

Sports Reporters' Attitudes About Ethics Vary Based on Beat

by Marie Hardin and Bu Zhong

This survey of 263 sports reporters found that reporters on the high school beat are often the youngest and most inexperienced and are more likely to believe they can operate with a more relaxed code of ethics than their counterparts.

Sports journalism has historically been described as a “toy department” vocation with little-to-no critical distance between reporters and the sports figures they cover, especially on the professional-sports beat.¹ Yet, ethicists argue that journalists who cover sports, as part of the journalistic establishment, should shed this reputation.² Thus, scholars suggest that sports journalists must also be accountable to the professional norms that advance the entire profession’s credibility.³

Research has demonstrated conflicting commitment to these norms by sports editors, who are the gatekeepers for mediated content in newspapers and on Web sites.⁴ Sports reporters, however, also make ethical decisions in the course of their work. These journalists have not received the same attention in regard to ethical decision-making as have editors and news reporters.⁵

This research updates research examining the practices, beliefs and attitudes of sports journalists in relation to their sense of mission, ethics and professionalism.⁶ Unlike earlier studies, it focuses on sports reporters and considers beat assignments in assessing their attitudes and values. Demands, opportunities and cultures for reporters can vary widely depending on the beat, such as one that focuses on amateur—high school, college or professional sports. Reporters covering professional sports have been most often criticized as engaging in journalistic conflicts of interest. This research explores that assumption.

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Ethics, Journalism and Sports

Providing verified, newsworthy information professionally and ethically is described as the responsibility of journalists, who generally agree their roles are ideally to serve as a government watchdog, expose institutional wrongs and serve the public interest.⁷ Thus, reporters strive to maintain independence from those they cover and make their first loyalty the public.⁸ Journalism in the pursuit of public service has the power to cause change, to challenge corporate, individual and governmental wrongdoing and, as a result, to improve lives.⁹

News reporters and editors make practical decisions about ethics daily.¹⁰ Journalists are guided by a variety of tools, including codes of ethics and their own moral reasoning.¹¹ Most specific ethical guidelines—such as those found in the Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) or *The New York Times* codes—focus on the idea of conflict of interest, described by Poynter Institute ethicist Bob Steele as “a soft spot in the underbelly of American journalism.”¹² Some newspapers, including *The New York Times*, have revised their codes to address conflict-of-interest issues such as political activism and gambling.¹³ The SPJ code, which has come to represent the industry’s values, emphasizes independence and accountability.¹⁴ At a practical level, it offers such admonitions as “Avoid conflicts of interest, real or perceived” and “Refuse gifts, favors, fees, free travel and special treatment.”¹⁵ Journalists also take their cues from other sources, including the work environment and their journalism training.¹⁶ Decisions also appear to be largely based on contextual factors.¹⁷

Sports Journalism

The culture in newspaper sports departments has long been criticized as different from that in the rest of the newsroom.¹⁸ Research has demonstrated, for instance, that sports editors agree with the idea that they should adhere to journalistic norms, but questions on specific issues show a gap between their endorsement and practice.¹⁹

Some organizations have sought to close that gap. One such group is the Associated Press Sports Editors, which published a code of ethics in 1974 and revised it in 1991.²⁰ The code forbids the acceptance of gifts, free travel and tickets from teams or individuals. The APSE code avoids topics such as membership in sports-related organizations—exclusive golf clubs, for instance—and gambling. Gambling, especially on games a sportswriter covers, has received little public attention from ethicists and editors, and most papers do not have a policy to address it.²¹ *The New York Times*, which forbids gambling by sports staffers on conflict-of-interest grounds, is an exception.

Practices opposed in the APSE code are acceptable to many sports journalists. For instance, on the 2005 survey, 43 percent of sports editors said they did not believe reporters’ accepting of freebies was problematic.²² The conflict-of-

interest—real or perceived—presented by free tickets and gifts, however, has long been one of the biggest criticisms of sportswriters.²³ Related to acceptance of freebies are issues involving relationships with athletes and teams. Although beginning sports writers are warned that “players and coaches are not your friends,”²⁴ they walk a fine line in developing relationships.²⁵ Unlike public officials, who may feel a responsibility to speak with the press, athletes are under no similar pressures.²⁶ Thus, reporters may shy away from writing critical stories in fear of losing access.²⁷

Friendly relationships with athletes and teams may be one factor in the prevalence of “homerism” or the rejection of detached reporting about teams in readers’ proximity. This practice has been criticized because it violates the industry norm of objectivity.²⁸ The practice also works at odds with a code commonly evoked among sportswriters: “No cheering in the press box.”²⁹ However, those in the profession appear to be ambivalent toward the practice. In Hardin’s 2005 survey, 39 percent of editors supported homerism. An extensive content analysis of sports sections in 2005 also found that a homer’s perspective was a staple in papers at every circulation level.³⁰

Variations in Sports Beats

Although sports coverage in most U.S. newspapers comprises everything from columns about road races written by running enthusiasts to briefs about international rugby and cricket competition, the mainstay for sports pages can be broken down into three areas: prep-level—high school and club competition for youths, college-level and professional-level sports. Covering the most popular professional-level team sports in the United States, such as football, basketball and baseball, is at the top of the beat hierarchy. These reporters are generally the most experienced.³¹ Most college sports reporting textbooks focus on training aspiring sportswriters to cover professional sports.³² Writers covering professional sports have been subject to most of the criticism leveled at sports journalists for lax ethical standards and improper relationships with sources, however.³³

Covering college sports can also be a coveted beat, depending on the news organization and geographic area. For instance, covering football or basketball “powerhouse” programs with a large, national fan base can be a prestigious assignment, drawing more interest than coverage of professional sports teams.³⁴ Covering college sports can run the gamut, however, and can also mean writing about a number of teams—men’s and women’s—playing at one of the hundreds of small, unranked programs in the United States.

A general beat of growing focus for newspapers is that of prep sports, which provides journalists an opportunity to cover sports of local interest without competition from national media outlets.³⁵ Many newspapers have continued to grow their coverage of youth sports, adding Web sites and making coverage a prominent part of their sports sections, even as they cut stories and beats

with national interest.³⁶ Reporters on the high school beat often cover dozens of schools, dealing regularly and directly with parents, coaches and athletes without the mediation of sports information directors, agents and managers that often accompanies coverage at college and professional ranks. The prep sports beat is recognized as an entry-level beat although the array of sports and territory reporters are required to cover make it an extremely challenging, time-consuming job.

Sports journalists have recognized differences in the ways each beat should be approached, based on differences in primary sources and subjects. For instance, one text admonishes aspiring sportswriters to “always take it easier on high school kids and college players than you would pros” with the reasoning that inexperienced athletes should not be subject to the same scrutiny as athletes who play for a paycheck.³⁷

If the APSE's annual awards for investigative journalism are any indicator, however, most public-service journalism—stories that go beyond wins and losses, trades and injury reports—takes place at the high-school and college levels. Furthermore, the most noteworthy investigative journalism, including a handful of Pulitzer winners, has been published in relationship to college sports.³⁸ This could be because of the direct public accountability of the coaches and administrators in these institutions, most of which are subject to public-records laws, and because of national legislation designed to ensure equal opportunity, such as Title IX. Scholars have advocated for more judicious coverage of the governing bodies—such as school boards and state associations at the high-school level and the NCAA at the college level—and institutions charged with administering sports programs for educational purposes.³⁹ Examples of recent stories lauded for public service include a 2009 *Columbus Dispatch* story about the redacting of public records by university athletic programs and a *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* story in 2008 about lax hiring of game officials, some of whom had criminal records, by a state high school athletic association.⁴⁰

Although research on the ethical beliefs and practices of sports journalists has expanded in recent years, most has focused on traditional “gatekeeper” editors. Sports reporters, whose work appears in print and on the Web, make many ethical decisions—without the consultation of gatekeepers. They routinely confront conflict-of-interest issues while developing relationships with sources and decide about story pursuits and angles.

This research focuses on sports reporters but recognizes that reporters do not act as a single group. There may be wide differences in their ethical practices based at least partly on the expectations and cultures within their beats. In U.S. sports sections, much coverage generally can be broken into three distinct areas: youth/high school—also called prep sports—college and professional sports. Understanding the differences in ethical norms among reporters contributes toward an understanding of the complex ethical dynamics among sports journalists and, ultimately, toward discussions about addressing these ethical norms.

Research Questions

RQ1:

Among reporters covering high school, college and professional sports, is any group more or less likely to see ethical norms for sports coverage as being similar to those of journalists covering news beats?

RQ2:

Among reporters covering high school, college and pro sports, are members of any group more or less likely to see their journalistic role through a traditional lens, in public-service or “watchdog” terms?

RQ3:

Among those who cover high school, college, pro and all sports, which groups of journalists are most likely to report befriending sources, which could present a conflict of interest?

RQ4:

Among reporters covering high school, college and pro sports, is any group more or less likely to report gambling on sports? Do journalists differ, based on the type of sports they cover, in their attitudes toward gambling in relationship to conflict of interest?

RQ5:

Among reporters covering high school, college and pro sports, is any group more or less likely to report accepting free tickets? Are members of any group more or less likely to see acceptance of freebies as a conflict of interest?

RQ6:

Among reporters covering high school, college and pro sports, are members of any group more or less likely to report favoring hometown teams in coverage a conflict of interest?



Perhaps because of their connection to public institutions, reporters on the high-school beat are more likely to recognize their work as a public-service endeavor. This finding is important because it demonstrates the “match” between ideals and possibilities.

Method

A list of sports reporters was compiled by examining Web sites of APSE newspapers from the organization's 2007 membership list, after papers not in the continental United States were removed and one-third (119) of the newspapers were randomly chosen. The final list included publications at all circulation levels from all regions of the United States. Web sites were examined for contact lists of sports reporters or for bylines with e-mail or phone contact information. A list of reporters was generated. After names of reporters who had left or moved to other newsroom jobs were purged, 667 remained. Reaching sports reporters by phone can be challenging, as many work from home or the road. Trained undergraduate students reached 285 reporters who were willing to complete the survey for a response rate of 43 percent.

Survey items requested demographic information and then presented a series of "yes/no" questions regarding the experiences of sports journalists, such as "Have you considered leaving your career in sports journalism?" and "Do you gamble on sports?" Likert-scale questions also asked respondents to choose one of several options in response to a variety of attitudinal statements related to the research questions. An example of a Likert-scale question was, "I do not think that accepting free tickets, meals or items compromises my ability to write objectively about the team or league that I am covering." Respondents were given the option of choosing responses ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree."

Overall, most reporters surveyed (91.6 percent, $n = 241$) were male, mirroring industry demographics.⁴¹ More than half (54.4 percent, $n = 143$) of participants were less than 40 years old. Most (88.3 percent, $n = 226$) were white. Reporters represented papers at every circulation level. About half (43.3 percent, $n = 113$) worked at newspapers with a circulation of at least 100,000. The rest (56.7 percent, $n = 150$) worked at smaller papers. The majority (57.8 percent, $n = 152$) had worked in journalism at least 10 years. [See Table 1]

The survey asked reporters whether they engaged in behaviors with an ethical component in relation to journalistic norms: gambling on sports, taking free tickets and favoring hometown teams in coverage. Overall, about four in 10 ($n = 107$, 41.2 percent) reported gambling on a sporting event at least once in the past year. Fewer, about one in 10 ($n = 29$, 11.2 percent) reported accepting free tickets to events. About one-quarter ($n = 68$, 26.5 percent) reported believing it was acceptable to favor hometown teams in stories.

Among the reporters surveyed, 263 reported covering beats in one of the following four categories: prep sports ($n = 93$, 32.6 percent), college-level ($n = 36$, 12.6 percent), professional-level ($n = 87$, or 30.5 percent) or a combination of all three levels (47, 16.5 percent). Twenty-two, or 7.7 percent, failed to provide information about their beats. They were not included in the analysis.

Reporters covering high school or college sports were more likely to be young—less than 40—than were reporters covering professional sports or a

variety of sports. Other significant differences among reporters were in journalism experience and newspaper circulation. Prep sports reporters were less experienced and often worked at smaller-circulation papers than were those who reported covering college or professional sports.

Although not related to the research questions, differences were found among reporters in relationship to their job outlook. Although this survey was conducted during a time of tumult in the newspaper industry, most reporters said they were satisfied with their jobs. Fewer said they thought their career prospects were good. Reporters covering prep sports were significantly more likely to say they thought their job prospects were good, however. They were also less likely to say they had considered leaving their careers. [See Table 1]

Table 1
Respondent Demographics

	Number of Sport Reporters (% of within group)				Total
	High School	College	Pro	All	
<i>Demographics</i>					
Age (40 and younger)	60 (64.5%)	24 (66.7%)	33 (37.9%)	26 (55.3%)	143 (54.4%)
Gender (Male)	86 (92.5%)	31 (86.1%)	82 (94.3%)	42 (89.4%)	241 (91.6%)
Race (Caucasian/White)	76 (84.4%)	33 (94.3%)	77 (89.5%)	45 (88.9%)	226 (88.3%)
Education (college/graduate)	85 (91.4%)	32 (88.9%)	80 (92.0%)	43 (91.5%)	240 (91.3%)
Journalist more than 10 yrs	44 (47.3%)	19 (52.8%)	56 (64.4%)	33(70.2%)	152 (57.8%)
Circulation (100,000 or more)	25 (26.9%)	16 (44.4%)	52 (59.8%)	20 (44.4%)	113 (43.3%)
<i>Ethical Behavior</i>					
Gamble on sports	36 (38.7%)	21 (58.3%)	33 (38.4%)	17 (37.8%)	107 (41.2%)
Take free tickets	7 (7.6%)	2 (5.7%)	16 (18.6%)	4 (8.5%)	29 (11.2%)
Favor home teams	30 (33.3%)	13 (36.1%)	14 (16.3%)	11 (24.4%)	68 (26.5%)
<i>Career Conditions/Outlook</i>					
Consider quitting job	39 (41.9%)	19 (52.8%)	52 (59.8%)	25 (53.2%)	135 (51.3%)
Satisfied with job	88 (94.6%)	31 (91.2%)	83 (95.4%)	45 (95.7%)	247 (94.6%)
Good job future	76 (84.4%)	26 (76.5%)	59 (68.6%)	34 (73.9%)	195 (76.2%)

Note: N = 263 as 22 of the respondents did not provide their beat information. Among the variables, only the following four reflect significant differences among the four groups: age ($X^2 (3, 263) = 15.55, p = .001$), circulation ($X^2 (3, 261) = 10.11, p < .05$), journalist more than 10 years ($X^2 (3, 263) = 9.07, p < .05$), favor local teams ($X^2 (3, 257) = 8.58, p < .05$).

Findings

RQs 1-2: General attitudes toward ethics among reporters on varying beats.

The first research question focused on possible differences in attitudes of reporters, based on the level of their beat assignment, toward general ethical norms in sports journalism. Reporters surveyed had been asked to provide their level of agreement with the statement, "Sports departments can have a more relaxed code of ethics than news departments." ANOVA analyses revealed that reporters who covered high school, college or professional sports only (not a combination) varied on agreement with this statement ($F(2, 212) = 3.68, p < .05, r = .53$). Tukey's HSD post hoc tests showed that those who mainly covered high school sports ($M = 2.24, SD = 1.09$) were more likely to agree with the statement than were those covering professional sports ($M = 1.84, SD = .92, p < .05$). No significant relationship was found between reporters on the college beat and the other two groups.

To explore RQ2, on public-service and investigative journalism, three Likert-style statements from the survey were used:

- "Sports reporters' primary goal should be to serve as a watchdog for the public on the team or sport they are covering."
- "More investigative journalism in sports is needed."
- "I consider investigative journalism to be a part of my job."

The three items loaded together (Eigenvalue = 1.33, explaining 43.44 percent of the variance, $KMO = .62$). They were added up and divided by three to create a composite measure of perceived views on sports journalism as public-service journalism with an ethical obligation ($M = 3.99, SD = .82, Cronbach's \alpha = .62$). A higher score indicates a stronger view that sports reporting should fulfill a public-service, "watchdog" mission in society.

ANOVA analyses found a significant difference among four groups of sports reporters—reporters covering each of the three levels plus those who cover all levels—on their view of public-service and investigative journalism ($F(3, 258) = 2.59, p < .05, r = .51$). Tukey's HSD post hoc tests showed that those who covered high school sports ($M = 2.24, SD = 1.09$) were more likely to see sports reporting in public-service terms than those covering professional leagues and teams ($M = 1.84, SD = .92, p < .05$). No differences were found among reporters covering other beats.

RQs 3-6: Specific ethics-related behaviors among sports reporters.

For RQ3 about relationships with sources, three statements were used:

- "Some athletes I cover have become my friends."
- "Some coaches I cover have become my friends."
- "Management at the teams and leagues I cover have become my friends."

A principal component analysis showed that the statements measured a single underlying concept (Eigenvalue = 1.93, accounting for 64.32 percent of

the variance, KMO = .67). The three items were thus added and divided by three to create a composite measure of personal friendships with sources (M = 3.12, SD = 1.17, Cronbach's α = .81). The higher the score, the more likely the respondent was to develop personal relationships with primary sources.

ANOVA analyses demonstrated a difference among the four groups of reporters, including the group of reporters who covered all levels, on the tendency to make friends with athletes, coaches and managers they cover (F (3, 258) = 5.42, p = .001, r = .66). Specifically, as Tukey's HSD post hoc tests show, those who covered high school sports (M = 3.03, SD = .92) and all levels (M = 3.08, SD = .94) reported that they were more likely to make friends with those they covered than were their colleagues covering college (M = 2.54, SD = .83, p < .05) and professional sports (M = 2.61, SD = .92, p < .05). No significant differences were found among the groups, however, in their reporting of gambling on sports (RQ4) or accepting free tickets to share with family and friends (RQ5).

For RQ6, relating to the practice of favoring home teams in reporting, responses to a yes/no statement asking whether reporters thought the papers they worked for should show such favoritism were analysed.

There was a significant difference among the four groups of sports reporters (χ^2 (3, 263) = 8.58, p < .05), in which those covering high school sports reported more support for the statement that coverage should favor home teams than did their colleagues covering college, professional sports and all beats. About one-third of reporters who cover high school or college beats said they wanted their papers to exhibit boosterism. Of the reporters who covered professional sports, the ratio was much lower (one-sixth).

Discussion

Reporters covering professional athletes and teams have, over the years, been scrutinized for ethically suspect behavior in relationship to accepting gifts, such as tickets and memorabilia, and in maintaining cozy relationships with the coaches, athletes and teams they cover. This survey, however, suggests that they may be closer to journalistic norms than criticism suggests. Reporters who cover professional sports generally disagreed with the idea that they could operate under more relaxed rules than their counterparts in news, and they did not report having developed friendships with sources. They rejected boosterism, for the most part, and they were also no more likely than reporters at other levels to report gambling on sports or accepting free tickets to events.

The reasons for these findings lie at least partly in the realities of the professional sports beat. The days when beat writers could fraternize with famous athletes are over. Public relations personnel now monitor clubhouses and locker rooms, and journalists often must go through agents to request permission to spend more than a few minutes with an athlete.⁴² In other words, the opportu-

nity to cultivate friendships with sources has diminished dramatically in the past several decades.

The realities of the beat for those covering professional sports may also be a reason they were less likely to claim a public-service mission for their work. Although they were heavily criticized for their lack of exposure to the steroids problem in baseball, for instance,⁴³ pro-beat writers work at a disadvantage in relationship to investigative journalism. They generally rely on sources who have no legal obligation to talk—and can instead make a reporter's task to get material beyond game reports very difficult.⁴⁴ Furthermore, professional sports organizations and the athletes employed by them are not subject to open-records laws.

Thus, constraints and practices may shape attitudes for these reporters and practice dictates values. This is not to discount another likelihood, however, that many writers who cover sports do so because they are fans. Thus, they may not have the know-how—nor the desire to seek it—to pursue stories beyond the locker room.⁴⁵

Another key reason attitudes and practices among pro beat writers may more closely match conventional norms may be pressure, including from their own professional organization (APSE) to move toward these norms. They may also be feeling more pressure to differentiate themselves professionally from sports bloggers, who do not claim a uniform set of professional or ethical standards as defining their work.

As the results of this survey attest, reporters on the high-school beat are often the youngest and most inexperienced in the sports department. In several ways, their attitudes varied markedly from others. For instance, they were more likely to believe sports reporters can operate with a more relaxed code of ethics than can those covering more news-oriented beats. Such beliefs may spring from their inexperience as journalists combined with their day-to-day experience on the beat. If, like many who pursue the profession, they have chosen sports journalism because they are sports fans—and not necessarily devotees to the craft of journalism—they may not yet be socialized into the occupation's ethical and professional norms.

At the same time, the experience of preps reporters may reinforce a view of sports journalism as an occupation requiring different standards. They spend many hours cultivating relationships with parents, coaches, athletes and administrators at practices and games, and they spend far more hours on school grounds than do news reporters on the education beat. Such access, they may find, allows them to develop enterprise stories to stay ahead of the competition, especially in relationship to stories about highly sought-after college recruits. Thus, it is no surprise that they report friendships with sources more than do other sports reporters. These friendships, however, can lead to ethical quandaries when bad news arises.⁴⁶ A prep reporter at a mid-sized daily described the competition her paper faces. At small-circulation paper nearby,

*....the sports editor is also a teacher at the school and a coach His newspaper only asks for positive news, and that is what he delivers.*⁴⁷

Another reporter, who covers prep sports for a large daily and who wrote a package of stories about high school athletes who had run afoul of the law, said her stories resulted in many calls from local parents. "We did not make friends running those stories," she said.⁴⁸

Perhaps because of their connection to public institutions, reporters on the high-school beat are more likely to recognize their work as a public-service endeavor. This finding is important because it demonstrates the "match" between ideals and possibilities. Reporters on this beat may have more opportunity than other reporters to write public-interest stories about the use of taxpayer dollars and the backgrounds of coaches and other athletic officials.

Reporters who claimed college sports as their primary beat generally did not stand out as a group. This is not surprising, given the flexibility in what it means to cover college sports. Some writers may cover teams that mimic professional organizations in terms of access to athletes. Other reporters may have much greater access and the opportunity to develop strong relationships—even friendships—with athletes, officials and coaches. This could be part of the reason college reporters, along with those covering prep sports, were more likely to endorse boosterism. Many may deal face-to-face on a daily basis with boosters, relatives and others who would express strong displeasure with coverage that did anything except root for the home team.

Conclusions

This survey suggests that in key ways, sports journalists who have historically been most scrutinized—those who cover professional competition—may be least deserving of criticism in relationship to ethics and professionalism. It is the younger journalists, who cover sports in local communities, who may struggle most with adhering to journalistic norms. This could be at least in part because of the nature of the job, one that requires them to spend many hours cultivating sources. Furthermore, they may still be writing from an idealized (fan's) perspective, one that is not informed sufficiently by newsroom socialization. Even so, they also seem to be working from an idealized perspective about the function of journalism, enabling them to see the potential for stories that go beyond box scores and game summaries—into public-service endeavors.

This study is not without limitations, including the possibility of a "halo effect" in responses. That is, journalists may have responded on questions about behaviors such as gambling in ways they thought were socially desirable. Furthermore, the limitations of survey design itself are apparent in that responses provide severely limited insight into the motives and rationales of respondents. Furthermore, although the response rate was acceptable, this study cannot claim to be generalizable to all sports reporters.

This study is of value, however, as a starting point in considering the differences among sports reporters; thus, it is fruitful as a springboard to further research. Because coverage of prep sports will likely continue to be prominent in local media (print and Web), projects that illuminate the attitudes, practices and career paths of reporters on this beat could be particularly useful. Such research could use a combination of content analyses and interviews, for instance, to assess trends in coverage and the socialization/training of journalists working on this beat.

Notes

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2. Thomas P. Oates and John Pauly, "Sports Journalism as Moral and Ethical Discourse," *Journal of Mass Media Ethics* 22, no. 4 (2007): 332-347.

3. Oates and Pauly, "Sports Journalism;" Tim Wulfemeyer, "Ethics in Sports Journalism: Tightening up the Code," *Journal of Mass Media Ethics* 1 (October 1985): 57-67; Mark Jurkowitz, "Muckrakers in the Outfield," *The Phoenix*, April 5, 2006 <<http://thephoenix.com/Boston/News/8312-Muckrakers-in-the-outfield/?rel=inf>> (April 7, 2006).

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5. A great number of studies, including many published in this journal, have discussed the ethics-related practices and values of editors and of news reporters. For instance, see Brad Schultz and Mary Lou Sheffer, "Sports Journalists Who Blog Cling to Traditional Values," *Newspaper Research Journal* 28, no. 4 (fall 2007): 62-77; Fred Fedler, "Plagiarism Persists in News Despite Changing Attitudes," *Newspaper Research Journal* 27, no. 2 (spring 2006): 24-38.

6. Anderson, "Sports Coverage in Daily Newspapers," 498; Garrison and Salwen, "Newspaper Sports Journalists," 66; Hardin, "Survey Finds Boosterism," 69.

7. Clifford G. Christians, Kim B. Rotzoll, Mark Fackler, Kathy Brittain McKee, and Robert H. Woods, *Media Ethics: Cases and Moral Reasoning* (7th ed.). (Boston: Pearson, 2005); Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel, *The Elements of Journalism: What Newspeople Should Know and the Public Should Expect*. (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2001); M. David Arant and Philip Meyer, "Public Journalism and Traditional Journalism: A Shift in Values?" *Journal of Mass Media Ethics* 13, no. 4 (1998): 205-218.

8. Kovach and Rosenstiel, *The Elements of Journalism*.

9. Rick Kenney and Susan Keith, "Investigative Reporting on Sports: A Missed Opportunity for Habermasian Discourse?" (paper presented at the Third International Summit on Communication & Sport, Clemson University, Clemson, SC.); David L. Protess, Fay Lomax Cook, Jack Doppelt, Margaret T. Gordon, James S. Ettema, Peter Miller, and Donna R. Leff, *The Journalism of Outrage: Investigative Reporting and Agenda Building in America*. (New York: The Guildford Press, 1991).

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11. Paul S. Voakes, "Public Perceptions of Journalists' Ethical Motivations," *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly* 74, no. 1 (spring 1997): 23-38.

12. Bob Steele, "Inside the New York Times' Revised Code," *Poynter.org*, 2003, Jan. 16, para. 1 <<http://www.poynter.org/column.asp?id=36&aid=17330>> (Jan. 1, 2009)
 13. Steele, "Inside the New York Times' Revised Code," para. 2-5.
 14. "Code of Ethics," *Society of Professional Journalists*, n.d., <<http://www.spj.org/ethicscode.asp>> (Jan. 2, 2009)
 15. "Code of Ethics," para. 32, 34.
 16. Christian, "New directions," 11.
 17. Bill Reader, "Distinctions That Matter: Ethical Differences at Large and Small Newspapers," *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly* 83, no. 4 (winter 2006): 851-864; Dan Berkowitz Yahiel Limor, "Professional Confidence and Situational Ethics: Assessing the Social-Professional Dialectic in Journalistic Ethics Decisions," *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly* 80, no. 4 (winter 2003): 783-801.
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 24. Reinardy and Wanta, *The Essentials of Sports Reporting and Writing*, p. 225.
 25. Raymond Boyle, "Running Away from the Circus," *British Journalism Review* 17, no. 3 (September 2006): 12-17; Mark Douglas Lowes, *Inside the Sports Pages: Work Routines, Professional Ideologies, and the Manufacture of Sports News*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000).
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