

# KIRKUS REVIEWS

## TITLE INFORMATION

### THE GOOD LANDLORD

*A Guide to Making a Profit While Making a Difference*

Peter Shapiro

The Good Landlord Publishing (284 pp.)

\$19.95 paperback, \$8.99 e-book

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## BOOK REVIEW

A Boston landlord and mediation expert provides a guide for landlords who want to profit while exerting a positive influence on their communities.

Many books offer advice to landlords about how to manage rental properties. The most notable of these how-to volumes, *Landlording* by Leigh Robinson, now in its ninth edition, has sold more than 370,000 copies since it was published in 1975. Here, debut author Shapiro develops an entire, unique ethos that recasts the negative image of the evil, greedy landlord as an exceptionally positive role model involved in the community—helping tenants while retaining personal boundaries, providing good serviceable housing, and, of course, still making money. The author, like most other landlord authors, deals with the tortuous and sometimes-tenuous legal framework that owners and tenants use. He’s clearly thought long and hard about how enlightened, civic-minded self-interest can guide the wise landlord. The book is replete with many anecdotes that show Shapiro’s deep engagement in the business and ethics of landlording, drawing on sources as diverse as the 18th-century observer of American democracy Alexis de Tocqueville, the mindfulness practitioner John Kabat-Zinn, and the psychologist Abraham Maslow, who developed the idea of the “needs hierarchy.” “Instead of treating a negotiation as a contest between enemies...try considering it as a problem to be jointly solved,” Shapiro counsels. Much of this engaging book offers powerful emotive strategies for dealing with difficult issues, but in simple, clear language, it emphasizes a central message: that making a profit as a landlord need not exclude ethics. Indeed, it asserts that proper landlording can be a fulfilling mode of providing service. The cartoons interspersed throughout the text offer little to support this important message, but overall, this book makes a significant and unique contribution that goes beyond standard landlord-tenant fare.

An amusing, thoughtfully written manual regarding the complex, challenging enterprise of landlording, full of enthusiasm, insight, and wisdom.

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