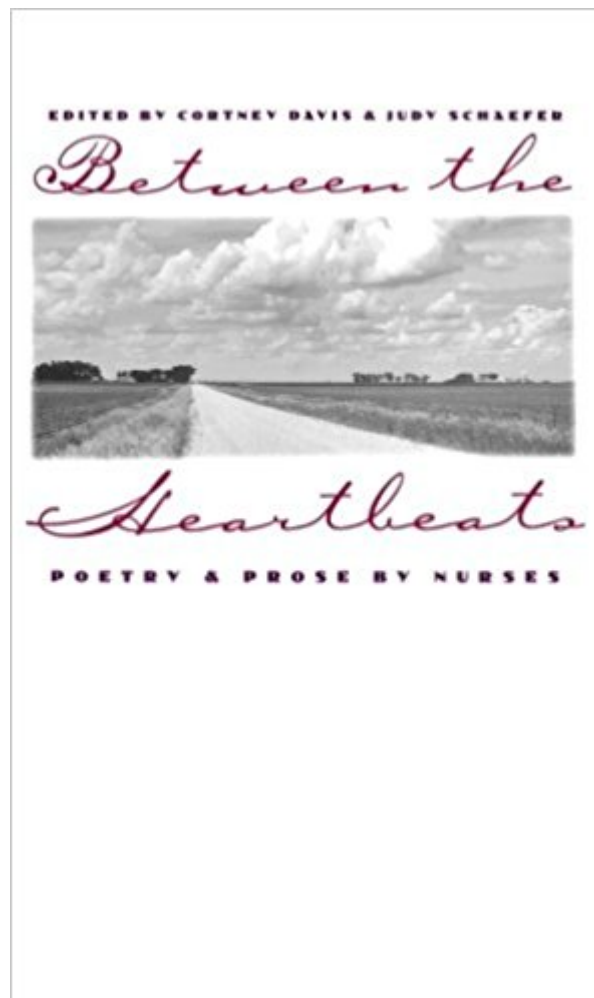




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# **Between The Heartbeats: Poetry And Prose By Nurses (Cambridge Language Education)**



## Synopsis

Nurses who are also creative writers have a powerful empathetic outlet for the joys and griefs of their everyday experiences. In *Between the Heartbeats* an international, diverse community of nurses write honestly and compassionately about their work. By unsentimentally translating out suffering into prose and poetry, the registered nurses in this brave, graceful anthology perform another enduring act of loving care.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“This volume of poetry and prose is written by nurses about their experiences of caring. It describes their disasters, their triumphs, their joy and sorrow. It is, quite simply, wonderful. Beg, steal, or borrow this book; if that fails, buy it.” —Nursing Times

What nurses know about care giving is different from what doctors and families know. The nurses in this collection talk about inpatients, outpatients, and home patients; these patients' attendants are young and old, female and, increasingly, male. Some of the nurses are dispassionately efficient; others wickedly admit to the excitement of voyeurism; all have unusual access to the depths and shallows of human emotion. By unsentimentally translating our suffering into prose and poetry, the nurses in *Between the Heartbeats* performs another enduring act of loving care. The forty-nine registered nurses in this brave, graceful, first-ever anthology represent thousands more. Their words

expand the practice of nursing and the practice of language. By bearing witness to the intimate details of nursing, from the mundane to the beautiful to the tragic, they reveal the epiphanies of life and death.

I liked this book. presents different perspectives

OK. Poetry is not my thing; but purchased this book because it was meant for nurses. It was very interesting.

Beautiful for illustrations of life in the hospital!

This collection of poetry, essays, and short stories by registered nurses has moved, inspired, and encouraged nurses here in the US and Canada and overseas. Many nurses, after reading this collection, have contacted me to say how these poems and stories reflect what they think and feel as they themselves are working with patients: the joys and moments of transcendence as well as the fears and frustrations. Nurses from all walks of healthcare--among them ICU nurses, homecare nurses, Hospice Nurses, OB/GYN nurses, Nursing Home nurses, office nurses--find words here that mirror what they feel during those amazing moments, the ones between the heartbeats, when they are standing by a patient's side. Death and dying are part of a nurse's day, just as surely as birth, healing, and grace are. These works speak of all aspects of caregiving, from the nurse's unique vantage point. Now in its fourth printing, *Between the Heartbeats* is being translated into Japanese and a second, all-new volume is currently being assembled, a companion piece to the original volume offered here. As Frances Biley said in her review of *Heartbeats* in *Nursing Times* (3/20/96) "This book is essential. I dare you to read 'NICU' by Dana Schuster and not be moved. Beg, steal or borrow this book; if that fails, buy it."

Superb text for teaching creative approaches to caregiving through literature to nurses and other caregivers. I had the honor of using the book as a text book this past semester at Penn State University, Harrisburg, PA. The course explored the literature of nurses as well as traditional literature. The goal of this exploration was to redefine caring, to create new ways to teach preventive health care and nurturance, and to sensitively encourage caregivers to own their responsibility to intellectualize and write from their unique vantage point as observers of pain. Numerous and various clinical scenarios were available through the creative writing in *BETWEEN*

THE HEARTBEATS and provided an opportunity to look at clinical situations with a refreshing perspective. My co-editor, Cortney Davis, and I have conducted many workshops but this was my first opportunity to use the book as a text for a three credit course. As might be guessed, I was personally pleased that the book served so well as a text. Best wishes to any of you who may want to try it in your classroom. Judy Schaefer, RNC, MA

I am a contributor to this book and am gratified to know that it's still being read. My two stories sprung from moments when taking care of very ill patients that made the real and the surreal seem to change places for a moment. The realities of life can perhaps be better understood by examining moments of apparent incongruity. One of the reasons I became a nurse was to get in closer contact with the nitty-gritty of human life. I got at least as much as I bargained for.

A meta-review -- 3 positive reviews by the work's editors and one negative review by a reader?  
Editors: don't "review" your own book, please.

As a nurse, when I purchased this book, I thought I would find some beautiful poetry about the profession of nursing and the art of caring. Instead, I found what I think may be the problem with nurses. As I read this book, I am struck with what appears to be repressed hostility and depression by these writers. Some of the poetry is morbid. And we wonder why there are nursing shortages?

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