ISSN 2178-2229

DOI: https://doi.org/10.18764/2178-2229v33n1e28170

The production of knowledge in the history of education and research

Sônia Maria da Silva Araújo
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8240-9704

Abstract: This paper addresses the ethical implications in the production of knowledge in the field of the history of education using tools available in the global network system (web). Based on Certeau's (1982) concept of historiographical operation, it reflects on the work of the historian with the existence of the internet. Having done that, the discussions promoted by the National Association of Graduate Studies in Education (ANPEd) on research ethics are brought into the debate, establishing connections with the writing of the history of education. Finally, as a concluding remark, it is argued that thinking about historiographical culture today requires recognizing the role that technological development plays both in relation to the gathering of sources and in the methodological procedures in the construction of history, in order to understand the subjectivities and otherness that constitute it.
Keywords: historiographical operation; ethics in research; global network system.

1 Introduction

The world has undergone countless transformations with the invention of the global network system (*the web*) and its physical spot —the Internet— which has raised concerns about procedures related to the production of scientific knowledge and, by extension, acceptable standards of behavior in the process of data manipulation. If, on the one hand, the Internet, as neuroscientists point out, modifies the mental structures of individuals due to the speed of information and the infinite volume of data, which should result in a new way of thinking about the world and the phenomena investigated by science; on the other hand, it requires new protocols of conduct, capable of enforcing the efforts undertaken to date in the construction of codes of ethics that ensure the principles necessary for the generation, manipulation, and analysis of data.

In a reality in which the Internet assigns activities that until recently were the exclusive responsibility of researchers—such as data collection, tabulation, organization, and analysis—ethical procedures that guide the process of scientific knowledge production have become even more pressing.

In the specific case of researchers in the history of education, the endless data and documents available on *the web* generate a memory over which they have no control. Events thus become information devoid of the scientific apparatus that researchers used to guarantee until recently, such as the reliability of the source. Digital technologies have reached such a high degree of sophistication that the manipulation of sources and data has become uncontrollable, leaving researchers in an even more fragile and vulnerable position when carrying out historiographical work, especially regarding ethics.

An indispensable theme in the production of knowledge, ethics (or lack thereof) in research, with the indiscriminate use of the web, raises concerns among epistemologists and historians of science. The digital environment, as a space for data sharing and knowledge dissemination, makes the debate about the construction of new codes of conduct capable of at least ensuring principles dear to science, such as privacy, reliability, data integrity, and authorship, among others, even more urgent, hence the importance of addressing it.

The text consists of three parts. In the first part, based on Certeau (1982), we briefly discuss the term historiographical operation, coined by this important French historian, who lived from 1925 to 1986. Then, in the second part, based on an exploration of the term, we present reflections on the impact of the global network system (*the web*), since it is from this system that texts on history are also produced today. Subsequently, in the third part, we develop reflections on ethics in educational research based on the debate that the National Association of Graduate Studies and Research in Education (ANPEd), as a scientific association, has raised to preserve, in the case of history in education, the origin and reliability of sources. Finally, as inconclusive final considerations, we highlight issues that we consider necessary to reflect on the meanings of the production of historical texts in the current times.

2 The historiographical operation

A term widely studied by historians, historiographical operation is a concept explored by Certeau (1982) to conceive the process of knowledge production in history that combines meaning, subjectivity, and otherness. The fundamental idea underlying the historiographical operation lies in the basic understanding that writing history is a task, a practice, as such, manipulated by technical instruments, by rules of theoretical-

methodological domain that transform the contents of sources — cut out, incidentally, by the subjectivity of the researcher — into historical text, that is, of a discipline, of a specific institutionalized model of text.

The tools chosen and the perspectives of interpretation adopted make the operator a legitimate representative because, with their technique — recognized by the university institution, by academia — they turn their discursive construction into a text of history. It is, therefore, the act of doing that produces the text of history, not the text itself, but the process through which it was constructed. The writing of history is thus controlled by practice. History is, then, for Certeau (1982), the science of action.

This means admitting that rules are determined/determining for the product — the historical text — to be generated, which represents recognizing that for this operation there is social control parameterized by norms that give credibility (or not) to the product of the operation. Thus, the social contexts in which the academic institution has a place of relevance cannot be neglected in the process of constructing the historical text, as they are what organize and guarantee the text's acceptance as historical. Therefore, what makes the product of the operation historical is the place from which it is elaborated, the methodical practice developed, and its writing.

In treating the writing of history in these terms, Certeau (1982) brings into debate the conditions under which the author of the writing produces History; he addresses the bases of its construction, its epistemological status. It is a discussion of the place of the present, only apparently absent — its author — in the elaboration of the historical text. This is how the absent present, which manifests itself in the existence of the subject (the historian), confronts the past-present. Under this logic, the present is so much more important than the past because it is marked by the social and cultural conditions of those who produce it.

As a form of production that carries the spirit of the times, the demands of the present modulate the discursive production of the historian. Today, for example, this modulation occurs under the condition of a globally interconnected society, which substantially alters human language. Time and territory, displaced by this new condition established by technological tools, transform historiographical operations and constitute new practices, structuring other perceptions.

If the questions previously raised by Certeau (1982) brought into discussion "What does the historian produce when he makes history? For whom does he work?

What does he produce?" Today, we produce the same questions and include the effects of the global network system. With the narrowing that the Internet has caused by rapidly bringing territories closer together and making time more compressed and ephemeral, how is the historiographical operation now processed, lived, and experienced? In this new order, for whom is the historian's fabrication intended? What language is possible for the system's reach? What technical mediations are presented?

Certeau's (1982) position lead us, then, to question the specific place of the historian, with his particular social and cultural condition in the context of the globally integrated network system. In the correlation between these places, the historiographical operation becomes simultaneously local-global and subject to a scripturalist practice 'crossed' by these two dimensions. In this direction, the place where the historian's questioning takes shape can no longer be thought of as isolated in multiple pluralisms, that is, based on those supposed particular places that historians spoke of, because these isolated individualisms are now saturated with infinite interferences. Today, we must consider that this pluralism is in constant connection.

This situation makes us question the rules and tools we have been using. Furthermore, it makes us question what we question; in which structures we live the present that forms the basis for the possibility of constructing the questions we 'carry out' to construct the text in History. In other words, the historiographical operation, more than ever, requires us to reflect on the possibilities that this new order presents us with in the process of constructing methodical plausibility in the face of a reality in which the tendency to use an increasingly open system of rules is imposed.

The place where questioning takes shape, so debated and questioned by Certeau (1982), thus becomes increasingly fluid and complicates reflections between reality and discourse, making the historian's craft even more challenging. Today, the combination of social place of production, technical procedures, and writing in historiographical operation, in addition to making the subject less delineated and/or defined, now must deal with a new language to legitimize itself, one that the Internet has instituted. In this process of construction, that which was distant in time, the object of historical investigation, a mark of otherness, becomes ever-present. The other, the distant past, becomes a constant presence, the dead appear as the living to haunt us, because everything will always be there, on the Internet, to be accessed.

3 History and the global network system

Certeau's reflections (1982), selected here specifically to give substance to our incursions, demonstrate that historiographical operation helps us to question how this science of action fits in with the Internet. After all, as Certeau (1982, p. 68, emphasis in the original) rightly points out: "[...] Before knowing what history *says* about a society, it is necessary to know how *it works* within it." So, how does history function in the Western world of which we are a part of the global network system? How has it changed the historian's craft?

Beyond platforms for accessing documents, the Internet has changed communication and instilled in us practices that transform the way we operate the technicalities used in constructing text into history. Physical libraries, replaced by virtual libraries, and documents made available virtually, archived in folders, promote spiritual adventures in us that we had not experienced before.

This means recognizing that the Internet has not only brought about changes in the social life of historians, which reverberate in the way historiography is constructed, but has also impacted on the ways in which knowledge is obtained, produced, and published. There are, therefore, two intertwined points worthy reflection: 1) how the Internet shapes our bodies to the point of preparing them to produce historical texts; 2) the possibilities that the system offers for archiving data to be accessed.

Regarding the first point — the body — it differs from the changes brought about by humanity with the advancement of industry. The fingers that touch the computer keyboard to access the data that the historian needs to produce his text are not the same ones that invented the wheel. The skills that computer use produces in humanity create in it the possibilities and limits of its capacity to manufacture historiographical knowledge.

Regarding the second point — data archives — access promotes mental structures in the absent subject that make them potentially capable of performing historiographical operations with the tools available. The body thus becomes the material, physical element that mediates between reality and historiographical discourse. The body is, as Vigarello (1978, p. 9) says: "[…] the first place where the adult's hand marks the child, it is the first space where social and psychological limits

imposed on their behavior are imposed, it is the emblem where culture inscribes its signs as well as its coats of arms."

In this regard, it is worth remembering the reflections of Foucault, for whom

> […] society's control over individuals does not operate simply through consciousness or ideology, but begins in the body, with the body. It was in the biological, the somatic, the corporeal that capitalist society first invested. The body is a biopolitical reality (Foucault, 1986, p. 80).

When mediating the historiographical operation in the context of production in which the Internet becomes a privileged space for the exploration of sources, it is necessary to consider the bodies in contact with the *web* that make the writing of history possible. These are bodies that rescue other bodies lost in the past, a past that the eternal present of the Internet tries to seek. The voice that echoes in the lines of the historiographical text materializes what the body speaks, both vehicle and product of historiographical knowledge.

Brazil is the fifth most connected country to the Internet, according to data from 2024, second only to China, India, the United States of America (USA), and Indonesia. Parallel to this data, which demonstrates Brazilians' accelerated interest in *the World Wide Web* (www or simply *the web*), there is growing concern, as Oliveira (2014, p. 25) explains, "[...] about the impact of these media on social relations, educational possibilities, excesses, and problems of all kinds that accompany them." The circulation of ideas on social networks is, in this context, an extremely important factor that disciplines bodies in the production of historiographical operations.

Pierre Levy (1999), one of the first thinkers to question the impacts of cyberspace on the production of knowledge, highlights the emergence of a new and universal form of communication with the Internet: cyberculture. Browsing has thus become a practice that affects the historian's craft. According to Oliveira (2014, p. 26), this causes us to face its "[...] implications and potentialities in issues as relevant as the construction and dissemination of historical knowledge."

While the Internet provides historians with access to sources through newspaper archive platforms[1], collections, archives, and digital museums, it also provides Internet users with historical texts published on specialized magazine

[1]Library section where collections of periodicals, such as newspapers, magazines, and other serial publications, are located. These documents are digitized and made available *online*.

websites and social networks: X, *Facebook*, *Instagram*, *TikTok*, and *Telegram*. Has all this ease of access, conveyed by a new language, changed the way historians practice their craft? To what extent has the historiographical operation, so debated by Certeau (1982), undergone transformations with the Internet?

This condition compels us to question whether electronic textuality has transformed the ways of organizing and defining the criteria for accepting or rejecting arguments. Chartier (2010 *apud* Oliveira, 2014, p. 27) addresses this debate when he discusses the entry of history into the era of textuality, which "[…] has imposed significant changes in the construction, publication, and reception of historical discourses […]," and therefore also in the technical arrangement for the operationalization of reading.

In recent reflections, Ginzburg (2010), in a lecture available on the Internet, given in Porto Alegre, in which he reflects on "history in the Google era," argues that "[...] Google is an extension, a prosthesis of our body and our mind." A prosthesis capable of great *feeds* that we will never be capable of" (2010). He continues: "[...] Google, as everyone knows, is a powerful search tool. But it is undoubtedly a lifeless machine. Idealizing Google would make no sense. Refusing to see the energy it can unleash would be equally meaningless." Based on a case in which a person had access to his 1966 book "Os andarilhos do bem" (The Wanderers of Good), he states that:

> […] Google is both a powerful tool for historical research and a powerful tool for erasing history. Because, in the electronic present, the past dissolves. This contradiction is already changing the world in which we live and in which future generations will live.

The intensification of information to which we have access through Google is a powerful tool for provocation and, in this sense, reinforces Certeau's idea that the cultural plurality of which we are part of is what drives historiography, because without our questions, Google is nothing more than a lifeless machine. In addition to the historian's ability to formulate questions based on the intense information available on the Internet, it is necessary to master certain specific knowledge, as well as certain social domains exercised over it.

Based on his experiences, Ginzburg (2010) states that, with the advent of the Internet, the concepts of present and future have become more fragile, as has the past. At least, the past as historians saw it. This means recognizing that the world tends to

change its ways of producing historical knowledge and historians to reformulate their operation. After the Internet, we recognize that history will never be the same. That liquid perspective we mentioned earlier prevails and, as Oliveira (2014) observes in relation to historical data, the way of acquiring information on *the web* "[…] even if it is momentary and even unstable, has great significance for understanding the current forms of reading and writing of our time, which cannot be forgotten by historians" (Oliveira, 2014, p. 29).

Access to documents at the touch of a finger on a computer keyboard, network communication between historians exchanging information and interpretations in real time, access to digital journals in the field, as well as *websites* and repositories that provide data and reflections on a wide variety of topics in history (women's history, film history, childhood history, prosopographic studies, electronic repositories, etc.), indicate that historiography is online and this changes the historian's craft. The inexhaustible source of information that the Internet now provides and the production of texts with their own language (with reduced number of characters, use of more direct language, etc.) break down boundaries, dispossess, and displace the historian.

Displaced, historians now must deal with new media and information formats, which obviously presents them with new perspectives on recording, cataloging, articulating, and interpreting data from sources. This indelibly affects the practice of researching the past, as Bresciano (2010) points out, by putting the graphosphere — the culture of printed text — at risk. According to this author, technological innovations have introduced changes in information media and formats and given rise to new document configurations, namely:

> (i) **Electronic devices** (analog or digital) generate records of the most diverse nature, whether based on the written or spoken word, images, or a combination of these three media.
>
> (ii) **Computer programs:** (a) produce a wide range of digital documents; (b) enable data collection, analysis, processing, and presentation operations.
>
> (iii) **Telematic networks:** (a) are linked to specific documents (websites); (b) connect individuals and groups regardless of their geographical location.
>
> (iv) **Hypermedia technologies** link digital documents to each other, regardless of the nature of the information they contain. (Bresciano, 2010, p.12, emphasis in the original).

The cumulative effect of these changes affects the creation and communication of the past and the institutional organization of historiography as an academic discipline, according to Bresciano (2010). Borrowing Torkel's (2006 *apud* Bresciano, 2010) term "infinite archives," the author highlights the operational problems that historians will now have to deal with in relation to ways of recording, communicating, and investigating human actions, since changes have been introduced in the work of historians from a theoretical, methodological, and technical perspective.

However, what the author presents is the idea that the Internet, by transforming the way of being and living in the world so radically differently from the recent past, will require historians to construct new methods and procedures that completely alter historiographical operation and may be giving rise to digital historiography.

Strictly speaking, according to Bresciano (2010, pp. 121-128), digital culture faces at least some challenges that affect the study of societies in a diachronic dimension, among them:

1. Technologies broaden the concept of historical sources through the development of new classes of records, media, and formats associated with digital culture.
2. The widespread use of electronic documents marks the birth of digital heuristic criticism.
3. With the incorporation of computer utilities and resources, hermeneutic analyses are being renewed in all fields of historical sciences.
4. By incorporating various resources arising from the emerging digital culture, historiographical discourse is undergoing changes in its configuration, content, and forms of dissemination.
5. Over the last twenty years, digital historiography has consolidated itself as a disciplinary field with its own research centers, international associations, academic consortia, networks, and specialized journals.
6. The history of historiography as a disciplinary specialization benefits from the same transformations that affect its object of study in the thematic and heuristic field.

According to Luccesi (2012), we are facing an important moment in history and historiography, and it is necessary to understand whether this is a time of paradigm

reformulation in historiographical practice or merely an update of the ‘old’ craft of the historian, whose epistemological foundations rest on pillars that predate the Google era. Without a definitive and conclusive answer, the author states that, at the very least, we need to engage in critical reflection considering the rapid pace of change brought about by the Internet.

For this new history unfolding before our eyes, Luccesi (2012), drawing on the reflections of historian Noiret (2005), calls Wireless History, and reflects on the ease and problems of accessing documents on the Internet, in addition to discussing the resources offered for the production of hypertexts, based on hypermediality, written in several layers, with embedded search *links*.

The wireless history of the Google era is processed, according to Luccesi (2012), by relationships that do not require displacement, which means experiencing a new notion of spatiality. One circulates in cyberspace without even the need for a wire, while infinite references to Google's own sources prevent historians from finding the thread.

This historiographical revolution in digital writing requires digital thinking and digital readers, as Darnton (1999) argues. To this end, individuals must be mobilized, educated, prepared, and trained to deal with multimedia resources. The author concludes by saying that this would generate a network of networks and refers to Chartier (2009 *apud* Darnton, 1999), who lists classic devices of historical writing: notes, references, and citations, which are responsible for the techniques of proof and the modalities of construction and validation of discourses of knowledge.

Such questions lead us to an epistemological problem that directly affects historiographical practice, but this will no longer be a problem in an era when a new standard of reference needs to be established: hypertextual writing. This brings us back to a classic problem: authorship, the return of the subject, given that cybernetic hypertextuality will no longer be able to identify the author. Along with it, another 'old' classic philosophical question will arise: ethics.

4 History, *the web,* and ethics

Since 2007, the National Association of Graduate Studies (ANPEd) has been promoting discussions on ethics in research through various initiatives. And in 2013, it intensified its actions on the topic and came to:

1. Participate in the Human and Social Sciences Working Group (CHS) of the National Research Ethics Commission (Conep), responsible for drafting a complementary resolution on ethics in research in the humanities and social sciences.
2. Participate in the Forum of the Association of Humanities, Social Sciences, and Applied Social Sciences (FCHSSA), which has developed several actions on research ethics with the aim of creating its own ethical review system outside the area of health.
3. Create, in 2015, a Commission responsible for promoting discussions on research ethics and a space on the ANPEd Portal for information on research ethics.

In the Commission's preliminary document, published on July 26, 2017, during the 38th Annual Meeting, held in São Luís do Maranhão, it is clear that ANPEd's concerns were not intended to discuss ethics in the field of cyberculture, much less the production of hypertexts that would compromise the codes of conduct of historians in the field of education, but inevitably, the topic emerged in the midst of the group's debates.[2]

From then on, the topic was also discussed at Regional Scientific Meetings and, in 2016, at the Southeast Regional Meeting, held at Unirio, the "Seminar on Ethics and Research in Education: Between Norms and Commitment" was held. On that occasion, among the hot topics discussed were: *online* sources, research with historical sources, and regulation of ethics in research. For ANPEd, “[…] ethics in research is an essential issue and needs to be considered in the different instances of the Association, in ANPEd's scientific meetings, and in the process of training researchers” (ANPEd, 2017).

Following its decisions, the Association produced publications on the topic and, in this regard, has already made three *e-books* on ethics in education research available on the ANPEd Portal. In the first volume, entitled "Ethics in Education

[2]In fact, ANPEd's concern with the creation of the commission and the mobilization of its members to discuss the issue is linked to the struggle for a specific ethical review system for the Humanities and Social Sciences, Social Sciences, and Applied Social Sciences. To date, the National Commission for Ethics in Research (Conep) is linked to the National Health Council (CNS), and ANPEd, as well as the Brazilian Association of Anthropology (ABA) and the National Association of History (ANPUH), are calling for a system separate from health to analyze ethical conduct in the Humanities, one that understands and respects the specificities of research in the field.

Research: subsidies" (ANPEd, 2019), the authors address the concept of ethics and the rules established by Conep. The articles deal with ethics linked to themes related to codes of conduct for the satisfactory production of knowledge. They discuss ethics in research with children, adolescents, and people with disabilities; ethics in research with indigenous peoples, quilombolas, and traditional peoples; consent and assent; confidentiality in research; vulnerability and ethics in research; data archiving; integrity in data collection; data production and analysis; the researcher's stance on cases of abuse and violence; data falsification; the role of ethics committees; and self-declaration.

This first volume also addresses topics such as *online* research, plagiarism, and self-plagiarism, but, in general, it deals with topics that relate to a debate in which scientific knowledge was produced without current technologies, without the Internet, and without social networks. When it addresses topics related to the global network system, it does so with an eye to the past, when the *web* was not yet used in the production of scientific knowledge.

The question that arises for us is: to what extent do such rules serve to inform historiographical practice today? Would the unrestricted availability of images that abound on the Internet, without proper information about their origin, be prevented from being used in an important discussion about the past, based on these rules? Beyond "misconduct," limited to the falsification of data and results, problems of execution and dissemination, are historians not facing an untimely dilemma with the widespread availability of data without any control?

The organizers of this *e-book* state as their objective for that publication “[…] to raise the issue of ethics for debate and seek to contemplate the epistemological and methodological diversity that characterizes research in our field” (ANPEd, 2017, p. 11). Research in the history of education falls within the context of this diversity.

With the challenges posed by the Internet, with its endless possibilities for data manipulation (and processing), will it not be necessary to consider changes beyond adapting the rules that preceded it for ethics to prevail? Or will it be necessary, from now on, to make an epistemological break and establish new codes of conduct in historiographical practice? Is this concern of ANPEd outdated, since other issues would impose themselves beyond a specific statute for the Humanities and Social Sciences?

Ethics in research represents applied ethics. Broadly speaking, it aims to solve practical problems in life, the creation of norms and their relationship with values in different situations of human existence. Hermann (2019, p. 34) clarifies that it is "[…] the study of the ethical aspects of a particular social or individual issue and should not be confused with the mere application of ethical norms. Rather, it focuses on discussing the current and future consequences of decisions."

Further on, the author explains that:

> The purpose of research ethics is to resolve specific issues in research involving human beings that arise at different stages of the investigative process, involving the context, the ethical consequences of decisions, the researchers, the institutions, and the participants involved. It emerged in the aftermath of World War II, inspired by normative documents such as the Nuremberg Code (1947) and the Declaration of Human Rights (1948), among others, with the purpose of establishing guidelines for health research, aiming to ensure the integrity of people subjected to medical experiments. Subsequently, it began to involve the social sciences and humanities, which demanded normative guidelines specific to the unique characteristics of the field. The demand for ethics in research is based on the ethical foundations of human dignity, freedom, and diversity of individuals and social groups, as well as principles of integrity, transparency, and responsibility in conducting research and its results. These values and principles are justified by philosophical ethics and are part of a long process of creating *ethos,* thus constituting our moral self-understanding. They are subject to new interpretations as a result of criticism, reworking, and demands for clarification of concepts and their use (Hermann, 2019, pp. 34-35, emphasis in the original).

Undoubtedly, the Internet has presented us with new protocols for writing and reading, as well as new forms of sociability which, when taken as the object of history, need to be supported by ethics. The narrative records made available, the images displayed, in short, all types of material presented on the Internet, which accumulate over time, will undoubtedly, at some point, come under the investigative gaze of historians and are already being examined by scholars of the present day.

But what are the ethical parameters for dealing with this data? Will the rules of conduct from the recent past, established in the 1940s, be sufficient to address the problems faced in the field of humanities? Should the narratives created and freely available in digital media be subject to the same research standards that we have developed to date? Should the author of the narrative on the Internet be contacted and the use of its content as a historical object duly authorized by a declaration of free consent and agreement to undergo interpretation by the historian? Are the technical

standards established for the application of ethnography, so extensively refined by anthropology, suitable for digital ethnography?

Oliveira (2014), while conducting research on *websites* about Brazilian history, encountered a problem that is very common for those who work with sources obtained from the Internet: "[...] mistrust about the authenticity of information, manipulation of data, and problems such as plagiarism and lack of authorship [...]" (Oliveira, 2014, p. 38). As we will see later, this issue has also been a concern for the ANPEd Ethics Committee.

In volume 1 of the *e-book* collection, Nunes (2019, p. 147) discusses *online* research and highlights that the expansion of the Internet "[…] has generated profound socioeconomic and cultural changes, with direct repercussions in the field of scientific research […]." For the author, there are multiple possibilities for research involving the Internet, such as: object of study, location where the research is conducted, and research instrument. The fact is, the author summarizes, that today, conducting research implies using the Internet at some point.

For Nunes (2019), the ethical problems of *online* research are similar to those observed in more traditional research in the humanities and social sciences, but he points out that it is impossible to ignore the fact that they raise specific issues. Among these issues, he distinguishes: "[…] the understanding of what is public or private; the need for and manner of obtaining free and informed consent; the guarantee of anonymity and reliability" (Nunes, 2019, p. 149).

On the first point — the question of public and private — he raises the following problems:

> When you post a message on *Facebook* and that text is shared by thousands of people, does that post become public or does it remain private? If I participate in an *online* forum on "education and technology" with thousands of members, can I use the posts for research purposes as public or should I treat them as private? When accessing *tweets* that have been retweeted countless times by different *Twitter* users, how can we know who created that message? (Nunes, 2019, p. 149, emphasis in the original).

Regarding the second point — obtaining free and informed consent — the author points out that cyberspace is a very nebulous territory, where interactions are not always carried out by humans, but by robots. Sometimes the information is false, such as name and age. This hinders the possibilities of consent and assent.

In such cases, Nunes (2019, p. 151) suggests that statements should be sought in order to protect participants from harm or risk, guaranteeing them “[…] freedom, privacy, and self-determination in the research process, [but] their waiver may occur provided it is duly justified by the researcher […].” The fact is that the author recognizes the ethical problems arising from the use of the Internet in the production of knowledge and reinforces the urgency of discussing and enabling alternative solutions.

Regarding the third and final point — anonymity and reliability — he clarifies that, while in physical world research it is possible to create strategies for maintaining anonymity without causing problems for the research process, in the case of the Internet, this is complicated because the information is there with the authors identified, and even if the researcher creates codes to maintain anonymity, when exposing the content, it becomes inevitable to locate the authors through traceability.

According to Hermann (2019, p. 18), ethics is “[…] a field of philosophical knowledge that studies values concerning good and evil and a normative order established in society and culture that guides human action.” For the author, ethics has as its starting point the questions that arise in the face of complex situations in life: “[...] How should I act? What is the right thing to do? What requirements must I meet?” (Hermann, 2019, p. 28)

In the specific case of research ethics, which underpins the historian's craft, standards of conduct have been consolidated throughout the advancement of science in modern life. Currently, with the improvement of technology, especially Artificial Intelligence (AI), new rules are being established, referred to as digital ethics. As in physical research, digital ethics aims to ensure the preservation of the privacy of those involved in/with the research. Some institutes have already established guidelines to be followed by their researchers in relation to digital ethics, such as Fiocruz, which published a document in 2020 entitled "Guidelines on ethics in research in virtual environments" (ENSP/Fiocruz, 2020). In a chart on virtual research strategies, the text identifies documentary research under the item "virtual environment as a field of study" and breaks it down into two types: Restricted Access Information and Public and Unrestricted Access Information, with the first type requiring ethical analysis.

The Dean of Research and Graduate Studies at the University of International Integration of Afro-Brazilian Lusophony (Unilab) has also prepared brief guidelines on

online research involving human subjects, which are available on the University's *website*. Internationally, as Nunes (2019) informs us, the *Association of Internet Researchers* (AoIR) was created in 1999 to advance Internet studies in various disciplinary fields. Similarly, scientific associations, including those in the field of education, recognize the need to establish ethics in *online* research. Among these entities, Nunes (2019) highlights:

1 The *British Educational Research Association*, which published the document *Ethical Issues in Online Research* in 2011, revised in 2018, which included in the document the fourth version of the *Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research*, now incorporating online research (BERA, 2018).[3]
2 The *National Committee for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences and the Humanities*, in Norway, published the document entitled *Ethical Guidelines for Internet Research* (NESH, 2014) in 2014, and in 2019 published the English version of *A Guide to Internet Research Ethics* (NESH, 2019), based on the previous document.

Regarding digital historiographical production, Bresciano (2010) highlights specific forms of institutionalization of the production of this knowledge, in addition to those already consolidated, such as the departments of History and Philosophy and Letters, or even academies and professional associations. The author summarizes these institutions into five types:

1 Research centers: dedicated exclusively to applying new technologies to the study of the past and requiring specialists from other sciences, these are not covered by traditional history departments.
2 International associations: aimed at the global academic community, formed by entities from different countries and continents.
3 Academic consortia: organizations of public and private entities linked to the historical sciences, with the aim of feeding an Internet portal for historians.
4 Virtual networks: a system of horizontal and dynamic links between individuals and their respective contexts, aimed at exposing data and analysis.

[3]An updated version of the document was published in 2024.

5 Specialized journals: digital editions dedicated to the impact of ICTs on the study of the past.

In the specific case of the institutionalizations presented by Bresciano (2010), these are better equipped to address ethical issues in history when dealing with the field of digital historiography in particular. Thus, generic reflections on ethics, the subject of the educational institutions cited by Nunes (2019), take on a concrete dimension, capable of enabling the problems generated by *the web* regarding historiographical production to be addressed.

The discussion around ethics in research, with special emphasis on Internet investigations, as we have seen, has been widely explored and is a subject of concern for researchers in the field. The fact is that research in education, including research in the history of education, faces new dilemmas, such as the problem of privacy. Considering the subjectivity of the historian, who occupies a place that is never depoliticized and devoid of intentionality, as Certeau (1982) demonstrates, the establishment of rules of conduct is, at the very least, necessary. After all, a historical text, as the same author argues, enunciates an operation that situates a set of practices for its realization.

5 Final considerations

The debate presented by Certeau (1982) in the text *Operação Historiográfica (Historiographical Operation)* became promising for us to discuss historical production based on the conditions of possibility created by technological advances that resulted in the invention of the Internet. Discussing the historical ways in which a society, located in time, deals with the temporal relations of the past makes this author an exponent in reflections on the formality of practices and the formality of representations. In the context of this debate, tensions, power relations, and the place of institutions in the production of knowledge can be perceived.

Thinking about historiographical culture today requires recognizing the place that technological development occupies in this area, since, both in relation to the collection of sources and in relation to methodological procedures, the resources available to historians impose changes in procedures on their craft, which, in turn, have an indelible impact on results, specifically, and on the tradition of historiographical culture, in general.

From the context of dense reflections produced by Certeau (1982), which help us to think about the use of the Internet in the work of producing history, we highlight the production of writing. The writing of history based on sources openly available on the Internet is a point that cannot be overlooked, especially in relation to the dilution of the author's social position, the possibility of loss of subjectivity in interpretation, which adds to a topography of interests.

When dealing with the use of the Internet in historiographical production, inspired by Certeau (1982), we encounter the formality of a practice that reveals a whole structure of feeling between the lines of the written text, as explained by Williams (1969; 1992). It is this structure that underpins an ethic in which the rules established by science are the tools shared by peers and which support the community of historians.

Digital ethnography, when materialized through writing, is still a particular record of the absent author about the Other and, undoubtedly, in the context of the development of writing, digitization continues to cause changes and transformations in history. If modern historiography, based on science and method, has placed the writing of history in a given place, it is worth asking: what place will the operationalization of this methodological process occupy with its computerization, with its digitization?

But, by admitting that the social place from which historiographical writing is produced has shifted, since, with the Internet, history is no longer written only from academia, history courses, archives, and museums, but from a non-place, accessible to all exiles, it is appropriate to question the new ethics that are being institutionalized, a discussion to which this article aims to contribute.

REFERENCES

ASSOCIAÇÃO NACIONAL DE PÓS-GRADUAÇÃO E PESQUISA EM EDUCAÇÃO (ANPEd). **Ética na pesquisa em educação**: documento preliminar, 2017. Disponível em: 13 maio 2025.

ASSOCIAÇÃO NACIONAL DE PÓS-GRADUAÇÃO E PESQUISA EM EDUCAÇÃO (ANPEd). **Ética na pesquisa em educação**: documento preliminar, 2017. Available at: https://anped.org.br/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/eticaANPED.pdf. Accessed on: february 1, 2026.

BRITISH EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATION (BERA). **Ethical guidelines for educational research, fifth edition (2024)**. 4. ed. London: BERA, 2018. Available at: https://www.bera.ac.uk/publication/ethical-guidelines-for-educational-research-2018. Accessed on: February 1, 2026.

BRESCIANO, Juan Andrés. **La historiografia el amanecer de la cultura digital**. Uruguai: Ediciones Cruz del Sur, 2010.

CERTEAU, Michel de Certeau. **A escrita da história**. Rio de Janeiro: Forense Universitária, 1982.

DARNTON, Robert. **A historian of books, lost and found in cyberspace**, 1999. Disponível em: Um Historiador de Livros, Perdidos e Achados no Ciberespaço. Acesso em: 13 abr. 2025.

ESCOLA NACIONAL DE SAÚDE PÚBLICA SERGIO ARAUCA(ENSP)/ FUNDAÇÃO OSWALDO CRUZ (Fiocruz). **Orientações sobre ética em pesquisa em ambientes virtuais**. Comitê de Ética em Pesquisa. Rio de Janeiro: ENSP/Fiocruz, 2020.

FOUCAULT, Michel. **Microfísica do poder.** Rio de Janeiro: Graal, 1986.

GINZBURG, Carlo. A história na era Google. *In*: GINZBURG, Carlo. **Fronteiras do pensamento**, 2010. Disponível em: Sempre Avanti...: Carlo Ginzburg - História na era Google - Fronteiras do Pensamento 2010. Acesso: 13 abr. 2025.

HERMANN, Nadja. Ética. *In*: ASSOCIAÇÃO NACIONAL DE PÓS-GRADUAÇÃO E PESQUISA EM EDUCAÇÃO (ANPEd). **Ética e pesquisa em educação**: subsídios. Rio de Janeiro: ANPEd, 2019. p. 27-35.

LÉVY, Pierre. **Cibercultura**. São Paulo: Ed. 34, 1999.

LUCCESI, Anita. **A história sem fio**, 2012. Available at: http://www.encontro2012.rj.anpuh.org/site/anaiscomplementares. Accessed on: February 1, 2026.

THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR RESEARCH ETHICS IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES AND THE HUMANITIES (NESH). **Ethical guidelines for internet research**. Oslo: NESH, 2014. Available at: https://www.etikkom.no/globalas-

sets/documents/english-publications/ethical-guidelines-for-internet-re- search.pdf. Accessed on: February 1, 2026.

THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR RESEARCH ETHICS IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES AND THE HUMANITIES (NESH). **A guide to Internet research ethics**. Oslo: NESH, 2019. Available at: https://www.enrio.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/guidelines-for-research-ethics-in-the-social-sciences-humanities-law-and-theology.pdf. Accessed on: February 1, 2026.

NOIRET, Serge. La "nuova storiografia digitale" negli Stati Uniti (1999-2004). **Memória e Ricerca**, [S.l.], n. 18, p. 169-186. jan./abr. 2005. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1400/63377. Available at: http://www.fondazionecasadioriani.it/modules.php?name=MR&op=body&id=339. Accessed on: February 1, 2026.

NUNES, João. Pesquisa online. *In*: ASSOCIAÇÃO NACIONAL DE PÓS-GRADUAÇÃO E PESQUISA EM EDUCAÇÃO (ANPEd). **Ética e pesquisa em educação**: subsídios. Rio de Janeiro: ANPEd, 2019. p. 146-154.

OLIVEIRA, Nucia Alexandra Silva de. História e internet: conexões possíveis. **Revista Tempo e Argumento**, Florianópolis, v. 6, n. 12, p. 23-53, maio/ago. 2014.

VIGARELLO, Georges. **Les corps redressé**. Paris: Jean **Pierre** Delarges, 1978.

WILLIAMS, Raymond. **Cultura e sociedade**: 1780-1950. São Paulo: Editora Nacional, 1969.

WILLIAMS, Raymond. **Cultura**. Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1992.

Received in july 2025 | Approved in november 2025

MINI BIOGRAPHY

Sônia Maria da Silva Araújo
PhD in Education from the University of São Paulo, with a postdoctoral degree from the University of Coimbra. Full Professor at the Federal University of Pará. Professor of the Graduate Program in Education at the Federal University of Pará and coordinator of the José Veríssimo Research Group and Latin American Educational Thought.
E-mail: ecosufpa@gmail.com

Translate by **Ana Conceição Borges de Oliveira**