

BOOK REVIEW

Ethics in Psychology: Professional Standards and Cases (Third Edition)

By Gerald P. Koocher, Patricia Keith-Spiegel, Oxford University Press, 2008

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Given the sacred nature of the professional trust we, as mental health professionals, are accorded by our clients and society, we must endeavour to do our utmost to act with ethical integrity. Our clients' well-being is entrusted to us, and necessitates a sound and sophisticated understanding and awareness of ethical issues and the subtleties associated with ethical dilemmas. Koocher and Keith-Spiegel, in their third edition of *Ethics in Psychology and the Mental Health Professions: Standards and Cases* provide an exceptional resource to inform mental health care ethical decision-making.

Koocher and Keith-Spiegel, in their 2008 edition, have expanded their book to address not only ethics in psychology, but also ethics in other mental health professions, including counseling, social work, family therapy, and psychiatry. This expansion is particularly useful given the wide range of professionals practicing in the behavioural health and mental health professions, and the core themes that cut across the practice of multiple mental health professions. The ability to cross reference with the codes of ethics of key mental health professions is critical given the heightened focus on interdisciplinary care and interprofessional education.

The third edition has expanded from 17 to 19 chapters, and has six appendices, including the codes of ethics of the American Psychological Association, Canadian Psychological Association, American Counseling Association, National Association of Social Workers, American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, and the American Psychiatric Association: *The Principles of Medical Ethics with Annotations Especially Applicable to Psychiatry*.

The book provides an excellent educational tool, text, and resource for the challenging clinical, educational, organizational, and research decisions faced by students/supervisees, as well as more seasoned mental health professionals. As the authors indicate, the goal of the book is to sensitize the reader to ethical issues that may be encountered with the intent of providing a comprehensive resource on a myriad of ethical issues that may be addressed in the mental health professions. In addition, the goal of the book is to enhance the ability of the mental health professional to prevent or avoid ethical misconduct. Although the book would appear

to be primarily targeted at an American audience, the authors' discussion encompasses the Canadian Code of Ethics for Psychologists, thereby complementing books on Canadian ethics and legislation.

The third edition expands on many of the same topics as the second edition not only by enhancing the content and discussion to address multiple mental health professions, but also, for example, by elaborating on the discussion of multiple-role relationships in three chapters rather than two. The latest edition is a comprehensive exploration of ethical issues in a broad array of areas, including psychotherapy, assessment, challenging work settings, academic and legal settings, scholarly publication and research and mental health business and marketing. The chapters "On Being Ethical", "Making Ethical Decisions and Taking Action", and "Knowing Thyself" are particularly important for highlighting the nuances of self-awareness and self-evaluation required for ethical practice. To enhance comprehensiveness, the authors also provide frequent cross-references to inform readers of where other information may be found in the book that is relevant to a particular issue or dilemma. An index at the beginning of each chapter, the summary boxes contained in many of the chapters, and the summary guidelines at the end of each chapter are extremely useful stylistic tools for structuring the content and reinforcing understanding.

The text is beautifully written in a respectful, sensitive, and engaging manner. The authors delicately balance ethical content with thoughtful discussion and deliberation. The book is an extremely interesting read, and uses witty and amusing case-example pseudonyms to add to its readability.

Koocher and Keith-Spiegel use hundreds of case examples throughout the book to enhance understanding of each of the content areas. These examples are garnered and adapted from ethics committees, licensing board decisions, case law, and publicized cases. The authors assure the reader that case examples are fully disguised, with the exception of public information. The authors demonstrate sensitivity and awareness by describing, in a very transparent manner, the use of pseudonyms and the "highly contrived" nature of the case examples.

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Given the sensitivity and complexity of the issues addressed by mental health professionals and the critical role of ethical awareness, understanding, and application in mental health practice, this book is an essential resource for mental health professionals. As Koocher and Keith-Spiegel state in their dedication, this book will provide mental health professionals with the resource they require “to demonstrate the courage to act with integrity.”

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