



Admin Overview Politics Ethics Rules Rule 6 Summary

Project Progress

- ◆ Only 11 of 46 have met w/ me
 - Apple, Chavie, dogmom, GhostFry, Haro, Lion83, sunflower7, Watergate, 012stitch, 333, and 90259 (Email me if we met and you aren't listed there!!)
 - And some of those need work (range .3-1; mean=.81)
- ◆ Everyone else should get on the ball ASAP
 - You're drafting survey questions (Lab 11) in 12 days
 - You're announcing your plan *to the class* in 21 days

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SOC497/L: SOCIOLOGY RESEARCH METHODS

Uses, Politics, Ethics:

External Constraints on Research

Ellis Godard

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Outline for Today

- ◆ Overview: Research Constraints
- ◆ Politics of Research
- ◆ Ethics of Research
 - "Rules": Problems & "Solutions"
- ◆ Summary (inc. Project)
- ◆ Optional Extra Credit Lab Exercise

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Favorite Pirate

1. Blackbeard 11%
2. Johnny Depp 86%
3. Steve Jobs 3%
4. Artem Vaulin 0%
5. Jameson Taillon 0%

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Q1: How often do you make inquiries, according to Babbie?

1. Every day 98%
2. At least once a week 0%
3. Monthly 3%
4. When you get married 0%
5. Never 0%

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Overview of Chapter 3

Was 19 (summary), 13 (internal), 9, now 3 (?)

- ◆ Analogues to science all the time in everyday life
 - Try to make sense of reality
- ◆ Similar problems, too
 - ignore evidence, casual/anecdotal, etc.
- ◆ Science tries to reduce probs thru procedures
 - study design, sampling, measurement, data collection
 - But range of choices, and variety of choices
 - Usually up to individual researcher, w/i parameters

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Political Problems

- ◆ Big "Politics" – checkered past
 - Race
 - ◆ William Graham Sumner: Social Darwinist? > "Separate but equal"
 - ◆ 1944 Gunnar Myrdal's study > Brown vs. Board of Education
 - ◆ 1996 "The Bell Curve": Funding / Political motivation
 - Project Camelot
 - ◆ Used research for counterinsurgency in Chile
 - ◆ Suppressed civil war & strengthened dictatorial regime
 - Behavioral science post 9/11 – fuzzy?
- ◆ Small "politics" – social process
 - Getting grants & positions
 - Making clients happy
- ◆ Objectivity and ideology – sociological problem?

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Q2. For what does Babbie provide guidelines?

1. Politics
5%
2. politics
0%
- ✓ 3. Ethics
95%
4. Gambling
0%
5. None of the above
0%

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"Solving" Political Problems

- ◆ No formal codes for politics
 - Key = don't let your orientation interfere
 - Weber: "value-free sociology"
- ◆ But role may not be clear, or beneficial-
 - Project Camelot?
- ◆ Arguably should *not* separate research & action
 - Marx's idea of "praxis" – should not because *cannot*
 - Social research role in politics of race relations for > 100 years
 - Many contexts, e.g. as an expert witness
- ◆ But ultimately, value-free empiricism is the goal
 - Weber is right about *science*:
 - ◆ methods themselves are largely neutral
 - Marx definitely right about *scientists*:
 - ◆ *scientists* are not neutral, at least not always or completely

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Four Research Constraints

- ◆ Scientific
 - = most of the semester - choices & limits
 - logic of soc. Sci. may suggest problematic routines & procedures
 - ◆ E.g. something too exploratory for large-scale surveys
- ◆ Administrative
 - have suggested various things that guide choice: research topic, availability of staff, facilities, time, money, sampling frame, characteristics of sample, etc.
- ◆ Ethics – deals w/ methods
- ◆ Politics – deals w/ substance & use... } Babbie, Chapter 3

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Q3. A professional guide to appropriate conduct is called a...

1. Code of Conduct
2%
- 😊 2. Code of Ethics
95%
3. Code of Politics
2%
4. Disciplinary Code
0%
5. Codename
0%

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What are "Ethics"?

- ◆ Defining characteristic of professions
 - Develop codes of ethics
 - Institutionalized in training, practices, law
- ◆ Guides to...
 - Goodness: acceptable goal
 - Rightness: acceptable path
 - Oughtness: moral compulsion

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Sources of Ethical "Given"s

- ◆ Nuremberg Code of 1946 (from trial, vs. Mengeles)
 - voluntary consent
 - avoid all necessary physical, mental suffering
 - fruitful results for good of society, unprocurable by other means
- ◆ Declaration of Helsinki 1964 (a.k.a. Helsinki Accord)
 - Responsibility
 - no secret research (difficult in politics or business)
- ◆ Professional codes of ethics add
 - honest about limitations
 - full disclosure of funding

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Rule 1: Know Local Ethics

- ◆ Must know who you're studying (ironic?)
- ◆ Inc. those of the scientific community
- ◆ May also include indigenous ideas

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Deceptive Requests: G2

Get rewarded!
Review anything in here
& get a \$10 Amazon gift
card!

Check the Bell

ellsgodard@gmail.com 1- 8/17/2023
RE: \$10 for you!

Liars. I did one for \$25 and got nothing.
I've taught survey methods for 25 years, and you're
the kind of outfit I warn about, misleading
respondents with overstated incentives and making
it harder for others to get legit survey work done.
You suck.

From: John @ G2 <outreach@hello.g2.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 17, 2023 6:12 AM
To: ellsgodard@gmail.com
Subject: \$10 for you!

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Rule 2: Must Be Voluntary

& withdrawal must remain an option, for all subjects

- social research nearly always intrusive
 - but no one should be forced to participate
- should be informed volunteers
 - principal of "informed consent"
- Works against generalizability
 - Theoretically: need 100%
 - Practically: need substantial majority
- sometimes can't
 - e.g. b/c can't acknowledge research being done

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Rule 3 (Don't Lie) cont'd

- sometimes cant, e.g. for lengthy questionnaire
 - do if justified by compelling sci. or admin. concerns
 - May need a debriefing afterwards -
 - may not be able to say purpose of study b4 observation
 - but no reason that can't tell them afterwards
- one cost of deception = credibility
 - Survey enterprise is tarnished
 - Validity of future data gathering may be harmed

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Rule 3: Don't Deceive Subjects

- Should inform respondents about...
 - who doing research, and for whom
 - purpose of the study
 - guarantees of confidentiality and anonymity
 - NOT the same! CAN'T have both! Don't confuse them!
 - assurance that can skip any questions
- Must keep promises
 - esp with Dillman's "total design methods"
 - if promise to send results, or to report results to policymakers, must do that
 - Don't want to say IV takes 10 min if takes 45 min

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Rule 4: Never Harm or Injure

- Avoid any risk wherever possible
- Inc. revealing info about, or threatening their interests or well-being
 - Even if confidential, may feel uncomfortable w/ some Qs
 - May have deep personal probs long after research completed
 - Prevent (or deter complaints) w/ informed consent
 - present w/ details about project, & statement to sign
- Can also be harmed by analysis and reporting -
 - E.g. sophisticated subjects can find themselves in tables & see how they were characterized, even if not by name

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Q4. Confidentiality means...

1. We don't know who said what
0%
2. The same as anonymity
0%
3. Respondents don't give their names
0%
4. Identifying info is kept secret
100%
5. A lawyer is involved
0%

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Rule 6: Methodological Obligations

- ◆ Avoid arcane methods other (inc clients) won't understand
- ◆ Use appropriate methods and not exploit the client
 - eg larger N for \$, smaller N w/o approp confidence
- ◆ Try to be objective – don't tailor methods to conclusions
 - great risk of findings what you're looking for
 - eg mail surveys get fewer low class/status respondents; shouldn't use for community input on building a new golf course
 - Want to at least be free of gross bias (= ethical, not just scientific)
- ◆ Interpret data appropriately
- ◆ Accurately communicate limitations of the method
- ◆ NO PRESSURE for any particular results (e.g. sig relationship)
 - Important for this class!
 - but you are bound to convey reality of your study
 - eg cant just pick which IV "works" – should report ALL that looked at

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Possible Solutions to Rule 4

- External Forces
 - Code of Ethics
 - Federal support requires IRB
 - Universities - HSC/HSR
- Data Limitations
 - Anonymity – no record of who studied
 - Confidentiality – ID known, but concealed
 - No "privileged communication" for social research
 - File Destruction

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General Guidelines

- ◆ **Keep info:** label, date, document, and backup all files – eg logs, forms, diary/journal
 - syntax file good bc harder to keep coherent record of errors w/ point and click - cant correct error if cant id source
 - save all outputs, notes, etc - required for fed grants for min of five years!
- ◆ **Plan to make errors** - inherent in the process; learn to ID tasks that routinely result in errors
 - allow time for correction
 - plan for detection - eg sumchecks in spreadsheet; rblty checks in coding
- ◆ **Replicate crucial steps** - could inc validation by other workers on the same project, eg swap CA samples
 - potential for error increases as # of workers increases, so should increase checks too

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Rule 5: Know Your Work

- ◆ Researcher should know his project best and present accurately and completely
 - IVERs themselves must have info they need
 - must be trained to answer Qs, inc about confidentiality
 - but the main researcher has broader obligations:
 - must be more familiar w/ any shortcomings and failures in the study that anyone else, & must report those
 - negative findings should be reported if relevant
 - may be even be *more* interesting or imp, esp if old topic
 - dont save face by fabricating hypotheses to fit your results

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Code of Ethics

- ◆ Typical requirements
 - Responsibility (esp. re Rule 6)
 - Honest about limitations
 - No secret research
 - difficult outside academia, eg polit or business)
 - Full disclosure of funding
- ◆ Most professions have one
 - Describe what's acceptable/unacceptable
 - Babbie includes AAPOR's (c. p. 446)
 - One reason doesnt print ASA's is because it's 24pp long
 - Don't resolve issues, but they at least raise them
- ◆ Sometimes, associations violate their own
 - ASA resolutions on Iraq War, gay marriage, *et al.*

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ASA Code of Ethics, section on Representation & Misuse of Expertise (9.01.3)

- ◆ (a) In research, teaching, practice, service, or other situations where sociologists render professional judgments or present their expertise, they accurately and fairly represent their **areas and degrees of expertise**.
- ◆ (b) Sociologists do not accept grants, contracts, consultation, or work assignments from individual or organizational clients or sponsors that appear likely to require violation of the standards in this Code of Ethics. Sociologists **dissociate themselves from such activities** when they discover a violation and are unable to achieve its correction.
- ◆ (c) Because sociologists' scientific and professional judgments and actions may affect the lives of others, they are **alert to and guard against personal, financial, social, organizational, or political factors** that might lead to misuse of their knowledge, expertise, or influence.
- ◆ (d) If sociologists learn of misuse or misrepresentation of their work, they take reasonable steps to correct or minimize the misuse or misrepresentation.

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Extra Credit Ethics Lab...

- ◆ Adds (not replaces), secretaries, due @ end of lab, etc.
- ◆ Visit the Code of Ethics of the American Sociological Association (<http://www.asanet.org/members/ecoderev.html> ?)
- ◆ Handout on Moodle – generally goes like this:
 - Cite language that addresses harms Babbie mentions:
 - Voluntary participation
 - No harm to subjects
 - Anonymity and confidentiality
 - Researcher's identity
 - Analysis and reporting
 - Summarize the code's content about politics of research
 - Identify three other topics addressed in the code
 - Submit your answers w/ the names of group members

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Summary of Research Ethics

- ◆ Voluntary participation
 - If you observe drinking at a party as part of your homework, you did not have permission from those you observed
- ◆ Do no harm
 - Some research may cause participants to question things as a result of your research, such as religious beliefs.
- ◆ Confidentiality (vs. anonymity)

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Q5. How many rules are there?

Number of Rules	Percentage
1	2%
2	2%
3	88%
4	5%
5	2%
6	0%
8	0%
10	0%

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Key Issues related to Project

- ◆ No Formal Oversight
 - Professional Codes, but no IRB/HSC
- ◆ Voluntary participation
 - Implied consent
- ◆ No harm to subjects
 - Nothing Traumatic
 - Anonymity vs. Confidentiality
- ◆ No deception of subjects
 - Debriefing
- ◆ Professional Analysis & Reporting

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Team Scores

Points	Team	Points	Team
5	Blackbeard		
5	Steve Jobs		
4.83	Johnny Depp		

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