Nursing Ethics: A Selected Bibliography, 1987 to Present

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The ethics of nursing is emerging as a discipline distinct from bioethics or medical ethics. Although these areas have many concerns in common, nurses are demonstrating that their perspective can make a unique contribution to ethical debate.

An especially dynamic area of discussion within nursing ethics is the philosophy of caring. The work on moral development by Harvard educator Carol Gilligan in her book, *In a Different Voice*, is pivotal in this discussion (IV B, Cooper 1989). Jean Watson, a nurse at the University of Colorado Center for Human Caring, also has written extensively on the philosophy of caring. She states that "an ethic of caring has a distinct moral position: caring is attending and relating to a person in such a way that the person is protected from being reduced to the moral status of objects..." (I, Watson 1988).

Even as the philosophy of caring becomes more predominant, however, nurses today are often drawn away from the caring role by forces prevalent in the modern hospital. First, modern technology can divert the nurse’s attention away from the patient and toward the operation of complex equipment, and second, large hospitals are often managed as bureaucracies (I, Fitzpatrick 1988).

A recent study examined the frequency and seriousness of ethical issues encountered in nursing practice (IV A, Berger 1991). A survey instrument that included 32 potential ethical issues was developed by the authors. Respondents were asked to identify what kinds of issues concerned them and with what frequency, and to indicate what resources were used to cope with these dilemmas. The study found that nurses were frequently faced with inadequate staffing, heroic measures for prolonging life, inappropriate resource allocation, situations where patients are being discussed inappropriately, and coping with irresponsible activity of colleagues.

The variety of ethical dilemmas encountered on a daily basis by nurses and their expressed interest in developing a moral grounding for the profession of...
nursing, along with increased attention to ethical issues in nursing education have led to an explosion in the literature on these topics. In the preparation of this bibliography over 1,000 citations were retrieved in computer searches of various databases: BIOETHICSLINE, MEDLINE and CATLINE (National Library of Medicine), CINAHL (Current Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature), BOOKS IN PRINT PLUS, and ETHX (the online public access catalog for articles at the National Reference Center for Bioethics Literature). What is offered here is a small sampling of that literature. Books and special issues of periodicals are briefly annotated, but citations to articles are simply arranged by broad subject, and within that, alphabetically by author. The subcategories reflect the topics receiving the most discussion in current literature.

This bibliography updates "The Ethics of Nursing: A Selected Bibliography," by Doris Mueller Goldstein, which covered the earlier literature and was published as an appendix to Ethical Decision Making in Nursing Administration (I, Silva 1990).

I. BOOKS


The National Professional Development Committee of Australia fostered the publication of a second volume of papers on nursing ethics. Articles cover patients' rights, ethical theory in decisionmaking behaviors, the nurse and the DNR order, and whistleblowing. Several appendices represent difficult-to-obtain documents, such as the RANF (Royal Australian Nursing Federation) position statements on terminal care, AIDS and occupational health, professional practice problems, and conscientious objection.


Following an extensive review of the moral foundations of decision making in nursing, the authors take the reader through a chronology of nursing ethics issues as they occur in the human life span, beginning with the procreative family period and concluding with the end of life. Each chapter contains discussion questions—an aid to educators using this as a textbook.


An overview of the nature of ethical inquiry and theory is followed by a thorough discussion of cases representing dilemmas in the nurse's relationships to patients, other nurses, physicians, and the institutions that employ them. The text is widely used in nursing education. A third edition will be published in 1992.

The premise of this book is: "An articulation of alternative approaches to health promotion, restoration, and even curing practices based upon the primacy of caring." The authors, both professors in the School of Nursing, University of California—San Francisco, identify three ways in which caring is primary. First, because caring determines what is important to a person, what is stressful, and what coping options are available, caring creates possibility. Second, caring enables connection with others and expression of concern. Third, caring facilitates both giving and receiving help. In the early chapters the authors use a phenomenological approach to examine the nature of the person and the nature of stress and coping. Then several chapters are devoted to the question of coping with various illnesses and their aspects. The final chapter addresses coping with caregiving, i.e., nursing, itself.


Coauthored by a nurse and a philosopher, this theoretical work relies on continental theories of philosophy (phenomenology, existentialism, and hermeneutics) to develop a philosophy of nursing, which, in the authors' view, is actually a philosophy of practice. They assert that a philosophy of nursing must be generated from within the experience of the profession.


The six nurses contributing to this monograph address pediatric nursing ethics in different areas of practice: neonatal nursing, intensive care nursing, community care, psychiatric nursing, nursing for the profoundly handicapped, and research. Appendices contain several codes that are not readily available in the United States: United Kingdom Central Council for Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visiting's Code of Professional Conduct for the Nurse, Midwife and Health Visitor (1984); the National Association for the Welfare of Children in Hospital's Charter for Children in Hospital (November 1984); and the Royal Council of Nursing, Society of Paediatric Nursing’s Statement of Values in Paediatric Nursing (August 1987).


Burnard and Chapman, both nurse educators, interpret the United Kingdom Central Council for Nursing's 1984 Code of Professional Conduct. Each of the 14 chapters illustrates a statement in the code and explores its implications.


A concise introduction to ethics in nursing, this work may be used as a personal tutorial. The book's design facilitates quick learning by highlighting major points, specifying educational objectives, and providing definitions and summaries.

Cushing, a nurse/lawyer, offers an authoritative overview of legal issues in nursing. Following a chapter on the “anatomy of a suit,” the author addresses the standard of care, nursing judgment, the safety of the patient, medication errors, communication and documentation, abortion, contraception, and medical treatment issues. The impact of the law on professional practice is considered in three areas: the employer-employee relationship, discrimination in education, and disciplinary proceedings before a licensing board. A final chapter deals with educational law.


Introductory chapters of this book discuss health care ethics, value clarification and moral development, and ethical approaches and principles. The authors examine bioethical issues from the perspective of nurses: informed consent, abortion, dying and death, behavior control, mental retardation, and public health policy. A final chapter provides case studies pertinent to the issues identified.


Written by a philosopher ethicist, a nurse ethicist, and a perioperative nurse executive, this work focuses on ethical dilemmas occurring in the perioperative period. Following an overview of consequentialist and deontological theories and a discussion of moral character, the authors respond individually to 16 case studies on such topics as incomplete sterilization, surgery on the wrong patient, and harvesting cadaveric organs. An appendix reprints the major codes of nursing and medical ethics.


Based on papers from the Ethical Issues in Caring Conferences held between 1981 and 1985, this anthology draws attention to moral problems arising “from our need to care and to be cared for.” The first group of essays is concerned with conceptual matters, and includes a contribution by Alastair V. Campbell on the nature of professional care as a vocation. The second group is issue oriented and covers, for example, choice in childbirth and the quality of life and services for the disabled.


The Linacre Centre identified the need for “a comprehensive account of nursing ethics which would be both faithful to Catholic moral tradition and accessible to a wider audience.” Dr. Fitzpatrick, a philosopher, drew upon a consultative committee of nurses and nurse educators to develop this scholarly treatise. The first half of the book is devoted to examining various moral theories and identifying fundamental moral principles, such as the immorality of killing, respect for persons, and the
fostering of honesty. Considerable attention is devoted to problems of life and death.


The two-part structure of this work focuses first on suggested basic principles and values in bioethics, and then the application of those principles and values to nursing. The contributors, primarily nurse educators, discuss autonomy, advocacy, accountability, non-injunction of harm, fidelity, veracity, justice, and legal issues. A postscript provides information resources on ethics in critical care nursing.


A lawyer, nurse educator, and nursing administrator have teamed up to provide a very brief overview of the possible legal liability of nurses. Written in a question and answer format, the book covers case law related to patients' rights, liability, recordkeeping, confidentiality, drugs, care of the dying, and what the authors term "ethical issues." A glossary of legal terms is appended.


Based on a similarly-titled piece contributed to Volume 7 of the *Annual Review of Nursing Research* (1989), this essay outlines the research literature on moral reasoning and ethical practice in nursing published between 1983 and 1987. The first of three extensive tables analyzes 15 studies of factors related to moral reasoning. A second looks at which instruments were employed to measure moral reasoning and ethical practice, and a third summarizes 22 studies of factors related to ethical practice and studies describing ethical practice.


The editor, a professor of nursing at Wayne State University, calls for the development of an ethic of care from the nursing profession itself, and not as a subset of medical ethics. Another development affecting the ethics of care is the multicultural aspect of nursing care and education; the nurse must increasingly be aware of various traditions and cultures represented by patients. This work presents different views on the moral and ethical aspects of human care.


The University of Colorado Center for Human Caring and the International Association for Human Caring sponsored this publication, an outgrowth of a conference on the relationship between education and caring held in Denver in 1989. Essays include: "Virtue, Ethics, and Care: Developing the Personal Dimension of Caring in Nurs-


Useful as an introduction to ethical issues for practicing nurses and nursing students, this book demonstrates the pervasiveness of ethical questions in routine work. Brief vignettes illustrate general ethical quandaries related to autonomy, disclosure, euthanasia, patient advocacy, confidentiality, and other topics.


Defining the ethos of nursing as its character or nature, the author examines the evolution of nursing, both in general and with regard to nursing specialties. Principles of professional practice as well as the concepts of duty, accountability, discipline, and health are covered.


In June 1988 the Center for Human Caring sponsored a National Conference on Caring and Nursing, and two doctoral candidates edited these proceedings. Contributors, mostly nurses, consider the art and science of human caring from the feminist perspective.


First published in 1961, Orlando’s work has been reprinted by the League. An important contribution to the literature on the nurse-patient relationship, the treatise marks a shift in focus from the patient’s treatment to the patient’s needs.


The compilers, a philosophy professor and a nurse administrator, view nursing ethics literature of the past decade as being derived from one of three approaches: the ethical theory approach, the moral principles approach, and the philosophical foundations approach. The latter is the one chosen for this collection of essays. Sections focus on philosophical foundations, patient advocacy, nurses’ rights, and the relationship of nurses to physicians, to other nurses, and to the institutions that employ them. This is a helpful and extensive collection of many contributions to the nursing ethics literature.

The authors merged ideas from their roles as professors of bioethics and nursing issues to create this overview of nursing ethics. Their purpose is to demonstrate that any separation of professional and ethical issues is artificial. Introductory chapters cover professional ethics and ethical theory. Other topics are: autonomy, the nurse-physician relationship, the economic status of nurses, and collective action.


The author, a nurse and Sister of St. Martha of Antigonish, asserts that "the goal of any health professional program . . . is to professionalize the human capacity to care." She views caring as nothing less than the human mode of being. After considering the attributes of professional caring and relating the concept to professional ethics, she addresses the erosion of human care and its relation to the crisis of values today. This work is an extension of an earlier monograph entitled *Caring: The Human Mode of Being, Implications for Nursing*.


An ethnographic method was employed by the nurse-author to observe the nurse-patient behavior in a large community hospital in the northeast United States. Both terminally ill and acutely ill patients participated in the research project. Particular attention was paid to caring behaviors, and what factors served to diminish caring behaviors. The study is an interesting account of recent empirical research on the nature of the nurse-patient relationship.


An outgrowth of a series of ethics conferences funded by the Division of Nursing, National Institutes of Health, from 1984 through 1989, this work provides an overview of ethical theory and applies that theory to ethical case studies contributed by nurse administrators who participated in the conferences. An ethics decision framework is offered by the author and then cases are considered which focus on conflicts between basic principles in ethical decision making: autonomy versus beneficence, beneficence versus nonmaleficence, and justice versus beneficence. One appendix contains six additional case studies, along with their outcomes. Another is the precursor to this bibliography, pp. 233–54.


By using a variety of databases and published indexes and by manually monitoring selected journals, the authors conducted a thorough search of the literature reporting empirical research on ethics in nursing education published between 1970 and 1990. Research on curricula, on attitudes of nursing students and faculty toward
ethical issues, and on ethical values of nursing students and faculty is also reviewed. Based on the 39 studies examined, several recommendations are made for the future of nursing education and practice. A final section identifies dissertations on ethics in nursing education.


A philosopher, a nurse, and a theologian collaborated to provide a basic primer on moral issues in nursing. Key topics include responsibility and accountability, power sharing and personal values, the nurse-patient relationship, moral dilemmas of the nurse administrator, nurses and society, moral decision making, and the relevance of moral philosophy to nursing ethics. Seven major codes appear as appendices.


The compilers of this anthology, useful as a textbook, focus on several of the key questions in nursing ethics: What distinguishes nursing ethics from medical ethics? What is the nurse's role in decision making? What are the ethical issues inherent to the nurse-physician relationship? How is ethics important in nursing research and in nursing education? Some of the most prominent writers are represented here.


The authors present 115 case studies that illustrate: 1) ethics and values in the nursing profession; 2) ethical principles in nursing (e.g., justice, autonomy, veracity, fidelity); and 3) special problem areas in nursing practice (e.g., human reproduction, psychiatry and behavior control, consent to treatment, and death and dying). An index is included.


In this extension of her earlier work on caring, the author, professor and dean at the School of Nursing, University of Colorado, advocates a "human science approach to health care" for nursing. She views adherence to the medical model for nursing practice as inadequate, since it neglects nursing's tradition of human caring. She goes on to develop her views of transpersonal caring. (This book is a rerelease of a volume originally published in 1985.)


The University of Colorado Center for Human Caring, the Hastings Center, and the Colorado Nurses' Association cosponsored a conference with this name. The keynote speeches of Sally Gadow and Daniel Callahan are made available here, along with summaries of the work of nine discussion groups. Dr. Gadow provocatively argues that the existing relationship between care and cure should be inverted, "designating care as the highest form of commitment to patients, encom-
passing as many different expressions of concern for patient well-being as we are imaginative enough to devise.” Care is defined as the alleviation of the vulnerability of the patient, and the ethical standard by which interventions are measured—in direct contrast to the commonly-held belief that cure is the standard.


Based on the author’s doctoral dissertation, *Nursing Rituals in an Adult Acute Care Hospital*, this study sees rituals—patterned, symbolic actions—as an aid to the nurse who must carry out difficult tasks. The rituals studied are post-mortem care, medication administration, and bathing patients. This unusual research supports the author’s view of the American hospital as a sacred institution. Although not a book on nursing ethics, this study provides insight into the nurse-patient relationship.


Beneficence, autonomy, truthfulness, confidentiality, justice and integrity are the principles that provide the framework of this multi-authored book prepared at the Westminster Institute in London, Ontario. Each principle is illustrated by three cases. Several codes are reprinted in appendices.

### II. ADDITIONAL READINGS


In recent years some nursing journals have initiated ongoing columns for the discussion of ethical issues, e.g. Western Journal of Nursing Research, Nursing Times, and Heart and Lung; while others have devoted entire issues to ethical topics. Some are listed below.


Critical Care Nursing Clinics of North America [2 (3): September 1990] published an issue entitled simply “Ethics,” which included articles by Jameton on culture, mortality, and ethics; Edwards on whether the DNR patient belongs in the ICU; Bigler on expanding responsibilities within the community; Pettigrew on intensive care nursing; and Smerke on caring.

The Journal of Medicine and Philosophy published an issue on nursing ethics edited by Sara T. Fry [16 (3): June 1991]. The editor, an associate professor of nursing at the University of Maryland, has selected essays that highlight how nursing ethics can inform health...
care ethics in general. She questions whether bioethical approaches are appropriate for a practice discipline like nursing. (Citations to individual essays are listed under subject categories below.)

_Nurse Managers Bookshelf_ offered an issue entitled "Creating an Ethical Environment," edited by June Levine-Ariff and Donna H. Groh [2 (1): March 1990]. The authors, both nurse administrators, are concerned with various aspects of ethics in nurse management: professional ethics and ethical decision making, confronting unsafe practice, whistleblowing, institutional forums, ethical guidelines, and the allocation of scarce nurse resources.


_Seminars in Oncology Nursing_ devoted an issue to ethical issues in cancer care [5 (2): May 1989]. Edited by Jo Ann Wegmann and Patricia Jassak, the collection of articles identifies several areas of concern for the cancer nurse: providing humanistic care within an ethical framework, understanding informed consent, facilitating the patient’s self-determination, providing pain management, dealing with ethical dilemmas in pediatric cancer, participating on an ethics committee, and functioning within a clinical research environment.

IV. JOURNAL ARTICLES/BOOK CHAPTERS

A. General


Foulk, G. J., and Keffer, M. J. The Moral Foundation of Nursing: Yarling and McElmurry and Their Crit-


Reeder, Jean M. Ethical Dilemmas in Perioperative Nursing Practice.


B. Philosophy of Care


Jecker, Nancy S., and Self, Donnie J. Separating Care and Cure: An Anal-


C. Codes/Guidelines/Policy Statements


Royal College of Nursing. *Guidelines for the Testing of Renal Patients for HIV*. England: Unpublished docu-
ment, Royal College of Nursing, 1991, 3 p.


**D. Decision Making**


**E. Nursing Education**

Note: The National Reference Center for Bioethics Literature supports nursing education through its Syllabus Exchange Project. Nurse educators have contributed many syllabi of undergraduate, graduate, and in-service courses; please call 800-MED-ETHX to order a free copy of the catalog, or refer to the annual cumulation of *New Titles in Bioethics* for a full list. (See Catalog Nos. 15–16, 32, 34, 55, 56, 58, 64–66, 122, 125–27, 130–40, 173–84, 197, 199, 201, 205, 229 for nursing ethics entries.) If you would like to contribute a syllabus, please send it to the attention of Mary Carrington Coutts, Reference Librarian.


van Hooft, Stan. Moral Education for


**F. Professional Professional Relationship**


**G. Nurse Patient Relationship**


H. Informed Consent


I. Nurses and AIDS


Gignac, Debra, and Oermann, Marilyn H. Willingness of Nursing Students and Faculty to Care for Patients with AIDS. *American Journal of Infection Control* 19 (4): 191–97, August 1991.


**J. Ethics Committees**


**K. Care of the Dying**


L. Nurses and Research


Robinson, C. A., and Thorne, S. E. Dilemmas of Ethics and Validity in

V. ORGANIZATIONS

American Nurses Association (ANA): Gladys B. White, Ph.D., R.N., Director, Center for Ethics and Human Rights, American Nurses' Association, 600 Maryland Ave., SW, Suite 100 West, Washington, DC 20024; Tel: 202-554-4444. The Center became operational in September 1990 and began publication of a newsletter: The Ethics and Human Rights Communique 1(1): Winter 1992. The Center's guiding objectives are: to promulgate a body of knowledge designed to address issues in ethics and human rights, to develop and disseminate information about and advocate for public policy assuring that ethics and human rights are addressed, and to assure that those issues will be addressed both within and outside of the ANA. One of the first projects of the Center is the preparation of a casebook of ethical dilemmas in contemporary nursing.

George Mason University: Mary Cipriano Silva, Ph.D., R.N., Director, Center for Nursing Ethics, George Mason University School of Nursing, Fairfax, VA 22030-4444. The Center was founded October 10, 1986 to promote education, research, scholarship, networking, and the dissemination of information about nursing ethics. Ethics Happenings, a newsletter inaugurated in 1984, will continue to be published by the Center.

University of Colorado: Jean Watson, R.N., Ph.D., Director, Center for Human Caring, University of Colorado Health Sciences Center, 4200 East 9th Avenue, Box C288, Denver, CO 80262; Tel: 303-270-6157.

SCOPE NOTE SERIES

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cessed through the National Library of Medicine's MEDLARS system), or by calling the National Reference Center for Bioethics Literature.

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No. 4. Diagnosis Related Groups (DRGs) and the Prospective Payment System: Forecasting Social Implications. June 1984. 11 p.


