



# Chumir Ethics Forum



Sheldon Chumir Foundation for Ethics in Leadership

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## Thinking about Ethical Leadership

### “Amending the National Anthem: Ethical Leadership on Gender Equality”

By Janet Keeping, President



As we approach another Canada Day and our armed forces continue to serve and die in Afghanistan,

my thoughts turn once again to the need to amend the words of the national anthem. As a feminist – which means that I believe in the equal worth and dignity of women and men – not such a scary idea really – I think it’s time we recognized the “true patriot love” of Canadian women for their country.

And yes, this is a bit of a feminist rant. You’ve been warned.

Blame it on my parents, I suppose, but while growing up the thought never crossed my mind that just because I was female, I was a lesser being. Nevertheless, I remember the moment when I first grasped that some people thought otherwise. It happened – and I am not making this up – while reading the preview issue of Ms. Magazine, which came out in early 1972. In the minutes before, I had been doing the dishes after a long day at work, while my (former) husband had been watching TV after his day on the job.

Once those lights go on, they never go off. Once you really

understand that you are equal in moral worth, there just is no turning back. So when I first heard the feminist version of the national anthem I was hooked forever.

Since then, I have sung no other. I proudly belt out, “in all of us command”, and have to quiet the voice inside that rails at the men and women around me: how can they sing “in all our sons command”? I have nothing against sons (and love mine very much), but what about our daughters?



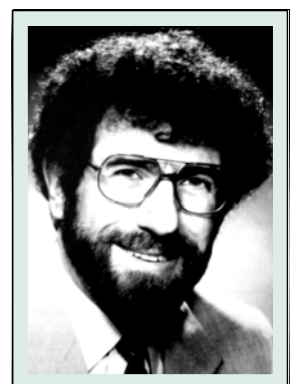
Photo Credit: Ian Britton

Previously I didn’t often think about the words of the national anthem, but this has changed since the death of Captain Nichola Goddard in Afghanistan. Of course, the death of a woman at war is no more a loss than the death of a man. But it is also no less. So, with women not only serving in combat roles, but now also dying in them, it seems to me that the time has come to acknowledge that “true, patriot love” – whatever that should amount to – is equally expected not just in all our sons, but all of us.

Janet Keeping

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Sheldon M. Chumir

## Letter from Ottawa

### *"Leadership required to improve the transition of New Canadians"*

I am intrigued by the experience of new Canadians within the context of Canadian citizenship, and how theories of citizenship actually unfold in real settings. My background with volunteer organizations, politics and professional associations has shaped my own experience and has helped me to understand the challenges faced by new Canadians, what those challenges mean to the Canada we know, and how our leaders can make a difference to our nation and new citizens.

In 2005 I volunteered with an immigrant-serving organization in Ottawa. The organization focused on language and cultural training, legal assistance, housing and work placements. One of my roles was to help some new Canadians understand the politics and culture of the Canadian workplace, to help them apply for jobs, to prepare for interviews and to communicate in ways that reflect Canadian norms. While this organization puts enormous efforts into assisting new Canadians with entering new communities and workplaces, these community leaders cannot always ease that transition. Many, such as the woman I volunteered with, were trained professionals who were unable to apply their skills, experience and expertise in the Canadian job market.

What do we know about the experiences of new Canadians' transition into the workplace? And more importantly, what do new Canadians know and expect when it comes to such a transition? Are embassies, consulates and universities outside of Canada conveying the financial burden, the education requirements and the time that such new training and education will require when they advise would-be Canadians about the opportunities in our country? Whose responsibility is it to make sure that new Canadians have the opportunity to contribute to their new communities in ways that value their experience, education and integrity?

In the fall of 2006 I was part of a gathering where one prominent MP spoke of the challenge of the credentialing of new Canadians. He addressed new Canadians' concerns about low-paying jobs, about limited credential recognition, and about the financial burdens of re-training and re-education. We need to ask what federal leaders can do to

help shape the experiences of new Canadians, what citizens expect of our leaders in this area, and what new Canadians require of their new governments.

This spring I began to work with the Canadian Pharmacists Association and the *Moving Forward* project funded by the Government of Canada's foreign credential recognition program. One of the research streams of this project emphasizes how international pharmacy graduates account for almost one third of the entire pharmacy workforce in Canada. The study has taught me that while these professionals must meet the same standards of practice and possess the same skills and knowledge of Canadian pharmacy graduates, many require considerable support to complete important regulatory processes before embarking on their careers. With a Canadian workforce that is overburdened in so many fields, it is essential that we find ways to support new Canadians in establishing themselves in these areas. Is it not a win-win situation when new Canadians are able to contribute to their communities, to provide for their families, and to live in society with integrity and pride, knowing that their hard work and dedication to their chosen profession can make a difference in the country they now call home?

Canadian leaders must follow through on their commitment to help the new members of our communities contribute to society in ways that develop a sense of belonging and a sense of pride in their new home. In order to move forward we have to work together to allow the knowledge, experience, values and attitudes of Canadian leaders and **all Canadian** citizens to contribute to the betterment of our communities.

Kelly Hogan, 2004-05 SCF Intern  
PhD Student in Political Science, Carleton University



*Parliament Hill, Ottawa, Photo credit, REIC.ca*

## Why Are Some Countries Less Corrupt Than Others? An Interview With Bronwyn Best, Transparency International—Canada

Each year, Transparency International (TI) publishes the 'Corruption Perceptions Index' (CPI) which ranks countries on the level of corruption of their public officials, as perceived by country analysts and foreign businesses<sup>1</sup>. At home, there seems to be considerable attention to where Canada ranks – 14<sup>th</sup> in 2006. Heather MacIntosh asked Bronwyn Best, Executive Director of TI Canada, about the top performers.

**Q:** *Finland, Iceland, New Zealand, Denmark, Singapore and Sweden have been named among the least corrupt nations for many years. What is happening in these countries that makes corruption virtually non-existent?*

**A:** That's a good question. The CPI measures perceptions of corruption among government officials, and Finland, Iceland and New Zealand rank at 9.6 out of 10...The Bribe Payers Index looks at which countries in the world have companies that offer bribes. Switzerland has companies that are least likely to offer bribes. But it is only 7.8 out of 10. So, there is a lot of room for improvement. It seems then that the public officials in Finland, Iceland and New Zealand are pretty clean, but there is room for improvement on the business side [there too].

**Q:** *The consistency over time is interesting.*

**A:** Over time, these countries develop a reputation for not accepting bribes. Outsiders dealing with public officials come to know that they should not even try offering a bribe.

**Q:** *I was not surprised to see Scandanavian nations topping the list.*

**A:** Interestingly, TI Norway is very active yet Norway ranks 8<sup>th</sup>. TI Finland and TI Denmark, on the other hand, are very small and Sweden has had a hard time developing a TI chapter.

**Q:** *I did find Singapore a bit surprising. Is it the tight level of regulation and governmental control that eliminates corruption there?*

**A:** Absolutely. In Singapore ... people would suffer the consequences there of corrupt behaviour. Singapore is really a city-state and quite easy to control in that way, and my perception is that Lee Kuan Yew ruled with an iron fist. China is very different, and you cannot really compare China and Singapore because the population differences are enormous. It is alleged that China is shooting people who are found to be guilty of corruption, so we cannot have an actual TI chapter in China as it could be a death knell [for those exposing corruption].

**Q:** *New Zealand appears to be a leader in e-government. Has that been an effective way to increase governmental transparency?*

**A:** I haven't heard much about e-government, but again New Zealand is a very small country which allows them to move forward more easily. They have had some very active people, like Hugh Templeton, former MP, making a difference. Shane Cave from TI-New Zealand runs a good project for the South Pacific Islands, and they have been able to work in the region as well as their own country. The Asia-Pacific program of TI has been effective, and that helps.

**Q:** *Has there been an attempt to draw lessons from the best practices of these countries for application in Canada?*

**A:** No. It's not something we've looked at but this is very interesting. I would very much look forward to what the least corrupt countries have to say as to why they do so well on the CPI! For the most part, they, like Canada, have a difficult time obtaining funding for their TI National Chapter offices, but National Chapters are as necessary in developed countries as they are in developing countries, in order for anti-corruption to be successfully curbed.

<sup>1</sup> For an overview of the methodology, see [http://www.transparency.org/policy\\_research/surveys\\_indices/cpi/2006/methodology](http://www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/cpi/2006/methodology)

## Urban Aboriginal Leadership

What does it mean to be an Aboriginal leader in a city? Michael Lickers<sup>1</sup>, Executive Director of Ghost River Rediscovery, asked prominent members of Aboriginal organisations in urban centres in Southern Alberta to reflect on their leadership context, development and styles as a thesis project.

He found that Aboriginal leaders in the cities face pressure to maintain traditional cultural values and practices and yet to adopt foreign styles of governance. As well, leaders deal with paternalism, whereby Aboriginal leaders are seen by some in the non-aboriginal community as not quite adequate.

Somewhat like being a parent, leadership was viewed by the respondents not as a nine-to-five job, but rather a facet of all aspects of life, from work, to community involvement, to the home. Concepts such as mentoring, role modeling, honouring Aboriginal culture, valuing opinions of youth, and learning *to dance the delicate dance of two worlds* were prominent.

If ethical leadership becomes a part of *who we are*, rather than only *what we do*, what does that imply? It places an incredible burden of responsibility on us – one that may be hard to live up to. At the same time, it provides a profound opportunity to display personal integrity and truly inspire the ethical development of those around us. Kudos to the urban Aboriginal leaders who are trying to do just that.

Heather MacIntosh & Megan Burrows



<sup>1</sup> Michael Lickers presented his thesis findings at Calgary Hull Family Services on March 30<sup>th</sup>, and coined the term *dancing the delicate dance of two worlds*. The Sheldon Chumir Foundation recently partnered with Ghost River Rediscovery to provide an orientation workshop for the Youth Leadership in Western Canada and Bolivia Program.

## What Do We Mean By ‘Ethical Leadership’?

Leadership in general is about many things – such as, vision, principle and integrity. Leadership is especially about the power to motivate others through words and deeds. And ethical leadership is about *ethically* motivating others in *ethical* directions.

Ethical leadership has both procedural and substantive, or character-based, dimensions. Both sides of ethical leadership are equally important, yet our characters seem to receive less examination.

Thoughtful reflection on what it means substantively to be an ethical leader would have us consider the role of courage, for example. It is often very uncomfortable to lead in the ethically desirable direction, especially where that requires opposing the more popular point of view. Imagine how unpleasant it was for those who first advocated for racially integrated sports teams or first spoke out in favour of gay marriage. How do we nurture such courageous leadership?

We know that one ingredient of moral courage is independence of thought. The ethical leader is one who can resist jumping on “bandwagons”. But where does this personality trait come from and how can its development be supported?

There are many other dimensions of ethical leadership. For example, ethical leadership recognizes the moral obligation to know enough to do the job right. Personal integrity and respectful decision-making are not always enough. Could we judge “ethical” a contemporary leader who did not recognize the importance of environmental concerns?

Consideration of the obstacles to ethical leadership can teach us a great deal. One impediment to showing ethics in leadership is lack of imagination: sometimes what stops us from doing the ethically right thing is that we cannot see beyond the usual confines of an issue – we cannot see our way through to ethically better solutions. For further discussion, please see ‘What is Ethical Leadership?’ on our new website [www.chumirethicsfoundation.ca](http://www.chumirethicsfoundation.ca).

Janet Keeping and Daniel Shapiro

## Ethical Leadership on Reform of Alberta Human Rights Law and the Vriend Case

In 1998 the Supreme Court of Canada ruled, in the Vriend Case, that section 15 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms requires that discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation be illegal. Even though Alberta law does not *appear* to make this discrimination illegal, it must be read and understood as if it did.

What would ethical leadership after the Vriend decision look like?

It would amend the law to make crystal clear that sexual orientation discrimination is illegal in Alberta: the words “sexual orientation” should be added to the statute. Why? Here are four reasons. First, clarity of the law *in general* is very important. We expect people to govern themselves in accordance with the law. Therefore, the law must be as intelligible as possible.

Second, clarity is especially important because a human right – freedom from discrimination – is at stake, and no law is more important than human rights law.

Third, protection from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation is relatively new and remains controversial in places. So, clarity on this legal point is crucial.

Fourth, the Alberta government fought against the legal protection of gay rights, and lost. Now it must rise above that loss and do the right thing. This is one measure of good leadership – the ability to admit defeat and respond honourably to it.

The provincial government, together with concerned Albertans, should also reflect upon the broader significance of the Vriend case. What did it tell us about the legal protection of human rights in the province? Is this a pretty picture? Don't we *all* deserve better? For human rights are not divisible: everyone is threatened when anyone's rights are violated.

Janet Keeping

Delwin Vriend was fired from his job at a religious college because he was gay. He filed a complaint with the provincial human rights commission which told him – incorrectly – that Alberta's legislation did not prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. Vriend went to the courts and eventually won.

## Diversity and Citizenship



*University of Western Ontario*

There is a tension between accommodation of diversity and the desire of many minorities to retain culture and language, on the one hand, and what is necessary to fulfilling one's duties as a citizen, on the other. The two are often compatible, but perhaps not always.

It is clear that if a person does not master the language of public, political discourse (in Canada, either English or French or, in some parts of the country, one of the major aboriginal languages), then he or she is incapable of carrying out even the most basic of civic duties, such as informed voting. But the demands of citizenship are greater and the diversity-related problems in this area arguably more varied than language competency would suggest.

So, “Is cultural identity putting democracy at risk”? Speakers at two University of Western Ontario events sponsored by the Chumir Foundation in March of this year, presented their thoughts on some of these issues.

Daniel Weinstock, University of Montreal, suggested that as soon as a debate takes on an “identity” flavour – for example, “I have to wear the veil because it is integral to who I am, to my identity” – the compromise which is crucial to successful democracy becomes more difficult. Weinstock thinks that *correctly understood* a political discourse consisting of solely individual rights would suffice, and reliance on multiculturalism (in the sense of identity arguments) would not be necessary. One needs to know more about what “correctly understood” means, but he may well be right.

Avigail Eisenberg, University of Victoria, argued that it is the very rigidity of many of our institutions, such as the courts, that forces people into making arguments based on identity. Here too we need to hear more, but the insight may be an important one.

## Ethical Leadership, Diversity and the GLBT Community



To achieve our full potential as human beings, we must have the freedom to dream, to strive, and to relate to one another in authentic ways. Ethical leadership helps to create an environment where this type of interaction is possible. Attitudes toward diversity, and treatment of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) citizens in particular, are a litmus test of ethical leadership in Canada.

The basic means of measuring diversity is comparison. By comparing ourselves with 'others,' communities and individuals become aware not only of who and what we are but of who and what we are not. The concept of diversity entails respect for these differences.

None of us are just one thing—we all have sexual, religious, racial, class, gender, and other identities that mingle together in complex ways. People are frequently disadvantaged as a result of more than one aspect of intolerance. A 2003 study by Stonewall (UK) has shown that people who are prejudiced against any ethnic group are twice as likely as the general population to be prejudiced against gay and lesbian people, and four times as likely to be prejudiced against disabled people. When GLBT individuals are targeted for harassment, it is often about more than just sexual orientation or gender identity.

Just as Canadian society in general demonstrates a wealth of diversity, so too does the GLBT community. Lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and transgendered people may be black, white, First Nations or of mixed heritage. They are rich and poor. They are able-bodied and physically and mentally challenged. They are Jewish, Hindu, Muslim, and Christian, of all religions and of none. They are old and young, and represent every political perspective.

By virtue of being human, GLBT individuals, like all other persons, are equal in human rights and should receive equal benefit of human rights protections. Yet, an overall climate of intolerance against the GLBT community remains. This is often characterized by the use of openly homophobic language by political and community leaders, incitement to homophobic violence by various groups, the banning of public events organized by the GLBT community and the abolition of the gov-

ernment offices responsible for the promotion of equal treatment for sexual minorities.

The public expression of bigotries against the GLBT community creates an atmosphere in which hate crimes flourish. Yet, the hatred of gay men, lesbians, bisexuals and transgendered individuals remains a socially 'acceptable' prejudice, despite the damage it causes.

Homophobia and transphobia harm us all by inhibiting appreciation of other types of diversity, encouraging hurtful behaviours, and putting limits on our relationships and roles in the community. The conditions that allow homophobia and transphobia to flourish also support racism, classism, sexism, ageism, and other forms of prejudice. Efforts to reduce one type of discrimination may also reduce other kinds, and will help individuals from a variety of backgrounds to feel safer and to thrive.

What does it really mean to embrace diversity? How might we demonstrate ethical leadership on diversity?

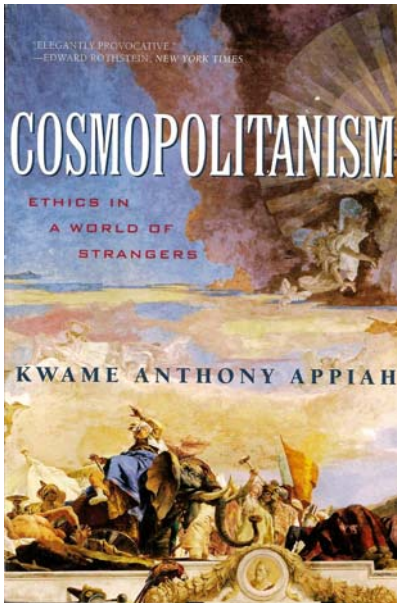
### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Challenge our discourse on diversity, inclusion, heterosexism and homophobia.
- Understand and take responsibility for how our words about GLBT rights may affect the behaviour of others
- Publicly recognise the values that influence our personal & institutional practice of diversity, and the stumbling blocks to our acceptance of certain types of difference
- Address all forms of prejudice towards those who experience discrimination on the basis of race, age, ability, religion, sexual orientation and expression, etc.

Embracing diversity requires more of each one of us than simply showing sensitivity to people or groups that are identified in some manner as falling outside of the dominant culture. Rather, it entails a change in our perceptions, values, and actions. More important than diversity of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation is the diversity of values and thinking systems in our society. True diversity requires respect for all, along with a heightened awareness of our own prejudices and re-evaluation of our beliefs and actions. True diversity is inclusive, it brings fundamental change to society and creates an environment which is accepting and welcoming of all.

Megan Burrows

## **Book Review: *Cosmopolitanism* by Kwame Anthony Appiah**



The ethical foundation of Appiah's approach is that, because we have the capacity to have an impact on people around the world, we have moral obligations to all human beings. "Each person you know about and can affect is someone to whom you have responsibilities: to say this is just to affirm the very idea of morality." (p. xiii)

The very difficult question then is, what are our moral obligations to those far removed from us?

For an answer Appiah urges us to adopt some version of cosmopolitanism – the view that we are all members of the human community – and to reject the idea we belong only "to a community among communities". (p. xiv) Like many worried about the divisiveness of identity politics, he urges us to focus less on our differences and more on what we share in common: "The foreignness of foreigners, the strangeness of strangers: these things are real enough. It's just that we've been encouraged, not least by well-meaning intellectuals, to exaggerate their significance by an order of magnitude". (p. xxi)

This is philosophy, so no easy solutions are on offer, but *Cosmopolitanism* helps us think through our ethical obligations to others distant, and apparently very different, from us. For example, his rejection of relativism – the view that ethical judgments can only be made *relative to* a particular culture – is useful and should be read by anyone tempted in the relativist direction.

On the other hand, Appiah's arguments against those who say we have the same moral obligations to everyone are not so convincing. It is a perplexing problem: I believe that I do not have equally pressing obligations to all human beings, but what is the basis for this belief? Appiah's treatment of the question "So how much do we really owe to strangers" is

not as helpful as it might be. And this is unfortunate, because the issue is an urgent one. We need only consider the debate over Canadian involvement in Afghanistan. What moral obligations do we in Canada have to people in that part of the world? How far *ought* we to go in trying to ameliorate the conditions of their lives?

And in some places, Appiah is, I think, just wrong. For example, he is understandably eager to show that there is a basis for discussion even with those whose actions – such as, "honour" killings of "disgraced" women – we find repugnant. In the process, he claims that even though western men do not "think that the solution is to punish these women", "men here [in the West], too, feel shamed, dishonoured, when their wives or daughters are raped". While there may be some pockets of men who do, my unscientific survey on this point shows they do not. The men I consulted were stunned: what possible meaning could shame or dishonour have in this context?

But overall, this is a book well worth reading. Like me, you may not agree with everything Appiah has to say, but *Cosmopolitanism* makes a useful contribution to the literature on diversity, cross-cultural understanding and what it means to live well in pluralist society.

Janet Keeping

### **PUBLICATION ANNOUNCEMENT**

#### **Shelter: Homelessness in a Growth Economy — Canada's 21st Century Paradox**

The Sheldon Chumir Foundation for Ethics in Leadership is pleased to announce the launch of ***Shelter: Homelessness in a Growth Economy — Canada's 21st Century Paradox***, by 2003-2004 Foundation Media Fellow Gordon Laird. In his report covering five major Canadian cities, Mr Laird argues that government policy in Canada from 1993 onward helped to create chronic poverty and housing insecurity.

To read the full report, see our [website](#).

## Event Announcements

### INTERNSHIP ANNOUNCEMENT 2007-08



**Katherine Austin-Evelyn** completed her BA (Hons) in Canadian Studies with minors in Women's Studies and Political Science at Mount Allison University. Her honours thesis was a comparative study of sexual harassment policies in Canadian universities.

She served as an Arts Senator on the Student Administrative Council, a member of the President's Advisory Committee on Women's Issues, and as the Co-Coordinator of the Rights and Democracy Mount Allison Delegation.

Katherine has worked in community outreach in Sackville, NB and her extensive volunteer experience includes working with Lethbridge food banks, the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation and the Diabetes Association.

### WEBSITE ANNOUNCEMENT

The Sheldon Chumir Foundation for Ethics in Leadership is pleased to announce our new website:

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

We have updated the existing content and added a number of new areas. For example, we now list past Foundation events by topic. We have added new essays responding to the questions "What is ethics?" and "What is ethical leadership?"

Our new website also has some user-friendly interactive features. You may now sign up for our mailing list online. You may also make a donation to the Foundation by credit card using our secure online donation form. Check our site often to learn about upcoming Foundation events and publications under the "Foundation News" column on the left-hand side of the page.

If you would like to offer any feedback about the new website, please contact us (details below).

## SEPTEMBER

### The Future of Rural Alberta: Why It Matters?

Joint Event with Alberta Global Forum, Alberta Views Magazine, Olds College and the Sheldon Chumir Foundation for Ethics in Leadership

**September 26, 2007, 7:30-9:30pm**  
Olds College Student Alumni Centre  
4500 - 50th Street, OLDS Alberta

**Panellists:** **Roger Epp:** Dean of Augustana Campus, U. of Alberta  
**Dan Fullerton:** Director of Innovation, Olds College  
**Francis Gardner:** Rancher; Board Member, Southern Alberta Land Trust Society  
**Dot Negropontes:** Assistant Superintendent, Chinook's Edge School Division

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