

## The Future of Media Ethics

**Date:** Friday, 9 December 2016

**Time:** 9:00 - 17:00

**Venue:** Auditorium XIII, The main building of the University of Helsinki, Unioninkatu 34.

The participation in the conference is free of charge. Refreshments will be served during the coffee break.

Please register by **2 December 2016**.

**Registration link:** <https://elomake.helsinki.fi/lomakkeet/75226/lomake.html>

**Description:** Over the last two decades or so, the long-established fundamentals of media ethics have come under increasingly intense scrutiny, leading to a veritable boom of new perspectives on familiar problems as well as novel questions that seem to challenge our very understanding of what “media ethics” is or what it may become. Driving this process is the perception that the professional and technological underpinnings of media ethics have undergone and are undergoing significant transformations, coupled with the suspicion that the normative frameworks developed in the 20th century are not up to the task of answering the ethical questions posed by digitalisation, globalisation, evolving journalistic practices, and changes in everyday uses of media. The proposed responses have ranged from moderate revisions of extant principles to more sweeping reforms of the professional procedures and academic theories of media ethics – all the way to a deeper scepticism regarding the usefulness of ethical codes for journalists and other media practitioners, now and in the future.

What is the outlook for media ethics in professional self-regulation and as a field of applied ethics? This one-day symposium seeks to advance discussion about the problems and prospects ahead. It will address questions such as: What are the central ethical problems facing media practitioners and media users today? Can we get along by amending extant principles, or does the situation call for more radical measures and new ethical frameworks? Will future media ethics still be primarily preoccupied with questions of professionalism and news media, or is it time to redraw the boundaries of this sub-field in view of the “new moral problems” that have emerged in the digital media landscape? What will become of such long-cherished norms as truth-telling, objectivity, and fairness? Are we witnessing the return of partisan media and an acceptance of open activism – and if we are, what ethical ideals are then to be maintained, promoted, and taught? What are the media-ethical implications of the current boom in “fake news” and resurgent nationalism? Can there be a global media ethics, or are we rather heading toward growing cultural fragmentation, do-it-yourself ethics, and scepticism regarding universal values?

The conference is co-organised by the Communicative Pragmatism and Reasonable Pluralism research project (financed by the Academy of Finland), the Pragmatic Objectivity research project (financed by the Helsingin Sanomat Foundation), the Master's Programme in Media and Global Communication at the University of Helsinki, and the Philosophy of Communication section of the European Communication Research and Education Association.

## Programme

- 9:00-9:10**      **Introduction: Media Ethics in a “Post-Truth World”?**  
Mats Bergman (Senior Lecturer, University of Helsinki)
- 9:10-10:00**    **Disrupting Journalism Ethics: Radical Construction of a Digital, Global Ethic**  
Stephen J. A. Ward (Distinguished Lecturer in Ethics, University of British Columbia)
- 10:00-10:20**    Coffee
- 10:20-11:10**    **Journalism Ethics in the Age of Trump**  
Barbie Zelizer (Professor of Communication, Annenberg School for Communication / Helsingin Sanomat Foundation Fellow, Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies)
- 11:10-12:00**    **Stories, Memes and Lies: How Mainstream Journalism Changed Its Standards and Enabled the Rise of the Fake Media**  
Hanna Nikkanen (Visiting Professor of Journalism, University of Tampere)
- 12:00-13:20**    Lunch break
- 13:20-14:10**    **Everything Old Is New Again: The Ethics of Information, Virtue, and Care in ICT design, Engineering, and Research**  
Charles Ess (Professor in Media Studies, University of Oslo)
- 14:10-15:00**    **Ethics in Our Era of Information War – Questions, Proposals and Practicalities**  
Elina Melgin (Managing Director, ProCom – the Finnish Association of Communications Professionals)
- 15:00-15:20**    Coffee
- 15:20-16:10**    **International Dimension of Media Ethics: The Challenge for Journalism Education**  
Kaarle Nordenstreng (Professor Emeritus, University of Tampere)
- 16:10-17:00**    **Whose Fault Was This? Media Ethics beyond Media Elites**  
Henrik Rydenfelt (Postdoctoral Researcher, University of Eastern Finland)