



UPPSALA
UNIVERSITET

Clashes between ethics

© 2000 Randy Glasbergen.



**“You can correct my spelling and grammar,
but my ethics are none of your business!”**



UPPSALA
UNIVERSITET

The aim of this presentation is to enlight potential complexities and contradicitons between different levels and categories of research ethics



Researchers ethics are leveled and categorised

Different aspects to follow

National and International rules

Local rules

Different work categories, norms

Researchers personal ethics



Three meanings of professional ethics

- The research activity is driven by a number of implicit and explicit norms that dictate what *good* science is (performing good work)
- Researchers, like all other professionals, must follow national and local rules, directions and norms regarding workplace
- Various researcher categories often have their own professional codes of ethics that address various aspects of the researcher role and activity. Often-used central concepts for professional practice are *servicing mankind* and *having respect for human life*.

<http://codex.vr.se/en/forskarensetik.shtml>



Researchers personal ethics

The researcher's own ethical responsibility forms the basis for all research ethics. That is, the researcher him/herself has the ultimate responsibility to see that the research is of good quality and is morally acceptable. (...) Investigation on research ethics, ethical reflection must be a natural part of a researcher's daily routine

(<http://codex.vr.se/en/forskarensetik.shtml>)



What shall we do when it clashes?

© Original Artist
Reproduction rights obtainable from
www.CartoonStock.com



search ID: bstn889

Bob gets filed
under "annoying"



Example one

A researcher, Adam, collects data from a specific group of adult informants. He promises that no one outside his research group will have access to the data. Later his findings are questioned by two other researchers, Brian and Cecilia, who request access to his source data. Adam refuses to hand them over, referring to his promise to his informants. The case reaches an unexpected conclusion when colleagues of Adam's say they have destroyed the source data on their own initiative.

Is the action taken by Adam's colleagues ethically acceptable? Is it compatible with existing legislation? Has Adam promised more than he can deliver?



Example two

A researcher sits together with children in a schoolclass. The theme of interview/discussion is childrens opinion upon TV-programs for children. It is decided that the reserahcer shall be the only adult at the session, so the children will not be conciuosly or non-conciously influenced of the teacher. During the conversation the children start speeking about how much it hurts when their parents hit them.

It is forbidden to hit children i Sweden (gonvernmental laws). The researcher has promised to keep silence of things that is said between the children, and she has been given their trust. To report is to break their trust and her promise as a researcher. Not to report is to allow parents to continue to hit them