

Book Review

Barsky, A. E. (2019). *Ethics and values in social work: An integrated approach for a comprehensive curriculum (2nd ed.)*. New York: Oxford University Press.

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FULL DISCLOSURE: The author of the book being reviewed, Allan Barsky, is a member of the JSWVE editorial board.

Dr. Allan Barsky's expertise in social work, law, ethics and mediation is once again well demonstrated in this second edition of *Ethics and Values in Social Work: An Integrated Approach for a Comprehensive Curriculum*. For those unfamiliar with his work, among Dr. Barsky's credentials are his Ph.D. and MSW in social work and his Juris Doctorate. Currently a full professor at Florida Atlantic University, he has 30 years' teaching experience, having also taught at the University of Toronto, Ryerson University, the University of Calgary, and as a visiting professor at Bar Ilan University in Israel. His teaching experience includes courses on ethics as well as social work and the law. He has held various leadership positions within the National Association of Social Workers including serving as chair of NASW's National Ethics Committee. In 2015 he received NASW's "Excellence in Ethics Award." From 2015–2017 he served on the National Task Force on Social Work and Technology. He also chaired the NASW Code of Ethics Revision Task Force, leading to the 2018 revisions of the Code. In this edition he brings the later experience to bear, providing new material related to the revised standards on the use of technology in social work practice. Dr. Barsky has also authored several other texts, among them *Conflict Resolution for the Helping Professions* (2017), *Interprofessional Practice with Diverse Populations* (2010, co-edited) and *Clinicians in Court* (2013, 2nd ed.)

This book offers a comprehensive study of ethical issues related to social work practice at all levels—individual, family, group, organization, community, and social policy. Reflecting new and emerging ethical issues (e.g., duties to protect in relation to clients who may be affiliated with terrorist organizations, videoconferencing, electronic records, apps, and more) this second edition has been updated to connect both old and new concerns with new laws and ethical practice standards, including the 2018 revisions of the NASW Code of Ethics. Two new chapters on international social work and private clinical social work practice have also been added. This edition also further addresses the relational aspect of managing ethical issues as Dr. Barsky has expanded the content on narrative ethics, virtue ethics, and ethics of care.

Like the first edition published in 2010, the text is divided into two parts with Part I focusing on content for BSW and MSW foundation courses and Part II focusing on content for advanced or concentration courses in MSW programs. Barsky's recommendation that the book be used across the social work curriculum is practical and seems highly appropriate. Part I will help students learn to identify relevant values, morals and ethics to guide their interactions and decision-making for all levels of practice. Part II will provide students with a "Framework for Managing Ethical Issues" that is larger than most ethical decision-making models and

offers a range of tools and strategies for identifying, analyzing, and responding to ethical problems, dilemmas, and breaches. Part II covers ethics in supervision, administration, psychopathology and mental health, child welfare, elders, international social work and private practice.

Chapters are well-organized beginning with a clear statement of learning objectives followed by topical content interspersed with new practice vignettes. Each chapter ends with a summary of key points and updated discussion questions and exercises. The revised ethical standards of the NASW Code of Ethics are well-examined, and the author supports his points with additional NASW Practice Standards and Guidelines, as well as documents from other codes and professions.

The new chapter on international social work focuses on workers' ethical responsibilities to develop competence in cultural relativism, cultural self-awareness, global consciousness, cultural humility, intercultural caring, and enculturation. The importance of having a clear understanding of both legal and ethical obligations as defined in the country of practice is emphasized. A section on comparative ethics alerts the reader to significant differences that can exist in the codes of ethics in different countries. The International Federation of Social Workers' Statement of Ethical Principles is introduced, and examples of how codes can differ in terms of their scope, detail, enforceability and specific standards are delineated. The chapter ends with a discussion on ethical challenges related to promoting social justice.

The new chapter on private clinical social work explores the benefits of private practice as well as potential ethical challenges. Barsky encourages workers in private practice to follow social work's mission by devoting at least some of their practice to social justice, helping vulnerable populations, engaging in community organization or policy work, and identifying themselves as social workers. Ethical obligations regarding competence, confidentiality, accessibility, continuity of services, safety, informed

consent, and boundaries are addressed along with appropriate marketing strategies and careful use of technology. Social workers are encouraged to develop appropriate support systems for supervision and/or consultation and backup. Barsky introduces the professional will that stipulates a plan for the possibility of sudden incapacity or death of the worker.

An appendix with a Worksheet for Managing Ethical Issues has been added to this edition. As the first edition, a helpful glossary, extensive bibliography, and index are included. Lengthier than most similar books, the 505 pages of text are well worth the time and effort needed to read and reflect upon the content. Of benefit to professors is an Instructor's Manual available from the publisher providing suggestions and further teaching resources. A modest retail price (\$65 per the publisher's website) contributes to the book's practicality as well.

An authoritative text, this book will help students develop the knowledge, self-awareness, and critical thinking skills needed to address complex ethical obligations and issues. The examination of new and emerging ethical challenges will test the problem-solving skills of seasoned social workers. I have no major criticism of the book, having greatly appreciated the author's easy-to-read writing style and comprehensive treatment of values and ethics. While the primary use of this text is intended for students, I would also suggest its value for individual and study group use among established social workers.