



# Academic Ethics?



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**PUBLICATION ETHICS: RIGHTS AND WRONGS**

*Balancing obligations and interests surrounding dissemination of research is an **arduous task***

*But whenever creative, and **often competitive**, people come together for an activity **loosely bound by policies and ethical standards**, occasional problems are to be expected. **Gross** scientific misconduct is **rare**, but **subtler forms of unethical behavior are becoming more common**. Misappropriated credit in publications, for example, can lead to some of the most contentious conflicts in the academic world.*

*Graduate students and postdocs--**who do most of the work**--are often lost in this shuffle. Although the research community agrees that high ethical standards are worthy goals, **few** of these junior members of the scientific community **receive any explicit training on publication practices and mores**. Instead, they are expected to absorb their respective disciplines' standards by osmosis. Teaching ethics to researchers is not the key point--"**ethics are caught, not taught**," one saying goes. Rather, many think the focus needs to be on helping researchers to be prepared to work through problems together so that everyone involved will be satisfied with the outcome.*

See:

<http://pubs.acs.org/page/publish-research/episode-5.html>

## **My Data**

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A discussion of data management was part of a research ethics conference at a Prestigious University, where you are a faculty member. In that discussion, one of your postdocs said that at the university where he had done his graduate work, he had been allowed to keep the laboratory notebook in which he recorded his observations. He said that because under the policies of Prestigious U. he was not allowed to keep his notebook, he did not bother to write things up in detail in his lab notebook, but in the evening made notes for himself at home.

What do you tell him?

# Where I get my case studies

Academic Ethics – case studies from

<http://www.onlineethics.org/cms/research/>

[http://www.aps.org/programs/education/ethics  
/index.cfm](http://www.aps.org/programs/education/ethics/index.cfm)

<http://portal.acs.org/portal/acs/corg/>