



## Ethical Decision Making in Therapy: Feminist Perspectives

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**Ethical Decision Making in Therapy: Feminist Perspectives** From Brand: The Guilford Press

How can clear but abstract ethical principles be applied in the real world of therapy? What is the ethical course when two or more principles conflict? What are ethical approaches on issues not addressed in traditional professional ethics codes? This volume grapples with these and related questions and offers an innovative feminist model that acknowledges the importance of affect in ethical decision-making. Case scenarios raise ethical dilemmas typical of everyday practice and experienced feminist therapists explain how they might respond. "A major goal of this volume," write editors Rave and Larsen, "is to sensitize therapists and therapists-in-training to ethical issues affecting women and girls in therapy."

Recognizing that women still comprise the majority of clients in most therapy settings, each section of the book begins with a context-setting discussion on why the issue is important to women. Topics include:

- \* Labeling and diagnosis
- \* Money issues (including those which arise in managed health care)
- \* Client/therapist overlapping relationships
- \* Violence against women
- \* Health and reproductive issues
- \* Special concerns in treating children and older women
- \* Balancing therapist self-care with clients' needs

At least two therapists respond to each ethical dilemma, applying the Feminist Therapy Institute's Code of Ethics (developed in 1987) as well as traditional ethical codes of the mental health professions. The discussions offer clear and practical guidelines for recognizing and resolving ethical dilemmas, encouraging readers to compare their own philosophical viewpoints and ethical approaches. Each section concludes with a discussion of implications and references.

Differences and diversity in race, ethnicity, and sexual preference are integrated throughout the scenarios and responses. The editors and contributors to this book, who are from Canada and the United States, also represent these diversities as

well as a range of disciplines and professions.

*Ethical Decision Making in Therapy: Feminist Perspectives* will be of lasting importance to psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, counselors, and nurses, regardless of setting or theoretical orientation. Because ethics education, minimal until recently in many mental health training programs, is an essential component in training and continuing education, this volume serves as a text for students and a resource for professionals.

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### **Bibliography**

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## **Editorial Review**

### Review

"One major contribution in this volume is the Feminist Model for Ethical Decision Making developed in Chapter Two by Hill, Glazer, and Harden. While there are existing models for ethical decision making, the unique contribution here is an emphasis on the inclusion of the therapist's emotional-intuitive responses. The model also emphasizes contextual issues, including therapist, client and consultants in the making of ethics decisions...Articulating the importance of self-care by the therapist is another milestone contribution...provides substantial contribution to the professional literature and should be required reading in all graduate school courses on ethics, as well as for all practitioners in the field." --Carrell Dammnn, Ph.D., in *Journal of Feminist Family Therapy*

"Essential reading not only for feminist therapists who will welcome it, but for all therapists who work with women and girls. The areas discussed include a broad and diverse range of topics, all of which are extremely important for practitioners. Rather than simply presenting abstract principles on ethical decision-making, the authors have included much of the material in the form of scenarios reflecting the complexity and confusion of the real world.' All of the dilemmas will be immediately recognizable to practitioners working with this client population, and the responses by over ninety experienced feminist therapists reflect sensitivity, insight and a deep respect for clients and practitioners alike. The editors and contributors are to be commended for providing a highly readable text on such an important topic." --Toni Ann Laidlaw, Ph.D., Co-author of *Healing Voices: Feminist Approaches to Therapy with Women*, Professor, Division of Medical Education, Faculty of Medicine, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada

"This volume is an important contribution to the growing awareness of, and literature, on ethics and therapy. Through an interactive process of posing ethical dilemmas and analyzing the responses of feminist therapists, the contributors to this book have highlighted many of the key constructs of importance to feminist therapists: positive valuation of women's experience, recognition of power differentials in therapy and how these can be addressed, and acute awareness of social/cultural/external factors on women's behavior. The implications of these constructs for the ethical practice of therapy with women is clearly developed in this volume: my congratulations to Elizabeth Rave and Carolyn Larsen for their efforts." --Keith S. Dobson, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology and Director of the Clinical Psychology Programme, Univ of Calgary, Calgary, Canada

"Long overdue! This exposition of the myriad ethical conundrums which permeate therapy interventions is an essential addition to every clinician's library. Recognizing that feminist values inevitably force a consideration of ethical issues, editors Elizabeth Rave and Carolyn Larsen have collected a compendium of the ethical concerns which in no small measure shape and define the practice of feminist therapy. This book is characterized by creative presentation and achieves clarity without sacrificing complexity. It directly addresses the lived experience of women whether therapists or clients. Practitioners of feminist therapy cannot function appropriately without it." --Sandra W. Pyke, Ph.D., Professor and Chair, Dept of Psychology, York University

"...an excellent introduction to the topic. It is a clearly written outline of the processes of ethical decision making and includes many excellent case examples." --Rita W. Clark, M.D. in *News for Women in Psychiatry*

"A scholarly and well-referenced publication that draws on both current feminist research as well as the real experiences, questions, and responses of feminist therapists. In this regard, the book is not only an example of fine scholarship but also of the feminist commitment to knowledge that is grounded in and validated by context....The book presents thought-provoking information for all experienced therapists....It is equally useful for students. The format is well crafted, beginning each section with an overview of the topic under review, encapsulating the key issues and feminist concerns, followed by sample ethical dilemmas....The book could easily be used in a seminar experience with students....This book is truly a valuable resource..."--  
Contemporary Psychology  
(*Contemporary Psychology* 1995-08-06)

"...provides substantial contribution to the professional literature and should be required reading in all graduate school courses on ethics, as well as for all practitioners in the field."--Journal of Feminist Family Therapy  
(*Journal of Feminist Family Therapy* 1995-08-06)

#### About the Author

Carolyn C. Larsen, Ph.D., is Senior Counsellor Emeritus and formerly Director, University Counselling Services and Adjunct Associate Professor, Department of Educational Psychology, The University of Calgary, and is in private practice as a partner with Alberta Psychological Resources, Ltd. She coauthored *A Woman's Choice: A Guide to Decision-Making*, and collaborated in developing the Ethical Guidelines for Counselling/Therapy with Women and *Therapy and Counselling with Women: A Handbook of Educational Materials* for the Canadian Psychological Association of which she is a Fellow. A founding member of the Feminist Therapy Institute (FTI) she was on the Steering Committee for 10 years, serving as Committee Coordinator and co-chair of the Ethics and Accountability Committee which facilitated the development of the Feminist Therapy Code of Ethics. Carolyn has contributed as author and section editor to three previous books sponsored by FTI.

Elizabeth J. Rave, Ed.D., is professor emeritus of school psychology and women's studies, University of Northern Colorado. She served as coordinator of the School Psychology Programs and was a member of the Women's Studies governing committee. Her research, presentations, and publications have been on anti-racism, ethics, violence against women and children, play therapy, gender and ethnic effects on perceptions of behavior, and supervision ethics. As one of the founding members of the Feminist Therapy Institute she has served on the Steering Committee and been Committee Coordinator and Co-Chair of the Ethics and Accountability Committee, charged with developing the Feminist Therapy Code of Ethics. She is presently living in Seattle, learning about ageism, completing an internship in Senior Services, and developing a consultation practice.

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1. Context of Feminist Therapy Ethics, Larsen and Rave 2. A Feminist Model for Ethical Decision Making, Hill, Glaser, and Harden 3. Feminist Therapy Code of Ethics 4. Naming the Issue, Ballou 5. Monetary Issues, Parvin and Anderson 6. Overlapping/Dual Relationships, Biaggio and Greene 7. Violence against Women, Contratto and Hassinger 8. Reproduction/Health Issues, Webster 9. The Medical Model, Liburd and Rothblum 10. Conflicts in Care: Early Years of the Lifespan, Conoley and Larson 11. Conflicts in Care: Later Years of the Lifespan, Sonderegger and Siegel 12. Therapist Self-Care: A Proactive Ethical Approach, Porter 13. Looking toward the Future, Rave and Larsen

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**Lisa Mercado:**

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