



CONTENTS

Preface ix

1. Social Work Values and Ethics: An Overview	1
Core Issues in Social Work Values and Ethics	3
The Evolution of Social Work Values and Ethics	4
Discussion Questions	11
2. Social Work Values	13
The Nature of Values in Social Work	14
Social Work's Mission: Core Values in the Profession	17
Typologies of Values in Social Work Practice	23
The Influence of Social Work's Values	29
Core Professional Virtues	32
Reconciling Personal and Professional Values	34
Cultural and Religious Values	35
The Tension Between Free Will and Determinism	41
Challenging Social Work's Values	42
From Values to Action	43
Discussion Questions	45
3. Ethical Dilemmas and Decision Making: A Framework	47
Codes of Ethics	48
The Current NASW Code of Ethics	52
The Resolution of Ethical Dilemmas	66
An Overview of Ethical Theory	69

The Process of Ethical Decision Making	77
Discussion Questions	94
4. Ethical Dilemmas in Social Work: Clinical Practice	95
Confidentiality and Privacy	95
Self-determination and Paternalism	108
Divided Loyalties	113
Professional Boundaries, Dual Relationships, and Conflicts of Interest	119
Emerging Ethical Challenges: Social Media and Electronic Communications	131
Professional and Personal Values	135
Discussion Questions	142
5. Ethical Dilemmas in Social Work: Macro Practice	145
The Allocation of Limited Resources	145
Government and Private-Sector Responsibility for Social Welfare	153
Compliance with Regulations and Laws	161
Organizational Ethics	163
Research and Evaluation	167
The Use of Deception	171
Whistle-blowing	174
Discussion Questions	177
6. Malpractice and Unethical Conduct: Strategies for Prevention	179
The Adjudication of Social Workers: Ethics Complaints and Lawsuits	181
Confidentiality and Privacy	184
Informed Consent, Delivery of Services, and Boundary Violations	191
Supervision: Clients and Staff	196
Consultation, Referral, and Records	198
Deception and Fraud	201
Termination of Services	203
The Impaired Social Worker	206
Conducting an Ethics Audit	211
Discussion Questions	214
Afterword: A Future Agenda	215
<i>Appendix: NASW Code of Ethics</i>	221
<i>References</i>	241
<i>Index</i>	257

PREFACE

SOCIAL WORKERS' understanding of professional values and ethics has matured considerably in recent years. During the earliest years of the profession's history, social workers' attention was focused primarily on cultivating a set of values upon which the mission of social work could be based. Over time the profession has nurtured and refined a set of values that has given tremendous meaning and purpose to the careers of generations of social workers. Social work's enduring commitment to vulnerable and oppressed populations, and its simultaneous preoccupation with individual well-being and social justice, are rooted in the profession's rich value base.

But the lens through which social workers view values and ethics has changed dramatically over time. Perhaps it is more accurate to say that social workers now look at these issues through several lenses, not just one, and that the angles of these lenses periodically shift in response to cultural developments and trends. Today's social workers face issues involving values and ethics that their predecessors in the profession could not possibly have imagined. What social worker, in the early twentieth century, could have anticipated the magnitude of the debates about the ethical issues for social workers that have emerged from the AIDS crisis or the complex privacy and confidentiality issues facing social workers who use e-mail, Facebook, and other Internet tools to serve clients? What social worker in the 1930s could have forecast the ethics debate about social workers' role in the use of animal or artificial organs to save a dying client's life or ethical problems created by cutting-edge psychopharmacology and electronic monitoring of certain clients?

Especially since the late 1970s, a growing number of social work scholars and practitioners have been studying, exploring, and debating issues involving values and ethics in the profession. Literature on social work values and ethics,