

***A Casebook of Ethical Challenges in Neuropsychology* edited by Shane Bush (Lisse, The Netherlands: Swets & Zeitlinger Publishers, 2004) ISBN: 9026519745.**

Sometimes “inconvenient” occurrences can have pleasant outcomes and such is the case with the recently released *Casebook of Ethical Challenges in Neuropsychology* edited by Shane Bush. Dr. Bush’s initial venture in the area, *Ethical Issues in Clinical Neuropsychology* (Bush & Drexler, 2002) was the first text that specifically focused on the application of ethics in neuropsychology and was regarded highly by professionals in the United States and abroad. Coincidentally, it was published in the same year that the American Psychological Association (APA) released its new ethical guidelines with numerous changes that directly impacted many areas of neuropsychological practice. While the then anticipated changes were addressed in the initial text, a comprehensive overview was not sufficiently provided. Rather than simply updating the previous text via a second edition, the current text instead is presented as a “companion” to the 2002 text and is “intended to bridge the gap and to examine an expanded range of ethical challenges.” Through 26 chapters that are presented in 13 sections, the text attempts to (1) relate ethical issues in neuropsychology to the 2002 APA Ethics Code; and (2) to animate ethical issues through case illustrations. This was accomplished in a unique and appealing format that encourages additional thought as well as disagreement on some occasions. Contributors to this text are easily recognized as leaders in their respective areas and the consistent presentation of information through case vignettes gives a “real-life” feel for how ethical dilemmas arise and are managed in day-to-day professional practice.

To set the stage (and in many ways to avoid redundancy in later sections), an overview of the changes in the APA Ethics Code from the 1992 to 2002 versions is provided. This serves as a stand-alone resource for understanding the changes in the ethics code and specifically how these changes apply to and guide neuropsychological practice. This is followed by 12 sections that cover a wide range of professional/clinical areas including forensic, medical, psychiatric, rehabilitation, pain, pediatric, geriatric, and culturally diverse settings. Also included are sections exploring ethical dilemmas in less “clinical” settings such as information technology and telecommunications, research, and test development. Finally, no current text on ethical issues in neuropsychology would be complete without examination of response validity in neuropsychology.

As would be expected in such a text, forensic issues in neuropsychology receive prominent attention. However, the breadth of coverage in this area exceeds expectation as the range of topic areas extends well-beyond the typical civil and criminal litigation realms to include more broadly applied issues related to disability determination, competency, commitment proceedings, worker’s compensation, fitness for duty, educational due process, and other adversarial cases. Additionally, the introduction to this section serves as an excellent primer for novices in forensics or clinicians who have limited exposure to forensic settings. As a result this “forensic” section becomes applicable to all neuropsychologists who inevitably get involved in forensic settings as a result of their clinical practice.

The attention paid to forensic settings does not discount the coverage of the other areas. The vignettes provided in subsequent sections are very strong and thought provoking. While some cases appear to be contrived and simple at times, they stimulate thinking and recollections regarding personal experiences and dilemmas. The inclusion of research, test development, and information technology and telecommunications is a particular strength reflecting the forward thinking of the editor and contributors as neuropsychology forges ahead into new areas.

As with most discussions of ethical issues, the dilemmas and their solutions reflect more shades of gray than clear black and white distinctions. As such, the reader may not always agree and, at times, may strongly disagree with the solutions/opinions provided in the text. Still, the opinions provided are based on reasonable and defensible rationales that are thought provoking. The reader is subsequently challenged to look inwardly with the same level of critical rigor to decide how they might approach the given example in a different manner. This aspect of the text is especially useful for those looking toward oral examinations for licensure or specialty board certification.

Some weaknesses of this book are inherent in the format of the text. First, there is a degree of redundancy across some of the areas that is likely unavoidable. The initial review of the APA Ethics Code reduces this to a large extent, but as similar dilemmas arise in a wide variety of settings so is the case in the vignettes provided. Second, as mentioned previously, some of the scenarios are largely “in your face” dilemmas that were not particularly challenging and in some ways over-simplified the material. Along

with this, the vignettes at times have endings that make it look as if managing complex ethical conflicts is an easy process with clear solutions. Finally, the breadth of coverage should satisfy most readers, but no text of this kind could be all-inclusive. With so much dialogue being generated regarding appropriate training and board certification in neuropsychology, a section focusing on education, training, and supervision would have been a provocative addition to this text.

Overall, *A Casebook of Ethical Challenges in Neuropsychology* is a well thought out book that serves as a strong companion to the original Bush and Drexler text. It provides a very good overview of how “black and white” ethical guidelines play out in very “gray” real world settings and is the only text and casebook in neuropsychology that addresses the APA 2002 Ethics Code. While this book is especially useful for students, pre- and post-doctoral trainees, and new professionals, the challenging and provocative nature of the content would enhance the ability of more experienced professionals to recognize and manage ethical challenges inherent in the practice of neuropsychology. For more senior practitioners, it serves as a unique reference for promoting thorough consideration of the new standards with the adequate breadth necessary for the many complex real world situations that require balancing multiple and sometimes competing obligations.

Although it specifically addresses the ethics code of the APA, it has broad applicability for neuropsychologists across all continents. In combination, the initial Bush and Drexler text (2002) and the new *Casebook* represent seminal texts in the application of ethical principles to guide neuropsychological practice and would “strengthen the shelf” of any clinician’s library.

## References

American Psychological Association (2002). Ethical principles of psychologists and code of conduct. *American Psychologist*, 57 (12), 1060-1073.

Bush, S. S. & Drexler, M. L. (2002). *Ethical issues in clinical neuropsychology*. Lisse, NL: Swets & Zeitlinger Publishers.

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