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# Separating Care and Cure: An Analysis of Historical and Contemporary Images of Nursing and Medicine

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## Abstract

This paper provides a philosophical critique of professional stereotypes in

medicine. In the course of this critique, we also offer a detailed analysis of the concept of care in health care. The paper first considers possible explanations for the traditional stereotype that caring is a province of nurses and women, while curing is an arena suited for physicians and men. It then dispels this stereotype and fine tunes the concept of care. A distinction between 'caring for' and 'caring about' is made, and concomitant notions of parentalism are elaborated. Finally, the paper illustrates, through the use of cases, diverse models of caring. Our discussion reveals the complexity of care and the alternative modes of caring in health care.

**Keywords:** [caring](#), [curing](#), [gender identity](#), [nursing ethics](#), [professional ethics](#)

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