

# Ethical Research Using Technology

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# Overview

- Ethical problems
- Ethical advantages
- Case studies

# It's Not New



# Neils van Doorn

## *Qualitative Inquiry* 2013

- Ethnographic study of intimacy, spirituality and citizenship among LGBT groups in Baltimore
- Smartphone: navigation, recording interviews, taking photos/videos, making field notes
- Technology helps, enables, fails, disappoints, and surprises
- The existence of technology changes research practice – key ethical point

# Ignorance Isn't Bliss



# Stine Lomborg

## *Research Ethics 2012*

- Studied Danish people's use of blogs/Twitter
- Public or personal? - sought consent for use
- Offered participants draft write-up to approve
- Requests for changes probably due to personal feelings/wishes, not considered judgement
- Problematic re quality of research, and 'interpretive authority' (Markham 2012:15)

# Kramer et al

## PNAS, USA, 2014

- Experiment manipulating FB users' exposure to emotional content in their timelines
- In accordance with FB data use policy
- FB users felt they had not given informed consent – vehement outcry on social media
- Researchers rapidly apologised
- Editor of PNAS printed an 'expression of concern' about the ethical status of the research

# Researchers Must Be Aware

- Online research can jeopardise people's personal safety – failure to maintain privacy, anonymity, confidentiality can lead to hacking or stalking
- Digital divide – bigger than you think – problems of exclusion
- Don't let the possibilities of technology seduce you into acting unethically – e.g. data analysis, data presentation





# Some Of The Good News

- Audio or video podcasts – consent
- Online surveys – reduce burden on participants
- Video – more accurate observational analysis
- Bridges distance
- Crosses boundaries
- Great teaching aid
- Open data, secondary data – quant and qual

# Qualitative Data Repositories

- The Henry A Murray Research Archive, USA
- ADA Qualitative, Australia
- NIQA, Northern Ireland
- Irish Qualitative Data Archive, Eire
- DARIS, Switzerland
- ADJ, Poland
- FSD, Finland
- Denmark, Lithuania, Czech Republic, Germany etc

# Teaching Research Methods

Informed consent for research participant with moderate aphasia (reading) and limited verbal output.

<http://youtu.be/b71Hz4QLHpc>

# Kaye Stacey and Jill Vincent

## *Qualitative Research 2011*

- Studied the quality of maths teaching in Australia – 21 curriculum leaders interviewed
- Created CD with structured interview format including hyperlinked multimedia resources such as lesson videos and textbook pages
- Participants typed and emailed responses
- Participants found it convenient and satisfying
- Good data; not flexible; very cost-effective

# Mary Ann Kluge et al

## *Qual Res in Sport & Exercise 2010*

- Linda, never been 'sporty', on turning 65 decided to become a competitive senior athlete
- Researchers used film to capture Linda's experience for 1 year – from first training session to winning a race at the Rocky Mountain Senior Games
- Video footage viewed several times by researchers with Linda, to establish themes
- Video also used to present findings – 23 minute film edited with, and narrated by, Linda

# Marie-Claire Shanahan

## *Journalism 2011*

- Ed Yong: UK science writer/blogger
- In 2010 used blog to disseminate work of Zhao et al, published in *Nature*, re gynandromorphic chickens (equal balance of male + female cells)
- Received comments from co-author + from farmer with gynandromorphic chicken
- Put scientist and farmer in touch – led to full-scale collaboration

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