

Research Ethics

Soc 357

Fall 2006



Goals for Today

- Introduce Ethics in Research issues
- Acquire a more in-depth understanding of ethical principles through dialogue & debate about cases
 - Meet people in the class

Ethics

The study of moral and responsible behavior

Three areas to think about

- Data collection & analysis
- Dissemination of findings
- Treatment of participants

1. Data Collection & Analysis

- Principle: honesty, full disclosure
- Why?
 - Underlying principle of science
 - Costs to community
 - E.g. Burt Twin studies, Ruggiero case
- Actions: Self-monitoring, peer-review

Ethical Considerations for Soc 357

Data Collection

- **Honesty:** All projects graded on basis of acknowledging “what you should have done” not what you did do.
- **Protection of students:** Do not do anything that makes you uncomfortable, or will get you in trouble
- **IRB:** Projects for class assignments do not need IRB approval, but undergraduate thesis research DOES need IRB approval
- **Controversial topics:** I will be in dialogue with the Chair of our dept.

2. Dissemination of Findings

- **Principles:** Balancing scientific honesty and justice
- **Why?** Findings used to harm groups, advance political agendas
- **Actions:** Debate, self-monitoring

3. Treatment of Subjects: Ethical Principles and Standards

- From *The Belmont Report* (1979):
 - Respect for persons
 - Beneficence
 - Justice
- Privacy and Information security
 - Informed consent
 - Anonymity vs. confidentiality

3. Treatment of Subjects – History & Actions

- History of harmful experiments
 - Eg. Tuskegee Syphilis Study,
 - Zimbardo Prison Study
 - Milgram Experiments
- Actions: Institutional Review Board oversight

Debates: Deception & Debriefing

- Different levels of deception:
 1. *informed consent to participate in one of various conditions*
 2. *consent to deception*
 3. *consent to waive the right to be informed*
 4. *consent and false informing*
 5. *no informing and no consent*
- Whether & how to debrief
 - E.g. Helping experiments

Instructions for group activity

- Get into groups of 4
- Introduce yourselves!
- Go through questions for each case
 - Don't be afraid of disagreement: the goal is to understand that there are **debates** about these issues
- Prepare to report back to larger group