In “Codes of Ethics in a Post-Truth World,” Hal Berghel analyzes the purpose and usefulness of codes of ethics to demonstrate the necessity for them. Berghel explains that throughout history, plenty of organizations devised codes of ethics to create standards for members to work within to prevent any unwanted consequences. Christianity provides the 10 Commandments for the faithful, governments create laws for their citizens, corporations devise rules for the organization as a whole and employees to maintain respect from the business world. However, whether for self-interest, forced duress, or other reasons, people continually violate codes of ethics. Despite that fact (and the fact such behavior is bound to continue), Berghel argues that although codes of ethics are only possibly useful after they have been violated, their necessity is not lessened in the slightest. He argues that even though they are bound to be violated, codes of ethics are not only necessary, but should be judged “based on their clarity and appropriateness,” with seemingly heavy emphasis on “appropriateness” after discussing at the length the APA Torture scandal. As it relates to the ACM Code of Ethics, Berghel expresses that although it is violated time and time again, its “clarity and widespread acknowledgement…[are] more than enough justification to have it.”

This topic makes me wonder about the age-old saying “rules are meant to be broken.” In fact, this article actually reaffirms my belief in that statement, not in the since that it encourages people to break rules, but that rules are designed to define when punishment is necessary for someone/something’s actions. Clearly, the follow-through on punishment is difficult when the organization/person in need of punishment is the organization/person in power, resulting in an unfortunate number of people escaping well-deserved consequences, but the alternative is freely allowing any action with no consequence. In a society that craves order like ours, distinction between right and wrong is necessary.