

# Preface

In preparing this book, I engaged dozens of professional and lay persons in conversations about ethics. I heard many quips that were thought provoking. Some stood out: (1) “Ethics is now just management of the risk of litigation” (physician); (2) “I have no ethics” (personal trainer); (3) “My main ethical consideration is not cross-contaminating my clients” (doctor’s assistant); (4) “The biggest ethical problem is greed” (dental hygienist); (5) “Doing what’s right for my patients” (nurse); and (6) “Oh No!” (ethicist on hearing about the other comments). I came to realize that broadening one’s understanding of ethics is more important than seeking simple rules.

Two questions must be dealt with. Is this book needed? And am I qualified to write it? An Amazon search indicates that more than one hundred thousand ethics-related books already exist. None are a concise student- and teacher-friendly textbook that provides an overview of topics relevant to health professionals. I served 7 years as chair of the University of California, Irvine (UCI), Institutional Review Board (IRB) on human studies. During that time, my committee reviewed about 1,000 human studies for our medical school. Following that sobering and enlightening period, I spent 7 years on the UCI Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) and served as its chair for 1 year. During that time, the IACUC reviewed hundreds of animal protocols and obtained AAALAC accreditation. I have provided formal ethics training for faculty investigators, university staff, undergraduate and graduate students, occupational medicine residents, and high school student researchers. I also served as a university spokesperson on animal research. I have had countless media interviews and appearances and written several book chapters related to research ethics. I currently chair the Board of Directors for the California Society for Biomedical Research and recently chaired our School of Medicine’s Continuing Medical Education Committee. Still, I consider myself a student of real-world ethics.

This book is designed for use in a variable-length introductory course. It is based on a syllabus that was written for teaching ethics to graduate students and medical residents. It includes cases of health professionals who unexpectedly had their careers disrupted by ethics violation charges, some iconic scandals and their impacts,

formal ethics philosophy, codes of conduct, regulations, guidelines and policies, research ethics, online training, unsolved problems, and a chapter designed to keep professionals out of trouble as they strive to succeed in their careers. An author-generated Index and answers to quiz questions are available at the end.

This book is designed to shift reader's thinking and ethics-related behavior to higher levels. The intended readers include students and practitioners in the health sciences, researchers who use human subjects or laboratory animals, administrators who oversee health science training or biomedical research, and anyone who is interested in real-world ethics.

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