

## Research Ethics in the Social Sciences

*Course description, Ph.D. course at the department of Informatics and Media, Spring 2022*  
*Annika Waern*

This course covers topics related to research ethics in the social sciences, with a strong focus on ethics in qualitative empirics. It corresponds to 7.5 HP (Bologna model) at Ph.D. level.

The course consists of literature seminars and practical exercises. The practical parts include invited lectures, fictive ethical reviews of publications, and planning your own data collection / ethical application. Please note that Ph.D. students must get approval from their Ph.D. examiner to attend the course.

### Goals

The course covers theoretical and practical aspects on ethics in empirical research, broadly related to the Social Sciences. After the course, students are expected to

- Be able to reason critically about the legal, philosophical and constitutional grounding of research ethics.
- Be able to make nuanced judgements concerning risk, privacy, and informed consent for a wide range of empirical approaches within the social sciences.
- Be able to plan a research intervention or data collection, making nuanced judgements about research ethics.
- Be able to write a high-quality ethical application.
- Be versed in Uppsala university institutions and Swedish formal procedures ensuring ethical conduct in research.

### Examination

To pass the course, students must individually

- Participate in most seminars. Students that miss more than one seminar will be required to do complementary assignments.
- Present some of the literature for each seminar and participate actively in seminar discussions.
- Hand in documentation of a research intervention or data collection which details the ethical considerations made in its planning. This can be (part of) an ethical application, or a research plan.

## Schedule

All seminars are held over Zoom. The times below are indicative: some seminars may not need all the time but book it in your calendars.

Date and Time	Seminar	Deadlines
Jan 11, 13-16	Conventions and Codes of Conduct.	
Jan 24, 13-16	Ethnography.	<b>Note that this is a Monday!!!</b>
Feb 1, 13-16	Participation, positionality and power.	<b>Deadline:</b> Bring a paper to discuss
Feb 15, 13-16	Conflict zones and repressive regimes.	
Mar 1, 13-16	Sensitive research.	
Mar 15, 13-16	Online research.	
Mar 29, 13-16	GDPR.	
April 12, 13-16	Swedish regulations and institutions.	
April 19		<b>Deadline:</b> Draft an invitation to study and a consent form/process
April 26, 13- 17	Participation and Intervention.	
May 10, 13-16	The Ethics of Ethical Reviews.	
May 16 <sup>th</sup>		<b>Deadline:</b> Documentation of research intervention or study.
May 23 <sup>rd</sup> and May 24 <sup>th</sup> , 12-17	Final seminars	

## Literature List

### ***Jan 11<sup>th</sup>: Conventions and Codes of Conduct.***

APA Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct

ASA Code of ethics, sections 11, 12, 13

The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity

The Nuremberg Code

<https://mp.uu.se/en/web/info/forska/etiskafragor>

### ***Jan 24<sup>th</sup>: (A MONDAY!) Ethnography.***

**Guest:** Stefan Eriksson, Rector counsellor in research ethics

Lofland E.A. (1971). Analyzing social settings, Chap 3, 4, 5

Mara, A. F., Potts, L., & Bartocci, G. (2013, September). The ethics of agile ethnography. In Proceedings of the 31st ACM international conference on Design of communication (pp. 101-106).

Murphy, Elizabeth, and Robert Dingwall. The ethics of ethnography. *Handbook of ethnography* (2001): 339-351.

Murphy, E., & Dingwall, R. (2007). Informed consent, anticipatory regulation and ethnographic practice. *Social science & medicine*, 65(11), 2223-2234.

**Feb 1<sup>st</sup>: Positionality and Power.**

**Practical exercise:** Do fictive ethical reviews of selected publications. Why are they ethical/not ethical?

Spicker, P. (2011). Ethical covert research. *Sociology*, 45(1), 118-133.

Henry, M., Higate, P., & Sanghera, G. (2009). Positionality and power: The politics of peacekeeping research. *International Peacekeeping*, 16(4), 467-482.

Sukarieh, M., & Tannock, S. (2019). Subcontracting academia: alienation, exploitation and disillusionment in the UK overseas Syrian refugee research industry. *Antipode*, 51(2), 664-680.

Clark, T. (2008). 'We're Over-Researched Here!' Exploring Accounts of Research Fatigue within Qualitative Research Engagements. *Sociology*, 42(5), 953-970.

**Feb. 15<sup>th</sup>: Research in Conflict Zones and Repressive Regimes.**

**Guest:** Kristine Höglund, professor in Peace and Conflict Research

Cronin-Furman, K., & Lake, M. (2018). Ethics abroad: Fieldwork in fragile and violent contexts. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 51(3), 607-614.

Van Baalen, Sebastian. "'Google wants to know your location': The ethical challenges of fieldwork in the digital age." *Research Ethics* 14.4 (2018): 1-17.

Fujii, Lee Ann. 2012. "Research Ethics 101: Dilemmas and responsibilities." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 45(4): 717-723. Available online.

Van Damme, 2019. "When Overt Research Feels Covert: Researching Women and Gangs in a Context of Silence and Fear." *Journal of Extreme Anthropology*, 2019, 3(1): 121-134.

Loyle, C. E., & Simoni, A. (2017). Researching under fire: Political science and researcher trauma. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 50(1), 141-145.

**Mar 1<sup>st</sup>: Sensitive research.**

**Guest:** Amanda Lagerqvist, Professor in Media and Communication Sciences. An existential ethics of care: slowness, silence and waiting

James, E. L., Kippen, S., & Liamputtong, P. (2007). Doing sensitive research: what challenges do qualitative researchers face? *Qualitative research*, 7(3), 327-353.

Puig De La Bellacasa, M. (2015). Making time for soil: Technoscientific futurity and the pace of care. *Social studies of science*, 45(5), 691-716.

Ess C (2020) Interpretative pros hen pluralism: from computer-mediated colonization to a pluralistic intercultural digital ethics. *Philosophy and Technology*, July 2020. [Interpretative Pros Hen Pluralism: from Computer-Mediated Colonization to a Pluralistic Intercultural Digital Ethics](#)

Lagerkvist et al (under review) Body Stakes: A Manifesto for an Existential Ethics of Care in Living with Biometrics and AI, *AI&Society*.

**Mar 15<sup>th</sup>: Online research**

**Practical exercise:** Ethical applications, go through format and read example applications

- <https://www.forskningsetikk.no/en/guidelines/social-sciences-humanities-law-and-theology/a-guide-to-internet-research-ethics/>

Franzke, A. S., Bechmann, A., Zimmer, M., & Ess, C. (2020). Internet research: Ethical guidelines 3.0. Association of Internet Researchers.

Driscoll, C., & Gregg, M. (2010). My profile: The ethics of virtual ethnography. *Emotion, Space and Society*, 3(1), 15-20.

Kadushin, C. Who benefits from network analysis: ethics of social network research. *Social Networks* 27, 2 (2005), 139–153.

Matz, S. C., Appel, R. E., & Kosinski, M. (2020). Privacy in the age of psychological targeting. *Current opinion in psychology*, 31, 116-121.

Markham, A. Fabrication as ethical practice: Qualitative inquiry in ambiguous internet contexts. *Information, Communication, and Society*, 5(3) (2012), 334-353.

**Mar 29<sup>th</sup>: GDPR.**

**Guest:** Christer Lagvik, Uppsala University Library, Department of scientific communication

- <https://mp.uu.se/en/web/info/stod/dataskyddsförordningen>
- <https://www.uu.se/en/about-uu/data-protection-policy/>

Bourgeois, J., Kortuem, G., & Kawsar, F. (2018, October). Trusted and GDPR-compliant research with the Internet of things. In *Proceedings of the 8<sup>th</sup> International Conference on the Internet of Things* (pp. 1-8).

Mourby, M., Mackey, E., Elliot, M., Gowans, H., Wallace, S. E., Bell, J., ... & Kaye, J. (2018). Are 'pseudonymised' data always personal data? Implications of the GDPR for administrative data research in the UK. *Computer Law & Security Review*, 34(2), 222-233.

Dilger, H., Pels, P., & Sleeboom-Faulkner, M. (2019). Guidelines for data management and scientific integrity in ethnography. *Ethnography*, 20(1), 3-7.

**April 12<sup>th</sup>: Swedish regulations and institutions.**

**Guest:** Johan Modin, Head of Etikprövningsmyndigheten

- [https://www.riksdagen.se/sv/dokument-lagar/dokument/svensk-forfattningssamling/lag-2019504-om-ansvar-for-god-forskningssed\\_sfs-2019-504](https://www.riksdagen.se/sv/dokument-lagar/dokument/svensk-forfattningssamling/lag-2019504-om-ansvar-for-god-forskningssed_sfs-2019-504)
- [https://www.riksdagen.se/sv/dokument-lagar/dokument/svensk-forfattningssamling/lag-2003460-om-etikprovning-av-forskning-som\\_sfs-2003-460](https://www.riksdagen.se/sv/dokument-lagar/dokument/svensk-forfattningssamling/lag-2003460-om-etikprovning-av-forskning-som_sfs-2003-460)
- <https://oredlighetsprovning.se/>
- <https://codex.uu.se/>

**April 26<sup>th</sup>: Participation and Intervention.**

**Practical exercise:** Invitation to study and consent form/process.

- Glanz, K., Rimer, B. K., & Lerman, C. (1996). Ethical issues in the design and conduct of community-based intervention studies. *Ethics and epidemiology*, 156-173.
- Downey, A. (2009). An ethics of engagement: Collaborative art practices and the return of the ethnographer. *Third Text*, 23(5), 593-603.
- Ymous, A., Spiel, K., Keyes, O., Williams, R. M., Good, J., Hornecker, E., & Bennett, C. L. (2020, April). " I am just terrified of my future"—Epistemic Violence in Disability Related Technology Research. In *Extended Abstracts of the 2020 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (pp. 1-16).
- Björgvinsson, E., Ehn, P., & Hillgren, P. A. (2010). Participatory design and "democratizing innovation". In *Proceedings of the 11th Biennial participatory design conference* (pp. 41-50).
- Waern, A. (2016). The ethics of unaware participation in public interventions. In *proceedings of the 2016 CHI conference on human factors in computing systems* (pp. 803-814).

***May 10th: The Ethics of Ethical Reviews.***

**Guest:** Åsa Cajander, Professor in Human – Computer Interaction at the department of Information Technologies and Rector counsellor in equal opportunities.

- Atkinson, P. (2009). Ethics and ethnography. *Twenty-First Century Society*, 4(1), 17-30.
- Haggerty, K. D. (2004). Ethics creep: Governing social science research in the name of ethics. *Qualitative sociology*, 27(4), 391-414.
- Michelson, M. R. (2016). The risk of over-reliance on the institutional review board: An approved project is not always an ethical project. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 49(2), 299-303.
- Dingwall, R. (2008). The ethical case against ethical regulation in humanities and social science research. *Twenty-First Century Society*, 3(1), 1-12.

## Complementary readings

This course covers ethical considerations over a wide variety of research fields and methodologies. Hence, the readings are somewhat restricted. If you want to go deeper in a particular issue, here are some pointers for further reading.

- Beaulieu, A. and Estallea, A. Rethinking research ethics for mediated settings. *Information, Communication and Society*, 15(1) (2012), 23-42.
- Brown, B., Weilenmann, A., McMillan, D., & Lampinen, A. (2016, May). Five provocations for ethical HCI research. In *Proceedings of the 2016 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (pp. 852-863).
- Buchanan, E., & Ess, C. Internet research ethics and the Institutional Review Board: Current practices and issues. *Computers and Society* 39 (2009), 43-49.
- Bouka, Y. (2018). Collaborative research as structural violence. *Political violence at a glance*, 12.
- Dempsey, L., Dowling, M., Larkin, P., & Murphy, K. (2016). Sensitive interviewing in qualitative research. *Research in nursing & health*, 39(6), 480-490.
- Dickson-Swift, V., James, E. L., & Liamputtong, P. (2008). Undertaking sensitive research in the health and social sciences: Managing boundaries, emotions and risks.
- Downey, A. (2007). Towards a politics of (relational) aesthetics. *Third Text*, 21(3), 267-275
- Ehn, P. (2017). Scandinavian design: On participation and skill. In *Participatory design* (pp. 41-77). CRC Press.
- Ess, C. (2017). Grounding internet research ethics 3.0: A view from (the) AoIR. *Internet research ethics for the social age*.
- Hair, N., & Clark, M. (2007). The ethical dilemmas and challenges of ethnographic research in electronic communities. *International Journal of Market Research*, 49(6), 1-13.
- Iachello, G., & Abowd, G. D. (2005). Privacy and proportionality: adapting legal evaluation techniques to inform design in ubiquitous computing. In *Proceedings of the SIGCHI conference on Human factors in computing systems* (pp. 91-100).
- Jeff T. Hancock. 2015. The Facebook Study: A Personal Account of Data Science, Ethics and Change. In *Proceedings of the 18th ACM Conference on Computer Supported Cooperative Work & Social Computing (CSCW '15)*. Association for Computing Machinery, New York, NY, USA, 1. DOI:<https://doi.org/10.1145/2675133.2697078>
- Hjorth, L., & Sharp, K. (2014). The art of ethnography: the aesthetics or ethics of participation?. *Visual Studies*, 29(2), 128-135.
- Hudson, J.M. and Bruckman, A. "Go Away": Participant Objections to Being Studied and the Ethics of Chatroom Research. *The Information Society* 20, 2 (2004), 127-139.
- Hydén, M. (2014). The teller-focused interview: Interviewing as a relational practice. *Qualitative social work*, 13(6), 795-812.
- Kraut, R., Olson, J., Banaji, M., Bruckman, A., Cohen, J., & Couper, M. (2004). Psychological research online: report of Board of Scientific Affairs' Advisory Group on the Conduct of Research on the Internet. *American psychologist*, 59(2), 105.

- Markham, A., & Buchanan, E. (2012). Ethical decision-making and internet research: Version 2.0. recommendations from the AoIR ethics working committee. Available online: [aoir.org/reports/ethics2.pdf](http://aoir.org/reports/ethics2.pdf).
- Mackenzie, C., McDowell, C., & Pittaway, E. (2007). Beyond 'do no harm': The challenge of constructing ethical relationships in refugee research. *Journal of Refugee studies*, 20(2), 299-319.
- McCosker, H., Barnard, A., & Gerber, R. (2001, February). Undertaking sensitive research: Issues and strategies for meeting the safety needs of all participants. In *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung/Forum: Qualitative Social Research* (Vol. 2, No. 1).
- Özkula, S. M. (2020). The issue of "context": Data, culture, and commercial context in social media ethics. *Journal of Empirical Research on Human Research Ethics*, 15(1-2), 77-86.
- Pormeister, K. (2017). Genetic data and the research exemption: is the GDPR going too far? *International Data Privacy Law*.
- Sieber, J. E., & Stanley, B. (1988). Ethical and professional dimensions of socially sensitive research. *American psychologist*, 43(1), 49.
- Yuill, C. (2018). 'Is Anthropology Legal?': Anthropology and the EU General Data Protection Regulation. *Anthropology in Action*, 25(2), 36-41.
- McMillan, D., Morrison, A., & Chalmers, M. (2013, April). Categorized ethical guidelines for large scale mobile HCI. In *Proceedings of the SIGCHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (pp. 1853-1862).
- Rudder, C. We Experiment On Human Beings! OkTrends: Dating research from OKCupid, (2014). <http://blog.okcupid.com/index.php/we-experiment-on-human-beings/>
- Sveningsson, M. (2004). Ethics in Internet ethnography. In *Readings in virtual research ethics: Issues and controversies* (pp. 45-61). IGI Global. <https://www.igi-global.com/chapter/ethics-internet-ethnography/28292>
- Thompson, A., Stringfellow, L., Maclean, M., & Nazzal, A. (2021). Ethical considerations and challenges for using digital ethnography to research vulnerable populations. *Journal of Business Research*, 124, 676-683.
- Bassett E, O'Riordan K. Internet research ethics. Ethics of Internet research: contesting the human subjects research model. [http://www.nyu.edu/projects/nissenbaum/ethics\\_bas\\_full](http://www.nyu.edu/projects/nissenbaum/ethics_bas_full)
- Zimmer, M. (2010). "But the data is already public": on the ethics of research in Facebook. *Ethics and information technology*, 12(4), 313-325.