

After reading the Tuskegee case study, answer five of the following six Questions:

1. An explicit requirement of the Tuskegee study was that the subjects not receive available treatment for a debilitating disease, a clear violation of normal medical practice. Would any study involving human subjects that violated normal medical practice necessarily be unethical?
2. The Tuskegee victims were not informed -- in fact they were deliberately misinformed -- about the nature of the study in which they were participants. A basic guideline for human subject research, specified in both the Nuremberg Code and the Belmont Report is the requirement of informed consent. What would have constituted informed consent in the case of the Tuskegee Study? If such informed consent had been obtained from the subjects, would this remove all questions about whether the Study was ethical?
3. In what sense were the premises and the practices of the Tuskegee study racist? An important question to explore when examining accusations of human rights violations or of prejudicial behavior is whether the standards being applied are those of the time the action took place, and if not, whether this should affect any judgement about the ethics of the situation. (Conforming to official social standards does not necessarily imply that you are behaving in an ethical manner. Most people would consider the medical experiments of the Nazi Doctors to be unethical even though they conformed to the principles spelled out in the Nazi ideology imposed on Germany by the Third Reich.)
4. Eunice Rivers, the African-American nurse who played a vital role by befriending the Tuskegee Study participants and assuring their cooperation has justified her support for the project in terms of the fact that the attention that she and the other medical staff gave to the men was more than a non-enrolled, poor, Macon County resident was likely to receive. If you had been in her place, do you think you would have come to the same conclusion with regard to the ethical choices available to you.
5. The Belmont Report proposes three criteria for the evaluation of human subjects research, *respect for persons*, *beneficence* and *justice*, as described above in the introductory section. In what ways does the Tuskegee Study fail to conform to each of these criteria.
6. In experiments on infants, it is obviously impossible to obtain the informed consent of the subject. This is also true in experiments on senile individuals. Does this mean that ethical considerations preclude using such subjects in any experiment?

*All questions taken from <http://www.onlineethics.org/cms/9716.aspx>