

# REVIEWS

**Nancy Phelan Walsh, RN, MSN**  
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## BOOKS

**Law and Ethics for Clinicians.** *Jacquelyn Kay Hall. Amarillo, TX: Jackhal Books, 2001, 394 pages, \$34.95.*

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*Law and Ethics for Clinicians* focuses on ways that clinicians can practice to avoid lawsuits. The book is not about law per se but is more about the theories and ethics of law. This easy-to-read text suggests that practicing good patient care is a “shortcut past the courthouse.”

Common ethical issues in relation to the law, how laws are made, and how ethics affect decision making are discussed. In my experience, few scholarly works simultaneously detail truths, values, and the laws that reflect those values with as much overall simplicity as this text manages; *Law and Ethics* is a wealth of information. After each section, “think-about-it” questions are featured to relate the previous information to current, everyday practice. The book is not intended to be read from cover to cover but, instead, as topics are needed. This book is suitable for a wide range of healthcare practitioners who have direct patient contact and is not specific to any specialty.

*Law and Ethics* provides a review of ethics and law and their relationship to practice. Ethical theories and decision making are discussed in a clear and concise manner. Each chapter contains key concepts, think-about-it questions, and references. The book is intended to change clinicians’ fear of law by educating about ethical and lawful practice. All major legal and ethical issues that healthcare providers encounter are discussed at length, such as do-not-resuscitate requests, living wills, malpractice, assisted suicide, the labor law, and licensure.

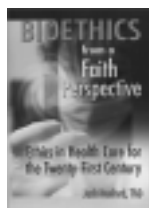
Very few tables or illustrations are included in the text, and those that are have no headings or titles. This is distracting because read-

ers must refer to the body of the text to determine what information the table or illustration is relaying. Despite this minimal shortcoming, *Law and Ethics* is an outstanding and timely book. Although most of its information can be found in law or ethics books, no other text contains as much information in a volume of this size. The information is up to date and describes situations that can occur on a daily basis. The author’s writing style is easy to read and interpret. This is an asset to healthcare literature and a great resource for all practicing healthcare providers.

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**Bioethics From a Faith Perspective: Ethics in Health Care for the Twenty-First Century.** *Jack Hanford. Binghamton, NY: Haworth Pastoral Press, 2002, 150 pages, \$19.95.*

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*Bioethics From a Faith Perspective: Ethics in Health Care for the Twenty-First Century* is a concise volume that describes the relevance, significance, and guidance that a faith perspective can impart to the field of bioethics.

The author is a pastor as well as a professor emeritus of biomedical ethics. In an admirably lengthy way, Hanford tackles the controversial religious dimension of bioethics. The faith perspective known best to the author is the Christian perspective; he offers a distinct Christian therapeutic perspective regarding the role that faith should play in bioethics. Although highly difficult to understand, this volume explains bioethics-related issues, making it a valuable contribution to the literature of faith and bioethics research and theory.

This thoughtful and dogmatic volume is comprised of 12 chapters and a multitude of references, which may be appealing espe-

cially to research-minded readers. Generally, the author states what he perceives to be the traditional divorcing of medical ethics from religion. A plethora of bioethics-related questions is examined from a faith perspective encompassing, for instance, managed care, organ donation, the Human Genome Project, mental health, medical technology, alternative medicine, physician-assisted suicide, and issues particularly impacting the elderly. *Bioethics* raises a great variety of questions for further research consideration and makes a commendable effort in demystifying the complexity and inscrutability of faith. Readers’ attention is drawn sharply to the potentially important role that faith perspectives can play in bioethics and healthcare decision making.

One chapter focuses on bioethics for nurses from a faith perspective. The author reveals a great deal of empathy for nurses and the tough professional challenges they face. This intellectually provocative book may be intriguing to nurses grappling with bioethics issues and instructive to nurses weighing whether to adopt a faith perspective when addressing bioethics matters.

Many faith traditions exist in the world. The faith and bioethics relationship may be better approached with a multiauthored volume that reflects on the disparate, wide-ranging views of ethicists, philosophers, and scholars attached to different religions.

Although the volume is written in a way that is probably too esoteric for many laypeople, *Bioethics* should be invaluable for nurses and other healthcare professionals.

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**Standing Ovation: Performing Social Science Research About Cancer.** *Ross Gray, Christina Sinding. Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira Press, 2002, 160 pages, \$34.95.*

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*Standing Ovation: Performing Social Science Research About Cancer* explores the question, “Is the use of a theatrical performance an effective way to communicate the results of social science research to healthcare providers and the public?” The authors, a social scientist and a psychosocial and

Digital Object Identifier: 10.1188/03.ONF.871-872

### Ease of Reference and Usability

🕒 Quick, on-the-spot resource

√ Basic

🕒🕒 Moderate time requirement

√√ Intermediate

🕒🕒🕒 In-depth study

√√√ Advanced and complex, prerequisite reading required

### Content Level

### Book Size

📖 Pocket size

📖📖 Intermediate

📖📖📖 Desk reference