

Introduction to Ethics in Health Technology Assessment

Critically Appraising the Primary Ethics Literature

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Use of low-dose computed tomography for screening for lung cancer in adults at high-risk of lung cancer. The test comes with a known high false positive and false negative rate and an uncertain risk of radiation-induced cancer over the long-term.

Bioethics Literature

Descriptive

- Qualitative and quantitative studies of beliefs, attitudes, experiences
- Use methods of psychology, sociology, anthropology, etc.

Normative

- Studies examining the ethical justification for a course of action
- Uses philosophical analysis and argument

Quantitative Surveys

Questionnaire: How were items selected? How was the questionnaire tested? How administered?

Population: How identified and recruited (random or census)? Does method of administration bias who will answer?

Analysis: Appropriate statistics and analysis?

Appraising Qualitative Studies

- Was the choice of participants explicit and comprehensive?
- Was data collection sufficiently comprehensive and detailed?
- Were the data analyzed appropriately and the findings corroborated adequately?

Giacomini M, Cook D, Guyatt G. Therapy and applying the results: Qualitative research. In: Guyatt G, Drummond R (editors). Users' Guides to the medical literature. AMA, 2002.

Participants

- Selected with emphasis on gathering range of experiences to help understand phenomenon broadly and in depth
- Purposive collection rather than random sample
- Could be small sample
- Look for reasons to think that complete range of views may not have been captured

Data Collection

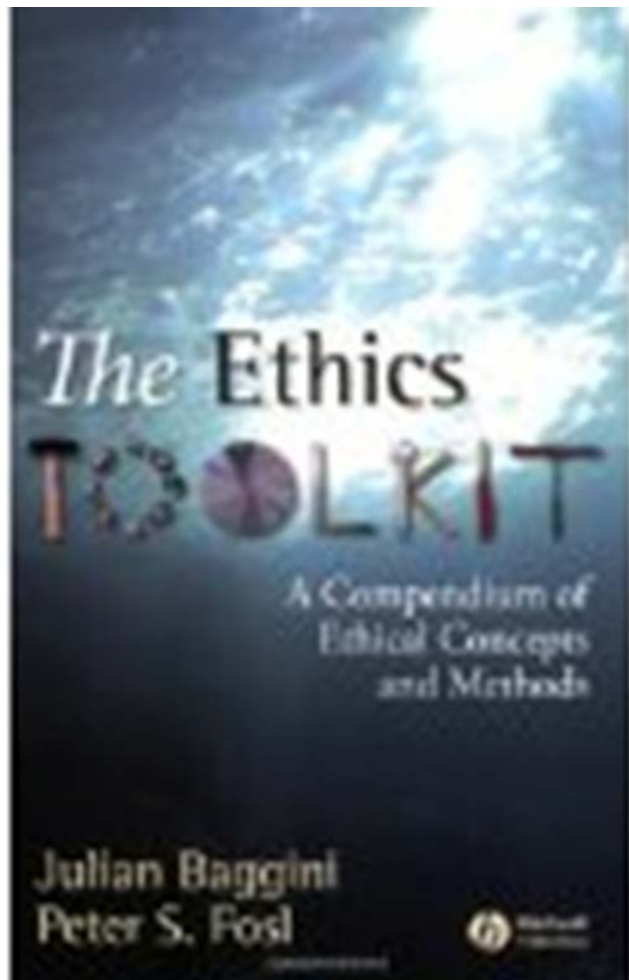
- Observation: direct or indirect
- Interview: individual or group, structured or open-ended
- Examining written material
- More than one source or method should be used
- Researcher's standpoint acknowledged and questioned

Data Analysis

Saturation: Minimal or no new information found with further observations

Triangulation: Use of multiple sources of information to corroborate

Triangulation: methodological, investigator, disciplinary



- Utilitarianism
- Deontology
- Virtue ethics
- Feminist care ethics
- Narrative ethics
- Principlism
- Casuistry
- Axiological/"Socratic"
Coherence analysis
- Interactive HTA (iHTA)
- Wide reflective equilibrium
- Social shaping of technology

Normative Bioethical Argument

Acceptable appeals

Tradition and current practice

Ethical principles

General ethical theory

Casuistry

Reflective equilibrium

Professional virtues

Unacceptable appeals

Historic facts

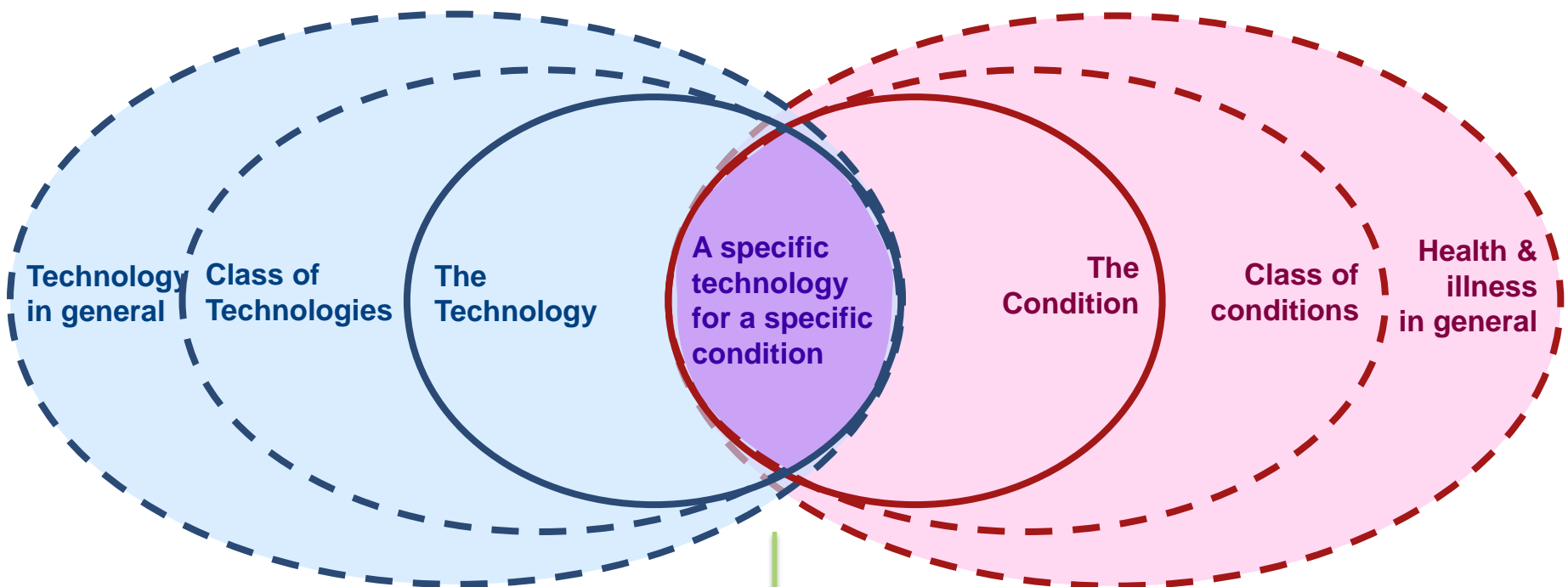
Majority opinions

Permitted by law

Mere opinion

Biologic truths

No right or wrong answer



Technology in general

Class of Technologies

The Technology

A specific technology for a specific condition

The Condition

Class of conditions

Health & illness in general

Qualitative literature

Clinical epidemiology & economic literature "PICO target"

Qualitative literature

Searching the Literature

Primary studies relevant for ethics not always readily identifiable as empirical research in ethics:

- published by a non-ethicist
- published in a non-ethics journal
- lack an explicit discussion of relevant ethical debates
- not indexed using ethics or ethics-related terms.

Ethics depends on social and cultural context and values; national and non-English language ethics databases are important.

Takk!

CADTH

Evidence
Driven.

ACMETS

Preuves
à l'appui.