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Erratum

The citation for this review is *8 RISK 299 (1997)* in most commercial databases.

Bonnie Cashin Farmer, *A Nursing Home and its Organizational Climate: An Ethnography* (Auburn House 1996). About the author, acknowledgments, appendix, bibliography, index. ISBN 0-86569-262-9 [176 pp. \$49.95 Cloth. 88 Post Road West, Westport CT 06881.]

Ms. Farmer is a former nurse and an Assistant Professor of Nursing. Her goal is to develop an understanding of the values that underlie a "nice place"¹ for possible replication by nursing homes attempting to improve their institutional climate.

She identifies three core values that make up a nice nursing home: appearance, service and residents' rights.² While she did not explain how she identified these values, she notes that the central values are "enduring over time, situations, and organizational members."³ Yet, she acknowledges that other institutions may have different value systems.

Farmer's ethnographic research is based on the assumption that nursing homes are, as a rule, stigmatized as places of doom and death. She seeks to identify ways that one, Meadows of Madison, overcomes the stereotype through an integrated value system that permeates all aspects of the institution and includes residents, guests, employees, management and the surrounding community.

However through focusing on a single institution, her study suffers from specificity and may have marginal general usefulness. Still, Farmer's observations may be helpful for those making policy at other nursing homes who seek to better understand the general relationship between institutional values and a home's reputation, both internally and externally.

Farmer attempts to overcome the stigmatizing stereotypes of nursing homes, essentially, by replacing the nursing home paradigm with that of a hotel.⁴ Farmer points out, however, that "[t]he weakness of the hotel model for long-term care is underscored by [a lack of focus on the primary function of] nursing."⁵

1 The quotation marks are hers.

2 At 45.

3 At 46.

4 At 106.

5 At 106.

According to Farmer, the hotel model can be reinforced with a set of well-established rules for residents and employees to promote her institutional objectives of pleasant appearances, courteous service and residents' rights. "[P]articularly for the residents, rules guide behavior but d[o] not necessarily dictate behavior, thereby making Meadows a nice place."⁶

Hence, *A Nursing Home and its Organizational Climate* attempts to show how one institution, by understanding and applying key values throughout, was able to overcome general and well-established negative perceptions of nursing homes.

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⁶ At 40.

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