Whistleblowing Bibliography

Author(s)

Kelly Laas

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Description

A bibliography on whistleblowing in business, science and research. Includes links to major organizations and federal guidelines, recent books and reports, as well as a number of journal articles from a range of disciplines.

Body

Guidelines & Regulations

National Institutes of Health: Reporting Fraud, Waste and Abuse SOP
Outlines standard operating procedures (SOP) for individuals wanting report issues of fraud, waste, or abuse of NIH funds.

National Science Foundation Whistleblower Protection
A list of resources provided by the National Science Foundation on whistleblowing, as well as contact information for the U.S. government and NSF for whistleblowers.

Office of Research Integrity
Provides guidance for researchers who are thinking about bringing forward

allegations of research misconduct. Includes links to summaries of research misconduct cases investigated by ORI, guidelines for whistleblowers for reporting possible instances of misconduct, and other helpful links to whistleblower policies and guidelines from other U.S. agencies.

[Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act of 2012](#)
U.S. Public law protecting federal employees from retribution.

Books and Reports

Government Accountability Project. 2018. [*Speaking Up for Science: A Guide to Whistleblowing for Federal Employees.*](#)
This guide seeks to help U.S. federal employees speak up when they feel that they have observed serious wrongdoing, abuses of authority, or threats to public health, safety, or the environment. The guide includes background about what counts as whistleblowing, attempts to dispel myths about whistleblowing, discusses federal protections for whistleblowers, and survival tips on how to blow the whistle effectively.

Gunsalus C.K. 2010. [*How to Blow the Whistle and have a Career Afterwards*](#).
This is a fantastic short guide that gives the reader advice about how to conduct professional disputes professionally. It discusses why many people try to avoid reporting misconduct, gives six rules about how to prepare your case, and provides pragmatic advice on how to report misconduct while avoiding hurting your own career.

Kohn, Stephen Martin. 2017. *The New Whistleblowers Handbook: A step-by-step guide to doing what's right and protecting yourself.* Guilford, CT: Lyon's Press.

In its third edition, this book provides guidance to whistleblowers in a variety of situations and contexts, including government agencies, corporations, and research institutions.

Keith-Spiegel, Patricia, Joan Sieber, and Gerald P. Koocher. 2010. [**Responding to Research Wrongdoing: A user-friendly guide.**](#)

An excellent guide that takes the reader through deciding how to act when they have witnessed suspected research misconduct. This guide includes guidance about deciding if misconduct might have occurred, when and how to get personally involved, and advice about reporting misconduct -- including informal and formal reporting options.

Research Triangle Institute. 1995. [Consequences of Whistleblowing for the Whistleblower in Misconduct in Science Cases](#). Report submitted to Office of Research Integrity.
This report summarizes findings from interviews and surveys of whistleblowers about some of the challenges students and faculty face when deciding to blow the whistle after witnessing research misconduct.

Articles

Aggarwal, Sahil, and Aaron Kheriaty. 2018. "Same Behavior, Different Provider: American Medical Students' Attitudes toward Reporting Risky Behaviors Committed by Doctors, Nurses, and Classmates." *AJOB Empirical Bioethics* 9 (1): 12-18. doi: [10.1080/23294515.2017.1377780.](#)
The bioethics literature lacks findings about medical students' attitudes toward reporting risky behaviors that can cause error or reduce the perceived quality of health care. A survey was administered to 159 medical students to assess their likelihood to directly approach and to report various providers -- a physician, nurse, or medical student -- for three behaviors (poor hand hygiene, intoxication, or disrespect of patients). Medical students' willingness to approach or report a provider for a risky or unprofessional behavior is influenced by the type of health-care provider in question. Medical schools should implement patient safety curricula that alleviate fears about reporting superiors and create anonymous reporting systems to improve reporting rates.

Andrade, Julio A. 2015. "Reconceptualising Whistleblowing in a Complex World." *Journal of Business Ethics* 128 (2): 321-335. doi: [10.1007/s10551-014-2105-z.](#)
This paper explores the ethical dilemma of conflicting loyalties found in whistleblowing.

Bouter, Lex M., and Sven Hendrix. 2017. "Both Whistleblowers and the Scientists They Accuse Are Vulnerable and Deserve Protection." *Accountability in Research: Policies and Quality Assurance* **24 (6): 359-366. doi:** [10.1080/08989621.2017.1327814.](10.1080/08989621.2017.1327814.)
Whistleblowers play an important role diagnosing research misconduct, but often experience severe negative consequences. That is also true for incorrectly accused scientists. Both categories are vulnerable and deserve protection. Whistleblowers must proceed carefully and cautiously. Anonymous whistleblowing should be discouraged but cannot be ignored when the allegations are specific, serious, and plausible. When accused of a breach of research integrity, it is important to be as transparent as possible. Sometimes accusations are false in the sense that the accuser knows or should know that the allegations are untrue. Striking the right balance between whistleblower protection and timely unmasking false and identifying incorrect accusations is a tough dilemma leaders of research institutions have to face.

Chen, Ching-Pu, and Chih-Tsung Lai. 2014. "To Blow or Not to Blow the Whistle: The Effects of Potential Harm, Social Pressure and Organisational Commitment on Whistleblowing Intention and Behaviour." *Business Ethics: A European Review* **23 (3): 327-342. doi:** 10.1111/beer.12053.
This study uses a rational ethical decision-making framework to examine the influence of moral intensity (potential harm and social pressure) on whistleblowing intention and behaviour using organisational commitment as a moderator. The paper describes a survey given to over 500 participants and discusses the results.

Delmas, Candice. 2015. "The Ethics of Government Whistleblowing." *Social Theory and Practice: An International and Interdisciplinary Journal of Social Philosophy* **41 (1): 77-105.** www.jstor.org/stable/24332319.
This editorial discusses what is wrong with government whistleblowing, and when can it be justified. In the authors view, "government whistleblowing," that is, the unauthorized acquisition and disclosure of classified information about the state or government, is a form of "political vigilantism," which involves transgressing the boundaries around state secrets, for the purpose of challenging the allocation or use of power. It may nonetheless be justified when it is suitably constrained and exposes some information that the public ought to know and deliberate about.

Fox, Mark, and Jeffrey Beall. 2014. "Advice for Plagiarism Whistleblowers." *Ethics and Behavior* **24 (5): 341-349. doi:** [10.1080/10508422.2013.866047](10.1080/10508422.2013.866047).

This article draws upon the authors' experiences as plagiarism whistleblowers with several goals in mind: to help would-be whistleblowers be better prepared for making well-founded allegations, to give whistleblowers some idea of what they can expect when reporting plagiarism, and to give suggestions for reducing whistleblowers' vulnerability to threats and stress.

Fredin, Amy, Roopa Venkatesh, and Jennifer Riley. 2019. "'The Road Not Taken': A Study of Moral Intensity, Whistleblowing, and Regret." *Ethics and Behavior* **29 (4): 320-340. doi:** [10.1080/10508422.2018.1469088.](10.1080/10508422.2018.1469088.)

Despite attempts to encourage whistleblowing, lingering reluctance to report questionable acts remains frustratingly apparent. Our objective is to examine the regret a professional anticipates when evaluating the action of reporting or not reporting, and whether the framing of the action influences regret. Responses from 263 professionals indicate that regret depends on the moral intensity of the situation and how the action is framed. Regret for whistleblowing is not comparable to regret for not remaining silent, despite the fact that these two descriptions result in the same action. This important implication may inform the way we educate and encourage whistleblowing.

Fredin, Amy J. 2011. "The Effects of Anticipated Regret on the Whistleblowing Decision." *Ethics and Behavior* **21 (5): 404-427. doi:** [10.1080/10508422.2011.604296](10.1080/10508422.2011.604296)

This article incorporates two emotion-based psychology theories into the study of whistleblowing. Particularly, it studies how one's predicted regret may differ when one is cued in to possible regret effects associated with either blowing the whistle or staying silent. Ethical scenarios with two moral intensity levels and two wrongdoing types were manipulated. Analysis of variance results based on subjects' predicted regret scores as well as subjects' descriptions of what the regret would be related to indicate several significant interactions. Findings suggest that individuals think about regret differently in a whistleblowing context as opposed to a silent observer context.

Horbach, Spjm, E. Breit, W. Halffman, and S. E. Mamelund. 2020. "On the Willingness to Report and the Consequences of Reporting Research Misconduct: The Role of Power Relations." *Science and Engineering Ethics*. **doi:** [10.1007/s11948-020-00202-8](10.1007/s11948-020-00202-8).

While attention to research integrity has been growing over the past decades, the processes of signalling and denouncing cases of research misconduct remain largely

unstudied. In this article, the authors' develop a theoretically and empirically informed understanding of the causes and consequences of reporting research misconduct in terms of power relations. Their findings suggest that these aspects of power relations play a role in the reporting of research misconduct.

Kaptein, Muel. 2011. "From Inaction to External Whistleblowing: The Influence of the Ethical Culture of Organizations on Employee Responses to Observed Wrongdoing." *Journal of Business Ethics* **98 (3): 513-530. doi: [10.1007/s10551-010-0591-1.](10.1007/s10551-010-0591-1.)**
Putting measures in place to prevent wrongdoing in organizations is important, but detecting and correcting wrongdoing are also vital. Employees who detect wrongdoing should, therefore, be encouraged to respond in a manner that supports corrective action. This article examines the influence of the ethical culture of organizations on employee responses to observed wrongdoing. Different dimensions of ethical culture are related to different types of intended responses. The findings show that several dimensions of ethical culture were negatively related to intended inaction and external whistleblowing and positively related to intended confrontation, reporting to management, and calling an ethics hotline.

Lee, Gladys, and Neil Fargher. 2013. "Companies' Use of Whistle-Blowing to Detect Fraud: An Examination of Corporate Whistle-Blowing Policies." *Journal of Business Ethics* **114 (2): 283-295. doi: [10.1007/s10551-012-1348-9.](10.1007/s10551-012-1348-9.)**
Putting measures in place to prevent wrongdoing in organizations is important, but detecting and correcting wrongdoing are also vital. Employees who detect wrongdoing should, therefore, be encouraged to respond in a manner that supports corrective action. This article examines the influence of the ethical culture of organizations on employee responses to observed wrongdoing. Different dimensions of ethical culture are related to different types of intended responses. The findings show that several dimensions of ethical culture were negatively related to intended inaction and external whistleblowing and positively related to intended confrontation, reporting to management, and calling an ethics hotline.

MacDougall, D. Robert. 2014. "Whistleblowing and the Bioethicist's Public Obligations." *Cambridge Quarterly of Healthcare Ethics* **23 (4): 431-442. doi: [10.1017/S0963180114000103](10.1017/S0963180114000103).**
Bioethicists are sometimes thought to have heightened obligations by virtue of the fact that their professional role addresses ethics or morals. For this reason it has

been argued that bioethicists ought to 'whistleblow' -- that is, publicly expose the wrongful or potentially harmful activities of their employer -- more often than do other kinds of employees. This article argues that bioethicists do indeed have a heightened obligation to whistleblow, but not because bioethicists have heightened moral obligations in general. Rather, the special duties of bioethicists to act as whistleblowers are best understood by examining the nature of the ethical dilemma typically encountered by private employees and showing why bioethicists do not encounter this dilemma in the same way. Whistleblowing is usually understood as a moral dilemma involving conflicting duties to two parties: the public and a private employer. However, this article argues that this way of understanding whistleblowing has the implication that professions whose members identify their employer as the public -- such as government employees or public servants -- cannot consider whistleblowing a moral dilemma, because obligations are ultimately owed to only one party: the public.

McIntosh, Tristan, Cory Higgs, Megan Turner, Paul Partlow, Logan Steele, Alexandra E. MacDougall, Shane Connelly, and Michael D. Mumford. 2019. "To Whistleblow or Not to Whistleblow: Affective and Cognitive Differences in Reporting Peers and Advisors." *Science and Engineering Ethics* **25 (1): 171-210. doi:** [10.1007/s11948-017-9974-3](#).

In this study, participants were presented with an ethical scenario where either a peer or advisor engages in misconduct, and positive and the negative consequences of whistleblowing are either directed to the wrongdoer, department, or university. Participant responses to case questions were evaluated for whistleblowing intentions, moral intensity, metacognitive reasoning strategies, and positive and negative, active and passive emotions. Findings indicate that participants were less likely to report the observed misconduct of an advisor compared to a peer. Furthermore, the findings also suggest that when an advisor is the source of misconduct, greater negative affect results.

Mecca, Jensen T., Kelsey Medeiros, and Lynn Devenport. 2014. "Perspectives on Whistleblowing: Faculty Member Viewpoints and Suggestions for Organizational Change." *Accountability in Research: Policies and Quality Assurance* **21 (3): 159-175. doi:** [10.1080/08989621.2014.847735.](#)

Given the prevalence of unethical behavior in research, whistleblowing may serve an important policing function. Despite this potential value of whistleblowing to

organizations, engaging in this type of activity often has negative ramifications for those who choose to blow the whistle. Organizations may fail to provide adequate support for these individuals. In order to help inform best practices for organizations in terms of whistleblowing support infrastructure, the present effort content analyzed interviews with university faculty members regarding ethical decision making in which whistleblowing was a topic.

Nayir, Dilek Zamantili, and Christian Herzig. 2012. "Value Orientations as Determinants of Preference for External and Anonymous Whistleblowing." *Journal of Business Ethics* **107 (2): 197-213. doi: 10.1007/s10551-011-1033-4**

Incidences of organizational wrongdoing have become wide spread throughout the whole business world. The management of organizational wrongdoings is of growing concern in organizations globally, since these types of acts can be detrimental to financial well being. Wrongdoing occurs within organizational settings and organizational members commonly have knowledge of and thus the opportunity to report the wrongdoing. An employee's decision to report individual or organizational misconduct, i.e. blow the whistle, is a complex phenomenon that is based upon organizational, situational and personal factors. The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between value orientations of individuals and choices for particular whistleblowing modes. The results show that there are significant relationships between these variables.

Olesen, Angelina Patrick, Latifah Amin, Zurina Mahadi, and Maznah Ibrahim. 2019. "Whistle blowing and research integrity: Potential remedy for research misconduct in Malaysian institutions of higher education." *Accountability in Research* **26 (1): 17-32. doi: 10.1080/08989621.2018.1554444.**

This study examined the willingness of Malaysian researchers to blow the whistle when witnessing research misconduct. The results revealed that a lack of protection with regard to the whistleblower's identity, the tedious investigative process, and the notion of avoiding confrontation, which is more apparent in Asian cultures as compared to the West, are among the reasons why individuals who witnessed misconduct chose to remain silent. The authors conclude that institutions need to create awareness among researchers regarding the existing platform for whistleblowers, or to develop a systematic and clear procedure which is reliable and independent to promote professionalism in academia.

Park, Heungsik, John Blenkinsopp, and Myeongsil Park. 2014. "The Influence of an Observer's Value Orientation and Personality Type on Attitudes toward Whistleblowing." *Journal of Business Ethics* **120 (1): 121-129. doi:** 10.1007/s10551-013-1908-7.

This study examines the influence of an observer's value orientation and personality type on attitudes toward whistleblowing. Based on a review of the literature we generated three hypotheses to explain the relationship between these two factors and attitudes toward whistleblowing, and these were tested using data collected from 490 university students in South Korea. The survey comprises two parts, a measure of MBTI personality types, and a section assessing value orientations and attitudes toward whistleblowing. Regression analysis was conducted to clarify the influence of the independent variables. The study offers two main contributions. First, it examines what role an observer's value orientation and personality type play in determining the attitudes. Second, it provides insights into designing customized ethical training programs and developing policy aimed at changing negative attitudes toward whistleblowing.

Satalkar, P., and D. Shaw. 2018. "Is failure to raise concerns about misconduct a breach of integrity? Researchers' reflections on reporting misconduct." *Accountibilty in Research* **25 (6): 311-339. doi:** 10.1080/08989621.2018.1493577.

This article describes and discusses the views of researchers on the significance of raising concerns about scientific misconduct in their work environment and the reasons or circumstances that might deter them from doing so. In this exploratory qualitative research study, the authors conducted in-depth interviews with 33 researchers working in life sciences and medicine. A large majority of respondents in this research study argued that failure to raise concerns about scientific misconduct compromises research integrity.. However, further interaction with respondents highlighted that this correct ethical assessment does not lead researchers to take the consequent action of raising concerns.

Sundin, Josefin, and Fredrik Jutfelt. 2018. "Keeping science honest." *Science* **359 (6383): 1443-1443. doi:** 10.1126/science.aat3473.

The article discusses the authors' experience as whistle-blowers in scientific research in relation to a fraudulent scientific article published in the journal. Topics include advice on reporting corrupt practices in science, the need for research institutions to be ready for the reporting of research misconduct, and the role of

anonymity in preventing retaliation against whistle-blowers.

Vadera, Abhijeet K., Ruth V. Aguilera, and Brianna B. Caza. 2009. "Making Sense of Whistle-Blowing's Antecedents: Learning from Research on Identity and Ethics Programs." *Business Ethics Quarterly* **19 (4): 553-586. doi:** [10.5840/beq200919432](#)
Despite a significant increase in whistleblowing practices in work organizations, we know little about what differentiates whistleblowers from those who observe a wrongdoing but chose not to report it. In this review article, the authors first highlight the arenas in which research on whistleblowing has produced inconsistent results and those in which the findings have been consistent. Second, they propose that the adoption of an identity approach will help clarify the inconsistent findings and extend prior work on individual-level motives behind whistleblowing. Third, they argue that the integration of the whistleblowing research with that on ethics programs will aid in systematically expanding our understanding of the situational antecedents of whistleblowing.

Watts, Logan L., and M. Ronald Buckley. 2017. "A Dual-Processing Model of Moral Whistleblowing in Organizations." *Journal of Business Ethics* **146 (3): 669-683. doi:** [10.1007/s10551-015-2913-9](#).
A dual-processing model of moral whistleblowing in organizations is proposed. In this theory paper, moral whistleblowing is described as a unique type of whistleblowing that is undertaken by individuals that see themselves as moral agents and are primarily motivated to blow the whistle by a sense of moral duty. At the individual level, the model expands on traditional, rational models of whistleblowing by exploring how moral intuition and deliberative reasoning processes might interact to influence the whistleblowing behavior of moral agents. The model combines individual variables (e.g., moral identity), organizational variables (e.g., organizational culture), and external, societal variables (e.g., media perceptions) to explain the moral whistleblowing process and the impact of moral agents on organizations and society.

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