

Fieldwork in a conflicted society: A contemporary researcher's ethical dilemma

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Abstract:

Ethnographers in Kenya have, in the past, grappled with methodological concerns in fieldwork. This is evidenced in the rich literature on methods of data collection, data analysis and dissemination. The discourses have been based on the assumptions that fieldworkers in oral literature are guided by a code of ethics in their fieldwork. This article argues that a number of folklore researchers operate in an ethical void and are unprepared in mitigating various ethical dilemmas that they encounter before, during and after fieldwork. Relying heavily on the personal experiences of the writer, this article discusses dilemmas a fieldworker faces when conducting research in a violence-prone environment, and the ethical considerations thereof.