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April 28, 1995

Dr. Rachelle Hollander
Program Director
Ethics and Values Studies
National Science Foundation
4201 Wilson Blvd., Room 995
Arlington, VA 22230

Dear Rachelle:

I am writing in response to your questions and comments. We do plan to keep an electronic archive of the Task Force's deliberations, our "raw data." It will, of course, be available to other scholars. You will be sent the form that declares our proposal is exempt from needing IRB approval and a revised budget with appropriate signatures.

We also want to respond on two substantive points, your concern about alternate interpretations and generalizability and the issue about self-interest associated with professions. Apparently, we conveyed a more dichotomized view of the different approaches to codes than we intended. We want to take care not to be misunderstood. The project presents us an opportunity to do some work on the notion of self-interest in relation to professions, sorting out and giving due weight to appropriate self-regarding considerations. There is a clue to our interest in probing self-regarding considerations in a) of the hypothesis at the bottom of p.2 of the codicil. We should have made that interest more explicit in the codicil.

We agree that a) the generalizability of any claims derived from our project are contestable and that b) even our specific findings would be open to alternate claims. We believe that we should not conclude either a) that we should avoid any generalizing from a single case or b) that we should avoid interpreting our data. We think it important to provide a thesis others will want to consider and even challenge. We think we should be as daring as we can (rather than as cautious as we can). Daring is more likely to provoke further research.

Best,

Vivian Weil
Director

VW:rn

Enclosures