

Book review

The Dark Side of Organizational Behavior, Ricky W. Griffin and Anne O’Leary-Kelly, eds, Pfeiffer/Jossey-Bass, New York; 2004, Hardback, US\$53.00, 544 pp., ISBN: 0-7879-7700-4

Human systems often have their downside. They do not always function as their founders or leaders would like them to do. Max Weber, it will be remembered, thought bureaucracy was the ultimate form in business organization, or public administration. How then to come to terms with what may go wrong?

A useful [edited] book reviewed here, *The Dark Side of Organizational Behavior* may well provide a framework for understanding contemporary thinking on the often *negative* consequences of organizational behaviour. This is a rather unusual angle and is not very often found in the genre. There are books on the dysfunctions of bureaucracy from Gouldner onwards but this one has broader implications.

The editors teach at Texas A&M and Arkansas Universities, respectively. They are well-qualified to put together such as collection. Written by leading North American academics in the field, the contributions to the collection focus on the “causes, processes, and con-

sequences” that have a negative effect on the organization and the people in them, such as aggression, alcoholism, discrimination, theft, sexual harassment, under-table deals and so on.

In a nut-shell, the set of disorders reported here is surely the “*yin*” (shade) to the “*yang*” (light) of modern business bureaucratic organizations more often than not highlighted in literature. The edited collection is a useful antidote to the functionalist literature but it is, in the final analysis, more a library purchase for reference rather than for course-adoption for college majors in business administration but it may be of interest to many MBA students. It is a hefty tome, weighing in at just over 500 pages and is not necessarily for the lay manager, as it is very academic and by dint of the discourse adopted, strong on jargon rather than plain English. Even so, it can be recommended as a useful contribution to the field.

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