The two articles that follow are intended as the first in an occasional series that *Focaal* will feature in forthcoming issues. The objective is to encourage a more rooted consideration of some of the ethical dilemmas and problems that anthropologists face in planning their research, doing their fieldwork, and publishing its results. Though in informal contexts anthropologists often discuss their experiences of such issues, they for the most part shy away from interrogating them in print. At the same time, they are increasingly subject to research ethics reviews from funding bodies and universities, which they often treat as a matter of “ticking boxes”. These sometimes impose conditions—for instance, written informed consent—that are imported from other disciplines and that, if followed literally, would make much ethnographic research impossible. In many cases, moreover, it is extremely difficult to predict the ethical dilemmas that will emerge during the course of ethnographic research and its publication. Universities now routinely set up committees to vet the ethical aspects of research that is conducted under their auspices, but it sometimes seems that these are more preoccupied with avoiding litigation than with grasping the complexities of the practical situations that anthropologists confront. The manuals of ethnographic practice and the formal ethical guidelines drawn up by our professional associations generally deal with them only in an abstract and disembodied away. As a contribution to the discussion of the ethics of anthropological practice, we hope this series will contribute to an ethnographically grounded reflection on the nature of those complexities.

Plainly, the kinds of problems and dilemmas that are most likely to arise will to some degree vary between different ethnographic areas, and will, among other things, depend on the nature of the local state and on the sorts of social inequalities that exist. Ethnographers may experience different problems, or experience the same problems differently, depending on their gender, on their own social backgrounds, and on whether they are outsiders or are studying their own society. The kinds of dilemmas to which we are most sensitive today are almost certainly not the same as they were in the past. We invite contributions from those at different stages in their careers that focus on particular cases bearing on such issues, or that address them in a more general vein.

Abstracts or informal proposals of not more than one page for a final manuscript of between 5,000 and 8,000 words in length are welcomed. Please make submissions to the series’ editor, Gavin Smith (gavin.smith@gmail.com). Submissions will be peer-reviewed in accordance with the journal’s normal procedures. Responsibility for postreview acceptance or rejection of manuscripts for publication lies with the *Focaal* editorial board.

Gavin Smith

*Series Editor*