

Annual Report 2019-20

CENTRE FOR FREE EXPRESSION

**Ryerson
University**

Centre for Free Expression
Faculty of Communication
& Design

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Introduction

It is a tired cliché to open this annual report with the observation that 2019-2020 has been an unusual year. All of our worlds have been turned upside down by the coronavirus. While, initially, there was hope that things would start returning to normal by summer, that has not been the case and the prospect of pre-COVID19 normality returning ebbs and flows with endless news of the possibility of vaccines and treatment.

Amidst this, the Centre for Free Expression, like most of the rest of the world, has focused on creatively responding to our new reality. Almost all of our work is proceeding although aspects have been slowed because of temporary closures of some institutions, shifting priorities of governments, and the necessity of finding good ways to function virtually.

In some cases, these new formats have allowed us to do things that were not possible before. For example, in switching from in-person public panel to a virtual format, we have been able to include a wide range of panelists that we would never have been able to include had they had to come to Toronto. We are especially grateful to our colleagues in Ryerson Media Services, Brian Boase and Luke Nater, whose skills allowed us to offer an excellent (and weekly) CFE Virtual Forum Series in May and June.

Despite everything, the Centre is more active than ever, as issues of free expression and the public's right to know are among those things at the forefront of public consciousness. What has happened in Canada's long-term care facilities during the pandemic dramatically and tragically revealed the deadly consequences of our almost non-existent protection for whistleblowers. The resurgence of long-standing racism and hate, fuelled by social media, have generated widespread recognition that it is the time for real change, although what that change should look like continues to be a matter of dispute.

Many question whether democratic institutions can survive the deep polarization and anger in society. But, as French philosopher and activist, Claude Lefort reminds us, "modern democracy... [is] a regime founded upon the legitimacy of a debate as to what is legitimate and what is illegitimate -- a debate which is necessarily without any guarantor and without any end." Expressive freedom is what makes that "debate", what I prefer to call "public discourse", possible. For too long, expressive freedom has been effectively denied to too many – those marginalized by class, race, gender identity and gender expression, sexual orientation, ability, ethnicity, and religion. A vibrant, inclusive public discourse is the only hope for social justice and a genuinely democratic society.

I hope this report gives you a good sense of the Centre's current work. We would welcome any comments or suggestions.

James L. Turk

Director

Interventions in Court

The Centre seeks leave to intervene in court cases where we feel our expertise will be useful to the court in reaching its judgment. In each case, we are represented by expert, *pro bono* legal counsel. The following are the interventions in which the Centre was engaged in 2019-2020.

A. Supreme Court of Canada

Case: *1704604 Ontario Ltd. v Pointes Protection Association*

Issue: Anti-SLAPP

CFE Counsel: Justin Safayeni (Stockwoods)

Status: Leave Granted - Awaiting Judgment

Case: *CBC v. The Queen and Ostrowski*

Issue: Publication Bans

CFE Counsel: Justin Safayeni (Stockwoods)

Status: Applying for Leave

Case: *Toronto (City) v. Ontario (Attorney General)*

Issue: Freedom of Expression

CFE Counsel: Jamie Cameron, Pierre Gemson, & Christopher Bredt (Borden Ladner Gervais)

Status: Applying for Leave

B. Federal Court of Appeal

Case: *Mirna Montejo Gordillo et al v. Canada (Attorney General)*

Issue: Failure of the Office of the Public Sector Integrity Commissioner

CFE Counsel: David Yazbeck (Raven Law)

Status: Applying for Leave

Case: *Kattenburg v. Canada (Attorney General)*

Issue: Public Right to Know

CFE Counsel: Faisal Bhabha (PooranLaw)

Status: Applying for Leave

C. Ontario Court of Appeal

Case: *Canadian Federation of Students v. Ontario*

Issue: Expressive Rights of Student Organization

CFE Counsel: Jennifer Saville & Phil Tunley (St. Lawrence Barristers)

Status: Applying for Leave

D. Ontario Divisional Court

Case: *Attorney General for Ontario v. Information and Privacy Commissioner, 2020 ONSC 5085*

Issue: Access to Information

CFE Counsel: Daniel Sheppard (Goldblatt Partners)

Status: Leave Granted – Judgment Rendered

Projects

1. Whistleblower Assistance Program

Canada's whistleblowing laws provide little or no protection for whistleblowers. While actively advocating for reform of our laws and institutional practices, the Centre is also setting up a Whistleblower Assistance Program (WAP) to assist public-interest whistleblowers. The WAP will provide information and assistance, making available *pro bono* legal advice and connecting them with investigative journalists, as appropriate. It will be the only such program in Canada. We have pilot tested our approach and have begun fundraising to cover the first-year costs. We have developed a detailed plan, in consultation with the advancement staff at FCAD, for sustainable funding after the first year.

2. CFE Digital Communities Advisory Panel (DCAP)

The Centre for Free Expression has created the Digital Communities Advisory Panel (DCAP) to provide expert advice and information and to assist civic engagement in communities considering "smart cities" initiatives.

DCAP's work starts from the perspective that connected communities should be characterized by democratic decision-making, democratic data governance, civic engagement, social justice, and protections of human rights as spelled out in the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The Panel's initial projects include:

- Create a national Connected Communities/Smart Cities Speakers Bureau
- Establish a registry of individuals who can provide expert advice to civil society groups in relation to smart cities/connected community issues
- Prepare a public report on lessons to be learned from the Sidewalk Labs Toronto Quayside project
- Write a history of the concept of "smart cities", the role of technology companies both in developing the concept and encouraging certain understandings of it, the many different usages of the term, and the various forms "smart cities" projects have taken in practice
- Identify emergent policy issues in relation to connected community projects
- Prepare a report on issues for workers who would have to use the public space of a smart city, the transportation system, and work in offices, shops and other commercial organisations located in the smart cities.

- Examine how navigation apps (e.g., Google Maps, Apple Maps) are used to shape mobility options in communities and how their adoption is fundamentally shifting the public's relationship with mobility.

Panel members are:

- **Nabeel Ahmed**, Programme Officer, One-to-One Advisory Service, Open North
- **Brenda McPhail**, Director, Privacy, Technology & Surveillance Project at Canadian Civil Liberties Association
- **Lisa Austin**, Professor, Chair in Law and Technology, University of Toronto
- **Jason Millar**, Assistant Professor of Electrical Engineering & Computer Science, University of Ottawa
- **Tanya Chung-Tiam-Fook**, Senior Lead, Indigenous Engagement, Evergreen and Future Cities Canada
- **Vincent Mosco**, Professor Emeritus, Sociology, Queens University
- **Nehal El-Hadi**, Science + Technology Editor, The Conversation Canada; Editor-in-Chief, Studio Magazine
- **Mariette Pilon**, Lawyer, Ottawa; Member of the Quebec Bar
- **Blayne Haggart**, Associate Professor of Political Science, Brock University
- **David Robertson**, former Director of Workplace Organization and Training for the Canadian Auto Workers
- **Fahmida Kamali**, Manager of Operations & Special Projects, Ryerson Leadership Lab
- **Renee Sieber**, Associate Professor of Geography, McGill University
- **Tamir Israel**, Staff Lawyer, Samuelson-Glushko Canadian Internet Policy and Public Interest Clinic (CIPPIC)
- **James L. Turk**, Director, Centre for Free Expression
- **Mariana Valverde**, Professor at the Centre for Criminology & Sociolegal Studies, University of Toronto

3. National Whistleblower Archives at Ryerson University

The launch of Ryerson University's National Whistleblower Archives, scheduled for this spring, has been postponed due to coronavirus. The Centre proposed the idea, has worked with the Chief Librarian and her staff to plan for it, and has arranged for

important Canadian public-interest whistleblowers to donate their records to the archives. The Archives will be launched once the campus fully reopens.

4. Partnership: Centre for Free Expression, UK's Box Clever Theatre, and Ryerson School of Performance

We are seeing a return to demands for censorship as a means of dealing with difficult and controversial issues. This is occurring increasingly in the arts which have traditionally been a vital vehicle for public discourse.

The Centre has reached out to the UK's Box Clever Theatre which excelled at using theatre to foster public discussions of difficult issues such as anti-Semitism. A key figure in their work is eminent Shakespearian director, Iqbal Khan, whose productions of *Merchant of Venice* for Box Clever have been performed in the UK and Israel to explore anti-Semitism and whose Royal Shakespeare Company production of *Othello* fostered innovative discussions of race.

We have arranged for discussions with Khan to be part of the Centre's virtual public education events in the fall and are working with the Ryerson School of Performance for Khan to run a series of masterclasses for students at the School. The Centre and the Ryerson School of Performance are hoping this can set the stage for a longer-term residency in 2021-22 and beyond.

5. Public Libraries Intellectual Freedom Policy Database

In response to the increasing number of challenges to public libraries' policies on intellectual freedom, the Centre has created data base of public library policies related to intellectual freedom – public space use and meeting room rental, materials selection, public internet use, library programming, and displays. The database is a tool to assist libraries to identify best practices and assist in policy discussions and development.

6. Workplace Free Expression Database

Social media has radically transformed the ability of individuals to transmit and publish their thoughts and opinions. One consequence has been to blur the boundary between employees' public right to free expression and their private obligations as employees. Increasingly, employees are being disciplined or dismissed for engaging in social media-based activities outside of the workplace. This raises important questions about the extent to which personal activity outside of work is becoming subject to employer control. Working with Charles Smith at Thomas More College at the University of Saskatchewan and Daniel J. Pare at the University of Ottawa, the Centre has created a

searchable online database of legal decisions regarding freedom of expression at work to facilitate research and information sharing on this topic.

7. Hate/Extremist Group Profiles

Modelled on the work of the [Southern Poverty Law Center](#) in the United States, the Centre for Free Expression is developing profiles of hate and other extremist groups in Canada. This investigative work is being carried out by a number of our junior fellows, mostly graduate students in journalism. The objective of the work is to shine a public spotlight on hate and extremist groups – exposing their nature and activities. This work grows out of the necessity of finding alternatives to ineffective, often counterproductive hate speech laws that not only fail to stem hate but undermine democratic discourse. The profiles will be available on our website.

8. Code of Silence Awards for Outstanding Achievement in Government Secrecy

The Centre coordinates the joint initiative with Canadian Association of Journalists, News Media Canada, and Canadian Journalists for Free Expression to identify and present annually the Code of Silence Award for Outstanding Achievement in Government Secrecy to the most secretive department or agency at the federal level, among provincial governments, among local/municipal governments, and among Canadian law enforcement agencies. The objective is to highlight the inadequacies of access-to-information laws in Canada so as to build public awareness and pressure for better legislative protections for the public's right to know. The [recipients](#) are announced publicly in February and March.

9. Expressive Freedom

The Centre has played an important role in promoting the discussion of expressive freedom in society and in the university. In addition to the Centre's publications, blog, film series, and public events, the Director has been an invited speaker on these issues at the Ontario Library Association Super Conference, Edmonton Public Library, the Vancouver Public Library, the International Dialogue on Education in Berlin, the University of Alberta, and the Calgary Public Library.

10. Snowden Archive-in-a-Box Display in the Ryerson University Library

The Centre and the Ryerson Library met with Ryerson librarians in February to unveil the Snowden-Archive-in-a-Box -- a display designed for the library to educate students and faculty on privacy and surveillance. Created by CFE Senior Fellow, Evan Light, the

Snowden-Archive-in-a-Box is a portable box containing a complete, searchable archive of all the published documents released to journalists by Edward Snowden. The Archive-in-a-Box allows users to connect via its own WiFi network, and browse from their own devices, without connecting to the Internet – making possible the browsing of Snowden’s documents securely. As part of the display, there is a “WiFi sniffer” inside the box, which detects traffic on the box’s network and displays it on the screen within the box. The data are not saved, but the display is a useful educational tool that shows how easily our “private” behaviour can be monitored. Once Ryerson opens from the pandemic, the Snowden-Archive-in-a-Box will be publicly displayed in the Ryerson Library and used as an educational tool.

11. Free Expression in Schools

The Centre has developed a workshop for elementary and secondary teachers that addresses teachers’ free expression rights. Special focus is put on (1) dealing with controversial issues in the classroom; (2) teachers and social media; (3) teachers and politics, and (4) restrictions on teachers’ behaviour outside the school. The objective is to allow teachers to share experiences and explore their rights. The workshop is being redesigned in a virtual format for 2020-2021 school year.

12. Ryerson National Security Faculty and Student Helpline

The Centre for Free Expression has developed a support service for Ryerson faculty and students who are approached by a Canadian national security agency requesting an informal or formal interview. The objective is to make them aware of their rights and to assist if they decide to go ahead with the interview. (The program will not deal with requests for assistance in relation to police investigations.) The Helpline is modelled on, and is working with, similar initiatives at the University of Toronto and Osgoode Hall Law School.

While the front end of each university’s program has been designed for its own campus, the three programs will share a back end consisting of specially trained lawyers who will provide *pro bono* advice and assistance to the faculty and students. Details of the initiative have been vetted by Ryerson General Council, Julia Shin Doi. The launch of the helpline was delayed because of the pandemic. Our hope is it will be start in early 2021.

13. Partnership: Freie Universität Berlin

The Centre has been developing a partnership with the Freie Universität Berlin (FUB) involving joint research and policy initiatives with FUB and Ryerson faculty on issues of

academic freedom, freedom of the press, and threats to liberal democratic values. The FUB has approached the Humboldt Foundation for support for a joint speaker series on freedom of expression and has included its partnership with CFE in its current Erasmus bid that would allow Ryerson students to spend three months to a year studying at FUB, which offers a number of relevant social science programs in English. We are also exploring several joint events on academic freedom and on freedom of the press. All of this has been delayed by the pandemic as we wait to see what will be possible in the next twelve months.

Law Reform

1. Whistleblower Protection

Across Canada, there is little effective protection for whistleblowers under federal, provincial, or municipal legislation and regulations. In 2017, the Centre worked with the House of Commons' Government Operations Committee in its review and report on the *Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act* (PSDPA) – the deeply flawed federal whistleblower legislation. The Committee unanimously approved a [report](#) critical of the PSDPA which has gathered dust since. Our advocacy work with staff and the minister responsible for this file, as well as with Sheila Fraser, the former Auditor General whose audits revealed serious problems with the Office of the Public Sector Integrity Commissioner's handling of its duties under the PSDPA, have been put on hold until the fall of 2020 due to the pandemic. The Centre has provided and continues to provide commentary and assistance to provincial governments and municipalities that have aided them in strengthening their whistleblowing protection legislation.

2. Research Confidentiality

Following publication of Ted Palys, John Lowman, and James Turk's research [paper](#) on statutory protections for research confidentiality, representatives of the Centre met with senior officials of Canada's three granting councils, staff in the Office of the Privacy Commissioner, and staff in the Department of Justice to chart a way forward to the introduction of such legislation in Canada. The Centre is currently developing language to amend the *Canada Evidence Act* and will be meeting with the granting councils and the federal government to take the next steps in the fall.

3. Provincial Anti-SLAPP legislation

The Centre has a long-term goal for the adoption of anti-SLAPP (Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation) legislation by the seven provinces that do not currently have it (all provinces except Ontario, Quebec, and British Columbia). To achieve that goal, the Centre is assisting with the creation of coalitions of provincial and local organizations in each province that will carry forward a campaign for the adoption of anti-SLAPP legislation based on the [Ontario's Protection of Public Participation Act, 2015](#) – arguably the best in North America.

We are awaiting the Supreme Court judgment on appeals to the Ontario legislation, a case in which we were granted intervenor status

4. Access-to-Information laws and regulation

The Centre's work on improvements to the flawed federal [*Access To Information Act*](#) was put on hold in March because of the pandemic. We, and our partners (Canadian Association of Journalists, News Media Canada, and Canadian Journalists for Free Expression) are ready to move forward as soon as possible to renew our active advocacy for better legislation and regulations

Research

1. Whistleblowing in Canada's Live Performance Industry

The Centre is in the final stages of a SSHRC-funding online survey of harassment and discrimination in the Canada's live performance industry with the assistance of Canadian Actors' Equity Association. The survey was completed at the end of March. The researchers are preparing a public report to be released in September, followed by several academic papers, conference presentations, as well as offer virtual workshops on our findings for those in the broader creative industries sector.

The research is focusing on the extent and nature of harassment and bullying in the industry, how people respond, the effectiveness of existing whistleblowing policies and practices, and learn more about the impediments to whistleblowing. The objective is to be able to contribute to the development of more effective organizational policies and practices. The research team is:

- James L. Turk, Director, Centre for Free Expression (Principal Investigator)
- Leslie Berger, Associate Professor and KPMG Foundation Fellow in Accounting, Lazaridis School of Business and Economics, Wilfrid Laurier University (Co-Investigator)
- Louis-Etienne Dubois, Assistant Professor, Department of Creative Industries, Faculty of Communications and Design, Ryerson University (Co-Investigator)
- Jonathan Farrar, Associate Professor, Department of Accounting, Lazaridis School of Business and Economics, Wilfrid Laurier University (Co-Investigator)
- Catherine Loughlin, Professor and Associate Dean, Research and Knowledge Mobilization, Sobey School of Business, St. Mary's University (Co-Investigator)
- Alexandra Orlova, Professor, Department of Criminology and Faculty of Law, Ryerson University (Co-Investigator)

2. Was the Phoenix Debacle Avoidable?

The CFE is finalizing its investigation, being undertaken by CFE Senior Fellow David Hutton, into the Phoenix Pay System debacle to determine if the devastating problems might have been prevented had there been adequate whistleblowing protection for public servants that would have allowed them safely to alert their superiors to the impending deficiencies and errors. His report will be published in the fall.

3. Whistleblowing among Quebec Nurses

The Centre continues its work with Professors Amélie Perron at the University of Ottawa and Marilou Gagnon at the University of Victoria who are undertaking a SSHRC-funded research project on whistleblowing among Quebec Nurses. The Centre is assisting by sharing its expertise with respect to whistleblowing legislation in Canada and the whistleblowing policies and practices in other sectors, as well as to provide advice on the interview guide and on recommendations that emerge from the study.

4. Survey of Whistleblowing Policies and Practices in Canada

Following completion of the survey into whistleblowing in Canada's live performance industry, the Centre is planning to apply for a SSHRC Partnership Grant to undertake a large-scale survey of whistleblowing policies and practices in organizations in the public and private sectors across Canada. We are working in conjunction with a team of researchers from Australian universities (Griffith, Sydney, Australian National University, Victoria) that have undertaken a similar [study](#) over the past three years in Australia and New Zealand.

5. Access-to-Information Laws – Best Practice

The Centre undertook a review of access-to-information (ATI) legislation in 123 countries to identify provisions that could serve as models for improving Canada's ATI legislation. This research was conducted and the [report](#) was written by CFE Junior Fellow Max Binks-Collier.

6. Police Secrecy

CFE awarded the first of its FCAD-funded early stage SRC grants to Lisa Taylor, Associate Professor of Journalism, whose research will identify trends in Ontario police agencies' release of identifying information about victims of homicide. The research will seek to determine if, as it appears, information vital to the public's understanding of fatal crime is being withheld from journalists and, by extension, the constituencies they serve, with increasing frequency.

Public Education

The Centre presented five in-person panel discussions and, after the pandemic, launched CFE Virtual Forum Series of nine online panels. Video podcasts of all the panels are available on the CFE [website](#).

Public Panels

Defending Alberta – at What Cost? (September 11, 2019)

Speakers:

- *Laurie Adkin*, Professor of Political Science, University of Alberta
- *Eriel Tchekwie Deranger*, Executive Director, Indigenous Climate Action
- *Tim Gray*, Executive Director, Environmental Defence
- *Alex Neve*, Secretary General, Amnesty International Canada

Moderator:

- *James L. Turk*, Director, Centre for Free Expression, Ryerson University
Co-sponsored with Parkland Institute

How is the public to know? When regulators lose sight of their public role (November 21, 2019)

Panelists:

- *Bruce Campbell*, Author of *The Lac-Mégantic Rail Disaster: Public Betrayal, Justice Denied* and former Executive Director of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives
- *Linda McQuaig*, Author of recently published *The Sport and Prey of Capitalists*
- *Mark S. Winfield*, Professor of Environmental Studies & Sustainable Energy Initiative Co-Chair, York University

Moderator:

- *James L. Turk*: Director, Centre for Free Expression

Can your face be your undoing: The perils of facial recognition (December 3, 2019)

Panelists:

- *Laura Tribe*, Executive Director, OpenMedia
- *Kate Robertson*, Lawyer, Markson Law, and Research Fellow, Citizen Lab, University of Toronto
- *Brenda McPhail*, Director: Privacy, Technology & Surveillance Project, Canadian Civil Liberties Association

Moderator:

- *James L. Turk*: Director, Centre for Free Expression

Is Privacy Possible in the proposed Sidewalk Toronto or any “Smart City”?

(January 22, 2020)

Panelists:

- *Andrew Clement*, Professor Emeritus, Faculty of Information, University of Toronto and Co-founder, Identity Privacy and Security Institute (IPSI)
- *Natasha Tusikov*, Assistant Professor, Social Sciences, York University, Author of *Chokepoints: Global Private Regulation on the Internet*

Moderator

- Brenda McPhail, Director - Privacy, Technology and Surveillance Project for the Canadian Civil Liberties Association

Can social media hate, lies, and harassment be regulated? How? (February 4, 2020)

Panelists

- *Carissima Mathen*, Professor of Constitutional and Criminal Law at the University of Ottawa
- *Ravi Vatrapu*, Loretta Rogers Research Chair in Digital Enterprise and Professor of Computational Social Science, Ted Rogers School of Management, Ryerson University

Moderator

- *James L. Turk*, Director, Centre for Free Expression, Ryerson University

CFE Virtual Forum Series

Pandemics and Civil Liberties (May 6, 2020)

Panelists:

- Brenda McPhail, Director, Canadian Civil Liberties Association's Privacy, Surveillance, and Technology Project
- Stephanie Perrin, President, Digital Discretion Inc.
- Renu Mandhane, Chief Commissioner, Ontario Human Rights Commission
- Tim McSorley, National Coordinator, International Civil Liberties Monitoring Group

Moderator:

- James L. Turk, Director, Centre for Free Expression, Ryerson University

Co-sponsor: PEN Canada and Canadian Civil Liberties Association

The Smart City in a Digital World (May 13, 2020)

Panelists:

- *Nabeel Ahmed*, Programme Officer, One-to-One Advisory Service, Open North
- *Tracey Lauriault*, Assistant Professor, Critical Media and Big Data, Carleton University
- *Vincent Mosco*, Professor Emeritus, Queen's University and author of *The Smart City in the Digital World*

Moderator:

- *Andrew Clement*, Professor Emeritus & Co-Founder Identity Privacy and Security Institute, University of Toronto

Who is 'Free' to Speak of "Genocide"? Perspectives on Reclaiming Power and Place (May 20, 2020)

Panelists:

- *Cyndy Baskin*, Past Chair, Aboriginal Education Council, Associate Professor of Social Work, Ryerson University, and Academic Coordinator of the Chang School's Certificate in Aboriginal Knowledges and Experiences
- *Len Findlay*, Distinguished Professor Emeritus and founding member of the Indigenous Humanities Group, University of Saskatchewan
- *Lynn Lavallée*, Strategic Lead, Indigenous Resurgence, Faculty of Community Services, Professor of Social Work, Ryerson University

Moderator:

- *Karyn Pugliese*, Assistant Professor of Journalism, Ryerson University, and Nieman Fellow, Harvard University

Co-sponsor: PEN Canada

Has Our Fear of Offending Gone Too Far? (May 28, 2020)

Panelists:

- *Sonya Fatah*, Assistant Professor, Ryerson School of Journalism
- *Abbas Kassam*, Senior Fellow, Centre for Free Expression, and former board member, National Council of Canadian Muslims
- *Lydia Perović*, Arts & Culture Journalist and Author

Moderator:

- *Lisa Taylor*, Associate Professor, Ryerson School of Journalism

Co-sponsor: PEN Canada

Is It Time to Re-examine Limits on Workplace Free Expression? (June 2, 2020)

Panelists:

- *David Hutton*, Co-founder of the Whistleblowing International Network, management consultant, Senior Fellow of the Centre for Free Expression
- *Danielle McLaughlin*, Former Director of Education, Canadian Civil Liberties Association
- *Charles Smith*, Associate Professor of Political Science. St. Thomas More College at the University of Saskatchewan and Co-Editor of *Labour/ Le Travail*

Moderator:

- *James L. Turk*, Director, Centre for Free Expression, Ryerson University

Fighting Anti-Semitism or Silencing Critics of Israel: What's Behind the Push for Governments to Adopt the IHRA Definition of Anti-Semitism (June 10, 2020)

Panelists:

- *Faisal Bhabha*, Associate Professor, Osgoode Hall Law School, York University and Former Vice-chair, Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario
- *Bernie Farber*, former CEO of the Mosaic Institute, the Canadian Jewish Congress, and the Paloma Foundation
- *Richard Marceau*, Vice President, External Affairs and General Counsel, Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs
- *Sheryl Nestel*, Independent Jewish Voices

Moderator:

- *Bernie Lucht*, Executive Producer of CBC Radio's *Ideas* from 1984-2012. Currently, Senior Fellow at Massey College, University of Toronto.

Co-sponsor: Canadian Civil Liberties Association

Can Journalism Be Saved? (June 18, 2020)

Panelists :

- *Colette Brin*, Professor, Département d'information et de communication and Directrice, Centre d'études sur les médias, Université Laval
- *Asmaa Malik*, Associate Professor of Journalism, Ryerson University
- *David Skok*, Editor-in-Chief, *The Logic*; former head of editorial strategy, *Toronto Star*
- *Kelly Toughill*, Associate Professor of Journalism, U of King's College

Moderator:

- *Ivor Shapiro*, Ivor Shapiro, Professor, School of Journalism, Ryerson University

Co-sponsor: Ryerson Journalism Research Centre

Challenges Facing “Smart City” Projects in Canada: A conversation with Sheldon Levy (June 23, 2020)

Speaker:

- *Sheldon Levy*, President of Ryerson University from 2005 to 2015; Ontario’s Deputy Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities from 2015 to 2017

In conversation with James L. Turk, Director, Centre for Free Expression, Ryerson University

Platforms of Distortion – Can They Be Fixed? (June 30, 2020)

Panelists:

- *Matt Bailey*, Digital Freedom Program Director, PEN America
- *Brendan de Caires*, Executive Director, PEN Canada
- *Petra Molnar*, Acting Director, International Human Rights Program, University of Toronto

Moderator:

- *James L. Turk*, Director, Centre for Free Expression, Ryerson University

Co-sponsor: PEN Canada

Working Groups

CFE Whistleblowing Initiative (CFEWI) Steering Committee

The CFEWI Steering Committee plays a central role in advising and helping carry out all the Centre's work in relation to whistleblowing. The Centre sees one of its most important missions to protect Canadian society by making responsible whistleblowing possible through effective protection for Canadian whistleblowers. This will enable Canadians to live and work with integrity and to combat misconduct that may threaten the well-being of our communities and our democracy.

As indicated throughout this report, the Centre's whistleblowing-related work is multifaceted. It raises public awareness through organizing public events focusing on whistleblowing issues, publishing public educational materials on the importance of whistleblowing, promoting stories of whistleblowing through social media, and by assisting journalists covering whistleblowing stories. The CFE [website](#) is the principal source of information about whistleblowing and whistleblowers in Canada.

The Centre publishes analyses of existing whistleblowing laws in Canada; makes recommendations for new/improved whistleblowing laws based on research and international best practices; provides advice to governments, school boards, and private organizations; maintains a database of major whistleblowing cases in Canada; investigates whistleblowing laws and policies in other countries to glean insights for Canada; and is preparing to undertake benchmarking research in Canada on public and private sector organizational whistleblowing policies and practices.

Ryerson has created a dedicated CFEWI fund for donors who wish to support this work.

The Centre for Free Expression is now the Canadian member organization of the Whistleblowing International Network –the international network of whistleblowing NGOs.

The members of the CFE Whistleblowing Steering Committee are:

Sandy Boucher

Corporate Investigator, Grant Thornton LLP Advisory Services

Ian Bron

Ph.D. student in public policy at Carleton University, former naval officer and federal civil servant, and prominent Canadian whistleblower

David Hutton

Former Executive Director, Federal Accountability Initiative for Reform (FAIR)

Peter Jacobsen

Partner, WeirFoulds LLP

Anna Myers

Executive Director, Whistleblowing
International Network (WIN)

David Yazbeck

Partner, Raven, Cameron, Ballantyne &
Yazbeck LLP

James L. Turk

Director, CFE

Working Group on Intellectual Freedom

To help guide its work on intellectual freedom, the Centre has created a Working Group on Intellectual Freedom. The working group will help the Centre identify and undertake appropriate public education, research, and advocacy regarding intellectual freedom amidst growing calls for restricting public discourse by disallowing perspectives that are deemed wrong or offensive.

Initial projects recommended by the working group include the CFE creating a database of public library intellectual freedom policies (see E under Projects) and launching a public discussion series to explore difficult and controversial public policy issues.

Member of the working group are:

Richard Beaudry

BC School Librarian;
Chair, Canadian Federation of Library
Associations Intellectual Freedom
Committee

John Pateman

Chief Librarian
Thunder Bay Public Library

Susan Caron

Director, Collections and Membership
Services,
Toronto Public Library

Toni Samek

Professor and past Chair
School of Library and Information
Studies, University of Alberta

Christina de Castell

Chief Librarian,
Vancouver Public Library

Alvin Schrader

Professor Emeritus, University of Alberta
and former President of the Canadian
Library Association

Pilar Martinez

CEO
Edmonton Public Library

Penni Stewart

Professor Emeritus, Department of
Sociology, York University

Erin Patterson

Head, Research Services, Acadia
University Library & Former Chair, CAUT
Librarians Committee

James L Turk

Director, Centre for Free Expression &
Distinguished Visiting Scholar
Ryerson University

Working Group on Academic Freedom

The public mission of post-secondary education is to advance and disseminate knowledge, educate students, and encourage critical thinking and free expression. These ends cannot be achieved without the academic freedom of academic staff. Yet, academic freedom is being seriously undermined in a wide variety of ways. To assist the Centre in its work in educating the public, education about the nature and importance of academic freedom, highlighting current threats, and working to help ensure that real academic freedom rights are extended to all academic staff, the Centre has created a Working Group on Academic Freedom whose members bring exceptional expertise to this work.

Members of the working group are:

Faisal Bhabha

Associate Professor, Osgoode Hall Law School
York University

William Bruneau

Professor Emeritus, Educational Studies
University of British Columbia

Jamie Cameron

Professor Emeritus, Constitutional Law
Osgoode Hall Law School

Dax D'Orazio

PhD Candidate, Political Science
University of Alberta

Len Findlay

Distinguished Professor Emeritus
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James L Turk

Director, Centre for Free Expression & Distinguished Visiting Scholar
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CFE Film Series

In conjunction with the Documentary Media Research Centre, the Centre for Free Expression held its third annual public film series in 2019-2020. This year's theme was Truth, Evidence, and Disinformation. Prior to the screening of each film, a guest presenter introduced the film and provided context, and, following the screening, led an audience discussion of the film. The final two film screenings had to be cancelled because of the pandemic.

The Thin Blue Line (October 10, 2019)

Director: Errol Morris (USA)

Blake Fitzpatrick, Professor, Ryerson School of Image Arts, introduced the film and led the post-screening discussion

Control Room (November 12, 2019)

Director: Jehane Noujaim (USA)

Introduction and post-screening discussion led by Alexandra Anderson, Professor Emeritus, Ryerson School of Image Arts, introduced the film and led the post-screening discussion

Rashomon (December 8, 2019)

Director: Akira Kurosawa (Japan)

Bruno Lessard, DocMedia Program Director in Ryerson's School of Image Arts, introduced the film and led the post-screening discussion .

The Great Hack (February 11, 2020)

Director: Fisher Stevens (USA)

James L. Turk, Director of the Centre for Free Expression, introduced the film and led the post-screening discussion

Sicko (March 10, 2020)

Director: Michael Moore (USA)

Daniel Fisher, Instructor, Ryerson School of Image Arts, introduced the film and led the post-screening discussion

Cold Case Hammarskjöld (cancelled)

Director: Mads Brügger (Denmark)

Official Secrets (cancelled)

Director: Gavin Hood (South Africa/UK)

People

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