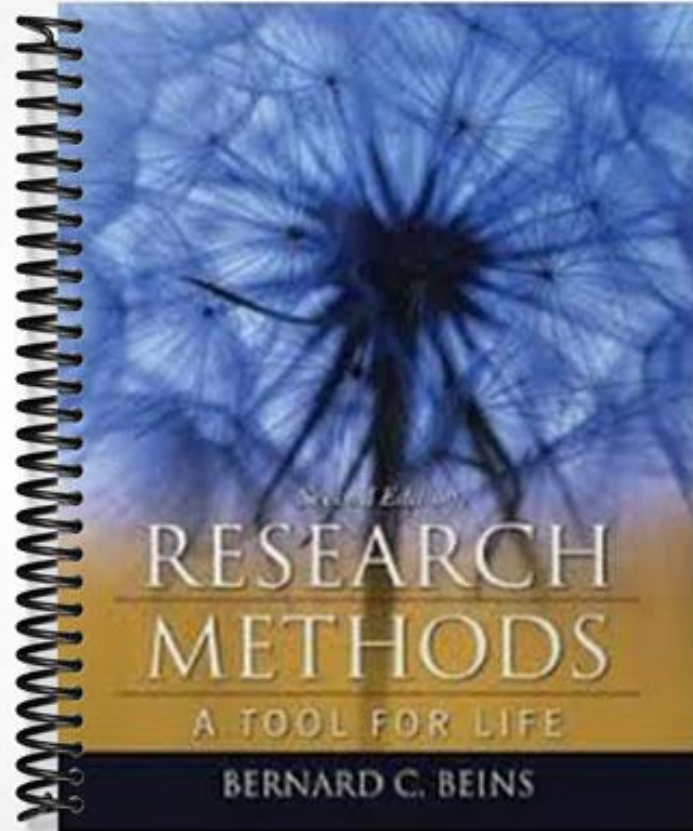


**TEST BANK**



## Chapter 2

### ETHICS IN RESEARCH: FOLLOWING THE GOLDEN RULE

- Chapter Outline
- Chapter Overview
- Concept Map
- Key Terms
- Chapter Preview
- Unethical Research Practices—Past and Present
  - Ethical Problems in the Early Years of the Twentieth Century
  - Ethical Questions in Corporate Research
- Ethical Guidelines Created by the American Psychological Association
  - Aspirational Goals and Enforceable Rules
  - Ethical Standards as They Affect You
- Legal Requirements and Ethics in Research
  - Institutional Review Boards
- The Importance of Social Context in Deciding on Ethics in Research
  - Stanley Milgram’s Research Project on Obedience
  - The Ethical Issues
  - The Social Context
- What You Need to Do If Your Research Involves Deception
  - Some Research Requires Deception
  - The Effects of Debriefing on Research
- CONTROVERSY: On Deception
- Ethical Issues in Special Circumstances
  - Ethics and Internet Research
  - Ethics and Survey Research
  - Ethics and Research with Animals
- Summary
- Review Questions
- Answers to Review Questions

### CHAPTER OVERVIEW

The vast majority of psychological research is well within the boundaries of ethical behavior. Still, we have to maintain vigilance that researchers’ eagerness about their projects does not lead them toward unethical behavior. Several renowned programs of research that violated ethical principles have taken place. As a result of such practices, state, national, and international laws have been enacted for the protection of participants in scientific research. In addition, the American Psychological Association has developed an extensive set of ethical principles that includes statements about the conduct of research. The principles are well developed now, although with new forms of research, such as that on conducted through the internet, the principles continue to evolve.

## **Activity 2.1**

### **Ethics in Observational Research**

**Concept:** The research depicted here strikes most people as unseemly. However, that is not the basis on which we decide on the ethics of research. The question in an ethical consideration is whether the research poses physical or psychological risks to the participants.

The discussion based on the research by Humphreys should focus around questions of invasion of privacy and deception. In addition, it is important to remember that the research took place in the late 1960s, when people might have been arrested for engaging in the behaviors that Humphreys observed; as such, there was potential physical risk to participants if information about their behaviors became public.

**Materials needed:** The description of the research by Humphreys (below).

**Instructions:** Ask students to read the passage below (*The Tearoom Trade*) and to identify the ethical issues associated with the project. Initially, the students should list the elements of the research that are troublesome. Then, in the subsequent discussion, the class can discuss whether the issues are so ethically troublesome that the research should not have been done. Ultimately, the discussion revolves around the cost-benefit analysis: what are the potential risks (costs) and what good comes from the research (benefit).

**Discussion:** Although this research is ethically troublesome, it is possible to produce viable counterarguments to virtually any argument about ethical issues. It can be a useful exercise for students to provide arguments as to why each potential ethical problem is troublesome, but also why it might not be. Students don't have to accept the arguments in their own judgments, but they should be aware that their own viewpoints are not the only valid ones.

Do the costs exceed the benefits? Analysis of responses to the interview revealed that "when the characteristics of the participants were compared with those of typical males from the same urban area, no striking differences in terms of occupations, marital status, socioeconomic characteristics, and the like were found. Aside from their participation in clandestine homosexual activity, there was little to distinguish these men from typical adult males" (Reynolds, 1982, p. 68).

Students typically mention issues of invasion of privacy at the public park

#### **References**

Humphreys, L. (1970). *Tearoom Trade: Impersonal Sex in Public Places*. Chicago: Aldine.  
Reynolds, P. D. (1982). *Ethics and Social Science Research*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

**Handout 2.1**  
**Ethical Issues and Examples**

<b>Ethical Issue</b>	<b>Possible student arguments supporting the contention that there are ethical problems.</b>	<b>Possible student arguments against the contention that there are ethical problems.</b>
Invasion of privacy in the park	The men were engaging in sexual activity, a private act.	The men were engaging in sexual activity with anybody who showed up, implying that they really didn't have expectations of privacy.
Invasion of privacy in the home interview	The researcher was getting information under false pretenses.	The researcher was getting the information he said he was after; the participant didn't have to agree to answer any questions.
Deception in the park	The researcher claimed to be a lookout, but observed the sexual behavior.	The researcher did serve as a lookout and was actually arrested a few times in his role as lookout.
Deception in getting information from the police	The researcher lied to the police in order to get information about the men he observed.	The police showed no real interest in the reason for the request for information about the men. In addition, the police expect people to lie to them as part of the work they do.
<p>1. Physical risk if the person's behavior became public (e.g., losing a job, family problems, being arrested)</p> <p>2. Psychological risk if the person's behavior became public (e.g., embarrassment)</p>	Society was not very tolerant of homosexual behavior, so if the men's actions became public, they could suffer severely.	<p>1. The researcher kept information about the men and their activities in a safe deposit box in a different state so that the police would never be able to get it.</p> <p>2. The results were published so that nobody could be identified individually as having been involved.</p>

<p>The participants did not give informed consent and were not debriefed.</p>	<p>The men's behaviors were surreptitiously monitored and they never learned that they had been observed.</p>	<p>The men were engaging in behavior in a public area, so they should not expect their behavior to be unobserved. Sometimes (rarely), researchers can omit debriefing if providing it would lead to more possible risk than not debriefing would.</p>
---	---	---

## **Activity 2.1**

### **How ethical is this study?**

A researcher was interested in the men who participated in sexual activity in a public place, that is, their personal characteristics and the nature of the sexual activity. His first step was to engage in observation of such activity in a public restroom in a park within a large city; these places were known as "tearooms." The general pattern was for the men to drive to the park, enter the public restroom, and engage in the desired behavior.

The researcher often served as what was called the "watch queen," that is, a lookout to prevent individuals who might cause trouble from interrupting the sexual activity. In general, interruptions of the activity occurred due to the presence of local teenagers or police. This activity was technically illegal when the study was done (in the 1960s), so it would have been troublesome if the police arrived on the scene.

He gathered his information on 50 sex acts (mostly oral sex) involving over 100 men. Then he obtained personal information about these individuals. He copied down their license plate numbers, went to the police and, giving a false cover story, obtained names and addresses from the license plates, and subsequently interviewed the men many months later. He informed them that it was part of a marketing research project.

#### **Questions**

1. What are the ethical issues that need to be considered to see if this study could be regarded as ethical?
2. What alternatives were there to the methodology used by the researcher?
3. Should this study have been done?

## **Homework 2.1**

### **Ethics in Research**

The theory of behaviorism dominated psychology for the first half of the 20th century. Basically, this theory postulated that all behavior was due to the effects of reinforcement and punishment. We learn to engage in behavior when we are rewarded for it and we suppress behavior when we are punished. In addition, any behavior that can be learned can be unlearned. Although most psychologists today would not label themselves behaviorists, nobody doubts the power and effectiveness of reward and punishment in shaping our behaviors.

During the height of behaviorism, a graduate student named Mary Tudor at the University of Iowa began to study children who stuttered. Her mentor, Prof. Wendell Johnson, had developed a hypothesis that stuttering resulted from children's somehow being reinforced for it; that is, when people called attention to stuttering, a child whose speech wasn't fluent would increase his or her stuttering.

So Tudor began a study of children living in an orphanage in which she identified a group of stutterers and a group of normal speaking children. She had a ready population because the children didn't have parents who could care for them, so they resided in the institution.

Under the guise of providing speech therapy, she created subgroups in which the children were either told that they had speech difficulties or that their speech was progressing very well. The result, very simply stated, was that children who stuttered and who were reminded of it continued to stutter whereas stutterers who were told that their speech was progressing well reduced the extent of their stuttering. When normally speaking children were told that their speech was fluent, they remained unchanged. On the other hand, normal speakers who were told that they were stutterers began to stutter. The stutterers were frequently socially isolated afterward.

When Tudor ended the experiment, there was no program to reverse the induced stuttering among children who were reinforced for stuttering, even though behavioral theory supports that idea that you could undo the stuttering by appropriate reinforcement techniques. In addition, the children were never told that they were participating in the research and only heard about it over half a century later.

Incidentally, Tudor's mentor, Wendell Johnson, never mentioned this research in any of his own research or writings. This research occurred during the beginning of the second world war; Johnson probably disavowed the study because people likened it to the behavior of the Nazis.

#### **Questions:**

1. Based on today's standards, what ethical principles were violated in this research?
2. Pretend that you were a behaviorist who firmly believed that behavior is controlled by reinforcement and punishment. Develop an argument from the perspective of a behaviorist in 1939 (when the study took place) in which you justify a research study like this as not being unethical. That is, within the perspective of behaviorism, how could you set up a study like this that would, in the end, be ethical?

## **Homework 2.1**

### **Ethics in Research**

#### **Questions:**

1. Based on today's standards, what ethical principles were violated in this research?
  - a. There was a problem with both physical and psychological harm. Regarding physical harm, the children were turned into stutterers. Psychologically, they suffered the problems of social isolation that stutterers frequently experience.
  - b. By today's standards, Tudor showed little responsibility for patients in the research, respect for people's rights, or concern for their welfare.
  - c. You can argue that Tudor invaded their privacy. She certainly did not get informed consent (either from the children or from parents or guardians). According to current law, participants must be free to terminate their participation at any time; there was no provision for this (especially because they didn't know they were involved in research). Likewise, there was no debriefing.
  - d. One of the most significant lapses is that there was no compensatory followup to rectify any problems that developed.
  - e. There was also a great deal of deception. The children thought they were receiving speech therapy.
  
2. Pretend that you were a behaviorist who firmly believed that behavior is controlled by reinforcement and punishment. Develop an argument from the perspective of a behaviorist in 1939 (when the study took place) in which you justify a research study like this as not being unethical. That is, within the perspective of behaviorism, how could you set up a study like this that would, in the end, be ethical?

According to behaviorists, if behavior can be learned, it can be unlearned. So you could create an ethical study in which you induced stuttering through reinforcement, then eliminated it through the reinforcement of non-stuttering behavior. At this point, there was no Nuremburg Code and there were no laws about treatment of research subjects, so the question of the ethics associated informed consent (and parental approval), debriefing, etc. are debatable. At that point, researchers were typically not sensitive to the desirability of such behavior.

Dyer, J. (2001, June 11). Theory improved treatment and understanding of stuttering. San Jose Mercury News, <http://www-psych.stanford.edu/~bigopp/stutter.html>, retrieved June 18, 2003.



**Handout 2.2**  
**Ten Points of the Nuremburg Code**

<b>Point</b>	<b>Comment</b>
1. Research on humans absolutely requires informed consent.	You cannot do research on people who are not able to give voluntary, informed consent. This requires that they be sufficiently aware of their rights to be able to make a choice that is good for them. You are also not allowed to use undue influence or power you have over a person. The individual must know what risks might be involved.
2. The experiment must have the possibility of contributing to our body of knowledge.	You should not perform research that has no chance of being useful to society. This does not mean that an investigation has to produce major results, but the outcome should add to the accumulation of knowledge about human and nonhuman behavior.
3. Researchers should be informed about the topic they investigate to maximize the likelihood that the results will be useful.	Especially for biomedical research, scientists should design their research based on previous work that has been conducted using animals. In addition, the scientist must be competent enough to design a study whose results will justify the experimentation.
4. The experiment should avoid unnecessary physical and mental suffering.	Sometimes research by its nature involves discomfort of some kind (e.g., a study of sleep deprivation). Researchers should design their work to minimize the extent of the discomfort should it be necessary. Embarrassment and frustration are examples of mental suffering that might be associated with psychological research.
5. No experiment should be conducted if there is good reason to believe that death or serious injury will occur.	When an investigation involves high levels of potential risk, this restriction can be relaxed if the researchers serve as participants in this research.
6. The degree of risk must be less than the potential gain from the research.	Sometimes research by its nature involves discomfort of some kind (e.g., a study of sleep deprivation). Researchers should design their work to minimize the extent of the discomfort should it be necessary. Embarrassment and frustration are examples of mental suffering that might be associated with psychological research.

<p>7. Prior arrangements must be in place for responding to an emergency that occurs during a research project.</p>	<p>The investigators must make provisions for emergencies that they can reasonably foresee. Sometimes a participant may suffer harm because of an entirely unforeseen circumstance. In such a case, the researcher might not be seen as acting unethically. Points 2 and 3 relate to this—a researcher should be sufficiently well informed to know what risks are likely.</p>
<p>8. The investigator must have appropriate training to conduct the research.</p>	<p>Researchers have to know what they are doing. If a researcher fails to anticipate dangers that an expert would recognize in advance, that researcher might be judged as acting unethically. Researchers must also ensure that workers subordinate to them are qualified to carry out the tasks assigned to them.</p>
<p>9. Research participants must be free to terminate their involvement at any time.</p>	<p>When an individual has reached the point that he or she no longer feels comfortable participating in research, the person has the right to leave without penalty.</p>
<p>10. The experimenter must terminate a research project if he or she believes that continuing the study will lead to injury or death.</p>	<p>The investigator has to be aware of the dynamics of the research situation. If he or she recognizes that there is an elevated level of risk, the investigator must end the study.</p>

**Handout 2.3**  
**Ethical Principles and Examples of Violations**

<p>Beneficence and Nonmaleficence</p>	<p>A psychologist would be in dangerous territory in conducting research in which he or she has a financial interest because that interest could cloud professional judgment to the detriment of the participant and others. Further, psychologists who are aware that they are experiencing mental health problems may be acting unethically with clients if their own mental health may lead to poor judgment.</p>
<p>Fidelity and Responsibility</p>	<p>A psychologist would violate ethical principles by engaging in dual relationships with patients. One of the most notable transgressions occurs when a therapist engages in sexual relations with a person while providing therapy to that individual. Also a psychologist who knows that a colleague is engaging in unethical behavior would himself or herself be acting unethically by not taking steps to prevent further such behavior.</p>
<p>Integrity</p>	<p>Psychologists who intentionally misrepresent their research results or who falsify data are engaging in ethical misconduct because they are not striving to maximize gain to the scientific and professional community, but rather are simply trying for personal gain. In addition, psychologists who knowingly use their knowledge to mislead others, such as in courtroom testimony, are engaging in unethical conduct. In this case, they are not using their professional expertise responsibly or contributing to the welfare of society in general.</p>
<p>Justice</p>	<p>A psychologist who is not trained in the use of a test like the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory but who uses it in his or her research or with clients might be engaging in unethical behavior because the validity of test interpretations may be low.</p>
<p>Respect for People's Rights and Dignity</p>	<p>Psychologists who violate the confidentiality of their research participants act unethically. This means that if you are doing research, you may not discuss with others how a particular participant responded during a testing session. (Such a discussion could be appropriate, however, if you discuss a research session with a colleague who is also working on that project and you need to resolve a methodological problem.)</p>

## INTEGRATION OF THE CONCEPTS

Create two groups of items and explain why the terms in each group belong together.

Active

Implicit

Role

Passive

Technical

Debriefing

Dehoaxing

Desensitization

Compensatory Followup

Group 1: Types of deception—Active, Passive, Implicit, Role, Technical

Group 2: Post-experiment communication—Debriefing, Dehoaxing, Desensitization, Compensatory Followup