

AUTHOR'S QUERY SHEET

Author(s): RESW 260164

Article title:

Article no:

Dear Author

The following queries have arisen during the editing of your manuscript and are identified on the proofs. Unless advised otherwise, please submit all corrections using the CATS online correction form.

- AQ1 Page reference available for the quote commencing “transfer of emphasis in the professional education ...”?
- AQ2 “four adult children (one son and two daughters)”: one plus two = three, not four. Please advise.

UNCORRECTED PROOF

Book Reviews

Social Work and Disadvantage: Addressing the Roots of Stigma through Association, edited by Peter Burke and Jonathan Parker. London: Jessica Kingsley, 2006, ISBN: 9781843103646, 176 pp.

Customarily, social workers and policy makers refer to vulnerable populations by labels such as 'impaired', 'unemployed', 'disabled', 'minority', 'foster child', 'single parent', and so forth. Whether consciously or unconsciously, such labels serve to locate the characteristic that makes the individual vulnerable within him or herself. In contrast, Burke, Parker and the authors they have assembled focus primarily on disadvantage and stigma as the factors that make individuals vulnerable. The authors acknowledge that impairments and other intrinsic conditions of the individual may contribute to disadvantage. However, the emphasis is on stigma, discrimination, and economic and developmental conditions outside the individual that are often more incapacitating to individuals, their families and associated others than their individual characteristics and impairments.

In the first chapter, Burke articulates a theoretical framework that will be used and expanded upon in subsequent chapters. This framework explores three key concepts: stigma, disability, and disability by association. Burke's model of stigma has three aspects, social (day-to-day interactions), situational (the circumstances related to location, place and identity) and structural (treatment by people of authority or institutions). All these aspects can contribute to social exclusion. Burke then turns to a discussion of the nature of disability. He uses a 'social model' of disability to illustrate how 'social experience constructs disability beyond the level of specific impairment' (p. 20). Under this theory, social conditions reinforce and amplify incapacity over and above organic impairments. Finally, Burke articulates a concept of disability by association. This is consistent with Goffman's notion of disability as a 'spoiled identity' (Goffman 1963, p 121); however, Burke notes that the stigma and disadvantage often extend beyond individuals with disabilities to their siblings, families and other close associations. Thus, Burke notes, stigma and disadvantage are like a contagion.

Chapters 2–8 explore and expand upon this framework. The concept of 'social disability', as illustrated in Chapter 1, is revealed to be similar to other conditions experienced by the individuals with whom social workers typically

interact. Similarly, the concept of 'disability by association' is transformed into the concept of 'associative disadvantage'. These chapters explore Burke's framework with a variety of populations. In some cases these chapters explore the experiences of family members. For example, Deverell explores the experiences not merely of foster children but of their parents. Burke and Fell report on their study of non-disabled members of families with a disabled child. One of the most interesting and provocative chapters along these lines is Guy's on the families of substance abusers. This chapter notes the rhetorical connections between social exclusionary policies of the Nazi period in Germany to modern treatment of substance abusers and their families.

It is not surprising, given that the framework originates in thinking about disability, that there would be chapters on chronic illness (chap. 8) or HIV/AIDS. More surprising, but no less timely, are chapters on aging gay men and lesbian women, and a chapter on 'Constructing Dementia' and 'Dementia Care'.

These middle chapters (2-8) appear to be designed more to be thought provoking than comprehensive in applying the framework that Burke articulates in Chapter 1. Indeed, the framework could be applied to many other populations and areas of social work practice. Nevertheless, the book does not cover all the areas that might have been of interest to readers. This was probably a good decision on the part of the editors, since it would have been difficult to address all areas adequately. Moreover, these chapters make up for lack of comprehensiveness by being creative and interesting. Most readers will find examples and applications of the framework that they would have been unlikely to consider. Thus, the rather unique and somewhat iconoclastic set of examples expands on the framework in ways that are likely to give readers ideas about how to apply the theory to their own fields of practice, even if they are not covered in the book.

Parker's penultimate chapter on anti-oppressive practice is an excellent capstone to the chapters focusing on fields of practice. This chapter addresses how social workers, by engaging in practice that is unreflectively politically correct, may actually contribute to stigma and oppression. This chapter highlights the need for social workers to be aware of the true sources of oppression that their clients face, and the need for practices that serve the social as well as biological and ostensible needs of their clients.

Burke's final chapter summarizes the important amplifications to the framework that have been developed in previous chapters, and summarizes some general implications for practice. Primarily these fall into three categories that he refers to as the three 'Rs': rights, responsibilities, and reflections. While readers of the journal *Ethics and Social Welfare* will find the first two interesting, it is the third that this reader found most interesting and important. The importance of this work is not in any new or previously undiscovered facts. Rather, it is in their unique ability to reflect on facts, conditions and situations, viewing them through the lens of stigma and oppression. The result is a viewpoint

that is different from that of most social workers, but one that this reader suspects would be especially congenial and familiar to many client groups and their families.

This is an excellent and timely look at stigma in modern context, and is an excellent contrast to the often overly concrete approaches to practice that neither reflect nor encourage practitioners to reflect on the implications of their practices and the systems in which they work. The book would be equally at home in an introductory social work practice course or a doctoral seminar, and will surely find its way into courses taught by this reviewer.

Richard L. Beaulaurier

Associate Professor of Social Work at Florida International University

© 2007 Richard L. Beaulaurier

Reference

Goffman, E. (1963) *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity*, Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ.

Reflecting on Social Work: Discipline and Profession, edited by Robin Lovelock, Karen Lyons and Jackie Powell. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004, ISBN: 0754619052, 262 pp.

The critical tradition in social work is difficult to pin down, and this difficulty provides both strength and weakness in *Reflecting on Social Work*, a collection of essays by leading academics which aims to re-examine that tradition in a contemporary context, with an emphasis on the contribution that the academy can make.

One problem in trying to summarize the critical perspective is its multi-faceted nature: there are many and various strands of critical thought, and this, indeed, represents a particular virtue of the tradition, reflecting a readiness to engage with the complexities and breadth of the field. The editors of *Reflecting on Social Work* are equally ready to tackle diverse concerns of critical practices; they do not seek to impose or force a conclusion, but rather present the book as an invitation to explore the political and ethical dimensions of social work, in a context which, they feel, gives increasing stress to its technical aspect.

It could be said, however, that inherent in this very attribute is a drawback, in terms of the disparate nature of the collection. This is a 'family' of essays, connected by a concern for the role of research and theory in practice, and exploring the contribution of social work as a university discipline. At times, though, the unifying factor is more about what the authors are against (primarily

evidence-based practice) than any sense of a shared project. I wondered, for instance, how James's call for a return to Hollis's psychodynamically informed casework approach sat with—for example—Humphries' analysis of the centrality of the political and policy role of critical social work practice.

Nevertheless, this is an absorbing book, whose strengths clearly outweigh any such reservations. Overall, its chapters offer a range of perspectives and provide encouraging evidence of the renewed vitality of the debate, and of the contribution social work, as an academic discipline, can make to the profession. Parton and Jordan explore the recent history of social work and argue for a renewal of social work through the incorporation of new modes of community-minded practices. James shares the concern of other authors in the collection about the impact of managerialism on practice and looks back to the future, calling for a revival of the casework approach. Butler and Pugh are also concerned with the increasing narrowness in social work. They focus on the idea of a technical evidence-based practice, which, while offering increased support for research activity, may entail losing the critical, ethical and political dimensions of social work research. Lyons and Taylor focus on the gendered nature of knowledge and explore the implications for research, education and the nature of professionalism. For Trevellion, social work research is at a crossroads, with the potential to make a significant contribution to the renewal of services, drawing on its long tradition of research and partnership as empowerment. Humphries looks at the idea of research as a moral and political activity. Alongside the idea of commitment which this entails, she emphasizes the role of research as a rigorous activity of questioning and challenging not only others' but also one's own perspective.

From different viewpoints, Lorenz and Gould celebrate the diversity of social work as an activity across cultures and time (in Lorenz's case) and (in Gould's case) in relation to the range of sources of knowledge with which the profession needs to engage. Kearney also explores this complexity in the relationship between research and practice, and highlights the essentially creative nature of social work practice, which has to participate in the dynamic narratives of human activity, rather than seeking and imposing a truth.

In the final chapter, Powell and Lovelock pick up, in particular, the contribution of Foucault and Habermas to critical practice, and offer an insightful and cogent analysis of their contributions.

In conclusion, *Reflecting on Social Work* is both a contribution to and an invitation to join important debates in contemporary social work, and as such should be required reading on all university social work courses.

Tony Evans

*Lecturer in Social Work at the Department of Social Policy and Social Work,
University of York, UK*

© 2007 Tony Evans

International Perspectives on Social Work: Global Conditions and Local Practice, by Karen Lyons, Kathleen Manion and Mary Carlsen. Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2006, ISBN: 9781403939517, 258 pp.

As concepts of globalization take hold, social work has been forced to move from its comfort zone of the 'local' in order to embrace an international perspective where the global domain influences practice. For social workers and those the authors describe as social professionals, there are arguably key challenges in grappling with the concept of globalization and its impacts. While recognizing that not all members of the social professions work in the international sphere, there would be few untouched by the forces of international pressures and events.

From the outset, the authors explain some of the global issues that are of prime concern to the social professions, often not covered in generic social work education. These include global food security, access to water resources and energy provision, civilian casualties in conflicts and the trafficking of women and children. As these issues increasingly enter the public and political domains, it is clearly beholden on social professionals to develop understandings and responses consistent with the social work mission of social justice and human rights.

The text is themed into two parts. The first explores theoretical frameworks, specifically globalization, inequality and loss, and the second the effects of globalization in practice. A salient point is made about the influence of social workers in the international sphere by explaining that there was a time when social work had a greater say in the framing of international policies. The onslaught of the values of economic development displaced social concerns, however, and the understandings presented in this book could be a way for the social professions to reclaim their lost power.

In the first section, the authors unravel the complexities of notions of globalization and explicate the relevance to social work. This is within the context of the statement by the International Federation of Social Workers, which suggests that social workers are likely to engage with people who are adversely affected by the processes of globalization. Drawing on the work of Zoe Irving and Malcolm Payne, the authors posit that there are three reasons why globalization is relevant to social work. These are knowledge transfer, the labour market, and cultural relevance. This section also examines social divisions in a global context and in so doing elucidates sociological perspectives to analyse the concept of 'difference' and endeavours towards more egalitarian relationships. The final chapter in this section explores the concept of loss, which can be encountered in a range of contexts and which encompasses diverse causes and consequences. Giving examples, the authors aptly recognize that social professionals must have knowledge and skills in the area of loss that is located within specific cultural contexts.

Perhaps the most challenging section of the book is where chapters are presented on specific issues and in which we are required to examine these

360 BOOK REVIEWS

disturbing areas more broadly than we have done until now. They are the interrelated topics of communities in conflict, natural and forced migration and child exploitation as well as global pandemics.

215 The television screen and other forms of media bring to our attention conflict and its consequences in a number of countries. These include the direct impact of wars, death and destruction, and those that are less evident such as refugee production, recruitment of children into the military, torture and rape. The text is unique in its examination of the so-called War on Terror and its relevance for social work, including the retraction of human rights and civil rights and the singling out of religious minorities. There have been few social work explorations to date of this 'war' that is gaining momentum in political-speak in many countries, and outlining this pervasive trend may well encourage social workers to take this analysis further. The chapter leads on to other arenas where the social work role may be more obvious. One of these is the area of 'natural and forced migration'. The asylum-seeker domain is one of particular interest to social workers in many parts of the world as governments are introducing increasingly harsh restrictions on entry. It is the area of asylum seeking where many social workers encounter the effects of forced migration and are confronted in their practice with the consequences of war, torture and other forms of persecution.

220
225
230
235 Child exploitation and child labour is another issue about which social professionals should be deeply concerned and where advocacy for its elimination is located within the children's rights movement in which social workers can play a role. Child sexual exploitation is singled out by the authors for detailed discussion as an area described by them as 'pervasive and prolific', including the severity of the effects. It is a phenomenon that exists in many countries, a fact unbeknown to many social workers and largely ignored in the wider community. The authors point out that the child sex trade is a 'multi-billion dollar global industry', which presents social workers with the challenge of how to engage with a seemingly entrenched and intractable crisis in the lives of children.

240
245 Taking a slightly different direction, the authors provide a thorough analysis of global pandemics. Given that many social workers are employed in the health industry, this section is important in expanding horizons beyond the local context. Included in the chapter are explorations of diseases spread across national borders, newly emerging diseases such as avian flu and the re-emergence of some diseases thought to be eradicated. The impact of HIV is particularly dire, including the decimation of populations, discrimination and the creation of orphans.

250
255 Woven throughout the book is the potential role of social workers and other social professionals. The authors emphasize the importance for social professionals, whether working internationally or in a national context, to equip themselves with knowledge of global events, global processes and cross-cultural issues. In this rapidly changing and interconnected world a local response alone is no longer sufficient. As global citizens, social workers are urged to grasp an international human rights context in order to understand and work at whatever

level and in whatever field, including the areas of health, people movements and environmental issues and their consequences.

This book is topical and timely, providing social workers with a sound contextual, analytical and practice base from which to pursue their activities. The authors are well placed to write such a book through their varied experiences of social work in a range of settings, local and international. It is an accessible book that can be read from cover to cover, or dipped into according to interest.

The authors remind us that the adage 'think global and act local' is pertinent in our work and this is a sound framework for those beginning to grasp the international context of social work as well as those who already explore the interconnections.

Linda Briskman

Dr Haruhisa Handa Chair of Human Rights Education, Curtin University, Perth, Australia

© 2007 Linda Briskman

Straight Talk about Professional Ethics, by Kim Strom-Gottfried. Chicago: Lyceum Books, 2007, ISBN: 978-1-933478-03-6, 237 pp.

Straight Talk about Professional Ethics is a handbook for social work and other practitioners, as well as students in the social services. It is very informative and comprehensive in its coverage of the subject matter. It examines the ethical standards governing the social work profession as they are used in various situations. It explains what ethics is and its elements, and presents a myriad of ethical dilemmas that most students and professionals encounter when assisting clients while upholding professional ethics and values. Further, it provides sound resources and guidelines to individuals on critical thinking, necessary for resolving ethical dilemmas from perspectives such as economic, traditional and religious. The 11 chapters are divided into two parts. Part I is the groundwork for ethical practice, and comprises chapters on Ethics and Ethical Behavior, and Ethical Decision Making. Part II applies the standards for ethical practice and contains chapters on Professional Ethics, Informed Consent, Conflict of Interest, Professional Boundaries, Confidentiality, Competence, Professionalism, Nondiscrimination and Cultural Competence, and Sustaining Ethical Habits.

The author begins the book with a debate on the definition of ethics and the significance of being ethical. This section is very important in setting up the discussion on ethics and values in the social work profession, and how these impact on clients, often resulting in dilemmas. Thus, the discussion on ethics and what it means to be ethical creates the basis for all other chapters that follow in the book. The author asserts that some ethical dilemmas may be smaller in scope but no less difficult to resolve. This is because individuals are usually faced with the difficulty of choosing the best alternative at any given time. An example is

362 BOOK REVIEWS

305 given about a professional seeing a parent in a line at a grocery store ferociously striking her child for reaching out to the candy display. This is a good example of the day-to-day situation that may confront practitioners, and raises the question as to how to react in such contexts. Possible ways in which one can react, with their advantages and disadvantages, are given. The dilemma is inherent in the arguments and options presented.

310 Chapter 2 presents some framework for examining ethical dilemmas. It also evaluates individuals' alternatives for resolving them. Examples are given on addressing the dilemmas based on the framework. In this, and the remaining chapters, Strom-Gottfried presents various viewpoints—such as liberal, conservative and traditional—in addressing ethical issues. For example, the issue of whether it is ethical to accept a gift from a client raises many questions. This is because accepting gifts from clients may be ethical and unethical at the same time, depending on the context. The chapter elaborates on why it may be ethical or unethical to accept a gift from a client. While it may be irritating that there are no easy answers, or hard-and-fast rules to follow, ethics is a personal decision. The author does a good job in alerting and educating the reader on situations where ethical dilemmas can, and may, arise.

320 Each of the remaining chapters focuses on a given component of ethics such as informed consent and self-determination, among others. The chapters use case studies to explain the difficulty in addressing ethical dilemmas. The use of case studies and examples adds a nice touch to the book, bringing the theoretical discussions to life. The author uses reviews, explanations and analysis, in addition to the case studies, to present the subject. The writing style is very useful in that facts about ethics, values and dilemmas are presented as clearly and impartially as possible. The exposition style of writing enables the author to explain the subjective matter effectively and comprehensively. Also, the techniques of persuasion are used to present credible arguments to convince the reader of their validity, especially of ethical issues and dilemmas in social work practice.

330 The book is written in a simple language that is easy to read and understand. This makes reading it enjoyable. The chapters are logically related to each other and present a comprehensive coverage of the subject matter. The case studies and examples are from current everyday experience which readers can relate to. The book is a great contribution to ethics in social work mainly because it is well thought out and researched. On the whole this is an excellent review of ethics and ethical dilemmas in social work practice.

340 ***Kwaku Osei-Hwedie***

Professor of Social Work, University of Botswana, Gaborone

Kayi Ntinda

PhD Student in Counselling and Human Services, University of Botswana, Gaborone

345 © 2007 Kwaku Osei-Hwedie and Kayi Ntinda

Ethics in Social Work, by David Guttman. Binghamton, NY: Haworth Press, 2006, ISBN: 9780789028532, 296 pp.

350 David Guttman's *Ethics in Social Work* is encyclopedic in its format and its
grasp with 14 chapters covering over 50 different topics from the history of
ethics to questions of etiquette plus case examples and two codes of ethics. As
355 might be expected of such a far-reaching work, there is very little room
available for much in the way of depth of perspective or explication. For
readers who are looking for a text which mirrors the complex and often
conflicted realities of social work practice this kind of book will not suffice. But
Guttman's project is not one of post-modern or social constructionist concerns
about relativism, historicity, or the politics of representation. Contrary to our
360 current climate of self-reflexive professional disciplines, Guttman feels no
need to justify his faith position that 'only moral philosophy can anchor the
ideas and ideals of the profession'. Guttman has diagnosed an existential need
in 'students, fieldwork instructors, and administrators, etc.' who 'all crave a
firm philosophical basis for their activities and decisions', complete with its
own kind of bad faith caused by the

365 transfer of emphasis in the professional education of social workers ... from the
virtues to 'professional values' is ... one of the main reasons why so many new
students wishing to acquire the profession see it as an opportunity to open
private practice, get rich, and disregard the social mission of the profession.

AQ1

370 For readers familiar with this genre of prophetic judgment it will come as no
surprise that Guttman's remedy for this illness of the soul consists of a very
traditionally minded moral re-education consisting of a call to identify with
moral exemplars and eternal verities. Guttman writes history in the style of the
great-man tradition where individuals are taken to be representative of entire
peoples and eras so that we can, for example, read Spinoza as representative of
375 'Jewish' ethics (without considering the ethical complexities of identity raised
by this example of a man who was banished from his own faith community for
being an unrepentant heretic) from his own time in the 1600s until the Holocaust.
This kind of gross generalization cannot be taken literally as a sociological truth
and so must either be read as a historical error of fact or as an example of
380 hagiography. Guttman appears to offer the reader an answer to this dilemma in
his linking of traditions to 'outstanding personalities' leading one toward the
latter. That said, Guttman is often inconsistent in that elsewhere he seems to
desire to align himself with more modern models of objectivity like those found
in medical science. The obvious limit to comparisons between medicine and
385 social work is that where medicine finds its professional authority in its mastery
of the norms of anatomical functions social work has no such objective subject
which we have the equivalent mastery over. (While it is possible to treat the
human body as an object, or a system of objects, suitable for scientific

manipulation, one cannot similarly turn the 'social' in social work into a 'subject' of study without committing the logical error of reification.) To be fair to Guttman, his historiographical confusion is an all too common problem in academic philosophy where the practice of clarifying the history of philosophers is confused with the practice of philosophizing, and theology is not yet separated from philosophical anthropology. To help avoid this problem Guttman would have been well advised to give us more from primary texts and to rely less on secondary sources.

The practical shortcomings of Guttman's approach are made evident when after spending many sections outlining a history of ethical thinking he finally comes to some case examples where his own solutions to the conflicts presented are lacking any explicit use of any particular philosophical method. This apparent lack could be explained as being akin to offering a solution to a mathematical problem without showing one's work, but the reader of *Ethics in Social Work* would be hard pressed to fill in the gaps. This is because Guttman has given them very little information to go on. His minimalist sketches of individuals tend toward caricature and his very simplified accounts of theories (Kantian ethics, for example, gets introduced and summarily dismissed in a little over a page; Levinas, a very complicated and controversial theologian, is reduced to a few sentences; Hegel, an important source for much contemporary social theory, doesn't even get mentioned, nor do any of the pragmatists like Jane Addams) are at best unfortunate examples of the philosophical error of naming in the place of thinking, a kind of professional ethical weakness familiar to social theorists and practitioners when they confront the dilemmas raised by labeling.

Lacking in Guttman's telling of the relevant developments in ethical thinking are any of the many recent criticisms of virtue-based ethics for failing to value differences, to recognize complexity, to resolve conflicts between competing 'goods', and to account for how we actually do things in our day-to-day lives. If Guttman had included any of these authors, such as Richard Rorty, A. R. Louch, Arlene Katz, or John Shotter, the reader might have learned that to practice in an ethical manner one need not undergo a conversion to any particular cult of personality or ideology nor should one seek to convert others, but rather be clear that ethics is about who is doing what to whom, and that our practices should be as transparent and individualistic as possible.

While Guttman is more explicitly metaphysical in his writing than many contemporary social work theorists, his underlying identification with normative ethics is quite representative of our profession. In our times the cash-value of normative technologies, evidence-based practices, is a dominant trend and most of the writers representing social work have allied themselves with those who are in the business of training other people's behaviors to conform to pre-established norms. The unasked question facing us is does this ethos of social engineering put us in service of institutionalized goals rather than personalized hopes, and if so wouldn't it be better to align ourselves with those who are in the business of

trying to understand people as complex individuals rather than those who see them as representative of social ills to be managed?

Dirk Felleman

Psychiatric social worker with the Office of Mental Health in the State of New York, USA

© 2007 Dirk Felleman

Caring and Social Justice, by Marian Barnes. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006, ISBN 9781403921628, 198 pp.

Over the past two decades there has been a burgeoning literature on informal caring which has greatly informed our understanding of the complexity of the relationship between care giving and receiving within the private domain. *Caring and Social Justice*, however, is a book with a difference. What makes the book such a welcome addition to the literature on care and caring is the way in which the voice of carers and their life stories form the centrepiece of the text around which Barnes integrates and develops her analysis of the relationship between caring and social justice from a feminist ethics of care perspective (Tronto, 1993; Sevenhuijsen, 1998). In the preface, the author states that the aim of the book is 'to offer an alternative way of viewing care-giving' to that which presents care giving as a 'problem' for those giving and receiving care. Through the use of narrative interviews, 12 carers from diverse backgrounds and situations tell their individual stories of their caring experiences and it is this rich source of qualitative data that provides the reader with informative and detailed insights into the public and private domains of caring relationships.

The book comprises nine chapters which are clearly organized and accessible. The chapters are well signposted and contain helpful end summaries, which add to their overall coherence and logical development of argument. Chapter 1 provides a helpful and informative review of the literature on care and care giving and covers much useful ground in relation to transnational care and care giving in different cultures. In emphasizing the 'embeddedness' of caring within particular relationships, the importance of the connection between caring as the provision of direct support to individuals and care as a social and political value is also highlighted. In Chapter 2 the biographical or life story approach used to generate the carers' narratives is described and a convincing argument is made by Barnes in advocating it as a method which can lead to a better understanding of the lives and experiences of care givers and receivers. Chapters 3–5 present the stories of the 12 carers: five mothers of disabled children, four adult children (one son and two daughters) of elderly, disabled parents and three partners (one husband and two wives) of spouses who lived with long-term illness or dementia. The stories told to the author by the carers, some of them very moving, are sensitively documented and symbolically represent the 'heartbeat' of the book. The next two chapters are used by the author to develop her analysis of the

480 carers' stories and explore a number of key issues emerging from the carers'
narratives. These two chapters broaden and deepen the analytical focus of the
book which incorporates some interesting discussion of the philosophical and
conceptual assumptions underpinning an ethic of care and of how care needs to
485 be understood in a political context as well as an interpersonal one. Chapter 7 on
carers and the carers movement provides some useful discussion and analysis of
the power of social movements in advocating for and promoting the social rights
of carers as citizens as well as their contribution towards raising the profile of
care and caring as a social good in policy making. In the penultimate chapter,
Barnes provides an impressive analysis of the social and political implications of
490 an ethic of care perspective to an understanding of the relationship between
caring and social justice, while the final chapter successfully draws together the
implications of the preceding analyses for front-line practitioners who work
directly with carers and those for whom they provide care.

This is a thought-provoking and informative book. One of its main strengths is
the way the author skilfully integrates the narrative material of the carers'
individual stories of their caring experiences with an insightful yet sensitive
495 analysis of the inter-linking themes of caring, ethics, rights and justice. Barnes's
interweaving of the personal with the political throughout the book succeeds as a
strategy in highlighting the artificial binary opposition between justice and care
and of the need for care to be understood in the political context as well as the
inter-personal one. This book does not just provide an academic and policy
500 analysis of these two key concepts. It also aims to 'encourage a social care
practice capable of supporting caring relationships so that the value and integrity
of individual care givers and receivers is respected' (p. ix). To this end it
succeeds admirably. Throughout this person-centred book, which is clearly
grounded in anti-oppressive principles and practice, the author successfully
505 manages to keep the voice of carers to the fore alongside some useful critical
analysis of relevant issues.

However, while one of the central aims of the book is to promote social care
practices capable of incorporating care and justice for both care givers and
receivers, it is possible that the application of such a biographical approach with
510 carers may present practitioners, particularly social workers, with a number of
ethical issues to consider. For example, given the complex power dynamics
involved in the negotiation of caring relationships, particularly in abusive
situations, autonomy in choosing to participate in such a potentially emancipa-
tory project may be restricted for both care giver and receiver where loss of
515 reciprocity has occurred in the caring relationship. In addition, from a
distributional perspective of social justice, the increased rationing of social
workers' time within the current managerialist climate and the priority given to
functional and task-centred approaches to assessment may prove a major
impediment to practitioners aiming to promote social justice for carers through
520 the use of the biographical method.

Caring and Social Justice is a refreshing and stimulating book which offers a
welcome counterbalance to the current functional approach to caring. It raises

525 important questions about care and caring and has provided a creative platform
from which the voices of carers themselves can be heard. The book is a valuable
contribution to the literature on caring and social justice and deserves to be
widely used by anyone interested in the topic and those involved in care giving or
receiving.

530 **John McLaughlin**

*Lecturer in Social Work, School of Sociology, Social Policy and Social Work,
Queen's University, Belfast, and President of the Northern Ireland Forum for
Ethics in Medicine and Health*

© 2007 John McLaughlin

535 **References**

- Sevnhuijsen, S. (1998) *Citizenship and the Ethics of Care: Feminist Considerations of
Justice, Morality and Politics*, Routledge, New York and London.
Tronto, J. C. (1993) *Moral Boundaries: A Political Argument for an Ethic of Care*,
Routledge, New York and London.