

# Book Reviews

## Bio-Engagement: Making a Christian Difference through Bioethics Today

Nigel M. de S. Cameron, Scott E. Daniels,  
and Barbara J. White, eds.

William B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI,  
2000, 265 pp., \$22.00 (paperback).

THIS THOUGHTFUL, ARTICULATE, PRACTICAL, and wide-ranging anthology brings a critical, reflective, and conservative Christian voice to bioethics, one clearly grounded in a distinctively biblical world view and obviously committed to making itself heard. This book is written more or less as a manual for evangelical

Christians interested in engaging and challenging the underlying assumptions and applied policies of a post-Christian society, particularly as these apply to certain specific questions in bioethics.

In a series of essays from a host of interdisciplinary but highly compatible voices, these conservative Christian authors call upon Christian professionals, educators, pastors, and citizens to wake from their cultural slumber and take a decidedly prophetic stance against what the editors perceive as a largely indifferent and unfriendly academic, legal, and cultural milieu.

The result is something of a handbook on evangelical Christian bioethics, mixing equal parts theory, homiletic encouragement, and practical advice. In several essays, such as Brian Mahwhinney's "Christian Leadership and Public Policy,"

Nigel M. de S. Cameron's "The New Medicine and the Education of the Christian Mind," and Francis Beckwith's "Is Statecraft Soulecraft? Faith, Politics and Legal Neutrality," the authors lay out what they see as the fundamental polarities separating the (conservative) Christian and post-Christian world views and offer critical arguments against the unchallenged supremacy of secular liberalism. Other pieces, such as John F. Kilner's "A Biblical Mandate for Cultural Engagement" and Barbara White's "A Call to Moral Leadership," seek to motivate Christian physicians, teachers, and voters to dust off their distinctively religious consciences and bring these biblically informed, moral perspectives and arguments into the fray of academic, cultural, and democratic debates.

In articles such as Dónal P. O'Mathuna's

## BOOK BRIEFS

### Understanding Medicare Managed Care: Meeting Economic, Strategic, and Policy Challenges

Louis F. Rossiter, *Health Administration Press, Chicago, 2001, 204 pp., \$39.95 hardcover*

The Medicare managed care market is a complex and competitive market. This book provides advice on how to strategically position your organization in this market.

Part one, "The Economics of Medicare Managed Care," introduces and describes the development of Medicare managed care. Also covered in this part is the changing private Medicare managed care market and Medicare today.

The second part, "Strategic Decisions and Proven Responses," covers the economics of Medicare managed care with topics such as pricing and capitation, benefit design, and provider liability.

The last part, "Unfolding Trends and Policy Outlook," looks ahead to the

natural progression of markets, with chapters on possible scenarios, trends, and the role of competition, and includes a strategic decisions checklist.

The book concludes with a glossary, list of common acronyms, and a summary of Medicare legislation. This is a unique reference for those who are entering, or are already involved in, the Medicare managed care market.

### Managing Health Services, Organizations and Systems, Fourth Edition

Beaufort B. Longest Jr., Jonathon S. Rakich, and Kurt Darr, *Health Professions Press, Baltimore, 2000, 882 pp., \$82.00 (hardback)*

This book provides information and insight to help set benchmarks of excellence for health service management. In this fourth edition, the title has been changed by the addition of "systems," reflecting the extensive attention given to health systems in this edition.

The authors have divided the 17 chapters into three parts, "Managing in the Health Services Environment," "Managerial Tools and Techniques," and "Managing Relationships." Each chapter includes questions and case examples.

While its primary audience is students, current managers will find this text a supplement to their own management experience as well as a new source of knowledge.

## BOOKS RECEIVED

**Contemporary Health Policy**, Beaufort B. Longest Jr., Health Administration Press, Chicago, 2000

**Patient Persistence**, Adele M. Gill, EP Press, Oradell, NJ, 2000

**Public Health in the Market**, Nancy Milio, University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, MI, 2000

"The Vertical Context," Teri N. Goudie's "The Media and its Opportunities," and Gregory Rutecki's "Paradigm Lost? New Techniques for Engagement in Medical Education," readers are offered specific advice about grounding their moral vision in a rich prayer life, improving their skills as media communicators, and upgrading their evangelical outreach to a postmodern audience. My own personal favorite was David A. Sherwood's "Common Ground and Conflict: The Study of Professional Ethics," which provides interested educators with an intriguing (and irenic) model for illustrating the overlapping elements and tensions between a Christian world view and generally accepted professional norms.

Although supportive of many of the arguments and insights in this book, Catholic and more moderate or liberal Christian readers will notice some dif-

ferences between their own take on Christian bioethics and that of these authors. To begin with, the focus of the present collection is almost exclusively on questions related to abortion, euthanasia, and sex education. Even in the section titled "Health Care," there is little, if any, mention of a right to basic health care or a need to reform our society's medical delivery system to make it more accessible to the poor. Indeed, the text seems decidedly uninterested in how issues of class, gender, and race affect health care in America, or what duties we have to provide for those who fall through our admittedly ragged social safety net. Given the book's rather thorough critique of our secular society's underlying cultural beliefs, and in particular of America's nearly idolatrous worship of personal autonomy and individualism, this seems like a striking oversight. Second, in their debate of postmodernity, the authors rely on a very particular biblical world view, one that seems distinctly untouched by Christian feminism and quite apodictic about the immorality of homosexuality. Although one might not get the impression from this collection, at least some of the major ethical debates in contemporary bioethics are going on *between* and *among* different Christian perspectives and voices. And, not all of those Christians who disagree with a conservative agenda have been co-opted by a post-Christian culture or academy.

Finally, in spite of our opposition to numerous unjust practices and structures in contemporary society and medicine, modern Catholic readers would be likely to see more commonality and bridge-building opportunities in the bioethics crisis and might be interested in discovering what the church and Christianity have to learn from—and not just teach—the world around us.

*Rev. Patrick T. McCormick, STD*  
Associate Professor, Christian Ethics  
Gonzaga University  
Spokane, WA

**Medical Care of the Soul**, Bruce G. Bartlow, Johnson Printing, Boulder, CO, 2000

**Bioethics in America: Origins and Cultural Politics**, M.L. Tina Stevens, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 2000

**Promoting Human Wellness: New Frontiers for Research, Practice, and Policy**, Margaret Schneider Jamner and Daniel Stokols, eds., University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, 2000

**The Spirit of the Coalition**, Bill Berkowitz, PhD, and Tom Wolff, PhD, United Book Press, 2000

**Mastering the Art of Contemporary Medicine: Beyond Training**, Kevin P. Glynn, MD, iuniverse.com, Lincoln, NE, 2000

# SEE THE FUTURE



With your help,  
"my kids" can  
look forward to  
a future without  
neuromuscular  
diseases.

Please  
volunteer  
today.

**MDA**

Muscular  
Dystrophy Association  
1-800-572-1717  
[www.mdausa.org](http://www.mdausa.org)

People Help MDA . . .  
Because MDA Helps People

PHOTO PARADE / EDDIE ADAMS

JOURNAL OF THE CATHOLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES

[www.chausa.org](http://www.chausa.org)

# HEALTH PROGRESS®

---

Reprinted from *Health Progress*, March-April 2001  
Copyright © 2001 by The Catholic Health Association of the United States

---