

INSTRUCTOR: DR. BERNHARD DEBATIN, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

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Office Hours: Tu 3-4, W, 11-1, Fr 9-11 (please make an appointment)

SCHEDULE OVERVIEW:

- Week 1** Tu, Jan. 8 Introduction and Course Organization
Th, Jan. 10 Lecture: Media, Technology, and the Law of Unintended Consequences
- Week 2** Tu, Jan. 15 Lecture: Basic Concepts of Media Ethics – Decision and Responsibility
Reading: PW, xi-xvi: Foreword & Preface,
PW, 1-17: An Introduction to Ethical Decision Making
• **Due date** for *Ethics Statement I*
Th, Jan. 17 Quiz 1 / Group discussion: Cases and Moral Systems (PW, 18-19, PW case 2-A)
- Week 3** Tu, Jan. 22 Lecture: Main Principles and Values in Media Ethics
Reading: PW, 20-67: Information Ethics: A Profession Seeks the Truth
Th, Jan. 24 Quiz 2 / Group discussion: What is Objectivity? (PW Case 2-C)
- Week 4** Tu, Jan. 29 Lecture: Ethical Codes, Duty, and Loyalty
Reading: PW, 94-122: Loyalty: Choosing Between Competing Allegiances
Th, Jan. 31 Quiz 3 / Group discussion: Loyalty and Human Interest (PW Cases 4-A and 4-D)
- Week 5** Tu, Feb. 5 Lecture: Media and Social Responsibility
Reading: PW, 175-208: The Mass Media in a Democratic Society
Th, Feb. 7 Quiz 4 / Group discussion: Reporting in Times of War (PW Cases 7-A and 7-C)
- Week 6** Tu, Feb. 12 Lecture: Spinmasters or Information Brokers?
Reading: PW, 123-146: Public Relations: Standards of Advocacy
Th, Feb. 14 Quiz 5 / Group discussion: PR and the Media (PW Cases 5-A and 5-F)
• **Due date** for *undergraduate students' Media Ethics Project*
- Week 7** Tu, Feb. 19 Lecture: The Media Business and Advertising
Reading: PW, 68-93: Advertising Ethics: From Let the Buyer Beware to Empowerment; PW, 209-236: Media Economics: The Deadline Meets the Bottom Line
Th, Feb. 21 Quiz 6 / Group discussion: Profit versus Responsibility (PW Cases 3-E and 8-D)
• **Due date** for *graduate students' Case Study Proposal*
- Week 8** Tu, Feb. 26 Lecture: Privacy and the Network Society
Reading: PW, 147-174: Privacy: Looking for Solitude in the Global Village;
PW, 277-308: New Media: Continuing Questions and New Roles
Th, Feb. 28 Quiz 7 / Group discussion: New Media Outlets (PW Cases 6-A and 10-E)
- Week 9** Tu, Mar. 4 Lecture: Ethics of Images and Entertainment
Reading: PW, 237-276: Picture This: The Ethics of Photo and Video Journalism;
PW, 309-337: The Ethical Dimensions of Art and Entertainment
Th, Mar. 6 Quiz 8 / Group discussion: Sensation and Infotainment (PW Cases 9-A and 11-E).
• **Due date** for *Ethics Statement II*
- Week 10** Tu, Mar. 11 Lecture: Media Ethics for Media Professionals
Reading: PW, 338-348: Becoming a Moral Adult
Th, Mar. 13 Quiz 9 / Group Discussion: Moral Development and Responsible Journalism
Review for the Final Exam
- Week 11** F, Mar.21 Final Exam at 2:30 p.m. in Scripps 111
• **Due date** for *Final Papers (graduate students)*

Please note that an optional alternative time for the final exam will be announced if available

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course deals with ethical questions in mass communication and journalism, particularly with the issue of ethical decision making. Theoretical aspects of media ethics will be systematically analyzed and applied to specific fields of media-related action, as well as to concrete cases. In addition, media ethical norms, values, and codes will be studied and evaluated based on students' own experiences. The course consists of lectures and discussions of the readings, written assignments, and a final exam. Main topics include:

- Basic Concepts of Media Ethics
- Main Principles, Values, and Codes in Media Ethics
- Decision, Freedom, and Responsibility
- Media, Democracy, and Social Responsibility in Times of War
- The Media Business, Conflicts of Interest, and Media Consolidation
- Privacy and the Network Society
- Ethics of Images and the Entertainment Industry

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- To understand the challenge and the necessity of ethical reasoning on the individual, organizational, and societal level
- To analyze moral norms and values, as well as ethical problems and cases in the media world
- To provide analytical tools for ethical decision making processes
- To develop an understanding of the social responsibility of mass media professionals
- To prepare you to address and resolve conflicts in the professional media environment
- To stimulate your moral imagination, intuition, and reasoning with special emphasis on "an informed concern for truth, accuracy, fairness, diversity, and respect," as outlined by the AEJMC Accrediting Council

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK:

Philip Patterson/Lee Wilkins. *Media Ethics: Issues and Cases*. Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill, 2008, 6th edition. (referred to in the schedule as "PW"). **Do not use any of the earlier editions!**

ASSIGNMENTS

All written assignments must be submitted on paper (electronic versions are *not* accepted unless explicitly instructed otherwise) and shall be written in 12 pt Times New Roman, double spaced, and a one-inch margin. You must not exceed the length limits – be concise and precise; exceeding length limits will cost you points! For due dates see schedule.

1. ETHICS STATEMENTS (50 points total)

- **Ethics Statement I: Reflections on Media Ethics** (*worth up to 25 points*):
Please describe *what* you think is ethically most important for you to become a good journalist (with respect to your sequence/future career) and *why* you believe this to be important. Also, discuss what you deem the biggest *obstacle* for ethical behavior in the media environment of your future career. Length: no more than 2 pages (600 words).
Grading Criteria: This assignment will be graded on the *effort and thought* you put into it, not on your prior knowledge of media ethics.
Graduate students are expected to include some additional reflections on their experience (or theoretical knowledge) in the professional world. Length: up to 4 pages.

- Ethics Statement II: Personal Ethics Code** (*worth up to 25 pts.*):

Please review your ethics statement in light of the material covered and discussed in class. Discuss how your new knowledge of ethical analysis changes your outlook on media ethical issues. Based on these reflections, you will then develop your own personal ethics code with respect to your sequence/future career. The code should consist of 3-4 main norms/values, each of which you'll explain in a subsequent paragraph. Your explanation should refer to your reflections and show how/why you came to pick this particular norm/value.

While your code may display some similarities to existing professional codes, you're **not allowed** to just copy from codes. You may refer to them, but you are also expected to make an effort to develop your own code and to justify it with your own words.

Length: no more than 2 pages (ca. 300 words reflections and 300 words for the code)
- Grading Criteria:** This assignment will be graded on effort and thoughtfulness, the quality of your reflections on your earlier statement and the class material, and on the consistency of your code and the coherence of your arguments explaining your code..

Graduate students are expected to include at least 2 secondary media ethics sources and additional reflections on their professional background and/or experience.

Length: up to 4 pages.

2. ETHICS PROJECTS/ORAL PRESENTATION (60 points total)

- Media Ethics Project for undergraduates** (*in lieu of midterm, worth up to 60 points*):

Analyze a current media ethical conflict or a case from the book (but NOT one we've already discussed in class—see schedule!) using the **template** from the Course Blackboard site. All questions on the template must be answered, but the answers shall not exceed the length limit.

Grading Criteria: It will be graded on how well and how precisely you analyze the case.
- Oral presentation for Graduate students** (*in lieu of midterm, worth up to 60 points*):

Give an oral presentation (up to 20 minutes) with a 1-page handout during the Thursday 4-5 PM meetings on chapters from Robert McChesney's "The Problem of the Media" and Tom Wheeler's "Phototruth or Photofiction?" (see literature list). Chapter presentations will be distributed during the first meeting.

Grading Criteria: It will be graded on how concisely you present the content.

3. WEEKLY QUIZZES ON THE COURSE READINGS AND LECTURES (80 points total).

From week 2-9 quizzes will be given at the beginning of the Thursday meetings. The purpose of this assignment is to ensure that you keep up with the week's course readings and lectures. To prepare for the quiz, you should ask yourself what are the main ideas, critical issues, and relevant arguments of each reading and lecture. Please note that the lectures will NOT cover all the points from the book and vice versa. Of the 9 quizzes, only 8 will count; the lowest quiz grade will be dropped.

Procedure: In each quiz, you have to answer up to five questions. Questions will be a mix of multiple choice and fill in the blank.

Grading Criteria: The quizzes will test your general understanding of the concepts and ideas in the readings and lectures (each quiz is worth 10 points).

4. GROUP WORK: IN-CLASS GROUP DISCUSSIONS ON THE WEEK'S TOPICS (80 points total).

The purpose of this assignment is to get you engaged in discussions with your classmates. Discussions will usually focus on case studies from the course readings.

Procedure: Group work with up to six participants per group will usually be conducted during the Thursday meetings. You will go through four steps: First, talk about the content of the assigned case; second, explore the ethical issues following the micro/mid-

range/macro questions; third, write up some keywords on your discussion; please include all names of your group members. Fourth, have one group member give a brief oral presentation of your discussion.

Grading criteria: Group work will be graded on participation and on the quality of the contributions. Each group activity is worth 10 points for each group member.

5. FINAL EXAM / PAPER (130 points total)

Final exam: A comprehensive test for undergraduate students (*up to 130 points*).

The purpose of the final exam is that you review and reflect on the course material as a whole. Here, you will demonstrate your ability to name, explain, and apply key concepts of media ethics.

Procedure: You have to answer a series of questions pertaining to the course reading. Questions will be a mix of multiple choice, fill in the blank, and short answers. You will be provided with a *concept guide* before the final, but you will also have to use the textbook and your lecture notes for preparing.

Grading Criteria: The final exam will test your understanding of the course material and your ability to apply it to concrete cases/problems.

Final paper: An in-depth case study for graduate students (*up to 130 points*).

The final paper is required for graduate students *in lieu* of a final exam. Its purpose is to reflect on the course material as a whole. The focus is on synthesizing media ethical ideas and concepts with an in-depth case study. You will analyze a case of your choice by applying media ethical categories, concepts, and criteria from the course and textbook. Also, you must use at least **six** pertinent scholarly sources. Your case may come from the literature (but NOT from PW), or be an ongoing media ethical controversy. Either way, you are expected to do your own research and not just rely on the text. Start your research early!

You shall hand in a 1-page long **case study proposal (due Feb 21)** with a brief case outline and a description of your research interest (proposal is worth 10 points, the final paper 120 pts.). The **final paper (due at the time of the final exam)** should be 10-12 pages long (not including cover sheet, table of contents, etc.).

Grading Criteria: Your paper is expected to include:

- a detailed description of the facts and a timeline/chronology of the events
- an analysis of the ethical conflict(s), involved actors, and their (alleged) decision making processes (individuals and organizations; their interactions and conflicts; the synergy of their actions; unintended and/or unforeseen consequences)
- an analysis of the violated (media) ethical values and norms (universal norms, general social values, professional norms and values, and conflicts among them)
- a *what-if* projection (what could have been done differently? how would you have acted in the position of the actor[s]? what could and should be changed in the organization in order to prevent such events? what other preventive or control mechanisms should be implemented or strengthened?)
- at least **six** scholarly sources *in addition to* the textbook
- a table of contents, a bibliographical list of all your sources, and (if applicable) an appendix with copies of material on your case
- concise, clear, and consistent writing. This is not only a question of style but also of good arguments. In other words: do not merely state your views. You must present good reasons for your views. Developing and evaluating arguments is as important for journalistic writing as it is for academic writing.

GRADING:

Deadlines: Work may be turned in early, but never late. Deadlines will be strictly adhered to. Assignments must be turned in at the beginning of class on the due date. Late work is lowered 5 points per day.

Grade appeal: You have the right to appeal any grade in any course. If you are concerned about your grade, you should talk to me as early as possible. If you are not satisfied with your grade, you can use the College of Communication’s three-level appeal procedure.

Disabilities: Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the instructor if special consideration is needed to complete any assignment or to attend any class.

The final grade consists of:

- Two ethics statements: **50 pts.**
- Ethics project/presentation: **60 pts**
- Quizzes: **80 pts.**
- Participation & group work: **80 pts.**
- Final exam/final paper: **130 pts.**

Total points: 400 pts.

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Points</u>
A	92% - 100%	>367
A-	89% - 91%	>355
B+	86% - 88%	>343
B	82% - 85%	>327
B-	79% - 81%	>315
C+	76% - 78%	>303
C	72% - 75%	>288
C-	69% - 71%	>275
D+	66% - 68%	>263
D	62% - 65%	>247
D-	59% - 61%	>235
F	Below 59%	...

ATTENDANCE POLICY

I expect regular attendance and thorough preparation for our class meetings. Your participation grade will reflect both your presence and your active involvement in discussion. Missed meetings are missed learning opportunities. If you cannot make it to a meeting or have to be late, you must write me a note or call me in advance and explain your reasons. I keep track of your attendance through giving and handing back the quizzes, which is why I will usually not take attendance orally in class.

More than one unexcused absence may **lower your grade**. I reserve the right to drastically lower the final grade in case of frequent absences (both excused and unexcused), and/or frequent late arrival/early departures.

What qualifies as an acceptable excuse? Serious illness, family emergency, university function—it must be a serious, credible, and unavoidable hindrance. Plus, you must get the instructor's approval prior to an absence.

Graduate students are expected to attend the graduate-student-only discussion meetings on Th, 4-5 in addition to the regular class meetings. Missed meetings will lower your grade.

CONDUCT AND DECORUM

As member of this class you’re expected to display polite and considerate behavior. This includes a respectful attitude not just toward the instructor, but toward your fellow students, as well. In particular, you should not chat, sleep, read the paper, or eat during class meetings, no matter how busy your life may be.

If you want to use a computer for taking notes, you should sit in the first row. I expect that you limit its use to that and not play games, check your email, surf the web, or engage in instant messaging. Similarly, I expect cell phones to be switched off (this class is not about who has the most obnoxious ringtone) and iPods (and similar devices) to be disabled.

Electronic Communication: Students must check their email on a regular basis. You must activate and check your OAK email account regularly, even if you have your OAK messages forwarded to your preferred address, because some messages (such as those with lengthy distribution lists) may not go through, due to spam filters. You are also responsible for making sure that your OAK email account is working properly and not “over quota.”

Students are required to have a signature tag on their emails that makes them clearly identifiable. Information you might want to put into your signature, besides your name and email address, may include: the fact that you're an OU student and a Scripps student (if you are), your expected graduation date, any leadership positions you hold with student organizations, and any affiliation you have with a publication, such as *The Post*.

Do NOT include any information, such as home address or a phone number, you wouldn't want the world to have.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND COPYRIGHT:

As an academic and a journalist, you take pride in your own work while respecting and honoring the work of others. Work submitted must be your own. When using others' work, you must state that explicitly and sufficiently. This has several aspects to it:

- all sources used must be cited,
- all quotations must be in quotation marks and include their page number,
- all paraphrases must be attributed to the original authors.

Copying material from other sources without attribution is Plagiarism, no matter whether it is done intentionally or out of carelessness.

Academic misconduct is a Code A violation according to the Ohio University Code of Student Conduct. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to, cheating, plagiarism and forgery. If the professor finds that a student has cheated or used others' work as if it were his or her own, s/he may be referred to the director of judiciaries and may receive an "F" for that assignment or the course. Other possible results are: the student's grade being lowered, suspension or dismissal from the University.

Note: Copying from online sources without attribution might appear as an attractive and easy thing to do. It is unethical misconduct like any other form of plagiarism.

Please consult the Office of University Judiciaries web site on Academic Misconduct at <http://www.ohio.edu/judiciaries/academic-misconduct.cfm#academic>



COPYRIGHT NOTE

The lectures, classroom activities, and all materials associated with this course and developed by the instructor are copyrighted in the name of Bernhard Debatin 2008.

Electronic recording of class meetings requires special permission by the instructor; unauthorized recording violates both copyright law and Ohio University policy.



LITERATURE:

Textbook: Patterson, P. & L. Wilkins. *Media Ethics: Issues and Cases*. Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill, 2008, 6th edition. (Referred to in the schedule as “PW”).

Supplemental Reading: Christians, C. et al. *Media Ethics: Cases and Moral Reasoning*. New York: Longman, 2005 (call number P94 .M36 2005)

Journal of Mass Media Ethics. Ed. J. Black & L. Wilkins. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum. <http://jcomm.uoregon.edu/~tbivins/jmme/index.html> (call number: P94 .J68., Alden 7th Floor)

Suggested Readings on Media Ethics:

Atkins, J. B., ed. *The Mission: Journalism, Ethics, and the World: International Topics in Media*. Ames: Iowa State University Press, 2002.

Berkman, R. I. and C. A. Shumway. *Digital Dilemmas: Ethical Issues for Online Media Professionals*. Ames: Iowa State Press, 2003.

Bertrand, C.-J. *An Arsenal for Democracy: Media Accountability Systems*. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton, 2003.

Black, J., Steele, B. and R. Berney. *Doing Ethics in Journalism*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1999.

Bok, S. *Lying: Moral Choice in Public and Private Life*. New York: Vintage Books, 1978.

Bugeja, M.J. *Living Ethics: Developing Values in Mass Communication*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1996.

Christians, C. et al. *Media Ethics: Cases and Moral Reasoning*. New York: Longman, 2006.

Christians, C., J. Ferré, and P. M. Fackler. *Good News: Social Ethics and the Press*. New York: Oxford University Press 1993

Cohen, E. D. and D. Elliott, eds. *Journalism Ethics: A Reference Handbook*. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 1998.

Day, L.A. *Ethics in Media Communications*. Belmont: Wadsworth, 1997.

Elliott, D. (ed.). *Responsible Journalism*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1986.

Fink, C.: *Media Ethics: In the Newsroom and Beyond*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1988.

Gordon, A.D., & J.M. Kittross. *Controversies in Media Ethics*. White Plains, NY: Longman, 1999.

Gross, L., J. S. Katz and J. Ruby, eds. *Image Ethics in the Digital Age*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003.

Kieran, M. (ed.). *Media Ethics*. London/New York: Routledge, 1998.

Knowlton, S.R. *Moral Reasoning for Journalists: Cases and Commentary*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 1997.

LaMay, C. L. *Journalism and the Debate over Privacy*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2003.

Lambeth, E.B. *Committed Journalism: An Ethics for the Profession*. Bloomington/ Indianapolis: Indiana UP, 1992.

Land, Mitchell and Bill W. Hornaday (eds.). *Contemporary Media Ethics: A Practical Guide for Students, Scholars and Professionals*. Spokane, WA: Marquette Books, 2006.

Limburg, Val E. *Electronic Media Ethics*. Boston: Focal Press, 1994.

Merrill, J.C. and S.J. Odell. *Philosophy and Journalism*. White Plains: Longman, 1983.

Meyer, P. *Ethical Journalism*. New York: Longman, 1987.

Pippert, W.G. *An Ethics of News*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 1989.

Pool, I. de S. *Technologies of Freedom: On Free Speech in an Electronic Age*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983.

Rivers, W.L. & C. Mathews. *Ethics for the Media*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1988.

Russell, N. *Morals and the Media: Ethics in Canadian Journalism*. Vancouver, B.C.: University of British Columbia Press, 2005.

Shea, V. *Netiquette*. San Francisco: Albion, 1994.

Smith, R.S. *Groping for Ethics in Journalism*. Ames, IA: Iowa State University Press, 1999.

Wheeler, T. *Phototruth or Photofiction?* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2002.

Wilkins, L. *The Moral Media: How Journalists Reason about Ethics*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2005.

APPENDIX: PROFESSIONAL CODES OF ETHICS

1. SPJ CODE OF ETHICS

<http://www.spj.org/ethicscode.asp?>

Preamble

Members of the Society of Professional Journalists believe that public enlightenment is the forerunner of justice and the foundation of democracy. The duty of the journalist is to further those ends by seeking truth and providing a fair and comprehensive account of events and issues. Conscientious journalists from all media and specialties strive to serve the public with thoroughness and honesty. Professional integrity is the cornerstone of a journalist's credibility. Members of the Society share a dedication to ethical behavior and adopt this code to declare the Society's principles and standards of practice.

Seek Truth and Report It

Journalists should be honest, fair and courageous in gathering, reporting and interpreting information.

Journalists should:

- Test the accuracy of information from all sources and exercise care to avoid inadvertent error. Deliberate distortion is never permissible.
- Diligently seek out subjects of news stories to give them the opportunity to respond to allegations of wrongdoing.
- Identify sources whenever feasible. The public is entitled to as much information as possible on sources' reliability.
- Always question sources' motives before promising anonymity. Clarify conditions attached to any promise made in exchange for information. Keep promises.
- Make certain that headlines, news teases and promotional material, photos, video, audio, graphics, sound bites and quotations do not misrepresent. They should not oversimplify or highlight incidents out of context.
- Never distort the content of news photos or video. Image enhancement for technical clarity is always permissible. Label montages and photo illustrations.
- Avoid misleading re-enactments or staged news events. If re-enactment is necessary to tell a story, label it.
- Avoid undercover or other surreptitious methods of gathering information except when traditional open methods will not yield information vital to the public. Use of such methods should be explained as part of the story.
- Never plagiarize.
- Tell the story of the diversity and magnitude of the human experience boldly, even when it is unpopular to do so.
- Examine their own cultural values and avoid imposing those values on others.
- Avoid stereotyping by race, gender, age, religion, ethnicity, geography, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance or social status.
- Support the open exchange of views, even views they find repugnant.
- Give voice to the voiceless; official and unofficial sources of information can be equally valid.
- Distinguish between advocacy and news reporting. Analysis and commentary should be labeled and not misrepresent fact or context.
- Distinguish news from advertising and shun hybrids that blur the lines between the two.
- Recognize a special obligation to ensure that the public's business is conducted in the open and that government records are open to inspection.

Minimize Harm

Ethical journalists treat sources, subjects and colleagues as human beings deserving of respect.

Journalists should:

- Show compassion for those who may be affected adversely by news coverage. Use special sensitivity when dealing with children and inexperienced sources or subjects.
- Be sensitive when seeking or using interviews or photographs of those affected by tragedy or grief.
- Recognize that gathering and reporting information may cause harm or discomfort. Pursuit of the news is not a license for arrogance.
- Recognize that private people have a greater right to control information about themselves than do public officials and others who seek power, influence or attention. Only an overriding public need can justify intrusion into anyone's privacy.

- Show good taste. Avoid pandering to lurid curiosity.
- Be cautious about identifying juvenile suspects or victims of sex crimes.
- Be judicious about naming criminal suspects before the formal filing of charges.
- Balance a criminal suspect's fair trial rights with the public's right to be informed.

Act Independently

Journalists should be free of obligation to any interest other than the public's right to know.

Journalists should:

- Avoid conflicts of interest, real or perceived.
- Remain free of associations and activities that may compromise integrity or damage credibility.
- Refuse gifts, favors, fees, free travel and special treatment, and shun secondary employment, political involvement, public office and service in community organizations if they compromise journalistic integrity.
- Disclose unavoidable conflicts.
- Be vigilant and courageous about holding those with power accountable.
- Deny favored treatment to advertisers and special interests and resist their pressure to influence news coverage.
- Be wary of sources offering information for favors or money; avoid bidding for news.

Be Accountable

Journalists are accountable to their readers, listeners, viewers and each other.

Journalists should:

- Clarify and explain news coverage and invite dialogue with the public over journalistic conduct.
- Encourage the public to voice grievances against the news media.
- Admit mistakes and correct them promptly.
- Expose unethical practices of journalists and the news media.
- Abide by the same high standards to which they hold others.

2. PRSA MEMBER CODE OF ETHICS 2000 – CORE VALUES

http://prsa.org/_About/ethics/preamble.asp?ident=eth3

1. Advocacy

We serve the public interest by acting as responsible advocates for those we represent. We provide a voice in the marketplace of ideas, facts, and viewpoints to aid informed public debate.

2. Honesty

We adhere to the highest standards of accuracy and truth in advancing the interests of those we represent and in communicating with the public.

3. Expertise

We acquire and responsibly use specialized knowledge and experience. We advance the profession through continued professional development, research, and education. We build mutual understanding, credibility, and relationships among a wide array of institutions and audiences.

4. Independence

We provide objective counsel to those we represent. We are accountable for our actions.

5. Loyalty

We are faithful to those we represent, while honoring our obligation to serve the public interest.

6. Fairness

We deal fairly with clients, employers, competitors, peers, vendors, the media, and the general public. We respect all opinions and support the right of free expression.

3. THE ADVERTISING PRINCIPLES OF AMERICAN BUSINESS

Adopted by the AAF American Advertising Federation Board of Directors, 1984

<http://www.aaf.org/about/principles.html>

1. Truth

Advertising shall tell the truth, and shall reveal significant facts, the omission of which would mislead the public.

2. Substantiation

Advertising claims shall be substantiated by evidence in possession of the advertiser and advertising agency, prior to making such claims.

3. Comparisons

Advertising shall refrain from making false, misleading, or unsubstantiated statements or claims about a competitor or his/her products or services.

4. Bait Advertising

Advertising shall not offer products or services for sale unless such offer constitutes a bona fide effort to sell the advertising products or services and is not a device to switch consumers to other goods or services, usually higher priced.

5. Guarantees and Warranties

Advertising of guarantees and warranties shall be explicit, with sufficient information to apprise consumers of their principal terms and limitations or, when space or time restrictions preclude such disclosures, the advertisement should clearly reveal where the full text of the guarantee or warranty can be examined before purchase.

6. Price Claims

Advertising shall avoid price claims which are false or misleading, or saving claims which do not offer provable savings.

7. Testimonials

Advertising containing testimonials shall be limited to those of competent witnesses who are reflecting a real and honest opinion or experience.

8. Taste and Decency

Advertising shall be free of statements, illustrations or implications which are offensive to good taste or public decency.

4. RTNDA ETHICS CODE

Adopted at RTNDA 2000 in Minneapolis September 14, 2000.

<http://www.rtna.org/ethics/coe.shtml>

Preamble

Professional electronic journalists should operate as trustees of the public, seek the truth, report it fairly and with integrity and independence, and stand accountable for their actions.

Public Trust:

Professional electronic journalists should recognize that their first obligation is to the public.

Truth:

Professional electronic journalists should pursue truth aggressively and present the news accurately, in context, and as completely as possible.

Fairness:

Professional electronic journalists should present the news fairly and impartially, placing primary value on significance and relevance.

Integrity:

Professional electronic journalists should present the news with integrity and decency, avoiding real or perceived conflicts of interest, and respect the dignity and intelligence of the audience as well as the subjects of news.

Independence:

Professional electronic journalists should defend the independence of all journalists from those seeking influence or control over news content.

Accountability:

Professional electronic journalists should recognize that they are accountable for their actions to the public, the profession, and themselves.

5. MASON'S OUTLINE OF DIGITAL ETHICAL ISSUES: PAPA

<http://www.elon.edu/andersj/ethicsdiscussion.html>

Privacy

What information about one's self or one's associations must a person reveal to others, under what conditions and with what safeguards? What things can people keep to themselves and not be forced to reveal to others?

Accuracy

Who is responsible for the authenticity, fidelity and accuracy of information? Who is to be held accountable for errors in information and how is the injured party to be made whole?

Property

Who owns information? What are the just and fair prices for its exchange? Who owns the channels, especially the airways, through which information is transmitted? How should access to this scarce resource be allocated?

Accessibility

What information does a person or an organization have a right or a privilege to obtain, under what conditions and with what safeguards?

6. A BLOGGERS' CODE OF ETHICS

From: Online News Association/Cyberjournalist, April 15, 2003

<http://www.cyberjournalist.net/news/000215.php>

BE HONEST AND FAIR

Bloggers should be honest and fair in gathering, reporting and interpreting information.

Bloggers should:

- Never plagiarize.
- Identify and link to sources whenever feasible. The public is entitled to as much information as possible on sources' reliability.
- Make certain that Weblog entries, quotations, headlines, photos and all other content do not misrepresent. They should not oversimplify or highlight incidents out of context.
- Never distort the content of photos without disclosing what has been changed. Image enhancement is only acceptable for for technical clarity. Label montages and photo illustrations.
- Never publish information they know is inaccurate -- and if publishing questionable information, make it clear it's in doubt.
- Distinguish between advocacy, commentary and factual information. Even advocacy writing and commentary should not misrepresent fact or context.
- Distinguish factual information and commentary from advertising and shun hybrids that blur the lines between the two.

MINIMIZE HARM

Ethical bloggers treat sources and subjects as human beings deserving of respect.

Bloggers should:

- Show compassion for those who may be affected adversely by Weblog content. Use special sensitivity when dealing with children and inexperienced sources or subjects.
- Be sensitive when seeking or using interviews or photographs of those affected by tragedy or grief.
- Recognize that gathering and reporting information may cause harm or discomfort. Pursuit of information is not a license for arrogance.
- Recognize that private people have a greater right to control information about themselves than do public officials and others who seek power, influence or attention. Only an overriding public need can justify intrusion into anyone's privacy.
- Show good taste. Avoid pandering to lurid curiosity.

Be cautious about identifying juvenile suspects, victims of sex crimes and criminal suspects before the formal filing of charges.

BE ACCOUNTABLE

Bloggers should:

- Admit mistakes and correct them promptly.
- Explain each Weblog's mission and invite dialogue with the public over its content and the bloggers' conduct.
- Disclose conflicts of interest, affiliations, activities and personal agendas.
- Deny favored treatment to advertisers and special interests and resist their pressure to influence content. When exceptions are made, disclose them fully to readers.
- Be wary of sources offering information for favors. When accepting such information, disclose the favors.
- Expose unethical practices of other bloggers.
- Abide by the same high standards to which they hold others.

5. BOB STEELE'S QUESTIONS FOR GOOD ETHICAL DECISIONS

<http://www.poynter.org/column.asp?id=36&aid=4346>

Ask These 10 Questions to Make Good Ethical Decisions

1. What do I know? What do I need to know?
2. What is my journalistic purpose?
3. What are my ethical concerns?
4. What organizational policies and professional guidelines should I consider?
5. How can I include other people, with different perspectives and diverse ideas, in the decision-making process?
6. Who are the stakeholders -- those affected by my decision? What are their motivations? Which are legitimate?
7. What if the roles were reversed? How would I feel if I were in the shoes of one of the stakeholders?
8. What are the possible consequences of my actions? Short term? Long term?
9. What are my alternatives to maximize my truth-telling responsibility and minimize harm?
10. Can I clearly and fully justify my thinking and my decision? To my colleagues? To the stakeholders? To the public?

6. RESOURCES FOR ETHICS CODES AND CASES

Poynter.org (<http://www.poynter.org/subject.asp?id=32>)

This website provides a wealth of information on media ethics, cases, conflicts, discussions, etc.

Journalism.org (http://www.journalism.org/resources/ethics_codes)

This page contains a collection of ethics guidelines from various news organizations worldwide. These include specific news outlets, parent news companies, and trade associations from working in different media.

Journalism Ethics Cases Online (<http://www.journalism.indiana.edu/gallery/Ethics/>)

This set of cases has been created for teachers, researchers, professional journalists and consumers of news to help them explore ethical issues in journalism. The cases raise a variety of ethical problems faced by journalists, including such issues as privacy, conflict of interest, reporter-source relationships, & the role of journalists in their communities.

Media Ethics Online (<http://www.stlouisspj.org/ethics.htm>)

SPJ-Ethics Listserv is a mail list devoted to the discussion of journalism ethics. You can subscribe by sending a message to majordomo@dworkin.wustl.edu and in the body of the message type `subscribe spj-ethics`