

Ethics in science: Forms of scientific responsibility

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A convenient way to study the role of ethical considerations in scientific practice is to focus on the moral responsibility of the scientist *as* scientist. After giving a brief account of the notion of moral responsibility as it is conceived in mainstream Anglophone philosophy, I will distinguish three main spheres of scientific responsibility. (a) The responsibility of the scientist as a researcher, (b) the responsibility of the scientist for the use of her work by third parties and (c) her responsibility as a professional who offers special services to the wider public. In each sphere of responsibility we encounter a different set of duties and varying degrees of responsibility that depend on the particular nature of the scientist's field of expertise. Our account will finish with a brief discussion of a democratic society's responsibility for its scientific priorities and the choice of the legal context, which determines the conduct of scientific research.