Ethical Research in the Digital Age: Balancing Priorities and the Public’s Trust of Science

Seminar chair

Camille Nebeker, Assistant Professor
Division Affiliations - Behavioral Medicine and Global Health
Department of Family Medicine and Public Health
School of Medicine, UC San Diego

Abstract

Researchers are increasingly using wireless, wearable and mobile technologies to monitor and influence human behaviors. These devices (i.e., smart phones, wearable cameras, geographic tracking devices, and skin sensors) may be worn, carried by or implanted in participants to intervene with and/or monitor behavior, activity, location, and assorted physiological and social functions. This ability to understand individual behavior in context and in real time may be a game changer in winning the battle against a number of chronic health concerns (i.e., cancer, obesity, heart disease). Yet, in a society with mounting concerns of surveillance and privacy, an ethical approach to research using pervasive methods is imperative.

This digital landscape is rapidly changing how we think about data management, informed consent and associated ethical and regulatory parameters. Now is the time for scientists from all disciplines to come together to discuss how we will advance this science in a responsible and ethical manner.

You are invited to take part in this exciting conversation!
We welcome diverse viewpoints recognizing that researchers bring different expectations to research ethics based on training and scientific discipline.

Proposed Seminar Outline

Introduction and Overview of MIST-E (35 minutes)
- Brief review of regulations/principles that guide human research protections
- Review of MIST-E (Mobile Imaging, Sensing and Tracking – Ethics) projects to advance data driven decisions

Case study (35 minutes)
- Examine and discuss the Dartmouth Student Life study: http://studentlife.cs.dartmouth.edu from different stakeholder perspectives (e.g., student, research team, IRB)

Regulatory Reform for Social and Behavioral Sciences – Review of Major Themes (30 minutes)
- What do you think?

Wrap-up (15 mins)
- Q & A
- Scientific Integrity course
- Resources