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Responsible Conduct of Research in Psychology: Conductas Responsables Para la Investigación en Psicología: Guía de Trabajo

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BOOK REVIEW

RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH IN PSYCHOLOGY

ANDRÉS ROUSSOS, MALENA BRAUN, AND JULIETA OLIVERA. *Conductas responsables para la investigación en psicología: Guía de trabajo*. Buenos Aires: FUNICS, 2012. 261 pp. ISBN-13: 978-9-8727-9380-7.

Why would some researchers engage in unethical practices in the conduct of research? What can happen when a researcher acts questionably? How can they conduct research ethically and with integrity? Roussos et al.'s book, *Conductas responsables para la investigación en psicología: Guía de trabajo*, discusses these questions. It is a comprehensive introduction to responsible conduct of research in psychology and a working guide to research ethics involving human participants. To this end, historical case studies built on breaches of research ethical integrity support the book, followed by practical hands-on exercises to motivate reflection and learning about ethical responsibilities in research. Humorous research-ethics cartoons graphically enhance *Conductas responsables*. Moreover, the book introduces the reader to some issues of research ethics in Latin America with examples of these practices in Argentina, where the authors are from, and based on their experience in conducting research in psychology.

The first section of the book is foundational. While Chapter One establishes moral underpinnings of research and distinguishes responsible research practices from those that fall short of ethical conduct, Chapter Two is an educational piece sending the reader on a journey through international and regional codes and declarations that have contributed to the evolution of regulations in research ethics. The inclusion of historical case studies and pertinent data enhance both the grounds of this section and the reader's opportunity for reflection and critical thinking about the moral integrity of the researcher.

The second part of the book looks at the process of research itself and at ethical issues that arise from it. Chapter Three examines ethical inquiries in research planning, specifically with regard to risks, benefits, and potential conflicts of interests. Framed in expository writing, Chapter Four is devoted to research participants, their protection, and their right to voluntary

informed consent. The chapter also considers ethical questions arising from research involving vulnerable populations. In the last two chapters of this section the authors offer insightful observations with respect to research data organization, analysis, and dissemination of results. They argue that responsible conduct of research is not constrained to the researcher-participant relationship but also stretches to data manipulation and ethical issues in publication. Thus, central to this section is to compel researchers to reflect on where and when issues of responsibility impinge on their own research.

In the last two sections of the book, the authors devote their attention to ethics in psychology. They draw our attention to four areas of psychology, namely qualitative studies, Internet research, animal research, and clinical psychology. Due to the nature of the methods, the authors contend that ethical problems in these types of research deserve better consideration in research-ethics review because the biomedical ethics model currently in use by ethics committees may not always be appropriate to evaluate these problems. Likewise, Roussos et al. remind researchers of some ethical principles of psychologists and the code of conduct endorsed by the American Psychological Association (APA) that need to be taken into consideration when working in the aforementioned areas. The book culminates with an overview of research ethics committees in psychology—their establishment, structure, and scope. *Conductas responsables* makes us aware of the hierarchical system of research ethics committees, from governmental levels of ethics regulations to institutional ones. It provides relevant information about the ethics review process undertaken by the so-called institutional review boards (IRBs) in the English-speaking world, and how the same practice has made its way to Latin America through CEIs (Comités de ética institucional). It is precisely in this context that the authors identify some difficulties and challenges in the establishment of research ethical standards in Latin America. Nevertheless, the authors provide suggestions so that CEIs become more adequately equipped to handle ethical problems in psychological research and researchers can

adhere to responsible conducts of research today to enjoy success without their integrity in research being questioned tomorrow.

This book is a contribution to research ethics. It is valuable for research within psychology, and a comprehensive addition to the area of research involving human participants. *Conductas responsables* provides students, researchers, and research ethics reviewers alike with an extensive working guide in matters of ethics and integrity in research while also drawing attention to issues of research ethics in Latin America.

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Constanza Rojas-Primus (constanza.rojas-primus@kwantlen.ca) is a research ethics board member of Kwantlen Polytechnic University's Research Ethics Board. She holds a PhD in Spanish and Latin American Studies, and her research interests include ritual languages, hybrid cultures, sociolinguistics, and language planning for indigenous/creole languages and groups in Latin America. She is currently working on the integration of the CEFR (Common European Framework Reference for Languages) into Canadian contexts, and the relationship between internationalization and intercultural competencies. She authored *Lengua ritual y sincretismo: Dinámicas de hibridez en el discurso mágico-religioso Palo Monte* (2009).