



Sociology  
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

***Brown Bag Series***

**Matthew Patterson and Judith Taylor**

**Autonomy and Compliance: How Qualitative Sociologists  
Respond to Institutional Ethical Oversight**

*Abstract:* Prevailing sociological understandings of institutional ethical review tend to homogenize faculty responses to them, and are predominantly speculative. In this research, we conduct interviews with sociologists from 21 Ph.D. granting departments across Canada, finding three predominant “ethics orientations” among them, with associated cognitive maps and strategic actions. In our analyses, we use these orientations to complicate homogeneous appraisals of social researchers’ responses to new bureaucratic requirements, enriching our understanding of how such requirements affect the ways sociologists think about their occupation, approach their research, and mentor successive generations. These ethics orientations suggest the field of sociology is comprised of distinct political cohorts with diverging understandings of ethical review, and by extension, power and intellectual work. For some, ethical review signals a more consultative and therefore better approach to knowledge production, while for others it marks the end of an era of unfettered (and superior) intellectual pursuit in sociology.

12-1PM on Thursday, March 4  
Room 240  
(Light Refreshments will be provided)