



DIALOGUES IN RESEARCH ETHICS

Friday, March 6, 2026, 12:00 – 1:00 p.m.

Don Soffer Clinical Research Building, Room 1270A

This event is in person, RSVP is required. A light lunch will be provided.

Click [here](#) to RSVP.

Ethics in Anatomy – The Meaning of Anatomy Education Today



Sabine Hildebrandt, MD, FAAA

Division of Pediatrics, Department of Pediatrics

Boston Children's Hospital; Harvard Medical School

In 2026, anatomy education means more than simple knowledge gain of structures of the human body. Rather, its potential as a first clinical discipline, as a learning and practice room for professional competencies – including ethics – has been recognized, as well as its role in professional identity formation. A new concept of anatomy integrates these insights from the domain of medical education in the framing of relational anatomy. This allows the analysis of relationships between learners, educators, and the human body – as donor or patient – not only within the space of the dissection laboratory, but also within their social networks and specific history. Herein, ethical questions can be explored that reach from informed consent and body provenance to the potential utility of Artificial Intelligence models in anatomy education. The relational anatomy model also invites reflection on the increasingly visible inequities in society that influence relationships and interpersonal connections, including in health care. Explicitly introducing learners to the concept of relational anatomy may support history-informed professional identity formation in a space characterized by trust and ethical deliberation, contributing to the learners' socialization as humane care givers.

Sabine Hildebrandt, MD, FAAA is a researcher and associate professor at Boston Children's Hospital. As a non-clinician, her research and teaching at Harvard Medical School and Harvard College is focused on anatomy and history and ethics of anatomy. Among other publications, her 2016 book *The Anatomy of Murder: Ethical Transgressions and Anatomical Science during the Third Reich* is the first systematic study of anatomy in Nazi Germany. As co-chair of *The Lancet Commission on Medicine, Nazism, and the Holocaust: Historical Evidence, Implications for Today, Teaching for Tomorrow*, she co-authored this commission's 2023 report. She is involved in various international committees that formulate recommendations on how to ethically deal with knowledge gained from coercive medical research and how to approach work with human remains in education and historical collections. She is an associate editor of *Anatomical Sciences Education* for the areas of history and ethics and a Fellow of the American Association for Anatomy.
