. Clearly, blowing the whistle is being used to describe an action that is in the public interest by people in the know, whether they are employees or not. People whose paycheques don't depend on those they are accusing obviously do not have the same kind of worries about retribution as do employee whistleblowers. So, while acknowledging that citizens and watchdog organizations can draw attention to a problem in the same way as a whistleblower (the Dutch word for whistleblower is similar to "bell ringer," for those who ring church bells to alert a community to a threat), my research focuses on whistleblowers who risk their employment, pensions and reputations by speaking out in the public interest. By this definition Sherron Watkins is a whistleblower, even though she did not go to the press.

Indeed, all three of the whistleblowers chosen as "Persons of the Year" tried to resolve their concerns internally. This is the recourse suggested in many cases and it is important to document that internal steps were attempted in case the whistleblower ends up in court.

The most famous cases are generally situations where whistleblowers decide they must go public. There are also good circumstantial reasons to take this route, such as when there is an imminent risk to the public (Nancy Olivieri—the Toronto doctor who felt pressure to bury damaging pharmaceutical results); when internal channels have been exhausted without the problem being resolved; when the problem is too high up for internal channels to work; or when the whistleblower is in danger for expressing his or her views (New York undercover cop Frank Serpico and nuclear safety activist Karen Silkwood).

So there are internal whistleblowers, internal whistleblowers who become public whistleblowers, and a final category: the alumni whistleblower. A Canadian example of the alumni whistleblower is Jon Grant, who was Chair of Canada Lands. After leaving that organization and becoming Chair of Laurentian Bank's Board of Directors, he blew the whistle on Alfonso Gagliano, the then Minister of Public Works, who was allegedly involved in influence peddling and eventually reassigned as ambassador to Denmark.

My research focuses on codes of conduct and legislation to support would-be whistleblowers, internal whistleblowers and public whistleblowers whose livelihoods are on the line. Whistleblowers, in my working use of the term, are employees who have legitimate cause to sound the alarm (not to be confused with disgruntled employees), risking a great deal by refusing to let the issue drop when internal mechanisms don't resolve the problem. Alumni whistleblowers (who left their employer voluntarily and not as a result of retribution) and concerned citizens, be they journalists, lawyers, politicians or alert consumers, can and should continue also to be "bright lights" from outside an organization. But to me, and others, the term whistleblower is reserved for employees or former employees in a tenuous position. The perception of whistleblowers may be changing of late with their valorization in the media — but this has not yet translated into more protection in Canada for the people who have truly earned the moniker.

Jennifer Williams
2001-2002 Media Fellow

Language & Engagement: The Coalition for Equal Access for Education



A focus of the Chumir Foundation is engaging citizens in dialogue as a means to develop community-minded values and behaviour. A fundamental component of dialogue – and engagement – is language. In the absence of an effective and efficient com-

mand of either official language, the efficacy of an engaged and participating citizenry is compromised. In keeping with this focus, the Foundation, through its 2002-2003 Intern D.J. Guzda, has continued to provide some help to the Coalition for Equal Access to Education over the past eight months – a relationship established in 2001 by Intern David Hughes. Both interns helped target initiatives that raise awareness of the challenges facing English as a Second Language (ESL) learners and ESL education in Alberta through their participation in the Coalition's monthly meetings and in the planning and implementation of a major consultation process.

The Coalition was created in Calgary in 1992 with a mandate to work with community, education, and government stakeholders to promote quality, effective, and equitable ESL education for children and youth. The work of the Coalition is supported by a number of community members and organizations in Calgary. Hieu van Ngo, Coordinator of the Coalition, has been working to create an opportunity for stakeholders with three objectives in mind. The first is to raise awareness of the 'three pillars of ESL education': pedagogically sound programming; adequate resources; and measurable results. The second objective is to develop a forum where stakeholders can participate in a facilitated dialogue to raise awareness of the current situation regarding ESL support in public education. The third objective is to highlight the widespread effect ESL education has on communities, individuals, and other stakeholders.

During 2002 – 2003, the Coalition developed a two-phase project entitled, *Toward an Innovative Vision for Quality Equitable ESL Education*. The first part of this project was a series of eighteen roundtables that took place in Edmonton and Calgary. The objective of this phase was to facilitate dialogues

among ESL education stakeholders and to identify ways to address challenges to the system. Mr. Ngo and members of the Coalition contacted 1500 potential participants from across Canada to engage in these discussions. Information packages were provided to help them become familiar with ESL issues and to promote thoughtful consideration of ways their sector could respond to the current challenges. Feedback was positive and the roundtables - which were attended by 250 of the respondents – resulted in well-structured and informative discussions.

The second phase of the project was an all day Symposium to raise awareness of the peripheral effects of ESL education on local communities and on Canadian society at large. Members of the community, school boards, provincial and federal governments gathered to discuss collaborative initiatives that could address the challenges shared by ESL learners and educators. Although the responsibilities of government in education are set out in the Canadian Constitution, stakeholders came together to think of new and innovative partnerships that could be developed that fall outside the traditional education policy framework.

The findings of this project are being compiled as the basis for a sustainable long-term response to the challenges that have been identified as facing ESL education.

DJ Guzda
2002 - 2003 Intern

EVENT REMINDER

INAUGURAL ELIZABETH FLAGLER

2003 Speaker: Dr. Françoise Baylis

Professor of Medicine and Philosophy
Dalhousie University

*"Stem Cell Research In Canada:
Embryos, Clones and Chimeras"*

MEMORIAL LECTURE

**Sheraton Suites Eau Claire, Calgary, Alberta
Friday, June 20th 2003, 8 p.m.**

For further information, or to confirm your attendance,
please contact the Foundation office

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2003 - 2004 Media Fellow: Gordon Laird

The Sheldon Chumir Foundation for Ethics in Leadership takes pleasure in announcing the appointment of **Gordon Laird**, as its **2003 – 2004 Media Fellow**. The four-month Fellowship will commence in June 2003.

Mr. Laird's topic,

"Shelter: The New Challenge for Canada" is an open and solution-oriented study of homelessness in Canada investigating the need for an evolution in governance - and the participation of civil society - that would advance public life beyond the institutional shortcomings of the 20th century. He identifies homelessness as a composite problem constructed largely from the escalation of other problems, one that has reached chronic proportions and is rapidly becoming one of Canada's defining social issues.

Mr. Laird is a writer and editor of wide repute, whose work has twice won gold at Canada's National Magazine Awards, including top honours for investigative reporting in 2001.

2003 - 2004 Public Policy Fellow: Kristen Boon

The Sheldon Chumir Foundation for Ethics in Leadership takes pleasure in announcing the appointment of **Kristen Boon** as its **2003 – 2004 Public Policy Fellow**. The four-month Fellowship will commence in the fall of 2003.

Ms. Boon's project, *Ethical Considerations of International Intervention and Governance*, explores the intersection between ethics and international law as it relates to (i) the moral foundation for armed international intervention in the absence of international consensus, and (ii) the ethical obligations which arise in the administration of territories in post-conflict situations.

A current Law Clerk to Supreme Court Justice Ian Binnie, Kristen holds BA (first class honours) and MA degrees from McGill University and a J.D. (*cum laude*) from New York University School of Law. Kristen is admitted to the Bar of New York and is preparing for her bar examinations in Ontario.

**SHELDON CHUMIR FOUNDATION
FOR ETHICS IN LEADERSHIP**

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2003 - 2004 Intern: Michelle McCann

The Sheldon Chumir Foundation for Ethics in Leadership takes pleasure in announcing the appointment of **Michelle McCann**, as its **2003 – 2004 Intern**. The nine month Internship will commence in September 2003.

Ms. McCann's work experience includes several part-time positions with the Calgary Sun as an Editorial Assistant and Graphics Artist, and the

Calgary Foothills Constituency Office where she is Assistant Manager. She is the recipient of a provincial scholarship from the Alberta Heritage Foundation, and has held two teaching assistantships and a research scholarship from the University of Calgary. During the past year she was President of the Graduate Students' Association and a member of the University's Board of Governors.

Michelle has a wealth of volunteer experience with student and civic organizations. Her interests stretch from local politics and civic participation to international relations - especially with regard to European Integration. She lives in Calgary, where she is completing her Masters of Arts in Political Science this summer.