

# Book Review

Grobman, G. M. (2015). *Ethics in nonprofit organizations: Theory and practice*, 2nd edition. Harrisburg, PA: White Hat Communications.

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Grobman has master's and doctoral degrees in public administration. He teaches nonprofit management courses, including nonprofit organizational ethics. He has 13 years of experience as executive director of a nonprofit organization in Pennsylvania.

The author's stated purpose is to present information about ethical concepts related to nonprofit organizations, because to sustain them, we need ethical leaders. This book is an attempt to professionally nurture those leaders. The 2nd edition includes chapters that address ethics in the following contexts: fund-raising, governance, financial management, grants management, and personnel management. The text includes 10 case studies and 120 fictional vignettes that illustrate the ethical challenges faced by social workers in nonprofit organizations. Each chapter concludes with discussion questions and learning activities,

I loved this book. It is engaging and readable, and I think students will like it. The book starts with a predictable introduction to the history of ethics and a brief summary of ethical theories and perspectives. Far from being dry and boring, Grobman gives a simplistic (maybe overly so) but easily understandable explanation of the different ethical approaches.

One might think that the same ethical principles would apply to all aspects of the nonprofit organization, but Grobman makes important distinctions. For example, the chapter "Ethics in Governance" includes advice about board composition, board decision-making, and promoting an ethical culture. The chapter "Ethics in Financial Management" includes discussion about segregation of duties,

training employees to eliminate waste and fraud, and gift policies. In the chapter "Ethics in Grants Management" Grobman addresses how grant writers should and should not be compensated and what an agency should be informed about before social workers pursue grants in its name. The chapter "Ethics in Personnel Management" recommends helping employees find balance in their work-personal lives and avoiding coercion to make donations. It promotes accountability and discusses what to do when managers are asked to give recommendations. It also includes the four steps that often lead to scandal: abuse, cover-up, circling the wagons, and victim blaming.

Each chapter contains relatable examples of the topic. For social workers who have little experience in nonprofit management, this book will be truly eye-opening. More than half the book consists of 10 richly described cases that are followed by a set of discussion questions. The vignettes at the end of the book provide nearly endless opportunities for students to examine the complexities of ethics in nonprofit corporations. The discussion questions and vignettes could easily be used for either in-class or online discussions.

If you are looking for a book that is heavy on theory and explores the theoretical perspectives in depth, this is not the book for you. However, if you are looking an affordable resource that will help students think through organizational dilemmas (and that they will actually read!), especially students at the master's level, then I highly recommend it.

