



Ethics in Anthropology ^[1]

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Similar to many disciplines in the social sciences, ethics are an important consideration for anthropologists.

The concern of anthropologists to produce research that is ethically sound has grown in the past several decades. Originally, when conducting ethnographic field work, anthropologists weren't particularly concerned with ethical dilemmas and the impact of their research on the people that they were studying. Today, anthropologists have a much better understanding of the importance and prominence of ethical dilemmas. All research, particularly field work, has an impact on the people in question that are being studied. Accordingly, anthropologists must ensure that their work does not negatively impact others and that they do not profit from another cultural group without giving something back to the community.

Besides the people being observed and researched, anthropologists must consider the impact that their research will have on themselves, and act accordingly in an ethical manner.

Below are just a few of the many ethical concerns of anthropologists:

Anonymity

Anonymity is an important feature of research. Especially in anthropology, where much of the research is the result of conversations and interviews, anonymity is important.

Anonymity—such as using a different name for an individual—helps maintain privacy.

Honesty

Honesty is an evident and important quality for all anthropological research. Anthropologists must not falsify any data, and have an ethical responsibility to publish research that is honest and true.

Objectivity

Anthropologists must continually strive to produce research that is objective. While many anthropologists would argue that there is always at least a small amount of bias in all research, anthropologists must attempt to ensure that their bias does not affect the quality of their research.

Peer Reviewing

Anthropological research should be subject to a peer review process before the research is

published. Peer reviewing entails other academics reading and reviewing work before it is accepted into an academic publication.

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