This in-depth new edition of an enduring ANA classic defines nursing's value and accountability to society.

The book's singular contribution is its description of the nursing profession and its essential elements:
- Social context and contract
- Nursing's knowledge base
- Definition of nursing
- Scope and standards of practice
- Authority for practice
- Regulation of practice

These elements have been revised in recognition of the ongoing advances in nursing practice and knowledge, delineating and reaffirming the deep societal commitments of the profession.