I. Context
II. Applications
III. Debates, evolutions, tensions

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Ethics of research in social sciences

I. Context

• Contested research practices
• Definitions and main principles
• Transformations of the relationships between science and society
• Transformation of research practices
At the origins of research ethics, medical practice and research

- Hippocratic oath
  ‘primum non nocere’

- Developments of modern medicine
  - Dissection of convicted persons' bodies
  - Vivisection on prisoners' bodies
  - Experimentation in the colonial context

- First codes of medical ethics in the 19th century
Research practices considered as unacceptable

• Medical experimentations in prisoners' camps during the 2d world War


• Tuskegee study on syphilis, Alabama 1932-1972

• HIV clinical trials in several African countries and the Caribbean

Contested practices closer to our disciplines

Research including

• Covert observation

• Partial information and deceit

• Power relations or constraints exerted on participation

• Experiments or questions which affect participants

Ethics, professional deontology, integrity. The rights and duties of researchers

- **Professional deontology**
  Rights and obligations of a profession

- **Ethics**
  Values which drive the researcher. Ethics refers to moral sense and accountability, it is dynamic and situated

- **Integrity**
  The 'proper conduct' of research practices

https://www.cnrs.fr/fr/ethique-deontologie-integrite-scientifique-et-lancement-dalerte

No consensus on definitions and delimitations between these notions

Code conduct for scientific integrity
Swiss Academies of sciences 2021

4 basic principles:

- reliability
- honesty
- respect
- accountability

Plagiarism as an illustration of violation of scientific integrity
Main principles of research ethics

• **Beneficence**
  • Assesment of risks and benefits
  • Avoid harm to participants

• **Respect of persons**
  • « informed consent »
  • Protection of anonymity

• **Justice**
  • Fair selection of participants

(1979)
Transformations of the relationships between science and society

- Media and public debates about unacceptable and contested research practices
- Demands for transparency and denunciation of conflicts of interests
- Social reflexivity and contestation of science
- Judiciarisation of social relations

Tension between academic freedom and administrative, legal, political and social expectations
Transformations of research practices

- Pluri-, multi-, interdisciplinary research associating different scientific cultures

- Globalisation of research practices funding, affiliations of researchers, fieldworks

- Open science
  *Open data, open access* imply a circulation of data and findings
Transformations of research practices

- **New types of data and big data**
  visual data, virtual data

- **Virtual channels of data collection and storage**
  for example zoom, skype, Dropbox, Google drive

- **Outsourcing of data collection, crowdsourcing**
  for example Amazon Mechanical Turk

- **Research designs: participatory, longitudinal**
  consequences on the relationships between researchers and participants
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