



Workshop “Research ethics in anthropology: which good practices?” March 22nd, from 1pm on, online

With the ongoing institutionalisation of research ethics in Switzerland and internationally, anthropologists increasingly have to engage with ethical guidelines defined by ethics commissions at university, regional or national level in order to undertake research, get funding and/or publish. Yet, these interactions often represent a challenge for anthropologists and qualitative social scientists at large. Procedural requirements differ considerably from the processual ethics favoured by the epistemological approach of our discipline and we feel that the latter are not given enough institutional credit. This, in turn, leads to misunderstandings and frustration on both sides, sometimes losing track of the common aim which is to protect our research participants and ourselves.

This workshop mainly addressed to young scholars aims to bring together anthropologists, qualitative social scientists and legal scholars working on research ethics to discuss appropriate ways to engage with procedural ethics. On the one hand, we wish to address the legal obligations concerning research ethics and how they are taken up by ethics commissions. On the other hand, we plan to discuss how anthropologists can deal with these requirements without betraying the processual ethics that characterises our discipline. To this end, the workshop combines inputs by specialists with spaces to exchange about experiences and to constitute a “reservoir” of good practices.

Programme

13.00	Introduction
13.15	Keynote “Negotiating ethical procedures and the demands of ethnography: From research proposal to the field”, with Valerio Simoni (Graduate Institute)
14.15	<i>Break</i>
14.30	Workshop session on the legal requirements of anthropological research, with Arthur Zinn-Poget (CER-VD) and Paola Juan (GRED)
16.00	<i>Break</i>
16.15	Workshop session on informed consent, with Nicole Ahoya (UNILU) and Wiebke Wiesigel (GRED)
17.45	<i>Gather party!</i>

Workshop session 1: Legal requirements of anthropological research

This workshop is a dialogue between the participants, who have prepared questions/issues in advance, Arthur Zinn-Poget, sociologist and General Secretary at the CER-VD (Cantonal Ethics Committee for the Cantons of Vaud, Fribourg, Valais and Neuchâtel), and Paola Juan, an anthropologist and member of the GRED. The point of this workshop is not to provide a comprehensive view of the legal requirements for anthropologists on the field, but to discuss the individual and institutional legal responsibilities that stem from participants’ research projects, in Switzerland and abroad. It seeks to give clues to the following questions: what are the legal requirements? What room do anthropologists have for manoeuvre? What are the legal and ethical consequences of anthropologists’ compliance or refusal towards ethics procedures?

Workshop session 2: Informed consent in ethnographic fieldwork

Informed consent is a challenging ethical concept for anthropologists due to the fluid and often-informal nature of ethnographic fieldwork. Recent legal developments and ethical assessment boards



have added a layer of requirements that we must navigate. In fieldwork, researchers might be confronted with questions like: How can we inform our interlocutors about the purpose of our ethnographic fieldwork? Should we use written consent forms, or is verbal consent more suitable in certain research settings? How can we ensure an “ongoing dialogue” on consent with our interlocutors? What can we do if we do not get consent at a certain point in the research process? How do we inform participants and get consent in digital spaces? In this interactive workshop, we critically engage with the concept of informed consent in ethnographic fieldwork, based on the situations and issues participants are facing in their own research.

Registration

Registration is possible until March 7th using the following link: <https://framaforms.org/workshop-research-ethics-in-anthropology-which-good-practices-registration-1613578760>.

Contact

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