

# The Ethics of Genealogy

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Joseph and Polly Knight Family Reunion 2024

Genealogical Proof Standard: Board for Certification of Genealogists

1. Reasonably exhaustive research
2. Complete and accurate source citations
3. Thorough analysis and correlation of facts found
4. Resolution of conflicting evidence
5. Soundly written conclusion based on the strongest evidence

Good intentions aren't enough. We need to do good work.

Citations style guide: *Evidence Explained* by Elizabeth Shown Mills

Conflicting evidence

- Primary sources > secondary sources > unknown sources
- Original information > derivative information > authored information
- Direct evidence > indirect evidence > missing evidence

Genealogy dilemmas

Double check the facts. Identify the parties involved. Pinpoint the ethical issues. Evaluate your options. Make a choice. Evaluate the outcome.

You don't have to publish everything on the internet.

Your distant relative is someone else's close relative.

Just because you write it doesn't make it your story to own.

Some records should never be shared online.

Many people today are intentionally not online. Obtain consent of living people.

There are many perspectives to every story.

We are each accountable for our own actions.

Make room for ancestors and descendants who are different from you.

What values are you prioritizing in your genealogy?