

Book Review of *Ethics in Crime and Justice: Dilemmas and Decisions*

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Ethics in Crime and Justice: Dilemmas and Decisions

By Joycelyn M. Pollock.

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Joycelyn Pollock's newest edition of *Ethics in Crime and Justice* is directed more specifically toward potential criminal justice practitioners than toward criminology programs. However, it does a nice job of bridging the gap between a guide for pure practitioners and a book for criminologists. Additionally, the revisions she has made from earlier editions should prove helpful for students and instructors of ethics courses.

Pollock relies heavily on scenarios to encourage readers to think critically. The situations help students to not only understand the difficult ethical situations that criminal justice professionals face, but also the potential consequences for their decisions. The scenario-based approach is also beneficial for class discussion on the issues.

The newest edition has been reorganized from earlier editions in terms of its chapter layout. The fourth edition has fourteen chapters which is beneficial for scheduling a semester long course. The transition between chapters is quite smooth, and the material flows well. However, smooth evolution of subjects can create a bit of a challenge for instructors looking for clear subject sections containing a few chapters. Nevertheless, this is not a challenge that instructors cannot overcome.

The first two chapters introduce the reader to the basic information necessary for the study of ethics. The initial chapter introduces the reader to the terminology and concepts necessary for a study of ethics. Pollock does a good job of using criminal justice examples to illustrate the application of the concepts discussed. Yet, she also is able to keep the discussion philosophical enough to avoid becoming a lesson in just police ethics.

The second chapter covers essential material for the study of ethics. It discusses the basic elements of the main ethical schools of thought. While most of the attention is reserved to deontology and teleology, a number of other schools of thought are covered including a thought provoking section on religious ethics. This chapter covers the appropriate information for an undergraduate college course on criminal justice

ethics. It is possible to cover more ethical schools of thought, but not necessary. Readers are given enough information to consider the ethical approaches throughout the remainder of the book. This chapter feeds the readers' comprehension of the philosophical underpinnings of ethical study while provoking their curiosity toward a more applied understanding, which comes in later chapters.

The development of moral character and behavior is the focus of the third chapter. This covers Kohlberg's moral stages as well as learning theory. Biological explanations are also discussed, though with less detail than the developmental theories. This chapter applies these approaches to a discussion of criminality. The remainder of the chapter is a bit awkward as it covers subject matter ranging from teaching ethics to explaining criminality. However, despite its dispersed subject matter, it is still information that will benefit readers.

Chapter four turns the book's focus toward applying ethical thinking onto justice considerations. In accordance with a liberal arts education, the philosophical aspects of justice are introduced. While helpful, this section could be expanded and details added. Other than that, this chapter explains the different types of justice and provides thoughtful examples of them. The legal applications of justice are discussed and provide a smooth transition into paradigms of law.

The fifth chapter discusses the application of retributive justice and the consequences of laws and policies. This chapter is mostly new material that was not in the previous edition. The material in this chapter is especially relevant to criminal justice students, because it applies the philosophical and theoretical discussions of the first chapters to actual practices of the criminal justice system. It is an excellent transition chapter between abstract subject matter into practical, applied ethical situations that criminal justice practitioners face.

Chapters 6, 7 and 8 focus on the various aspects of ethical situations that law enforcement officials face. This is an expansion from the third edition, which only had two chapters focusing on this subject. Included are specific elements of the occupation, such as use of force and the opportunities for corruption that result from undercover operations and interrogations. This profound collection of chapters discusses the potential

drawbacks of allowing police such leeway in using discretion, but also points out the importance of it. Pollock gives a very balanced presentation of the issues. Based on the information provided in this section, every law enforcement practitioner from rank and file officers to police administrators would benefit from reading these chapters.

Despite the usefulness of this group of chapters, some enhancements could be made. The role of police in society is discussed in the broad terms of crime fighters or public servants. The internalization of these roles will certainly contribute to an officer's use of discretion and the possibility of using it inappropriately. The chapter would be enhanced through an expansion of that explanation. This edition includes a short explanation of different policing styles. Yet these explanations should be more in-depth. Furthermore, a more thorough discussion of how these policing styles impact unethical behavior would be helpful for readers.

An additional consideration in this group of chapters is the short discussion of Sherman's (2002) moral career. The moral career is discussed, but a more thorough explanation should be included.

In chapters 9 and 10, Pollock turns focus toward the ethics of legal professions. Chapter 9 provides an excellent overview of the challenges and ethical quandaries that defense attorneys face during the course of their work. She notes the irony of the public largely resenting lawyers but being quick to hire them when they are in trouble. She states, "No one needs a lawyer unless he or she feels a wrong has been done to them or a person needs to be defended. The ability of lawyers to argue either side raises a level of distrust. We would prefer a passionate advocate rather than a paid advocate" (p. 232).

By providing this context, Pollock provides a good framework for understanding the circle of criticisms that inevitably come to attorneys. She helps readers understand the ethical expectations placed on lawyers by society as well as the difficulty of meeting them within the occupational responsibilities such as confidentiality and the duty to provide a zealous defense.

Chapter 10 combines the discussion of the ethical responsibilities of prosecutors and judges. However, even though these duties often overlap, the chapter still flows smoothly. Furthermore, the discussion is very thorough while maintaining an enjoyable readability.

Pollock notes the moral implications of correctional philosophies and methods in Chapter 11 and the specific ethical dilemmas for correctional professionals in Chapter 12. Once again, she does a remarkable job of integrating philosophical concepts into applied situations. The chapters are also quite thorough. She even goes so far as to include a discussion of correctional administrators' responsibilities to go along

with the insights on correctional officers. Furthermore, she includes a section highlighting the distinctions in duties and occupational responsibilities between correctional and jail officers.

Pollock added a chapter to this edition, which explores the role of community corrections and its practitioners in achieving justice. This new chapter is a needed addition. Considering the widespread use of community corrections by courts, this chapter proves quite helpful in providing the reader with a complete understanding of the need for viewing justice in real-world circumstances. Pollock also includes a discussion of the concepts behind restorative justice and highlights the need for more victim satisfaction in the pursuit of justice.

In the final chapter, Pollock sums up the ethical responsibilities of policy makers. This chapter is a vital component to the study of ethics in criminal justice due to the subjectivity of laws. While discussing the myths that contribute to policymaking, a section discussing critical criminology would be helpful. Nevertheless, the chapter is a strong finish to an excellent book. Pollock closes by noting the profound personal responsibility in ethical decision making and leaves the reader with guidance on the subject.

This book is an outstanding book for undergraduate criminal justice studies. It is best used in a curriculum that includes a combination of classes on criminology and applied studies. This book would not be appropriate for classes that cover research ethics for criminal justice researchers. However, this can be overcome if it is used in a curriculum that covers that material in research methods. So the book is best used for criminal justice ethics classes that combine the philosophical guidelines of ethical thought with applied information. Bridging this gap is what Pollock has accomplished so well with this text.

References

Sherman, L. (2002). "Learning police ethics." In Braswell, M., McCarthy, B.R. and McCarthy B.J. (Eds.), *Justice, crime and ethics* (pp.49-64). Cincinnati: Anderson.