

## **Ethics and Educational Research**

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## Introduction

It is not uncommon, in planning research or in carrying it out, for the question to arise: Is this ethical? Similar questions may be prompted when reading accounts of other people's research. Here are a few examples of ethical issues that can arise:

- In designing a project concerned with investigating racist practices within schools, the researcher believes that only by disguising the focus of enquiry will access be granted. Would she be justified in doing this?
- In the course of a piece of practitioner research concerned with improving the operation of a prison education unit, its manager decides to allocate prisoners randomly to two tutors, whom he trains to teach in contrasting pedagogical styles. Is this legitimate?
- Studying provision for students with disabilities in further education, a researcher is faced by a young adult with severe learning difficulties who demands to be included in the research project, along with fellow members of the class, even though her parents have already refused on her behalf. What should be the researcher's response?
- In writing up a study of three nurseries, the researcher realises that his analysis is likely to be interpreted by parents and the local media as suggesting that one of these nurseries does not meet current inspection standards. Should he proceed to publish the findings?
- During the course of investigating induction processes in a military training establishment, a researcher witnesses what she feels was severe bullying of a new recruit by two of the staff. She documents what occurred, interviews the people involved, and discusses the incident at length in the research report published two years later. But should she have intervened at the time to try to stop it; or, if this was not possible, should she have abandoned the research and immediately reported or publicised what had happened?

Several distinct ethical principles can be involved in dilemmas of this kind, and it is important to identify them clearly.

## Ethical Principles

Commonly recognised principles include:

1. *Minimising Harm*. Is a research strategy likely to cause harm, how serious is this, and is there any way in which it could be justified or excused? Note that harm here could include not just consequences for the people being studied (financial, reputational, etc) but for

others too, and even for any researchers investigating the same setting or people in the future.

2. *Respecting Autonomy.* Does the research process show respect for people in the sense of allowing them to make decisions for themselves, notably about whether or not to participate? This principle is often seen as ruling out any kind of deception, though deception is also sometimes rejected on the grounds that it causes harm.
3. *Protecting Privacy.* A central feature of research is to make matters public, to provide descriptions and explanations that are publicly available. But what should and should not be made public? What does it mean to keep data confidential, and is this always possible or desirable? Can and should settings and informants be anonymised in research reports?
4. *Offering Reciprocity.* Researchers depend upon being allowed access to data, and this may involve people cooperating in various ways; for example, giving up time in order to be interviewed or to fill in a questionnaire. The research process can also disrupt people's lives in various ways and to varying degrees. Given this, what, if anything, can participants reasonably expect in return from researchers; and what should researchers offer them? Should experimental subjects or informants in qualitative research be paid?
5. *Treating People Equitably.* It may be argued that the various individuals and groups that a researcher comes into contact with in the course of research should be treated equally, in the sense that no-one is unjustly favoured or discriminated against.

These principles do not exhaust all of the ethical concerns relevant to social research, but they are probably the main ones.

There is now quite a large literature on ethics in educational research, and a much larger one relating to social scientific work generally. See Appendix 1 for a Selective Bibliography on Ethics in Educational and Social Research.

There is also, of course, a huge philosophical literature on ethics generally. Some of this analyses key ethical concepts, including those mentioned above; some is concerned with exploring different general ways of thinking about ethics, such as deontological, consequentialist, ethics of care, and other approaches; and some is devoted to so-called 'applied ethics', in other words to using philosophical ideas to explore troubling public issues of various kinds that have an ethical dimension. See Appendix 2 for a guide to the Philosophical Literature on Ethics.

We believe that in some discussions about research ethics there is a tendency to oversimplify the issues involved, and to underestimate the scope for reasonable disagreement about them. In what follows, we will outline several sources of complexity.

## Conflict Among the Principles

A first point is that the five principles we outlined above sometimes conflict, and this means that they may have to be 'weighed' against one another. For example, in order to minimise potential harm to those we judge to be vulnerable, we may infringe their personal autonomy by insisting that others, those who know them well and can guard their interests, must give permission on their behalf if they are to participate in a research project. Alternatively, if we insist that *they* have the sole right to make the decision about their participation, so as to respect their autonomy, we may be unwittingly subjecting them to risk of harm that could otherwise be avoided. The potential conflicts among this set of principles carries the implication that sometimes an action will be ethical in one respect and unethical in another. These conflicts also raise the question of whether some ethical principles are so important that they should never be compromised in this way. But, if so, which ones, and why? One source of disagreement here, though not the only one, is cultural variation. Cultures differ in the priority they give to particular ethical principles and issues; for example in the weight they assign to individual autonomy as against loyalty to the group or respect for authority. At the same time, there can also be considerable variation in weight given to particular ethical principles *within* any particular culture.

## Varying Interpretations of the Principles

Each of the five principles can be subject to somewhat different interpretations that are open to dispute. There are questions, for example, about what counts as harm. In the context of medical research this might include damaging people's health, and there would probably be general agreement that the risk of this should be avoided if at all possible. However, the issue is not straightforward, either in this context or that of social research. Let us imagine a situation in which someone loses her or his job partly as a result of publication of the findings of a study of their work context. This is clearly a serious matter. But does this outcome constitute harm caused by research? It would probably be viewed like this by the person who was sacked, at least in the short term. But might others view it as of benefit, for example because the reason for dismissal was that this person had been shown to be abusing her position? Would that protect the research from the accusation of causing harm? We might also ask how direct a role the research played in bringing about dismissal. Was it the key factor, or did it only hasten what would probably have happened anyway? Does this, should this, make any difference to our judgment about whether the researcher acted ethically?

Let us consider a rather different example: people may be distressed because of the way they are portrayed in a research report. Does this constitute harm? And, if it does, is it a sort or level of harm that researchers should seek to avoid at all costs? The second of these questions indicates that harm is a matter of degree. And we can also talk of degrees to which someone's autonomy or privacy have been infringed, as well as degrees of exploitation or inequity. Needless to say, there

is scope for reasonable disagreement in judgments about what are greater or lesser infringements of the five ethical principles. For example, are material consequences for someone's livelihood more serious than reputational harm or psychological distress?

## **Multiple Dealings**

The five principles we outlined do not usually relate just to our dealings with one person at a time, or even one homogeneous group of people at a time. Often several people, and types of people, are implicated in the decisions that researchers make, and one or more of the principles may be relevant to each of them. This is true not only in relation to a researcher's interactions with various categories and groups of people *in the field*, but also includes others too: fellow members of a research team, colleagues and managers in the institution or organisation where the researcher works, funding bodies of various kinds, gatekeepers, and various further kinds of 'stakeholder'. These multiple relations may generate ethical dilemmas, in terms of one or more ethical principle.

Furthermore, ethics is not just about how one deals with those specific people with whom one has direct contact. Research can affect people more generally. For example, a study could damage the public reputation of a large organisation, a particular occupation, community group, or national society, and thereby the interests of those involved in it. These broader relations may also have to be taken into account.

Finally, it is worth raising the question of whether a researcher has ethical responsibilities as regards her or his own moral character, emotional security, personal safety, etc. These relate, of course, not just to researchers as individuals but also to the various other roles which they play (including as kin, friends, etc) outside of research.

## **The Research Goal**

We have outlined some of the complexities that may be involved in making judgments about the ethics of particular research strategies, as regards the implications for other people, and for the researcher as a person. However, it is very important to recognise that values do not enter the research process only in relation to our obligations and responsibilities to others, or even as regards the researcher as a person. In fact, some value or values must underpin the research enterprise itself, and also the selection of particular issues for investigation. This implies a rather wider interpretation of the scope of research ethics than is usual: judgments about what is and is not ethical practice must depend upon what is taken to be the goal of educational research, who is its audience, and how it is intended to relate to policy or practice.

In our view, the first responsibility of the researcher is to pursue worthwhile enquiry as effectively as possible. But what this means can vary sharply, given the considerable diversity in approach

within educational research today, and especially given differences over what its goal should be. For example, it makes a difference whether the purpose of research is to contribute to knowledge about important educational topics, or whether it is to bring about some kind of educational improvement or to promote social justice. Furthermore, the values that underpin the research goal may themselves have ethical implications for how people should be treated. One example is that researchers who adopt a 'critical' perspective that is concerned with bringing about emancipation of some kind may feel that ethical considerations should be applied quite differently in their dealings with those they regard as oppressed as against those whom they see as responsible for, or at least as strongly implicated in, that oppression. Similarly, if research is to contribute directly to educational improvement, then the decisions that the researcher makes in the field will be shaped by pedagogical or managerial considerations not just those that relate to the pursuit of knowledge *per se*; and there may be conflict between these two sets of goals. This is particularly true where researchers are operating under the auspices of some other role as well as that of researcher, as for example in the case of practitioner research. This other role is likely to affect their judgments about what would and would not be ethical. Indeed, some priority may have to be given to one role over the other.

In our view, the prime ethical responsibility of the researcher is to pursue worthwhile knowledge; no other goal should be substituted for this, nor should it be compromised by other concerns unless this is ethically required as regards dealings with other people. Moreover, there may need to be resistance against attempts to impose excessive ethical or practical requirements that make it impossible to carry out research effectively, for example as a result of institutional forms of ethical regulation.

### **Situated Judgments**

What weight researchers give to each of the five ethical principles outlined earlier and how they interpret them, in relation to the various people implicated, is also likely to vary according to the particular circumstances in which they are making judgments. Furthermore, how various problems arise, and one's orientation towards them, may well change over the course of the research process. For example, in some kinds of research it is likely that researchers will come to know some of the people they are working with quite well. This will inevitably, and perhaps to an extent should, affect how they deal with them, at least to a degree and in particular respects.

It is also important to remember that it is not just the researcher who will engage in judgments about the priority and interpretation of various ethical principles, but also those he or she deals with in the field, and elsewhere. Moreover, these people will usually be situated differently from the researcher, and it is not uncommon for this to lead to their reaching rather different conclusions. This generates various questions: What weight should be given to the ethical judgments of others, and whose responsibility is it to judge what is and is not ethical research practice? Our view is that



the prime responsibility should always lie with the researchers themselves, but they would be foolish to ignore others' judgments about these matters.

An important aspect of the situated nature of judgment is that the concerns that inform researchers' actions will never be solely ethical ones. Also involved are what we might call prudential matters: about what it would be most sensible to do given our goals and given what we want to avoid or minimise. And the constraints here will include the actual or likely reactions of other people.

Above all, the situated nature of practical decision-making within research makes clear that sound judgments about what it is best to do cannot be made simply by following instructions or applying rules. In this respect, and others, research is a form of praxis; in other words, it is an activity in which there must be continual attention to methodological, ethical, and prudential principles, what they might mean in the particular circumstances faced, and how best to act in those circumstances as a researcher.

As we have said, in our view the researcher, or research team, must take responsibility for these decisions; and this implies that they must be free to make them. This inevitably implies that occasionally researchers may make what others judge to be wrong decisions, and perhaps even decisions that they themselves come later to regret. The likelihood of ethical misconduct can be reduced by wider and more careful discussion of the practicalities of research, including the ethical issues that arise in the course of doing it. However, there is no way of eliminating all error, for example by applying some code, set of rules, or all-purpose tool. Indeed, attempting this can have quite the reverse effect. This is partly because, for the reasons we have outlined, what is right and wrong in some particular situation is a matter that requires consideration of diverse and potentially conflicting considerations.

There have nevertheless been attempts to lay down procedures for dealing with ethical issues, of which the most influential has been the consent form. And this is at the core of recent developments in ethical regulation of social and educational research.

### **Informed Consent: Fully Informed and Free?**

A common strategy used by researchers is to gain informed consent via a consent form which lays out what will be involved in the research, and the rights and responsibilities each side has. While informed consent is an important principle that addresses, in particular, the issue of respecting people's autonomy, it is not a simple concept, nor does it offer any blanket solution to ethical problems. Much the same is true of other, less common, strategies; such as assigning rights over interview data to informants, or including them as full participants in the research process.

Some people regard informed consent as an essential requirement in all social and educational research, while most others believe that it is desirable but not essential. As a number of commentators have pointed out, however, there are difficult issues involved in this notion, relating to each of its two components. [For a review of the literature see (accessed 24.4.12): <http://eprints.ncrm.ac.uk/85/1/MethodsReviewPaperNCRM-001.pdf>]

### *Fully informed?*

There are several problems with the idea that participants in research can be fully informed. Some of these hinge on interpretation of the word 'fully'. This cannot mean that all information about the research is provided, since this is potentially endless. Moreover, there will be much that could be asked about the research to which the researcher him or herself does not know the answers, particularly in the early stages. So, does 'fully informed' mean that gatekeepers, informants, and other research participants should be given all of the information about the research that the researcher has? We need to recognise that this information can take a variety of forms. Some of it will be about the purpose of the research, some about how the researcher plans to pursue the investigation, some will be about possible findings that could result from the research, some will concern possible consequences of carrying out the enquiry or of publishing the findings. Should all of this be supplied to the people being researched or only some of it? Should they be provided only with the information that is relevant to their decision about whether or not to participate? But, if so, can the researcher legitimately judge what is and is not relevant? And what about the danger that giving participants some of this information will affect their behaviour and thereby possibly render the findings of the research invalid or non-generalisable?

Switching to a different sort of concern, is there any justification for not telling people about possible consequences of the research because this may alarm them unduly about what are very unlikely consequences? Is the researcher in any better position to judge what consequences are and are not likely than the participants? What if the people approached are simply not sufficiently interested in the research, or do not have the time available, to allow themselves to be fully informed in any of these senses? Should the researcher insist on their receiving all the information or allow them to opt in or out of the research without being fully informed? Would insisting on fully informing them infringe their autonomy?

Other problems revolve around the word 'informed'. What does it mean to say that someone is informed about something? Does it mean simply that they have been told about it? Or does it mean that they *understand* what they have been told? And how are we to interpret the word 'understand' here? Does this mean that they understand the research in the same way as the researcher? In fact, this is very unlikely ever to be possible, not least because they are different people with different background knowledge, concerns and preoccupations, who are involved in



different activities. Most of us could perhaps agree that the ideal would be to provide people with sufficient understanding (not just information) to make a reasonable judgment for themselves about whether or not they want to participate in the research. But what would count as having done this is not entirely clear, at least in abstract terms. Furthermore, as already noted, because of the very fact that participants have other concerns, many of them may not be very interested in spending time gaining an understanding of what would be involved in participating in the research. And it may be that it is not worth their spending time on this because the decision is not a consequential one: it will not make much difference to their lives one way or the other.

### *Free consent?*

There are also problems surrounding the notion of free consent. Here, again, we need to take both of the words involved seriously. 'Consent' might be taken to mean: has signed a consent form, and assuming that the person has been 'fully informed' it is hard to deny that this amounts to consent in legal terms. But consent could also be given orally, and perhaps even implicitly. It may not be possible in all circumstances to get all participants to sign a consent form, for example because this would involve major disruption of the setting being investigated. So, as elsewhere, there may be a tension here between ethical concerns and doing the research effectively; or even between different sorts of ethical concern.

The idea of '*free consent*' refers to the extent to which a person might be, or could feel, under pressure to consent or for that matter to refuse consent. We cannot assume that, when people are faced with the issue of consenting or not consenting to being researched, they exist in a social vacuum as sovereign individuals. Rather, they live through playing various roles that involve them in relationships with other people, including many that involve influence and power. They make their decision, at least partly, in light of those relationships. And they may feel that their hand is forced to agree or disagree by someone who is in an institutional position above them, or by their peer group, or by consideration for people for whom they feel a responsibility. Whether or not these are illegitimate constraints on them is a matter of evaluative judgment, and may be one about which there can be disagreement. Moreover, who is to decide?

It is also worth noting that the researcher, and even the people themselves, may not be aware of the forces that are shaping their decisions. We might also wonder whether there are circumstances in which someone might too freely consent or too freely refuse consent. What we mean by this is that they may have made the decision without taking sufficient account of what are legitimate considerations that they ought to have addressed. Should people's apparently freely taken decisions about whether to participate in a research project be accepted at face value, or should they be questioned about how well they are informed, how carefully they have thought about it, and how free they feel to consent or refuse? Or would such questioning be disrespectful, infringe their autonomy by putting them under pressure, or simply cause unnecessary problems for

the research?

It is increasingly common for the requirement of informed consent to be operationalised in terms of a formal contract between researcher and researched via a consent form. [See: Singer, E. (1980) 'More on the Limits of Consent Forms', *IRB: Ethics and Human Research*, 2, 3, p7; Bradshaw, M. 'Contracts with research participants', *Building Research Capacity*, Issue 4, pp4-6, available at (accessed 24.4.12): <http://www.tlrp.org/rcbn/capacity/Journal/issue4.pdf>; and Coomber, R. (2002) 'Signing your life away? Why Research Ethics Committees (REC) shouldn't always require written confirmation that participants in research have been informed of the aims of a study and their rights – the case of criminal populations', *Sociological Research Online* 7, 1. Available at (accessed 24.4.12): <http://www.socresonline.org.uk/7/1/coomber.html>]. There certainly may be advantages in having a permanent record of what was agreed, though we should note that this may work in the interests of the researcher as much as in that of the researched. It is also important to remember that any contract can be interpreted in different ways, however carefully worded, and that its interpretation and use always requires shared understanding and trust; and this may change over the course of the research. A written contract cannot be a substitute for these, only an aid to them. Any attempt to make it work as a substitute will not only result in a very lengthy, detailed, and legalistic document, but will also be futile. Furthermore, consent forms can have unethical consequences, where they are treated as replacing judgments about what would and would not be ethical.

Finally, it is important to recognise that there are significant cultural differences in view about who can and should give consent for who to be involved in what. In many Western societies, it is usually assumed, in principle, that adults ought to be treated as free agents in terms of their decisions, though the situation is more uncertain as regards children, and also as regards both children and adults who have disabilities that could affect their capacity to be informed or to consent in a manner that takes account of their own interests. However, in some non-Western cultures this sort of autonomy is not given the same weight. Here, the head of a kin group or a community leader may be regarded as having the proper authority to agree to whether members of the family or community should participate. Such cultural differences are important, and can pose difficulties: should the researcher respect the established culture or insist that individuals are fully informed and freely consent? Would that be possible? At the same time, we should note that there is no single, sharp contrast here between traditional and modern liberal communities. In the latter context, those in management positions within large organisations will sometimes act to prevent any member of their organisation participating in a research project, or they may effectively order all members to participate. Difficult questions can arise over how a researcher should respond to either of these situations.

What is clear, though, is that informed consent cannot be treated as a sacred principle that must always be fully respected. What it means, and what is possible and desirable, will vary according

to circumstance. Complex and uncertain judgments are always at least potentially involved.

## **Ethical Regulation**

In recent times, there has been increasing regulation of social and educational research. Initially, this took the form of ethical codes established by professional associations, with universities and other research organisations sometimes requiring their members to adhere to these codes. More recently, ethics committees have been established in universities, and in other organisations, or the remit of existing committees has been extended to include social and educational research. Moreover, there has been a tendency for the operation of these committees to be modelled on the regulation of medical research, though there have also been recent attempts to make their approach more appropriate. This increased regulation is controversial, not least because of the complexities surrounding the ethical judgments involved in research. There are also questions to be raised about the legitimacy of ethics committees in principle, and about the effects of their operation: do they encourage more and better dialogue about ethical matters; or do they, in effect, falsely reduce ethical consideration to a matter of compliance with a code or to the use of a tool like a consent form? There is now a considerable literature on ethical regulation, see Appendix 4.

## **How Serious are Ethical Issues in Educational Research?**

Our discussion may well have given the impression that the activity of doing educational research is saturated with agonising ethical dilemmas. It is certainly true that any research project involves many *potential* ethical issues. However, these are by no means always very serious matters about which researchers need to worry or deliberate. Our view is that there is often a tendency to over-dramatise the seriousness of the ethical problems involved in social and educational research. For example, much of the time this research has relatively little significance for the people being studied, compared with all the other things going on in their lives. Indeed, it seems to us that, in ethical terms, social and educational research is not much different from many ordinary activities that we all engage in every day. There too there is always scope for identifying ethical issues that might need consideration. Much of the time these will have to be put on one side in order to get anything done, but some of them will be of such importance that they need to be addressed. Careful discrimination is required.

It certainly seems to us that the sorts of ethical issues that arise in doing social and ethical research do not usually have the same level of seriousness as those involved in, say, carrying out randomised trials on the effectiveness of medical treatments. Here, the consequences for those being researched are likely to be potentially much more severe, though the benefits may also be greater. Indeed, we do not believe that even randomised controlled trials of educational interventions involve the same level of serious problems as those in medicine; though, as in the case of educational action research, there will always be issues to do with the nature and

consequences of the intervention concerned. Generally speaking, research which does not involve any major intervention in the lives of the people being studied is less likely to generate serious ethical issues. While there will be some occasions when major problems do arise, in our judgment these are not very common. Needless to say, our views on this matter are far from universally shared by educational researchers or by other stakeholders. However, this fact simply underscores what has been one of our main points here: that there is considerable room for reasonable disagreement about research ethics.

**APPENDICES**

**1 SELECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY ON ETHICS IN EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL RESEARCH**

**2 THE PHILOSOPHICAL LITERATURE ON ETHICS**

**3 LITERATURE ON ETHICAL REGULATION**

## APPENDIX 1 SELECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY ON ETHICS IN EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL RESEARCH

Some of the sources listed here are intended to be fairly comprehensive, others are focused on particular aspects of the research process, the use of specific data collection methods, the investigation of particular kinds of research context, or the issues that can occur in working with some sorts of people (for example, those who are judged especially vulnerable, or those who have considerable economic or political power). This literature also displays a range of rather different views about how ethical issues should be approached.

Many, though not all, methodological texts include a section on ethics (see, for example Bryman, A. (2012) *Social Research Methods*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, see also earlier editions, and Hammersley, M. and Atkinson, P. (2005) *Ethnography: Principles in Practice*, Third edition, London, Routledge.). However, there are also books, collections and articles specifically devoted to research ethics, varying somewhat according to whether they cover both qualitative and quantitative work, what issues they address, and from what perspective. They include the following:

Barnes, J. A. (1979) *Who Should Know What?* Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Beals, R. L. (2005) *Politics of Social Research*, Second edition, Chicago: Transaction Books/Aldine.

Beauchamp, T., Faden, R., Wallace, R., and Walters, L. (eds.) (1982) *Ethical Issues in Social Science Research*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Caplan, P. (ed.) (2003) *The Ethics of Anthropology: Debates and Dilemmas*, London, Routledge.

Christians, C. (2011) 'Ethics and politics in qualitative research', in Denzin, N. and Lincoln, Y. (eds.) *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Thousand Oaks CA, Sage.

Denzin, N. K. and Giardina, M. D. (2007) *Ethical Futures of Qualitative Research: Decolonizing the politics of knowledge*, Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.

Diener, E. and Crandall, R. (1978) *Ethics in Social and Behavioral Research*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Gregory, I. (2003) *Ethics and Research*, London: Continuum.



Hammersley, M. and Traianou, A. (2012) *Ethics in Qualitative Research: Controversies and Contexts*, London, Sage.

van den Hoonaard, W. C. (ed.) (2002) *Walking the Tightrope: ethical issues for qualitative researchers*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Homan, R. (1991) *The Ethics of Social Research*, London: Longman.

Iphofen, R. (2009) *Ethical Decision Making in Research*, London, Palgrave Macmillan.

Israel, M. and Hay, I. (2006) *Research Ethics for Social Scientists*, London: Sage

Kimmel, A. J. (2007) *Ethical Issues in Behavioral Research: Basic and Applied Perspectives*, Malden MA: Blackwell.

King, N. M. P, Henderson, G. E. and Stein, J. (eds.) (1999) *Beyond Regulations: ethics in human subjects research*, Chapel Hill NC: University of North Carolina Press.

Macfarlane, B. (2009) *Researching with Integrity: the ethics of academic enquiry*, London, Routledge.

McNamee, M. and Bridges, D. (eds.) (2002) *The Ethics of Educational Research*, Oxford: Blackwell.

Mauthner, M., Birch, M., Jessop, J., and Miller, T. (eds.) (2002) *Ethics in Qualitative Research*, London: Sage. [Second edition 2012]

Mertens, D. and Ginsberg, P. (eds.) (2009) *Handbook of Social Research Ethics*, Thousand Oaks CA, Sage.

Murphy, E. and Dingwall, R. (2001) 'The ethics of ethnography', in Atkinson, P., Coffey, A., Delamont, S., Lofland, J., and Lofland, L. (eds.) *Handbook of Ethnography*, London, Sage.

Punch, M. (1986) *The Politics and Ethics of Fieldwork: Muddy boots and grubby hands*, Beverly Hills: Sage.

Punch, M. (1994) 'Politics and ethics in qualitative research', in N.K. Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.) *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Newbury Park CA, Sage.

Ryen, A. (2004) 'Ethical issues', in Seale, C., Gobo, G., Gubrium, J, F., and Silverman, D. (eds.)

*Qualitative Research Practice*, London: Sage.

Rynkiewich, M. A. and Spradley, J. P. (eds.) (1976) *Ethics and Anthropology: Dilemmas in fieldwork*, New York, Wiley.

Sieber, J. (1982) *The Ethics of Social Research: Fieldwork, regulation and publication*, New York: Springer.

Sieber, J. (1992) *Planning Ethically Responsible Research: a guide for students and internal review boards*, Beverly Hills CA: Sage.

Simons, H. and Usher, R. (eds.) (2000) *Situated Ethics in Educational Research*, London: RoutledgeFalmer.

Sjoberg, G. (ed.) (1967) *Ethics, Politics and Social Research*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Welland, T. and Pugsley, L. (eds.) (2002) *Ethical Dilemmas in Qualitative Research*, Aldershot: Ashgate.

## **Specific Topics**

In the remainder of this bibliography we identify material relevant to some specific topics that may be of interest.

### *Diverse perspectives*

It is important to recognise that there are conflicting views about the importance and nature of ethical issues in the context of social and educational research, and about how they should be dealt with. One dimension is between what might be called ethicist and Machiavellian positions.

At the ethicist end of the spectrum are researchers who believe that the people being researched should be given considerable control over the research process. Examples include:

Benjamin, A. F. (1999) 'Contract and covenant in Curaçao: reciprocal relationships in scholarly research', from King, N. M. P, Henderson, G. E. and Stein, J. (eds.) *Beyond Regulations: ethics in human subjects research*, Chapel Hill NC: University of North Carolina Press. See also: Fox, R. (1999) 'Contract and covenant in ethnographic research', in the same book.

Walker, R. (1993) 'The conduct of educational case studies: ethics, theory and procedures', in M. Hammersley (ed.) *Controversies in Classroom Research*, (2<sup>nd</sup> edn) edition, Buckingham: Open

University Press. [Reprinted from W. B. Dockrell and D. Hamilton (1978) (eds.) *Rethinking Educational Research*, London: Hodder and Stoughton.] For a response to Walker's position, see Jenkins, D. (1978) 'An adversary's account of SAFARI's ethics of case study' in C. Richards (ed.) *Power and the Curriculum*, Driffield: Nafferton Books. See also: Simons, H. (2009) 'Whose data are they?', in *Case Study Research in Practice*, London, Sage.

Homan, R. (2006) 'The principle of assumed consent: the ethics of gatekeeping', in McNamee, M. and Bridges, D. (eds.) *The Ethics of Educational Research*, Oxford: Blackwell.

There are also those who believe that all social research, or all that of a particular kind, for example research dealing with children, ought to be carried out 'with' not 'on' people, involving them as more or less full participants in research decisions. See, for example, Kellett, M. (2005) 'Children as active researchers: a new paradigm for the 21<sup>st</sup> century?', NCRM Methods Review Paper 3. Available at (accessed 25.4.12): <http://eprints.ncrm.ac.uk/87/1/MethodsReviewPaperNCRM-003.pdf>. Similar arguments can also sometimes be found in the context of feminist methodology and in relation to research dealing with indigenous groups or people with disabilities.

For rationales of somewhat different kinds that can support ethicism, see:

Christians, C. G. (2005) 'Ethics and politics in qualitative research', in N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln (eds.) *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (3<sup>rd</sup> edn), Thousand Oaks CA: Sage. (Revised version in fourth edition, 2011.)

MacIntyre, A. (1993) 'Ethical dilemmas: notes from outside the field', *American Anthropological Association Newsletter*, October.

Shils, E. (1959) 'Social inquiry and the autonomy of the individual', in D. P. Lerner (ed.) *The Human Meaning of the Human Sciences*, New York: Meridian. (Reprinted in E. Shils (1980) *The Calling of Sociology and Other Essays on the Pursuit of Learning*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.)

Standish, P. (2006) 'Data return: the place of the given in educational research', in McNamee, M. and Bridges, D. (eds.) *The Ethics of Educational Research*, Oxford, Blackwell.

Usher, R. (2000) 'Deconstructive happening, ethical moment', in H. Simons and R. Usher (eds.) *Situated Ethics in Educational Research*, London, Routledge Falmer.

At the Machiavellian end of the spectrum, not very vociferous today, are those who emphasise

that if research is to be done effectively, particularly qualitative research in natural settings, and especially where the researched are powerful, then covert strategies and other kinds of deception are probably unavoidable. For this point of view, see:

Douglas, J. D. (1976) *Investigative Social Research*, Beverly Hills CA: Sage. See also the chapter by Douglas in Klockars, C. B. and O'Connor, F. (eds.) (1979) *Deviance and Decency*, Beverly Hills CA, Sage, and the contrasting position taken by Reiman in his chapter.

Lehman, T. and Young, T. R. (1974) 'From conflict theory to conflict methodology: an emerging paradigm for sociology', *Sociological Quarterly*, 44, 1, pp 15-28.

Littrell, B. (1993) 'Bureaucratic secrets and adversarial methods of social research', in Vaughan, T., Sjoberg, G. and Reynolds, L. (eds.) *A Critique of Contemporary American Sociology*, Dix Hills NY, General Hall.

Most social and educational researchers adopt positions somewhere between these two extremes.

*Ethical issues relating to randomised controlled trials, and to experimental research more generally*

The use of random allocation to experimental groups raises distinctive ethical issues that have been explored, especially, in the literature on medical research. For discussions, see:

Edwards, S. J. L. et al (1998) 'The ethics of randomised controlled trials from the perspectives of patients, the public, and healthcare professionals', *British Medical Journal*, 317, pp1209-12.

Edwards, S. J. L. et al (1999) 'Ethical issues in the design and conduct of cluster randomised controlled trials', *British Medical Journal*, 318, pp1407-9

Fries, J. F. and Krishnan, E. (2004) 'Equipoise, design bias, and randomized controlled trials: the elusive ethics of new drug development', *Arthritis Research and Therapy*, 6, 3.

Jadad, A. and Enkin, M. W. (2007) *Randomized Controlled Trials: Questions, answers and musings*, Second edition, Oxford, Blackwell BMJ Books (Chapter 8).

For a recent account of what are seen as the ethical requirements in experimental research in psychology, see: Banyard, P. and Flanagan, C. (2006) *Ethical Issues and Guidelines in Psychology*, London, Routledge.

A classic discussion of the issue of deception is: Kelman, H. (1967) 'Human use of human subjects: The problem of deception in social psychological experiments', *Psychological Bulletin*, 67, 1, pp1-11. Available at (accessed 20.4.12):

<http://mona.uwi.edu/spsw/downloads/coursemat/PS21D/2007-2008/summer/Kelman%20Human%20use%20of%20human%20subjects.pdf>

An interesting psychological investigation of ethical issues surrounding research is offered by: Stanley, B., Sieber, J., and Nelton, G. (1996) *Research Ethics: A psychological approach*, University of Nebraska Press.

Codes covering experimental research include:

British Psychological Society: <http://www.bps.org.uk/publications/policy-guidelines/research-guidelines-policy-documents/research-guidelines-policy-docum>

American Psychological Association: *Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct*. Available at (accessed 20.4.12):

<http://www.apa.org/ethics/code/index.aspx>

### *Ethics and survey research*

There are also some distinctive issues that arise in the context of survey research, see:

Groves, R.M., Fowler, F.J., Couper, M.P., Lepkowski, J.M., Singer, E., and Tourangeau, R. (2009) *Survey Methodology*, Second Edition, New York, John Wiley, Chapter 11.

Kelley, K., Clark, B., Brown, V., and Sitzia, J. (2003) 'Good practice in the conduct and reporting of survey research', *International Journal for Quality in Health Care*, 15, 3, pp261-266.

Singer, E. (2008) 'Ethical issues in surveys', in De Leeuw, E., Hox, J., and Dillman, D. (eds.) (2008) *International Handbook of Survey Methodology*, Routledge, 2008.

Kennedy, J. (2001) 'Ethics Codes and Survey Researchers', paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Association for Public Opinion Research, Montreal, May 2001. Available at (accessed 21.4.12):

[http://www.iu.edu/~csr/comparisons\\_of\\_ethics\\_codes.pdf](http://www.iu.edu/~csr/comparisons_of_ethics_codes.pdf)

For a brief online account of some of the issues, see:

<http://survey.pearsonncs.com/special/ethics.htm>

For standards set down by the Council of American Survey Research Organizations:

<http://www.casro.org/codeofstandards.cfm>

For the code of the American Association for Public Opinion Research see:

[http://www.aapor.org/AAPOR\\_Code\\_of\\_Ethics/4249.htm](http://www.aapor.org/AAPOR_Code_of_Ethics/4249.htm)

For the American Statistical Association's *Ethical Guidelines for Statistical Practice* (1998):

<http://www.amstat.org/about/ethicalguidelines.cfm>

### *Ethics and action research*

Action research and participatory inquiry can take a variety of forms, which have implications for ethical dilemmas. Furthermore, the rationales behind action research give a distinctive slant on how these should be dealt with. See, for example:

*Action Research*, vol. 4, no.1, 2006

DePalma, R. (2010) 'Socially just research for social justice: negotiating consent and safety in a participatory action research project', *International Journal of Research and Method in Education*, 33, 3, pp215-27.

Elliott, J. (1984) 'Methodology and Ethics', in C. Adelman (ed.) *The Politics and Ethics of Evaluation*, London: Croom Helm.

Griffith, M. (1998) *Educational Research for Social Justice: Getting off the fence*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

Jones, M. and Stanley, G. (2010) 'Collaborative action research: a democratic undertaking or a web of collusion and compliance?', *International Journal of Research and Method in Education*, 33, 2, pp151-63.

Kelly, V. A. (1986) 'Education or indoctrination? The ethics of school-based action research', in Burgess, R. G. (ed.) *The Ethics of Educational Research*, Lewes: Falmer.



Miller, M. (2008) 'Ethics and action research', in Reason, P. and Bradbury, H. (eds.) *The Sage Handbook of Action Research*, Second edition, London, Sage.

Morton, Alec (1999) 'Ethics in action research', *Systemic practice and action research*, 12, 2, pp219-222.

Nolen, A. L. and Putten, J. V. (2007) 'Action research in education: addressing gaps in ethical principles', *Educational Researcher*, 36, 7, pp 401-7.

Tickle, L. (2001) 'Opening windows, closing doors: Ethical dilemmas in educational action research' *Journal of Philosophy of Education* 35, no. 1, pp345-59

Tracy, F. and Carmichael, P. (2010) 'Research ethics and participatory research in an interdisciplinary technology-enhanced learning project', *International Journal of Research and Method in Education*, 33, 3, pp245-57.

Williamson, J, and Prosser, S. (2002) 'Action research: politics, ethics and participation', *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 40, 5, pp587-93.

Zeni, J. (2000) (ed.) *Ethical Issues in Practitioner Research*, New York: Teachers College Press.

### *Research on Children*

There is a considerable literature dealing with ethical issues relating to research on children, much of which emphasises children's competence and agency. In recent years the positions taken have often been close to what we referred to earlier as an ethicist position. This derives from broader ethico-political ideas about the position of children in society and how this should be changed, often centred around a notion of children's rights (see Article 12 in the *UN Convention of the Rights of the Child* 1989). From this point of view, children and young people should, at the very least, be treated as having the same rights to choose whether or not to participate in research as adults do, but perhaps should instead be regarded as co-participants in the research process, or treated as researchers in their own right.

Among the relevant publications here are the following:

Alderson, P. (2000) 'Children as researchers: the effects of participation rights on research methodology', in P. Christiansen and A. Prout (eds.) *Research with Children: Perspectives and practices*, New York: Falmer Press.

- Alderson, P. and Morrow, V. (2011) *The Ethics of Research with Children and Young People*, London, Sage.
- Aubrey, C., David, T., Godfrey, R., and Thompson, L. (eds.) (1998) *Researching Early Childhood Education: Debates and issues in methodology and ethics*, London: RoutledgeFalmer
- Boyden, J. and Ennew, J. (1997) *Children in Focus – a manual for participatory research with children*, Stockholm: Radda Barnen.
- Christensen, P. and James, A. (eds.) (2000) *Research with Children*, London: Falmer.
- Christensen, P. & Prout, A. (2002) 'Working with ethical symmetry in social research with children', *Childhood*, 9, 4, pp477-397.
- David, M., Edwards, R., and Aldred, P. (2001) 'Children and school-based research: "informed consent" or "educated consent"', *British Educational Research Journal*, 27, 3, pp347–65.
- Farrell, A. (ed.) (2005) *Ethical Research with Children*, Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Heath, S., Charles, V., Crow, G, & Wiles, R. (2007) 'Informed consent, gatekeepers and go-betweens: negotiating consent in child- and youth-oriented institutions', *British Educational Research Journal* 33, 3, pp403-417.
- Leadbeater, B. et al (2006) *Ethical Issues in Community-based Research with Children and Youth*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Lewis, A. and Lindsay, G. (2000) *Researching Children's Perspectives*, Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Morrow, V. & Richards, M. (1996) 'The ethics of social research with children: an overview', *Children & Society*, 10, 2, pp. 90-105
- Scott, J., Wishart, J., and Bowyer, D. (2006) 'Do current consent and confidentiality requirements impede or enhance research with children with learning disabilities?', *Disability and Society*, 21, 3, pp273-87
- Sime, D. (2008) 'Ethical and methodological issues in engaging young people living in poverty with participatory research methods' *Children's Geographies Journal*, 6, 1.
- Stanley, B. and Sieber, J. (1992) *Social Research on Children and Adolescents: ethical issues*,

New York: Sage.

Thomas, N. & O’Kane, C. (1998) ‘The ethics of participatory research with children’, *Children and Society* 12(5), pp. 336-348.

### *Internet Research*

The development of the Internet has considerably expanded the resources available to researchers, but has also raised some new ethical issues, or at least old ones in new forms.

Allen, C. (1996) ‘What’s wrong with the ‘golden rule’? Conundrums of conducting ethical research in cyberspace’, *The Information Society*, 12 (2) pp. 175-187.

Bakardjieva, M. and Feenberg, A. (2001) ‘Involving the virtual subject’, *Ethics and Information Technology*, 2, 233–240.

Bassett, H.E., & O’Riordan, K. (2002) ‘Ethics of Internet research: Contesting the human subjects research model’, *Ethics and Information Technology*, 4, 3, pp. 233-247.

Berry, D. M. (2004) ‘Internet research: privacy, ethics and alienation – an open source approach’, *Internet Research*, 14, 4, pp 323-332.

Buchanan, E. A. (2003) *Readings in Virtual Research Ethics: Issues and controversies*, Information Science Publishing.

Hudson, J. M., & Bruckman, A. (2004) “Go Away”: Participant Objections to Being Studied and the Ethics of Chatroom Research’, *The Information Society*, 20, 2, pp. 127-139.

Johns, M., et al (2003) *Online Social Research*, New York: Peter Lang.

Kitchin, H. (2008) *Research Ethics and the Internet: Negotiating Canada’s Tri-Council Policy Statement*, Toronto: Fernwood.

Mann, C., & Stewart, F. (2000) ‘An Ethical Framework’, in C. Mann & F. Stewart *Internet Communication and Qualitative Research*, London: Sage.

Markham, A. (2003) ‘Representation in online ethnographies’, from M. Johns et al (eds.) *Online Social Research*, New York: Peter Lang.

Markham, A. (2005) ‘The methods, politics and ethics of internet ethnography’, in Denzin, N. and

Lincoln, Y. (eds.) *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Thousand Oaks CA, Sage.

Markham, A. (2006) '[Ethic as Method, Method as Ethic: A Case for Reflexivity in Qualitative ICT Research.](#)', *Journal of Information Ethics* 15, 2, pp37-54.

Nissenbaum, H. (1999) 'The meaning of anonymity in an information age', *The Information Society* 15, pp. 141-144. [Reprinted in R.A. Spinello and H.T. Tavani (2001) (eds) *Readings in CyberEthics*, Sudbury: Jones and Bartlett.] (available at [http://www.nyu.edu/projects/nissenbaum/paper\\_anonymity.html](http://www.nyu.edu/projects/nissenbaum/paper_anonymity.html))

Reid, E. (1996) 'Informed Consent in the Study of On-Line Communities: A Reflection on the Effects of Computer-Mediated Social Research', *The Information Society*, 12, 2, pp. 169-174.

Spinello, R.A. and Tavani, H.T. (eds.) (2001) *Readings in CyberEthics*, Sudbury: Jones and Bartlett.

### *Ethics in Visual Research*

There is also some literature on the ethical dilemmas posed in the production, manipulation and dissemination of digital images. Much of this focuses upon the protection of anonymity and privacy during visual research.

Flewitt, R. (2005) 'Conducting research with young children: some ethical considerations', *Early Child Development and Care*, 175, 6, pp553-565.

Gold, S. 'Ethical issues in visual fieldwork' in Blank, G., McCartney, J. & Brent, E. (eds.) (1989) *New Technology in Sociology: Practical Applications in Research and Work* New Brunswick, NJ, Transaction

Gross, L., Katz, J. S. & Ruby, J. (eds.) (2003) *Image Ethics in the Digital Age* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Mercedes, D. (1996) 'Digital ethics: computers, photographs, and the manipulation of pixels', *Art Education* 49, 3, pp44-50.

Nutbrown, C. (2010) 'Naked by the Pool? Blurring the Image? Ethical Issues in the Portrayal of Young Children in Arts-Based Educational Research', *Qualitative Inquiry*, 17, 1, pp3-14.

Pope, C., De Luca, R., and Tolich, M. (2010) 'How an exchange of perspectives led to tentative ethical guidelines for visual ethnography', *International Journal of Research and Method in*

*Education*, 33, 3, pp301-15.

Prosser, J. (2000) 'The moral maze of image ethics', in H. Simons and R. Usher (eds.) *Situated Ethics in Educational Research*, London: Routledge Falmer.

Clark, A., Prosser, J., and Wiles, R. (2010) 'Ethical issues in image-based research', *Arts and Health*, 2, 1, 81–93.

Wiles, R., Prosser, J., Bagnoli, A., Clark, A., Davies, K., Holland, S., Renold, E. (2008) *Visual Ethics: Ethical Issues in Visual Research*, ESRC National Centre for Research Methods Review Paper.

Wiles, R., Coffey, A., Robison, J., and Prosser, J. (2012) 'Ethical Regulation and Visual Methods: Making Visual Research Impossible or Developing Good Practice?' *Sociological Research Online*, 17, 1. Available at (accessed 1.3.12): <http://www.socresonline.org.uk/17/1/8.html>

#### *Ethical issues in narrative and discourse analysis*

Some distinctive issues can arise in these kinds of work:

Borland, K. (1991) "'That's not what I said": interpretive conflict in oral narrative research', from S. Gluck and D. Patai (eds.) *Women's Words*, New York: Routledge,

Clough, P. (2004) 'Theft and ethics in life portrayal: Lolly – the final story', *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 17, 3, pp 371-82.

Janovicek, N. (2006) 'Oral history and ethical practice', *Journal of Academic Ethics*, 4, pp157-74.

Josselson, R. (ed.) (1996) *Ethics and Process in the Narrative Study of Lives*, Thousand Oaks CA: Sage.

#### *Relationships with funders*

Discussions of research ethics sometimes forget that relations with the people being researched are not the only sorts of relationship that can generate ethical issues. One other area concerns dealings with funders. On these, see

Bridges, D. (1998) 'Research for sale: moral market or moral maze?', *British Educational Research Journal*, 24, 5, pp 593-608.

Pettigrew, M. (1994) 'Coming to terms with research: the contract business', in D. Halpin and B. Troyna (eds.) *Researching Education Policy*, London: Falmer.

Norris, N. (1995) 'Contracts, control and evaluation', *Journal of Education Policy*, 10, 3, pp 271-85.

### *The issue of anonymity*

Generally speaking, researchers attempt to maintain the anonymity of those whom they have studied and whom they have used as informants. However, some commentators have argued that this is neither entirely possible nor desirable. On this issue, see:

Flewitt, R. (2005) 'Conducting research with young children: some ethical considerations', *Early Child Development and Care*, 175, 6, pp553-65.

Grinyer, A. (2004) 'The Anonymity of Research participants: Assumptions, ethics, and practicalities', *Social Research Update*, 36, pp1-6. (available at <http://sru.soc.surrey.ac.uk>).

Hopkins, M. (1993) 'Is anonymity possible? Writing about refugees in the United States', in Brettell, C. (ed.) (1993) *When They Read What We Write: The politics of ethnography*, Westport, CT, Bergin and Garvey.

Kelly, A. (2009) 'In defence of anonymity: rejoining the criticism', *British Educational Research Journal*, 35, 3, pp431-45.

Nespor, J. (2000) 'Anonymity and place', *Qualitative Inquiry*, 6, 4, pp564-9

Nissenbaum, H. (1999) 'The meaning of anonymity in an information age', *The Information Society* 15, pp. 141-144. [Reprinted in R.A. Spinello and H.T. Tavani (2001) (eds) *Readings in CyberEthics*, Sudbury: Jones and Bartlett.] (available at [http://www.nyu.edu/projects/nissenbaum/paper\\_anonimity.html](http://www.nyu.edu/projects/nissenbaum/paper_anonimity.html))

Nutbrown, C. (2010) 'Naked by the Pool? Blurring the Image? Ethical Issues in the Portrayal of Young Children in Arts-Based Educational Research', *Qualitative Inquiry*, 17, 1, pp3-14.

Piper, H. and Sikes, P. (2010) 'All Teachers Are Vulnerable but Especially Gay Teachers: Using Composite Fictions to Protect Research Participants in Pupil-Teacher Sex-Related Research', *Qualitative Inquiry* 16, 7, pp566-574.

Tolich, M. (2004) 'Internal confidentiality: When confidentiality assurances fail relational informants', *Qualitative Sociology* 27, 1, pp101-6.



Walford, G. (2002) 'Why don't researchers name their research sites?', in G. Walford (ed.) *Debates and Developments in Ethnographic Methodology*, Studies in Educational Ethnography Volume 6, Amsterdam: JAI Press.

Walford, G. (2005) 'Research ethical guidelines and anonymity', *International Journal of Research and Method in Education*, 28, 1, pp83-93.

Walford, G. (2008) 'Selecting sites, and gaining ethical and practical access', in Walford, G. (ed.) *How to do Educational Ethnography*, London, Tufnell.

Wiles, R., Crow, G., Heath, S., and Charles, V. (2008) 'The Management of Confidentiality and Anonymity in Social Research', *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 11, 5, pp. 417-428.

#### *Ethical issues and the archiving of data*

Research data are increasingly being stored in archives, and indeed researchers are under pressure to deposit their data. There are ethical issues involved here, particularly in the case of qualitative data. See:

Corti, L., A. Day, and G. Backhouse (2000) 'Confidentiality and Informed Consent: Issues for Consideration in the Preservation of and Provision of Access to Qualitative Data Archives', *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung/Forum: Qualitative Social Research* 1, 3. Available at: [www.qualitative-research.net/fqs-texte/3-00/3-00cortietal-e.htm/](http://www.qualitative-research.net/fqs-texte/3-00/3-00cortietal-e.htm/)

Hadfield, L. (2010) 'Balancing on the Edge of the Archive: The Researcher's Role in Collecting and Preparing Data to Deposit in Conducting Qualitative Longitudinal Research', *Timescapes Working Paper 2*: [http://www.timescapes.leeds.ac.uk/assets/files/WP2\\_final\\_Jan%202010.pdf](http://www.timescapes.leeds.ac.uk/assets/files/WP2_final_Jan%202010.pdf)

Johnson, D. and Bullock, M. (2009) 'The ethics of data archiving: issues from four perspectives', in Mertens, D. and Ginsberg, P. (eds.) (2009) *Handbook of Social Research Ethics*, Thousand Oaks CA, Sage.

Parry, O. and Mauthner, N. (2004) 'Whose Data Are They Anyway? Practical, Legal and Ethical Issues in Archiving Qualitative Research Data', *Sociology*, 38, 1, pp139-152.

Thompson, P. (2003) 'Towards Ethical Practice in the Use of Archived Transcribed Interviews: A Response', *Social Research Methodology* 6, 4, pp357-60.

Williams, M., Dicks, B., Coffey, A. and Mason, B. (2011) Methodological issues in qualitative data sharing and archiving. Briefing paper 2. Qualitative data archiving and reuse: mapping the ethical terrain Accessed 5/3/2012 from:

<http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/socsi/hyper/QUADS/Briefing%20paper%20ethics.pdf>

*Ethics and data protection*

Akeroyd, A. (1988) 'Ethnography, personal data, and computers: the implications of data protection legislation for qualitative social research', in Burgess, R. (ed.) *Studies in Qualitative Methodology, Volume 1 Conducting qualitative research*, Greenwich CT, JAI Press.

Erdos, D. (2011a) 'Stuck in the thicket? Social research under the first data protection principle', *International Journal of Law and Information Technology*, 19(2), 133-52.

Erdos, D. (2011b) 'Systematically handicapped? Social research in the data protection framework', *International Journal of Law and Information Technology*, 20(2), 83-101.

SRA (1995) *The Data Protection Act 1998: Guidelines for social research*, London, Social Research Association.

For other bibliographies on social and educational research ethics, see:

<http://www.aare.edu.au/ethics/aareethc.htm>

<http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/educationstudentintranet/researchethics/reading-list.aspx>

[http://www.colorado.edu/education/faculty/kennethhowe/Docs/Howe\\_Moses\\_Ethics\\_in\\_Educational\\_Research.pdf](http://www.colorado.edu/education/faculty/kennethhowe/Docs/Howe_Moses_Ethics_in_Educational_Research.pdf)

## APPENDIX 2 THE PHILOSOPHICAL LITERATURE ON ETHICS

There is a huge philosophical literature on ethics, and considerable disagreement within it about the nature of ethical issues, as well as about the implications of ethical principles for action. Among the topics which this literature covers are the following: Are there moral truths? Should we approach ethical problems in terms of principles or particular judgments? Should we determine what are good and bad actions in terms of the intentions behind them or their consequences? What, if any, are the grounds for moral obligation?

For an excellent set of papers deploying philosophical arguments in relation to educational research, see McNamee, M. and Bridges, D. (eds.) (2002) *The Ethics of Educational Research*, Oxford, Blackwell. See also Bridges, D., Gingell, J., Suissa, J., Watts, M. and Winch, C. (2007) *Ethics and educational research: philosophical perspectives*. London: TLRP. Online at <http://www.tlrp.org/capacity/rm/wt/bridges>

There are many introductions to the philosophical literature, though few cover the full range of kinds of philosophical work. Here are some examples, with varying styles and stances:

Benn, P. (2000) *Ethics*, London: Routledge.

Blackburn, S. (2001) *Being Good: a short introduction to ethics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Ewing, A. C. (1953) *Ethics*, New York: Free Press.

Frankena, W. K. (1963) *Ethics*, Englewood Cliffs NJ, Prentice-Hall.

Grayling, A. C. (2003) *What is Good? The search for the best way to live*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson.

Griffin, J. (1996) *Value Judgement: Improving our ethical beliefs*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hudson, W. D. (1983) *Modern Moral Philosophy*, Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Kerner, G. C. (1990) *Three Philosophical Moralists: Mill, Kant, and Sartre*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Larmore, C. (2008) *The Autonomy of Morality*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Mackie, J. L. (1977) *Ethics: inventing right and wrong*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Murdoch, I. (1985) *The Sovereignty of the Good*, London, Ark.

Raphael, D. D. (1981) *Moral Philosophy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Warnock, G. J. (1967) *Contemporary Moral Philosophy*, London, Macmillan.

Warnock, M. (1978) *Ethics Since 1900*, Third edition, Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Williams, B. (1985) *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy*, London: Fontana.

A useful dictionary on philosophical ethics is Jacobs, J. A. (2005) *Ethics A-Z*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

There are also many collections that bring together diverse approaches to a range of ethical topics. For two particularly wide-ranging ones, in somewhat different ways, see Singer, P. (ed.) (1991) *A Companion to Ethics*, Oxford: Blackwell and Singer, P. (ed.) (1994) *Ethics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

For a useful, detailed, introduction to three currently influential philosophical approaches within Anglo-American philosophy, see Baron, M. W., Pettit, P., and Slote, M. (1997) *Three Methods of Ethics*, Oxford: Blackwell.

For a collection which covers issues in Continental philosophy, see Kearney, R. and Dooley, M. (eds.) (1999) *Questioning Ethics: contemporary debates in philosophy*, London: Routledge.

For a history of philosophical ideas about ethics, see MacIntyre, A. (1967) *A Short History of Ethics*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul; see also Becker, L. C. and Becker, C. B. (eds.) (1992) *A History of Western Ethics*, New York: Garland.

For a more recent and quite a demanding discussion of some of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century sources of philosophical ideas about ethics, see Rawls, J. (2000) *Lectures on the History of Moral Philosophy*, Cambridge MS: Harvard University Press.

One philosophical approach to ethics that was particularly influential in early thinking about ethical regulation of research was that of David Ross in the 1920s. On this, see his book *The Right and the Good* (2002), Oxford: Oxford University Press.

For a discussion of the influence of Ross's work on ethical regulation of research, see Small, R. (2001) 'Codes are not enough: what philosophy can contribute to the ethics of educational research', *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 35, 3, pp387-406. [Reprinted in McNamee, M. and

Bridges, D. (eds.) (2002) *The Ethics of Educational Research*, Oxford, Blackwell.]

For illuminating philosophical reflections on moral reasoning that came out of working on the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, which produced the Belmont Report, see Jonsen, A. R. and Toulmin, S. (1988) *The Abuse of Casuistry: a history of moral reasoning*, Berkeley: University of California Press. These authors argue that what is primary in moral reasoning is the consideration of particular cases, rather than the establishment of abstract principles. Others have taken a similar line, see for example Dancy, J. (2004) *Ethics Without Principles*, Oxford: Oxford University Press. For counter arguments, see McKeever, S. and Ridge, M. (2006) *Principled Ethics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

### *Feminist Ethics*

Feminist philosophy has challenged much modern ethical theory on the basis that it takes masculine experience as the norm, and thereby devalues women's interests and points of view. Some feminists have developed an approach that takes women's experiences as the starting point for ethical deliberation, often given the label 'the ethics of care'. This has been particularly influenced by the work of the psychologist Carol Gilligan: see Gilligan, C. (1982) *In a Different Voice*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press.

A leading proponent of an ethics of care is Nel Noddings. See Noddings, N. (2003) *Caring: A feminine approach to ethics and moral education*, Berkeley, CA, University of California Press. Sara Ruddick proposed 'maternal thinking' as a virtue which should be applicable to government and international relations in order to promote global peace and prosperity (see Ruddick, S. (1989) *Maternal Thinking: Towards a Politics of Peace*, New York: Beacon Press). A similar argument is supported by Virginia Held in her work: Held, V. (1993) *Feminist Morality: Transforming culture, society, and politics*, Chicago: Chicago University Press. See also Held, V. (2006) *The Ethics of Care*, New York, Oxford University Press; Kittay, E. F. (1999) *Love's Labor: Essays on Women, Equality, and Dependency*, New York: Routledge; and Kittay, E. F. and Feder, E.K. (2003) *The Subject of Care: Feminist Perspectives on Dependency*, Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield

For an excellent review of feminist ethics including care ethics and its criticisms see <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/feminism-ethics/> (accessed on 05.03.2012)

### *Other radical approaches*

There are other lines of philosophical thinking about ethics that put into question core aspects of the character of modern ethical thought.

One source here is the writings of Nietzsche, see Leiter, B. and Sinhababu, N. (eds.) (2007) *Nietzsche and Morality*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Some draw on ideas from Levinas and post-structuralists like Derrida and Lyotard, see for example Caputo, J. (1993) *Against Ethics: Contribution to a poetics of obligation with constant reference to deconstruction*, Bloomington, IN, Indiana University Press and Caputo, J. (2000) 'The end of ethics', in LaFollette, H. (ed.) *The Blackwell Guide to Ethical Theory*, Oxford, Blackwell.

Foucault's last three books dealt with ethics, see O'Leary, T. (2002) *Foucault and the Art of Ethics*, London, Continuum, and Davidson, A. (1994) 'Ethics as ascetics: Foucault, the history of ethics, and ancient thought', in Gutting, G. (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to Foucault*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.



### APPENDIX 3 LITERATURE ON ETHICAL REGULATION

Once upon a time, not that long ago, there was little or no regulation of social and educational research. The initial moves toward regulation took the form of the production of ethics codes by professional or disciplinary associations. In large part, this was prompted by the move to regulation in the field of medical research after the Second World War. This was largely stimulated by the discovery that research had been carried out on prisoners in concentration camps, and by the production of the Nuremburg Code in response to this. Some other examples are repeatedly cited as indicating the need for ethical regulation of research, including the Tuskegee Syphilis Study.

Within social science, reference is also sometimes made to Project Camelot, in which research was implicated in US foreign policy in Latin America, Stanley Milgram's experiments on obedience, and Laud Humphreys' study of 'impersonal sex in public places'.

Key documents relating to the ethics of medical research in the US, but which also have relevance to social and educational research, are contained in Sugarman, J., Mastroianni, A. C., and Kahn, J. P. (1998) (eds.) *Ethics of Research with Human Subjects: selected policies and resources*, Frederick, Maryland: University Publishing Group, 1998. Included here are relevant sections of the Nuremburg Code, the World Medical Association Declaration of Helsinki, and the Belmont Report.

As regards the Tuskegee Syphilis Study, there is some dispute about the facts and ethics of this case, on which see:

Shweder, R. A. (2004) 'Tuskegee re-examined', *Spiked*, available at <http://www.spiked-online.com/Articles/0000000CA34A.htm>

See also Reverby, S. (ed.) (2000) *Tuskegee's Truths: Rethinking the Tuskegee Syphilis Study*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

On Project Camelot, see: <http://www.cia-on-campus.org/social/camelot.html>

This is an extract from: *The Rise and Fall of Project Camelot: Studies in the Relationship Between Social Science and Practical Politics*, Irving Louis Horowitz, ed. Cambridge MA: The M.I.T. Press, 1967.

On Milgram's work, see:

Milgram, S. (1974) *Obedience to Authority*, New York: Harper & Row.

Miller, A. (1986) *The Obedience Experiments: A case study of controversy in social science*, New

York, Praeger.

On Humphreys' *Tearoom Trade*, see <http://www.angelfire.com/or3/tss/tearoom.html>

For a fuller discussion, see: Humphreys, L. (1975) *Tearoom trade: Impersonal sex in public places*, Second edition, New York: Aldine. This edition provides a postscript and retrospect on the ethical issues.

For a history of the development of codes and regulation within US social science, see Hammersley, M. and Traianou, A. (2012) *Ethics in Qualitative Research*, London, Sage, Introduction; and Homan, R. (1991) *The Ethics of Social Research*, London, Longman, ch.2. See also T. Beauchamp et al *Ethical Issues in Social Science Research*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982, Part 5; and King, N. M. P, Henderson, G. E. and Stein, J. (1999) (eds.) *Beyond Regulations: ethics in human subjects research*, Chapel Hill NC: University of North Carolina Press. The introduction of codes was not without opposition. Here, for example, are brief reactions to the introduction of ethics codes in sociology and anthropology:

Becker, H. S. (1964) 'Against the code of ethics', *American Sociological Review*, 29, 3, pp 409-10.

Freidson, E. (1964) 'Against the code of ethics', *American Sociological Review*, 29, 3, pp 410.

See also Wax, M.L. and Cassell, J. (1981) 'From regulation to reflection: ethics in social research', *American Sociologist*, 16, 4, pp224-9.

For a more recent discussion, see: Small, R. (2001) 'Codes are not enough: what philosophy can contribute to the ethics of educational research', *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 35, 3, pp 387-406. (Reprinted in M. McNamee and D. Bridges (2002) *The Ethics and Educational Research*, *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, Oxford: Blackwell).

Current social science research ethics codes include the following:

British Sociological Association (BSA) (2002) *Statement of Ethical Practice*  
<http://www.britisoc.org.uk/about/ethic.htm>

Social Research Association (SRA) (2003) *Ethical Guidelines* <http://www.the-sra.org.uk/ethics.htm>

American Sociological Association (ASA) (1997) *Code of Ethics* <http://www.asanet.org/ethics.htm>

American Anthropological Association (AAA) (1998) *Code of Ethics*  
<http://aaanet.org/committees/ethics/ethicscode.pdf>

British Psychological Society (BPS) (2010) *Code of Human Research Ethics*  
<http://www.bps.org.uk/about/rules5.cfm>

British Educational Research Association (BERA) (2011) *Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research* <http://www.bera.ac.uk/system/files/BERA%20Ethical%20Guidelines%202011.pdf>

For a fairly recent account of the role of ethics committees today in the UK, see Tinker, A. and Coomber, V. (2004) *University Research Ethics Committees: their role, remit and conduct*, London, Nuffield Foundation/Kings College.

There is a whole journal in the US devoted to issues surrounding institutional review boards and research ethics: *IRB: Ethics and Human Research*

The introduction of the ESRC Research Ethics Framework/Framework for Research Ethics marked a significant shift in the level of ethical regulation of educational and social research in the UK. See:

Economic and Social Research Council (2010) *Framework for Research Ethics*, Swindon, ESRC. Available at:  
[www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/esrcinfocentre/opportunities/research\\_ethics\\_framework/](http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/esrcinfocentre/opportunities/research_ethics_framework/) (accessed 19.8.10).

See also:

UNITED KINGDOM RESEARCH INTEGRITY OFFICE  
[http://www.ukrio.org/sites/ukrio2/the\\_programme\\_of\\_work/live\\_document\\_code\\_of\\_practice\\_for\\_research.cfm](http://www.ukrio.org/sites/ukrio2/the_programme_of_work/live_document_code_of_practice_for_research.cfm)

There has been considerable reaction against the ESRC Framework, and against the even more stringent regulation operating in the field of health:

Boden, R., Epstein, D., and Latimer, J. (2009) 'Accounting for ethos or programmes for conduct? The brave new world of research ethics committees', *Sociological Review*, 57, 4, pp727-49.

Dingwall, R. (2006a) 'An exercise in fatuity: research governance and the emasculation of HSR.' *Journal of Health Services Research Policy* 11, 4, pp193-4 [\[doi:10.1258/135581906778476580\]](https://doi.org/10.1258/135581906778476580)

Dingwall, R. (2006b) 'Confronting the anti-democrats: the unethical nature of ethical regulation of social science: Summary of Plenary Address to Annual BSA Medical Sociology Group Conference, Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh, September 2006.', *Medical Sociology Online*, 1: 51 – 8.

Dingwall, R. (2007) 'Turn off the oxygen...' *Law and Society Review* 41, 4, pp787-95.

Dingwall, R. (2008) *The Ethical Case Against Ethical Regulation in Humanities and Social Science*

Research. *21<sup>st</sup> Century Society*, 3, 1, pp1-12.

Hammersley, M. 'Are ethics committees ethical?', *Qualitative Researcher* Issue 2, Spring 2006. Available at: [http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/socsi/qualiti/QualitativeResearcher/QR\\_Issue2\\_06.pdf](http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/socsi/qualiti/QualitativeResearcher/QR_Issue2_06.pdf)

Hammersley, M. (2010) Against the Ethicists: On the Evils of Ethical Regulation. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 12, 3, pp211-225.

Hammersley, M. (2010) Creeping Ethical Regulation and the Strangling of Research. *Sociological Research Online* 15, 4. <<http://www.socresonline.org.uk/15/4/16.html>>

Holmwood, J. (2010) Research Ethics Committees (RECs) and the Creaking Piers of Peer Review. *Sociological Research Online*, 15, 4. <<http://www.socresonline.org.uk/15/4/14.html>>

Kushner, S. (2006) 'A lament for the ESRC', *Research Intelligence*, The newsletter of the British Educational Research Association, Issue 94, February.

McDonach, E., Barbour, R., and Williams, B. (2009) 'Reflections on applying for NHS ethical approval and governance in a climate of rapid change: prioritising process over principles', *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 12, 3, pp227-41.

Meehaghan, A., O'Herlihy, A., Durand, M. A., Farr, H., Tulloch, S., and Lelliott, P. (2007) 'A 55 kg Paper Mountain: The impact of new research governance and ethics processes on mental health services research in England', *Journal of Mental Health*, 16, 1, pp149-55.

Melrose, M. (2011) 'Regulating social research: Exploring the Implications of Extending Ethical Review Procedures in Social Research', *Sociological Research Online*, 16, 2. Available at: <<http://www.socresonline.org.uk/16/2/14.html>>

Orton-Johnson, K. (2010) 'Ethics in Online Research; Evaluating the ESRC Framework for Research Ethics Categorisation of Risk', *Sociological Research Online*, 15, 4. <http://www.socresonline.org.uk/15/4/13.html>

Penn, R., & Soothill, K. (2007). Ethical issues in social inquiry: The enemy within? *Qualitative Researcher*, 6. Retrieved 18 May, 2008 from, [http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/socsi/qualiti/QualitativeResearcher/QR\\_Issue6\\_Sep07.pdf](http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/socsi/qualiti/QualitativeResearcher/QR_Issue6_Sep07.pdf)

Reed, K. (2010) [The Spectre of Research Ethics and Governance and the ESRC's 2010 FRE: Nowhere Left to Hide?](http://www.socresonline.org.uk/15/4/17.html) *Sociological Research Online*, 15, 4. <http://www.socresonline.org.uk/15/4/17.html>

Richardson, S. and McMullan, M. (2007) 'Research ethics in the UK: What can sociology learn from health?', *Sociology*, 41, 6, pp1115-32.

Rustin, M. (2010) The Risks of Assessing Ethical Risks. *Sociological Research Online* 15, 4. <http://www.socresonline.org.uk/15/4/18.html>

Stanley, L. and Wise, S. (2010) The ESRC's 2010 Framework for Ethics: Fit for research Purpose? *Sociological Research Online* 15, 4. <<http://www.socresonline.org.uk/15/4/12.html>>

There is also a broader literature on ethical regulation, notably in the US but also in other countries:

American Anthropological Association Statement on 'Ethnography and Institutional Review Boards' <http://www.aaanet.org/stmts/irb.htm>

Anthony, R. 'Consistency of ethics review', *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 6, 1, Art.5 January 2005 <http://www.qualitative-research.net/fqs>

Boser, S. (2007) 'Power, ethics, and the IRB: Dissonance over human participant review of participatory research', *Qualitative Inquiry*, 13, 8, pp1060-74.

Cannella, G. S. 'Regulatory power: can a feminist poststructuralist engage in research oversight?', *Qualitative Inquiry*, 10, 2004, pp235-45.

Casey, C. (2001) 'Ethics Committees, Institutions and Organizations: Subjectivity, Consent and Risk', in M. Tolich (Ed.). *Research Ethics in Aotearoa/New Zealand*. Auckland: Longman, pp. 127-40.

Connolly, K. and Reid, A. (2007) 'Ethics review for qualitative inquiry: adopting a values-based, facilitative approach', *Qualitative Inquiry*, 13, 7, pp1031-47.

Coomber, R. (2002) 'Signing your life away? Why Research Ethics Committees (REC) shouldn't always require written confirmation that participants in research have been informed of the aims of a study and their rights – the case of criminal populations', *Sociological Research Online* 7, 1. Available at: [www.socresonline.org.uk/7/1/coomber.html](http://www.socresonline.org.uk/7/1/coomber.html)

Cribb, R. (2004) 'Ethical regulation and humanities research in Australia: Problems and consequences', *Monash Bioethics Review*, 23, 3, pp39-57.

Derbyshire, S. (2008) 'The Ethical Dilemma of Ethical Committees', *Sociology Compass* 2, 5, pp1506-22.

Fallon, D. and Long, T. (2007) 'Ethics Approval, Ethical Research and Delusions of Efficacy', in T. Long and M. Johnson (Eds). *Research Ethics in the Real World: Issues and Solutions for Health and Social Care*. London: Elsevier, pp.139-156.

Haggerty, K. (2004) 'Ethics Creep: Governing Social Science Research in the Name of Ethics', *Qualitative Sociology* 27, pp391-414.

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*Education*, 6, 3, pp239-251.

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Hurdley, R. (2010) 'In the Picture or Off the Wall? Ethical Regulation, Research Habitus, and Unpeopled Ethnography', *Qualitative Inquiry*, 16, 6, pp517–528

Johnson, R. S. (2008) 'Qualitative research in question: a narrative of disciplinary power with/in the IRB', *Qualitative Inquiry*, 14, 2, pp212-32.

Koro-Ljungberg, M., Gemignani, M., Brodeur, C. W., and Kmiec, C. (2007) 'The technologies of normalization and self: thinking about IRBs and extrinsic research ethics with Foucault', *Qualitative Inquiry*, 13, 8, pp1075-94.

Ladd, J. (1991) 'The Quest for a Code of Professional Ethics: An Intellectual and Moral Confusion', in Johnson, D. (ed.) *Ethical Issues in Engineering*, New Jersey, Prentice Hall.

Lincoln, Y. S. 'Institutional review boards and methodological conservatism: the challenge to and from phenomenological paradigms', in N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln (eds.) *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Third Edition, Thousand Oaks CA, Sage, 2005.

Lincoln, Y. S. and Tierney, W. G. 'Qualitative research and institutional review boards', *Qualitative Inquiry*, 10, 2, 2004, pp219-34.

Lomas Scott, C. and Fonseca, L. (2010) 'Overstepping the mark: ethics procedures, risky research and education researchers', *International Journal of Research & Method in Education*, 33, 3, pp287–300.

Milne, C. (2005) 'Overseeing research: ethics and the institutional review board', *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, Vol. 6, No. 1, Art. 41 <http://www.qualitative-research.net/fqs> (Accessed February 2006)

Nelson, C. 'The brave new world of research surveillance', *Qualitative Inquiry*, 10, 2004, pp207-18.

Oakes, J. M. (2002) 'Risks and wrongs in social science research: an evaluator's guide to the IRB', *Evaluation Review*, 26, 5, 443-79.

O'Brien, R. (2006) 'The Institutional Review Board Problem: Where it came from and what to do about it', *Journal of Social Distress and the Homeless*, XV, 1, pp23-46.



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