

Ethical Issues in Conducting Research with Human Subjects involved in Illicit/Stigmatized Behavior

Call for Chapter Proposals

Kaveh Khoshnood (Yale University), Merrill Singer (University of Connecticut), Kevin Irwin (Tufts University) and Craig Fry (University of Melbourne) are editing a book provisionally entitled *Ethics in the Shadows: Moral Challenges in the Study of Illicit and Stigmatized Behaviors*. We are aiming for a publication date in early 2010.

The edited volume will examine the ethical issues that arise in the study of highly stigmatized and/or illicit behaviors and the populations that engage in such behaviors. These populations and behaviors may include: illicit drug use, sex work, homosexuality, gambling, domestic violence victims and perpetrators, prisoners, drug dealers, undocumented persons, pedophiles, child abuse victims and perpetrators, homeless persons, oppressed ethnic minorities, gang members, or people who attempt suicide or engage in self-mutilation (e.g., “cutters”). Other relevant behaviors and populations can be proposed. This book is intended to address ethical research challenges that have not been adequately addressed by existing guidelines or literature. Uniquely international issues are also highly encouraged.

The focus of the book is interdisciplinary and will include theoretical and practical perspectives on ethical dilemmas arising in research on illicit and stigmatized behaviors. Evidence-based ethics, or the relationship between empirical data and ethical deliberation and decision-making, is an underlying theme of the project. Contributions are welcome from, but not limited to the disciplines of philosophy, applied ethics, sociology, anthropology, politics, psychology, medicine, public health and law. The provisional outline of the book is divided into three main parts: applied ethical theory and frameworks; current controversies in research with the aforementioned populations; and, new frontiers.

While all issues related to this topic are welcome, we are particularly interested in chapters that address the following issues:

- Capacity for consent
- Confidentiality issues
- The unique risks to which research may expose subjects in such studies
- Community consultation and engagement in design and oversight
- Payment of research subjects
- Collaboration between US and non-US IRBs
- Situations in which research is inappropriate
- The researcher's roles and ethical responsibilities
- Risks to researchers and research assistants
- Ethically (un)justified deception in research
- Providing illegal/addictive “substances” to research subjects
- Professional research subjects
- Harm reduction
- Addiction treatments and standards of care

- Respondent-driven and other novel sampling methods

The book will be targeted to a broad audience that includes researchers, IRB members, practitioners, students, bioethicists and funders. Each chapter should be “user-friendly” so as to serve as a useful resource tool for these diverse audiences, avoiding academic jargon or narrow frameworks aimed at highly specialized audiences. Chapters may include guidelines, practical recommendations, case studies, key sources and literature, or important websites. The approximate length for each chapter is 5000-7000 words.

DEADLINE EXTENDED

Interested authors are requested to submit a two page Chapter Proposal (cover page to include tentative title, author(s), affiliations and contact information, and a one-page abstract) plus the primary author’s CV by February 20, 2009. The decision to accept proposals will be made by March 6th, 2009.

The editors are currently securing a publisher.

Please do not submit proposals for chapters that have already been published or are currently under review. Send the proposals as attachments via email to Craig Luekens (research assistant) at craig.luekens@gmail.com and Kaveh Khoshnood at kaveh.khoshnood@yale.edu with “Research Ethics Book” in the subject-heading field.

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CIRA is located at 135 College St., #200, New Haven, CT 06510.

Email: cira@email.med.yale.edu

URL: www.yale.edu/cira