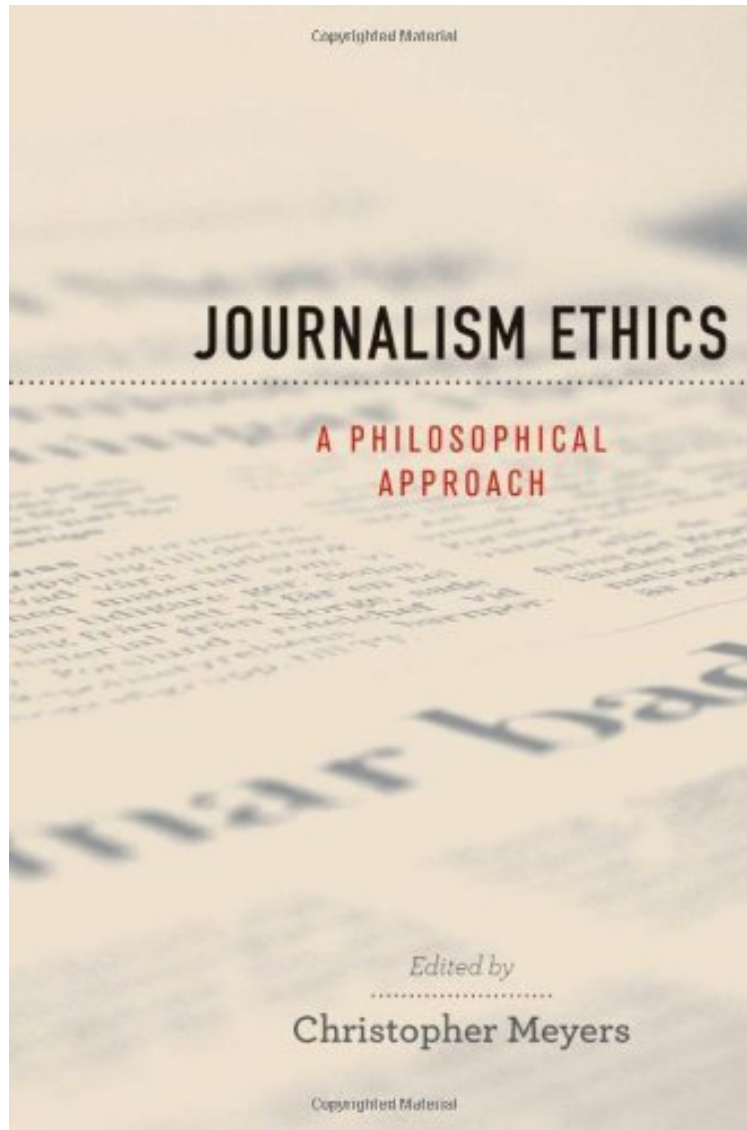


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From Oxford University Press : Journalism Ethics: A Philosophical Approach (Practical and Professional Ethics) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Journalism Ethics: A Philosophical Approach (Practical and Professional Ethics):

0 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Chris Meyers Professor Philosophy CSUBBy DanielChris Meyers is hard to follow, using over technical vocabulary throughout. It seems he does this with the intention of sounding smart? However, by doing this it def. does not read smart and is hard to follow throughout. There are some great points made

by contributing writers and editors, yet again over analyzing the very basics of journalism ethics is not only boring but unnecessary. Too many words to explain what can be said clearly and factually with dozens of less words and technical jargon. Chris seems like a decent enough guy, however if you take his class you will get the shock of a lifetime when he asks: "Is it okay to kill children and eat them?" The various and immediate answers of "no way in hell is that okay" let alone ok to use jokingly as a weird way to prove a point of ethics and why we believe what we believe. A bit far out Mr. Meyers, however well intended your point may be that there could be circumstances like that of the Donner party in which one would possibly entertain that morbid idea. Not the kinds of things one would want to think about when simply trying to learn the basic ethical standards journalists use in the media.

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. The best take on the topic

By Zoominskee Christopher Meyers has heard the jokes about journalism ethics being an oxymoron -- and he's not amused. From the opening lines of this valuable edited volume, Meyers lays out just why journalism ethics are no laughing matter -- and why they are more valuable, not less so, with the advent of the Internet. With chapters penned by a stable of diverse contributors, Meyers has compiled a book aimed at reminding reporters -- both new and old, and the professors who train them and scholars who study them -- that journalism is a vital endeavor that requires a careful ethical methods. Without a strong eye on ethics, Meyers argues, today's media, already buffeted by economic and cultural winds, will be hopelessly ill-equipped to earn the trust audiences must have in it to succeed.

Structurally, the book is divided into two sections, the first aimed at establishing a conceptual and theoretical foundation and the second designed to illuminate how those ideas are put into practice. While the book is intended to provide practical ethics for those in the field, the initial focus on the abstract allows for a better framework for understanding the commonly found ethical issues found in the second section. The chapters, written by scholars with journalistic backgrounds, cover a bevy of topics Meyers helpfully groups into subsections. While it's possible to pick and choose sections ala carte, doing so would undermine one of the key strengths of the book.

Notably, the first section stands out from other practical ethics texts by avoiding the cold murder's row of philosophers offering apparently distinct and incompatible theories. Meyers argues this typical approach is intended to provide a foundation but ends up being hopelessly superficial. So he opts to avoid "dense original sources" and artificial assignments ("How would Kant approach this? How would Aristotle?") and instead seeks to encourage careful moral reasoning that incorporates the central points of those classical theorists. The result is the "systematic moral analysis" (SMA), the real star of the book, which looks to take ethical decision-making to a more reasoned level in order to perform the vital duty of journalism.

The central theme of the SMA is that journalists have a duty to cause harm in order to perform their jobs, so the focus lies in determining if that harm is fully justified. What sets this text apart from other professional ethics book is the careful consideration for the journalist's true audience as not the individual reader or viewer, but rather the "Public," the society as a whole. This broadens the ethical discussion from the common focus of many practical ethics books for journalists: avoiding plagiarism, achieving objectivity, and navigating concerns over conflicts of interest and privacy. For example, with this paradigm, a story that was completely accurate and did not violate any of the hot button issues mentioned above would still be considered unethical if it did not serve the public and instead only benefited the leaders of a particular company. While there is obviously more nuance than is possible to convey here, the simple fact Meyers' contributors are weighing just what journalists do and ought to do as a profession to fulfill not just a reader's desire or their own peace of mind but to enhance the greater public good elevates this text above lesser entries in the genre.

That is not to say there aren't weak points in Journalism Ethics. As with any edited collection of contributed chapters, the book has issues with evenness, particularly when it comes to use of examples for illustrative purposes. However, those chapters that readily utilize real-world examples stand out for their effectiveness. The global media ethics chapter, meanwhile, seems ill suited for the remainder of the text, which Meyers situates as a rumination on journalism's role as the Fourth Estate, a particularly American construction.

Ultimately, the largest issue with the text is its myopic decision to focus only on mainstream media, which Meyers justifies in the preface by explaining online reporting has not proven itself a viable replacement for the "traditional model of journalism" epitomized by newspapers. His only real inclusion of the Internet is as one of a number of factors hammering journalism that illustrate the need to remain credible through ethical practices. While his assessment of online news' shortcomings may be apt, it does not excuse the noticeable abdication of discussing ethics in cyberspace. Considering the text is designed for "budding practitioners" who will surely spend more of their careers producing pixels than papers, this is a glaring omission.

On the whole, however, Journalism Ethics makes a compelling argument that codes of ethics aren't sufficient to provide real guidance for the kinds of ethical questions journalists face. This rich, layered examination of both the theory and practice of ethics does a much more thorough job and would be well suited for graduate-level journalism courses or particularly advanced undergrads, either as a standalone text for a media ethics class or as a supplement to a more skills-focused text in a reporting course.

1 of 15 people found the following review helpful. A failed attempt to defend an oxymoron...By another_perspective

Arguably the most lame attempt I have ever read to defend an oxymoron. "Journalism Ethics" is akin to "military intelligence" and "President Jimmy Carter"; some things just don't ring true. I could write a treatise on how this "journalistic" failure is nothing more than a group of tangentially related topics woven clumsily together to try to put a prom dress on a pig. But why not just cut to the bottom line?--Because credibility is journalism's main

currency, many news agencies and mass media outlets claim that they have strict codes of conduct and enforce them, and use several layers of editorial oversight to catch problems before stories are distributed.-Since the American public rates the credibility of the media at a resounding 21%, it is obvious that these selfing platitudes about strict codes and their enforcement are a pipe dream.America's most radical, liberal, pro-black racists, the media stand as an example for no one to follow. It's easy "work", requires no credentials, and is often an outlet for deeply seated emotional issues the Christiane Amanpoursand Katy Courics have yet to work through.I mean, what was the point?

Since the introduction of radio and television news, journalism has gone through multiple transformations, but each time it has been sustained by a commitment to basic values and best practices. Journalism Ethics is a reminder, a defense and an elucidation of core journalistic values, with particular emphasis on the interplay of theory, conceptual analysis and practice. The book begins with a sophisticated model for ethical decision-making, one that connects classical theories with the central purposes of journalism. Top scholars from philosophy, journalism and communications offer essays on such topics as objectivity, privacy, confidentiality, conflict of interest, the history of journalism, online journalism, and the definition of a journalist. The result is a guide to ethically sound and socially justified journalism-in whatever form that practice emerges. Journalism Ethics will appeal to students and teachers of journalism ethics, as well as journalists and practical ethicists in general.

"Impressive" --Journal of Mass Media Ethics
About the Author
Christopher Meyers is Professor of Philosophy at California State University, Bakersfield.