



# **The Virtuous Physician: The Role of Virtue in Medicine: 114 (Philosophy and Medicine)**

*James A. Marcum*

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Although modern medicine enjoys unprecedented success in providing excellent technical care, many patients are dissatisfied with the poor quality of care or the unprofessional manner in which physicians sometimes deliver it. Recently, this patient dissatisfaction has led to quality-of-care and professionalism crises in medicine.

In this book, the author proposes a notion of virtuous physician to address these crises. He discusses the nature of the two crises and efforts by the medical profession to resolve them and then he briefly introduces the notion of virtuous physician and outlines its basic features. Further, virtue theory is discussed, along with virtue ethics and virtue epistemology, and specific virtues, especially as they relate to medicine.

The author also explores the ontological priority of caring as the metaphysical virtue for grounding the notion of virtuous physician, and two essential ontic virtues—care and competence. In addition to this, he examines the transformation of competence into prudent wisdom and care into personal radical love to forge the compound virtue of prudent love, which is sufficient for defining the virtuous physician. Lastly, two clinical case stories are reconstructed which illustrate the various virtues associated with medical practice, and it is discussed how the notion of virtuous physician addresses the quality-of-care and professionalism crises.

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