

Research article

Sensitive sources

Ethical challenges and methodological possibilities in sensitive research

Elin Wallner

This article problematizes humane research approaches in sensitive research. I explore methodological possibilities and ethical challenges when approaching sensitive sources with compassion and consideration, and creating safe spaces in the context of my ethnological research process. My sources, referred to as sensitive, are human sources, and the article is based on fieldnotes collected during my doctorate, where I used qualitative ethnographic methods consisting mainly of semi-structured in-depth interviews. Analysing my fieldnotes, I explore possibilities and challenges of employing humane approaches in research with sensitive sources, in relation to the concepts of *research ethics* and *researcher ethics*. Humane approaches can work as tools to access intimate information and to navigate sensitive situations considerately. However, such interaction can also open up for certain risks, which are ethically significant for both the quality of the research and the wellbeing of the study participants.

Keywords: research ethics; researcher ethics; safe spaces; humane approaches

Denna artikel problematiserar medmänskliga förhållningssätt i känslig forskning. Jag utforskar metodologiska möjligheter och etiska utmaningar som kan uppstå när känsliga källor bemöts med medmänsklighet och omtanke, och genom att skapa trygga rum i kontexten av min etnologiska forskningsprocess. Mina källor, som här benämns som känsliga, är mänskliga källor, och artikeln baseras på fältanteckningar skrivna under mitt avhandlingsarbete där jag använt kvalitativa etnografiska metoder främst bestående av semistrukturerade djupintervjuer. Genom att analysera mina fältanteckningar utforskar jag möjligheter och utmaningar med medmänskliga förhållningssätt gentemot känsliga källor, i relation till koncepten *forskningsetik* och *forskareetik*. Medmänskliga förhållningssätt kan fungera som verktyg för att få tillgång till intim information och hänsynsfullt navigera känsliga situationer. Emellertid kan sådan interaktion också öppna upp för särskilda risker, som är etiskt avgörande både för forskningens kvalitet och studiedeltagarnas välmående.

Nyckelord: forskningsetik; forskareetik; trygga rum; medmänskliga förhållningssätt

This article problematizes humane research approaches in sensitive research. I explore methodological possibilities and ethical challenges when approaching sensitive sources with compassion and consideration in the context of my ethnological research process. The article is situated within a continuous discussion about ethics and ethnography within the field of ethnology (e.g. Ehn & Klein 1994; Liliequist 2016; Hughes, Tidlund & von Unge 2022).

My sources, referred to as *sensitive*, are human sources and can be considered sensitive on several levels. The study participants themselves are not sensitive; rather, their positions as sources and the material they

provide in this particular context are sensitive. *Sensitive research* often refers to research about emotionally difficult topics experienced by participants as personal, painful, stigmatizing, intrusive, taboo or embarrassing (Melville & Hincks 2016). However, depending on the context, any kind of topic can be sensitive (Lee & Renzetti 1990: 512). Sensitive research can also refer to research projects dealing with “sensitive personal information”: personal information deemed sensitive by the law as regulated by the Swedish Ethical Review Authority (Swedish Research Council 2017).

The article is based on fieldnotes collected during my doctorate, where I used qualitative ethnographic methods

consisting mainly of semi-structured in-depth interviews ranging from one to four hours each. The thesis explores experiences of mistreatment in healthcare encounters regarding hormonal, sexual and reproductive health from an ethnological perspective. Such experiences can be sensitive as mistreatment can make individuals feel exposed, and such healthcare can be experienced as particularly intimate. In the interviews, the participants share experiences of being belittled, neglected, traumatized and abused. The sharing of such experiences can be a sensitive process in itself, and this article focuses on such interview situations reflected upon in my fieldnotes.

Interaction with human sources requires some level of interpersonal skills. In sensitive research, I argue that humane qualities such as compassion and consideration can be useful when collecting material. Ethnological research using ethnographic methods is often conducted in close proximity to people. The focus on individual experiences and everyday lives often allows ethnological researchers to come very close to their research subjects. Such close interactions provide unique opportunities for knowledge, where researchers' humane qualities can work as tools to access intimate information and to navigate sensitive situations considerately. However, close interaction also opens up for certain risks, which are ethically significant for both the quality of the research and the wellbeing of the study participants.

Analysing my fieldnotes, I explore possibilities and challenges of employing humane qualities in research with sensitive sources in relation to the concepts of *research ethics* and *researcher ethics*, which are briefly presented below. The following discussion is divided into two themes that emerged as especially impactful in my methodological and ethical reflections upon my interviews. The first theme is the creation of *safe spaces*, and the second theme is the use of compassion and consideration.

Research ethics and researcher ethics

In the legally required ethical reviews for research dealing with sensitive personal information, the benefits of the research are weighed against possible harm to study participants; *researcher ethics* are weighed against *research ethics*. Research ethics refer to the protection of individuals and how research participants are treated, whereas researcher ethics concern protection of knowledge, knowledge production and societal benefits (Swedish Research Council 2017: 12; Kalman & Lövgren, 2019: 14–15). However, ethical reviews do not necessarily mirror what is considered sensitive by individuals, nor do they capture sensitive aspects outside what is regulated by law. Sensitive research can pose challenges not always covered by general ethical guidelines (Melville & Hincks 2016: 2), and the ethical responsibility of researchers applies continuously, no matter if the research is perceived as sensitive in the moment or ethically problematic on the surface (Lövgren, Kalman & Sauer 2019: 67; Svedmark 2019:

114). Hence, continuous ethical reflections are required throughout the research process to avoid instrumental approaches based on ethical reviews (Lövgren, Kalman & Sauer 2019: 68). Such reflexive approaches include problematization of my own position and perspective as a researcher and how they might form encounters with study participants (see Ehn & Klein 1994).

In this article, I explore how the complex weighing of research ethics against researcher ethics manifests in practice when influenced by researchers' use of humane qualities. In sensitive research like mine, researchers must balance respect for individuals' integrity with getting close enough to understand what is studied (Svedmark 2019: 105). Such research can feel like an intrusion into someone's personal life. At the same time, there is need for knowledge about topics perceived as uncomfortable (Svedmark 2019: 106). In the following discussion, I apply the concepts of research ethics and researcher ethics to problematize such balancing acts in my interpretations of interactions with participants.

Safe spaces for sensitive sources

This section explores how creating *safe spaces* in interview situations can provide certain methodological possibilities, but also cause ethical concern. A pressing risk in sensitive interviews is the retraumatization of participants. Ethical approaches – in terms of research ethics – can therefore aim to minimize risks of participants' discomfort and suffering (Lee & Renzetti 1990). In such approaches, researchers can offer safe spaces where participants' experiences are sensitively and competently explored, instead of exploited (Melville & Hincks 2016: 19). Safe interview spaces shaped by researchers' consideration can protect participants' wellbeing, and therefore research ethics. Furthermore, safe spaces offer opportunities to gather intimate material; they might encourage participants to share things they would otherwise be hesitant to talk about. Intimate and trusting relationships between interviewers and interviewees supported by safe spaces can therefore provide unique research material – thus, also supporting researcher ethics of gaining and expanding knowledge.

The dynamics of safe spaces in my interviews have been influenced by carrying them out online. This was an effect of the Covid-19 pandemic, which challenged my preconceived ideas about intimate conversations being best performed in person. Online we were all in self-chosen environments. It seemed to make participants feel safe to be in control of where to be and able to leave the interview situation immediately and effectively. Additionally, self-chosen environments can provide personal information about both parties, and can therefore contribute to a more intimate relationship between researcher and participant. In one interview:

The participant's dog was lying next to her, sleeping and snoring. It became an icebreaker; something we

laughed about together. Likewise, my cat jumped into my lap and interfered with the interview a few times. It gave us a common position as animal lovers, which strengthened the feeling of informality and connection in the interview (Fieldnotes May 2021).

Increased familiarity, as in the above example, can add to experiences of interviews as safe spaces – where such dynamics can be a product of environmental, technical, interpersonal or other factors. Some participants attempt to strengthen informal interview dynamics themselves, for example by repeatedly using my first name during the interviews. The situation then resembles an informal conversation rather than an interview between strangers, and I am positioned as a fellow human being rather than an anonymous academic. Such participants seem more comfortable with an informal interview situation.

However, appearances of safe spaces may vary depending on participants' needs and preferences. Some prefer anonymity over familiarity, which might be further supported by the digital format. Safe spaces offered by anonymity can enable participants to share experiences not shared with anyone else, which is expressed in my interviews and reflected upon in my fieldnotes. Anonymity in the study, as well as in relation to me as unknown listener, can remove some of the social risks of talking about sensitive topics. In addition, compared to participants' loved ones, researchers might appear more interested in listening and empathizing without judging (Corbin & Morse 2003). Hence, participants can talk out of gratitude that someone shows interest in their situation, or out of a need for acknowledgement or someone to talk to (Lövgren, Kalman & Sauer 2019: 64). Accordingly, safe spaces and trusting relationships between researchers and participants can open up for harmful manipulation – consciously or subconsciously (Kvale 2006: 484). By being considerate and accommodating, researchers can create safe and intimate environments where participants reveal (sometimes too) much about their private lives (Corbin & Morse 2003: 338; Kvale 2006: 482). My safe interview spaces encourage participants to share personal and intimate information, which while good for my research aims, risks leaving participants feeling exposed and regretful.

Besides the factors mentioned above, accounts in safe interview spaces can be influenced by participants' previous experiences – in this case of abuse and dismissal. Previous experiences can discourage participants to set boundaries, to discontinue if feeling uncomfortable or to limit what information to share (Liamputtong 2007). I reflect about such dynamics in these notes written after an interview:

The participant repeatedly apologizes for not being coherent enough because she's upset. I assure her that she's doing great, and that it's more important that she's okay. I remind her of the possibility to take a break, change the subject or end the interview

if it's too hard or uncomfortable. She appears to be okay with the interview situation as such – mostly, she seems worried that I'd be dissatisfied with her efforts. Of course, I assure her that's not the case. She seems afraid I'd think she's wasting my time and that I won't take her seriously either (as the healthcare professionals she's met over the years) (Fieldnotes May 2021).

Many participants in my study struggle with trusting their intuition and judgement. In their healthcare experiences, their accounts have often been questioned and treated as wrong or irrelevant. Often, their boundaries have been overstepped without them feeling able to refuse or speak out. How can I be sure I am not pushing the participant's limits in the interview described above? The participant's previous experiences might inhibit both her trust in feelings about appropriateness and discomfort in the interview and her ability to set boundaries. Additionally, participants can feel obliged to meet researchers' expectations and answer questions "correctly" (Lövgren, Kalman & Sauer 2019: 65), which requires considerations about integrity regardless of whether participants share intimate stories on their own initiative (Svedmark 2019:106). For example, perceptions of what is expected might pressure participants to deliver information that is interesting or good enough, instead of what they deem appropriate themselves.

Yet another problematic ethical aspect caused by safe spaces, present in my study, is how interaction between researchers and participants in sensitive interviews sometimes borders on the relationship between therapist and patient (cf. Kvale 2006: 482–483). It is not necessarily wrong for participants to use safe interview spaces for therapeutic reasons, especially if it makes participants experience the interviews as meaningful – and simultaneously helps researchers to deal with feelings of inadequacy often present in emotionally challenging interviews (Nilsson 2003: 19). However, as I lack therapeutic competence and my aim is to gain knowledge, rather than healing participants, the interaction in research interviews should not be confused with therapy. Regarding research ethics, I risk causing harm to participants if they feel safe enough to deal with difficult experiences without professional guidance.

Compassion and consideration in sensitive interviews

In my interviews I have dual roles as researcher and human being, where I use my humanity as a tool to conduct the research (cf. Thornquist 2019: 135). Empathic approaches allow for closer interaction and more intimate information, as discussed in the previous section. However, the roles as researcher and human being can offer different courses of action to meet different considerations (Thornquist 2019: 143). In this section, I explore such dilemmas in relation to

research ethics and researcher ethics when applying consideration and compassion in my interviews. I begin with problematizing the use of consideration, which I view as an apparatus that researchers can plan and prepare, and then act in relation to during interviews. Whereas, compassion, discussed towards the end of this section, is approached as something occurring more dynamically and spontaneously – but still in relation to ethical considerations.

Consideration can become relevant when participants experience strong feelings, as I reflect upon in this fieldnote:

Certain topics seemed hard to discuss. Twice she started crying. It's hard to know how to handle this correctly. At the time, it felt like a safe and respectful situation, but afterwards I've considered a lot if I should've done something differently. I acknowledged her struggle, asked if she wanted a break, and when she seemed composed again and wanted to continue, I changed the topic somewhat so she'd be able to go on without being too distraught. I'm not sure that was the right thing to do. I didn't want to pressure her into talking about something so apparently difficult. But it was also a shame I didn't get more answers about these specific questions, since they seemed to upset and matter to her the most (Fieldnotes March 2021).

Out of consideration, researchers might need to end, pause or steer interviews into less sensitive topics (Corbin & Morse 2003: 347). However, as highlighted in the fieldnote, it might be hard to know which approach is appropriate. My intention was to treat the participant with respect and consideration when I did not push further about seemingly uncomfortable topics. Nonetheless, by avoiding hard topics researchers might limit conversational space (Melville & Hincks 2016: 10). My approach might result in overlooking relevant information and work against researcher ethics, as far as developing knowledge. In addition, showing *too much* consideration and assuming that certain topics are potentially harmful could limit participants' agency and control over what is being said about that topic (Corbin & Morse 2003). By avoiding certain topics, I risk strengthening them as taboo. In that way, my approach to protect participants, that at first glance might seem ethical (at least in terms of research ethics), may in fact be the opposite. Cowles advocates a direct approach that validates participants' experiences by asking about what makes them upset, showing there is no shame in discussing sensitive topics (1988: 171). Further, Svedmark suggests including participants in ethical considerations and performing risk assessments in interaction with them (2019: 114). In other words, the researcher opens for participants' own perceptions of what they will be able and willing to talk about and adjusts the study accordingly.

In my considerate approach, I often refrain from challenging participants' stories out of consideration for their prior experiences of being disbelieved in medical contexts. This could result in less nuanced answers, which in turn can affect the knowledge production and researcher ethics negatively, as disagreements can offer new perspectives and generate additional material (Vähäsantanen & Saarinen 2013). If a considerate approach prevents me from capturing certain information or challenging participants' stories, I risk becoming a mere spokesperson for them, and my research loses its critical potential. It can, therefore, be hard to distinguish between the voice of the researcher and the participant (cf. Liliequist 2016). In addition, the participants are prevented from reflecting on certain experiences.

Similarly, consideration of participants' emotional wellbeing can affect my interview structure:

I should probably have actively controlled the interview more, but it felt wrong to interfere, especially when she was upset. It felt disrespectful to interfere when she talked about something so significant to her – especially when sharing previous experiences of not being heard. Since she's been dismissed so many times, it felt important that she'd feel listened to in this context. Therefore, I also struggled to end the interview and went well over the set time (Fieldnotes April 2021).

Out of consideration for participants' previous feelings of powerlessness, I allow them control over the interviews' content and form—for example, control of when to end and when to change topic, as described in the fieldnote above. Even so, less structured interviews do not necessarily imply less control for researchers; power can be exercised through implicit and underlying means. Researcher-participant relations are influenced by multiple power structures and therefore risk being unequal no matter my approach (see Wallner 2022), requiring reflexive considerations (Ehn & Klein 1994). Still, less control and structure might result in reduced research quality if exaggerated, thus jeopardizing researcher ethics.

Although influenced by situational aspects and subjective decisions to some extent, consideration can be applied in relation to a planned stance. However, considerations can also be made out of compassion, where the employment of compassion is a more dynamic and unregulated occurrence. A way of expressing compassion can be to cry along with participants. Below are fieldnotes written after such an occasion.

When she first started crying she apologized and seemed embarrassed. I guess you often feel exposed when crying; something very personal happens outside your control; you are no longer acting “professionally”. I wonder what happens, then, when I cry, too. It could make the participant feel less alone in her exposed position; we are crying together. It

shows that I, too, react as strongly to her story, even though I might have even more expectations of acting professionally as it's part of my job. Additionally, it could be a confirmation that what she's telling me is moving and horrible, and that she shouldn't have had to suffer like that. After she noticed I was crying too, we laughed about the situation. We could step out of the traumatic event she was talking about and see ourselves in the interview situation. After that she calmed down and continued with a steadier voice (Fieldnotes March 2021).

Crying as an expression of empathy and compassion can be an important part of the research process; to use or give in to humanity in such a way can increase understanding and trust in the interview situation (Cowles 1988: 174). In the context described above, my crying seemed to make the participant more comfortable and enabled the interview to proceed. In terms of research ethics, it attended to the wellbeing of the participant, while in terms of researcher ethics it allowed for further material collection. However, other participants might prefer researchers to listen with compassion without being upset themselves (Campbell et al. 2009).

Compassion can be part of the research process, but, at the same time, risk limiting the knowledge production if given too much space. It accordingly requires reflexive consideration. Crying can affect dynamics of the interview as well as the researcher's focus. Qualitative research, therefore, requires a situational understanding, building upon an interaction between "common sense, feeling, expertise and accumulated experience" (Thornquist 2019: 145). While it is not necessary or desirable to be neutral in one's empathetic approach towards participants (Nyström 2019: 80), being empathetic is not enough either. In my approach, I risk being *too* empathetic. If too much focus is on emotional support (and research ethics), other things – important for the development of knowledge (and researcher ethics) – risk passing me by.

Furthermore, a compassionate approach could make me treat participants differently, as I reflect upon in the following fieldnote:

She talks quite matter-of-factly and dispassionately about her experiences. I don't have to provide emotional support like I feel I've had to in many other interviews. Therefore, I don't feel as emotionally drained afterwards either. Somehow, it makes the interview situation appear more equal. We are more like equals in an intellectual conversation focused on the participant's own structural analyses, rather than on her feelings about traumatic experiences. Of course, all interviews contain both elements to some degree, but they can differ a lot in their main focus. But why does this situation feel more "equal" to me? Perhaps I'm assigned (or take) a more authoritarian position when I'm met as therapist or emotional support (Fieldnotes June 2021).

The interview material is co-created by researcher and study participant (Liliequist 2016). However, the dynamics of such co-creation depends on my approach as researcher. The selected example illuminates how the interview's dynamics, as well as my approach to participants, may be influenced by my subjective and situational perception of the level of emotional support needed. Both research ethics and researcher ethics are at risk if I approach participants differently. The participants risk being offered different levels of support as well as different statuses as providers of knowledge. Furthermore, different approaches may result in different amounts and types of material. Here, a reflexive approach is required, to increase my awareness of what happens in the encounter and its possible implications for the research process and results (see Ehn & Klein 1994).

Throughout the discussion it is evident how being close to my sources and employing compassion make me engaged as a human being – on top of my research interest. In the following fieldnote I reflect upon this engagement:

The emotional effects I experience are partly empathetic reactions to capturing stories. But I also think it's because, all of a sudden, I become part of the stories. Many participants express how much the interviews mean to them; that their stories are finally believed and listened to. The interviews are not outside of their understandings of these experiences; they're part of their continuous meaning-making processes. I'm not a passive listener; by performing the interviews I'm drawn in as an actor in these processes (Fieldnotes October 2021).

The selected fieldnote illustrates how researchers are simultaneously participants and spectators observing and interpreting the interview (cf. Kvale 2006: 497). Therefore, sensitive interviews may be demanding for researchers as well, and they might, like participants, need emotional support (Corbin & Morse 2003: 344; Melville & Hincks 2016: 12). Although the individuals I meet are my sources and the interviews provide research material, we are still human beings interacting over sensitive matters in a sensitive situation – and ethical considerations can include the wellbeing of researchers too.

Human sources and humanity in sensitive research

Intimate interview situations formed by safe spaces, the topic's sensitive nature, and the researcher's humane approach can provide unique information and insights. Consideration and compassion can be used as emotional support, but also as tools to gain trust and access to certain information. Nevertheless, interaction with human sources in sensitive research involves risks, as do humane approaches in interviews. Despite the researcher's good intentions, participants risk being manipulated and thereby harmed by researchers'

compassionate approach and safe interview spaces – opposing research ethics. Furthermore, in regard to researcher ethics, compassion risks compromising the knowledge process by focusing on emotional support rather than the aim of the study and quality of research.

Ethical research approaches are not just instrumental requirements regulated by law; when problematized in practice they offer something for the research process and quality. In sensitive research, they help to illuminate the balancing act between researcher ethics and research ethics; a balance between keeping the purpose of the research in sight and considering participants' well-being. In order to meet challenges and explore possibilities provided by research with sensitive sources it is crucial to consider and define ethical limits, and to continuously and reflexively make conscious decisions about when research ethics ought to outweigh researcher ethics, and vice versa – and to not get lost in a never-ending ethical hall of mirrors along the way.

Author biography

Elin Wallner is a doctoral researcher in Ethnology at the Department of Culture and Media Studies at Umeå University. Her research mainly concerns patients' experiences of healthcare encounters.

References

- Campbell, Rebecca, Adams, Adrienne E., Wasco, Sharon M., Ahrens, Courtney E. & Sefl, Tracy (2009). Training interviewers for research on sexual violence: A qualitative study of rape survivors' recommendations for interview practice. *Violence Against Women*, 15(5): 595–617.
- Corbin, Juliet & Morse, Janice M. (2003). The unstructured interactive interview: Issues of reciprocity and risks when dealing with sensitive topics. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 9(3): 335–354.
- Cowles, Kathleen V. (1988). Issues in qualitative research on sensitive topics. *Western Journal of Nursing Research*, 10(2): 163–179.
- Ehn, Billy, & Klein, Barbro (1994). *Från erfarenhet till text: om kulturvetenskaplig reflexivitet*. Stockholm: Carlsson.
- Hughes Tidlund, Ida & von Unge, Elin (2022). Etik och kvalitativa metoder. In: Silow Kallenberg, Kim, von Unge, Elin & Wiklund Moreira, Lisa (red) *Etnologiskt fältarbete: nya fält och former*. Lund: Studentlitteratur.
- Kalman, Hildur & Lövgren, Veronica (red) (2019). *Etiska dilemman: Forskningsdeltagande, samtycke och utsatthet*. Malmö: Gleerups Utbildning AB.
- Kvale, Steinar (2006). Dominance through interviews and dialogues. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 12(3): 480–500.
- Lee, Raymond M. & Renzetti, Claire M. (1990). The problems of researching sensitive topics: An overview and introduction. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 33(5): 510–528.
- Liamputtong, Pranee (2007). *Researching the vulnerable: A guide to sensitive research methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Liliequist, Marianne (2016). Rethinking the proxemics of interviewing. In: Gabriele Griffin, (red) *Cross-cultural interviewing. Feminist experiences and reflections*. London & New York: Routledge.
- Lövgren, Veronica, Kalman, Hildur, & Sauer, Lennart (2019). Känsliga personuppgifter – mellan prövning och forskningspraktik. In: Kalman, Hildur & Lövgren, Veronica (red) *Etiska dilemman: forskningsdeltagande, samtycke och utsatthet*. Malmö: Gleerups Utbildning AB.
- Melville, Angela & Hincks, Darren (2016). Conducting sensitive interviews: A review of reflections. *Law and Method*, 1(1): 1–26.
- Nilsson, Bo (2003). *Brottsoffer: offerskapets innebörder och villkor i (o)säkerhetens kultur*. Umeå: Boréa.
- Nyström, Anne-Sofie (2019). Mellan empati och kritisk granskning? Forskningsdeltagande som risk. In: Kalman, Hildur & Lövgren, Veronica (red) *Etiska dilemman: forskningsdeltagande, samtycke och utsatthet*. Malmö: Gleerups Utbildning AB.
- Svedmark, Eva (2019). Att skydda individen från skada. En forskningsetisk balansakt. In: Kalman, Hildur & Lövgren, Veronica (red) *Etiska dilemman: forskningsdeltagande, samtycke och utsatthet*. Malmö: Gleerups Utbildning AB.
- Swedish Research Council (2017). Good Research Practice. Stockholm: Vetenskapsrådet. https://www.vr.se/download/18.5639980c162791bbfe697882/1555334908942/Good-Research-Practice_VR_2017.pdf [2022-10-05].
- Thornquist, Eline (2019). Etiska utmaningar och motstridiga hänsyn. Reflektioner över en studie från sjukgymnastisk verksamhet. In: Kalman, Hildur & Lövgren, Veronica (red) *Etiska dilemman: forskningsdeltagande, samtycke och utsatthet*. Malmö: Gleerups Utbildning AB.
- Vähäsantanen, Katja & Saarinen, Jaana (2013). The power dance in the research interview: manifesting power and powerlessness. *Qualitative Research*, 13(5): 493–510.
- Wallner, Elin (2022). Studiedeltagarnas roll i kunskapsproduktionen: en teoretisk infallsvinkel på etik och metod. In: Nilsson, Bo & Arvidsson, Alf (red), *Teori som metod*. Umeå: Institutionen för kultur och medievetenskaper, Umeå universitet.

How to cite this article: Elin Wallner. 2022. Sensitive sources: Ethical challenges and methodological possibilities in sensitive research. *Kulturella Perspektiv*, vol. 31, s. 1–6.

Submitted: 13 April 2022 **Accepted:** 24 October 2022 **Published:** 23 December 2022

Copyright: © 2022 The author(s). This is an Open Access article, distributed in accordance with Creative Commons, license CC-BY 4.0, which permits unlimited use, distribution, and reproduction in all media formats, granted that original author(s) and source are duly attributed. See <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>.

Kulturella Perspektiv – Svensk etnologisk tidskrift, ISSN 1102-7908, is a peer reviewed Open Access journal, published by the association Föreningen Kulturella Perspektiv

OPEN ACCESS 