

# Reviews

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R.A. Buchholz, A.A. Marcus and J.E. Post, *Managing Environmental Issues. A Casebook*. Corporate Conservation Council, National Wildlife Federation, Sponsor. (Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1992).

W. Rathje and C. Murphy, *Rubbish! The Archaeology of Garbage. What Our Garbage Tells Us about Ourselves*. (HarperCollins, New York, 1992).

In July 1992, the National Wildlife Federation, Corporate Conservation Council, (1400 Sixteenth St., N.W., Washington D.C., 20036–2266, USA), issued the Final Report “Gaining Ground: Environmental Education in Business Schools”, marking the culmination of the NWF Curriculum Development Project [1,2]. This project addressed several areas critical to the introduction and acceptance of Environmental Management in graduate business and management programs. As a result of this study, Professors Buchholz, Marcus and Post, developed a casebook entitled *Managing Environmental Issues* which is designed to examine a wide variety of environmental issues with their corresponding corporate responses.

This casebook illustrates the type of material that will be useful for new courses in Environmental Management which are springing up in many educational settings, be they Conservation, Environmental Studies or Management departments.

The casebook shows the fundamental interdependency between environmental protection and economic growth. As has been known for a great deal of time, it is not a question of *either-or*. Rather, as the cases in this collection demonstrate, progressive and forward thinking companies are making environmental protection pay: “The environment, . . . is a growth industry, with opportunities in profit making” [p. xiii].

Issues that cry out for solutions include:

- “the failure of markets to reflect the full social and environmental costs, including the cost to future generations of goods and services;
- the difficulties of establishing risks, costs and benefits with certainty;
- the general unwillingness of individuals and organizations to make investments with long-term uncertain paybacks;
- the widespread desire and need to preserve or maximize individual and corporate self-interest;
- the difficulty of gathering, understanding and comparing information about environmental impacts of individual or organizational actions, and their alternatives; and
- the difficulty of clearly assessing the nature and extent of tradeoffs which environmentally sound alternatives may offer for other socially desired ends (economic growth, employment, social justice, women’s rights)”.

The authors make a clear distinction between two camps. On the one hand, the Environmental Movement and its adepts which they categorize as extreme in their demands because they do not take into account the economic and social realities. On the other hand, corporate decision makers are countering the environmentalists with more practical solutions which take into account the interests of all concerned.

“One strand of the Environmental Movement that is not at odds with business management is Conservation”. “Conservation adheres to the tenets of good scientific management – the avoidance of waste, the rational and efficient use of nature’s riches and the maximization of long-term yields, especially of renewable resources.” Indeed, Conservation is a new discipline which has its beginning in Art History, Urban Planning and Museology. However, in the last decade, Conservation has taken a broader perspective and is merging the concept of preservation of the historical and cultural heritage with a concern for the natural and environmental resources which sup-

port humans and other diverse species [3,4,5,6].

The casebook raises the question of whether politics and science can be blended to formulate strategic conservation issues which make economic and technical sense. The text proposes policies for "an alternative future based on renewable resources and energy efficiency". It reminds us that environmental management must be "in harmony with economic values". We must heed "price signals emanating from the marketplace" which are needed "to adapt" and "to conserve". "Humans should [not] exercise their dominion over nature for the sake of material progress". It is obvious from this compendium that "environmental philosophy does not necessarily blend easily with the tenets of business management". All these concepts and ideas are raised in the context of text and cases which cover such topics as the Amazon Rain Forest, the advance of Greens in Europe, the Exxon Valdez oil spill, the auto emissions debate, the Clean Air Act, cases illustrating toxic dumps, recycling, waste disposal, solar energy and the problem of ozone depletion among others.

This casebook is a perfect text for a course in Environmental Management or other related topics such as Conservation, Industrial Policy and the like. The National Wildlife Federation should be commended to have sponsored a project which will enhance the cause of protecting the environment through education and public debate.

The second book reviewed here (*Rubbish! The Archaeology of Garbage*) is more specialized than the first. It deals with the so-called "Garbage Project" which was initiated by the authors at the University of Arizona.

According to Rathje and Murphy, "to understand garbage you have to touch it, to feel it, to sort it, to smell it". That is exactly what they have been doing in a very methodical way. Digging up garbage from city dumps, "yields knowledge about people and their behavior". Garbage can be seen as "symbols of a way of life". It is interesting to note that "archaeologists have been picking through ancient garbage ever since Archaeology became a profession". The artifacts that are unearthed "serve as markers of how our forebears coped with the evolving physical and social world". "Garbage is a mir-

ror of American society". It offers images of a "mental reality" and of a "physical reality". "Garbology", combined with urban trash management, is a "unique database" which covers virtually every aspect of American life. The authors state that, all told, "the Garbage Project has conducted nine full-scale excavations of municipal landfills in the United States". Rathje and Murphy provide first a short history of garbage. They note that "from the beginning of time non-biodegradability has been a strikingly constant, even predominantly feature of garbage" (p.38). They complain that "the contents of the household garbage of our time, remain largely a mystery" (p. 45). That "behavior is reflected in artifacts" . . . "lies at the heart of studies of what is known to archaeologists as 'material culture'."

The Garbage Project is so thorough that the authors are even able to throw light on detailed questions such as whether the poor pay more than affluent people for the food products they buy. They carry out a study of this nature by comparing the refuse of two different neighborhoods (p. 65).

*Rubbish!* claims to be based on a data base of over 55,000 documents. The book amply illustrates the research methods used by the authors and their colleagues. It discusses the question of probable errors when collecting data and the taxonomies used to sort the contents of a landfill. The book contains maps of the former wetlands in the New York metropolitan area which have been built up into solid land with debris and municipal solid waste.

The members of the Garbage Project excavated landfills for two main archaeological reasons: (1) to compare data being gleaned from garbage fresh off the truck carrying it, with data from garbage in municipal landfills; and (2) to study the formation processes and look at what happens to garbage, after it has been interred (p. 92). They estimate that the amount of space taken by fast-food packaging in landfills is about one third of the total. The volume of plastic in landfills is indeed a concern. Newspapers constitute another big percentage of the occupied volume. A year's worth of copies of *the New York Times* weighs about 520 pounds and occupies a volume of about 1.5 cubic yards. The project revealed that newspapers do not disintegrate as thoroughly as has been stated heretofore.

In spite of the computer and information systems revolution, "paper has managed to hold its own among the components of the U.S. solid-waste stream" (p. 103). An interesting chart shows that paper is the single biggest constituent of a typical landfill. Construction-and-demolition debris account for an average 12 percent of total content. These figures should give environmentalists useful ideas about where they should place their efforts. It is obvious that the defense of forests, the recycling of paper and the reduction of the use of paper in business and in packaging, without causing an increase in the volume of other substitutes such as plastic, are all interrelated and must be considered in unison.

One chapter of this book is devoted to the Myth of Biodegradation and another one on the Diaper Dilemma.

The authors state that "in thinking strategically about how to cope with garbage problems, policymakers need to be realistic" (p. 166). It is interesting to note that the environmental movement arose from the easier life enjoyed by America's vast middle class: "Convenience and leisure on the one hand and concern about the environment (and garbage) on the other are inextricably linked. An erosion of the former will result in an erosion of the latter". Whereas diapers and fast-food containers are convenient symbols for the most pressing problems, it is not entirely clear that they constitute the most important ones". "And we should pick our battles carefully" (p. 167).

The final chapter presents admonitions in the form of ten commandments, namely: (1) "Don't think of our garbage problems in terms of crisis; (2) Don't bow before false panaceas; (3) Be willing to pay for garbage disposal; (4) Use money as a behavioral incentive; (5) Distrust symbolic targets; (6) Focus on the big ticket items; (7) But recycled and recyclable materials; (8) Encourage modest changes in household behavior; (9) Be reasonable about risk; and (10) Educate the next generation – without the myths" (pp. 238–245).

As a final point, *Rubbish!* re-emphasizes the idea that "the mental realities and material realities are (seldom) congruent".

The Garbage Project served to debunk many misconceptions that existed about the behavior of

the American people. We know that "this is not the usual starting point of most discussions in America, especially political ones. But it is not a bad starting point at all", in particular at the present time, so conclude the authors.

## References

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J.P. VAN GIGCH  
California State University  
Sacramento, CA 95819-6088 USA

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Peter Herriot, *The Career Management Challenge: Balancing Individual and Organisational Needs*. (Newbury Park, Calif. and London: SAGE publications 1992), 180 pages.

Not too much has been heard of career theory in recent times. Much of the leading work in the field was conducted by Edgar Schein and colleagues at M.I.T., during the 1970s. Interest in this work focussed upon the interface between the occupational preferences of individuals and the demands made upon employees by organisations. Such concerns dovetailed well with wider debates regarding human motivation, particularly the 'needs' theories advanced by McGregor, McClelland and others, and much interest was accorded to career management as a result. Since then, Authur *et al.* (1989)

published their *Handbook of Career Theory*, while Wall and colleagues at the Social and Applied Psychology Unit, Sheffield, have undertaken research into managerial job change. Other than this, relatively little research has been conducted specifically into the management of careers.

Given this history, one might expect Peter Herriot's book to be a timely contribution to the field. In some respects at least, this is correct. Standard patterns of working life have long been breaking down. Individuals rarely enter single organisations with the expectation of spending extensive proportions of their working lives within it. The typical career pattern is now much more mobile, shifting between both organisations and occupations more frequently. Professionals at least, may go on sabbatical, may be seconded to other departments or other organisations or may dispense with full time attachment to the organisation, retiring early, entering into consultancy arrangements or working part-time.

Such reasons constitute a strong imperative for the reappraisal of what is conceived to be a 'career' by both individuals and organisations. It is a task to which Peter Herriot's book does only limited justice. Two difficulties are noteworthy in particular. The first difficulty is stylistic. Herriot seems to be referring continuously to 'brilliant' books (p.1), 'technological tornados' (p.16) and rather clichéd metaphors ('So the winds of change really are a tornado' (p.16)). In addition, there is the use of an extended but unconvincing Star Trek analogy to describe variance in attitudes to job tasks. Such stylistic devices ought to serve to engage and retain the attention of the reader, and for the reviewer at least, this was not the case.

A second difficulty is rather more insuperable and concerns the extent to which the book extends our conceptual understanding of career theory. Much of the analysis contained within the book does not advance significantly upon previous literature. On material such as occupational choice, career anchors and cultural and strategic change, the reader may be referred more profitably to Edgar Schein's (1978) volume, *Career Dynamics, Matching Individual and Organisational Needs*. It

is however, fair to note that the volume displays some originality with regard to the association between career management and Porter's model of competitive advantage, and as a synthesis of some of the more recent literature.

Despite my reservations, Herriot raises some pertinent questions regarding what association ought to exist between individual preferences and organisational demands, and it is in this area that scope for some interesting theorising exists. For the majority of employees, standard contracts of employment will continue to govern their work lives. For an increasing minority of employees however, it may be more appropriate to conceive of employment as an extended series of short term contracts. The terms of such contracts will be dictated partly by need but increasingly by individual choice and occupational preference in addition. Individuals may have the freedom increasingly to move not merely within organisations but between public and private spheres of industry, and the commercial, voluntary and even academic sectors.

Increased occupational choice implies a still greater attention to the factors which motivate individuals and to the means by which such individuals may be managed most profitably. Of fundamental importance is the need to motivate individuals whose skills are likely to be relatively high but whose attachment to any single organisation is rather less than that of the conventional employee, without invoking the use of overprescriptive, bureaucratic contracts. In such a context, the recognition of career anchors, in which the individual is allowed a degree of latitude around some central career specialisation, and of career management, in which both the individual's entry to and exit from the organisation are considered explicitly, may be accorded greater significance. In the sense that Peter Herriot's volume raises some of these issues, and provides at least half-answers, it is a book worthy of recommendation.

MARTYN WRIGHT  
*Judge Institute of Management Studies,  
Univ. of Cambridge,  
England.*

H.E. Gospel (Ed), *Industrial Training and Technological Innovation*. (London & New York: Routledge 1991), Hardback, 246 pp.

P. Blyton and J. Morris (Eds), *A Flexible Future: Prospects for Employment and Organization*. (Berlin & New York: Walter de Gruyter 1991), Hardback, 364 pp.

It is now 'received wisdom' that training is a major factor in explaining why specific firms (and indeed countries) perform better than others. In looking at industrial training in *Britain, Japan* and the *USA*, Dr. Howard Gospel (currently reader in industrial relations at the University of Kent, Canterbury, England) offers an invaluable study in depth in this ably edited volume on its comparative importance vis-à-vis the degree of technological innovation. Gospel has assembled a very good mix of contributions from business and economic historians in the three countries, with a sizeable number of Japanese experts providing approximately half of the chapters. The specific role of engineers and their respective education and training takes up a good part of the monograph, focusing particularly on crucial periods of economic growth which have influenced major developments in that country. This is a useful book for specialists and faculty libraries.

In a second, and related text, Dr. Paul Blyton and Dr. Jonathan Morris (who teach HRM at the Cardiff Business School, Cardiff, Wales) consider the 'flexible future' of work. They attempt to understand how 'flexibility develops and the conditions under which it is seen as the critical *means* to different organizational ends' (p. 3). The editors examine the twin concepts of 'flexible specialization' and the 'flexible firm', with their wide implications for labour and management. All contributions to their book focus on specific companies, industries and countries, so that the coverage is indeed wide ranging from Michael Reed's excellent chapter on theory, to Thomas Clarke's on Volvo, as well as Alan McKinlay and Ken Starkey on Ford, Marion Whitaker on the UK Clothing Industry, Hans-Wern Franz on the European Iron and Steel Industry, and many others. As in most symposia, the chapters vary in quality but overall the collec-

tion is highly topical. There is, however, too little on Japan and the 'Little Dragon' economies of East and South-East Asia. 'Japanization' does nonetheless receive some detailed treatment in Peter Turnbull's robust chapter nine on "Buyer-Supplier Relations in the UK Automotive Industry" (pp. 169 ff.).

Of the 21 contributors to the volume, all but four are British or at least teach at universities there. Two other work in Canada, one in Germany and another in Sweden. Of the 18 chapters, most are either general in coverage, with a few specifically British, Canadian or European in scope. A greater number of cross-national comparisons might have been an improvement.

MALCOLM WARNER  
*Judge Institute of Management Studies*  
*University of Cambridge*  
*England*

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D.K. Das, *Korean Economic Dynamism* (Macmillan, London, 1992), 196 pp.

*Korean Economic Dynamism* is a survey of the economic factors which have led to the unprecedented growth performance of South Korea during the period 1960–1990. The book is both well informed and well written and draws heavily from the extensive literature on that country which comes from the Harvard project and the neoclassical school of economists who have been much concerned to demonstrate that the Korean growth success has been premised on the application of open economy/free market economic propositions.

The growth strategy followed by Korea was that of export-led industrialisation which allowed it to exploit its static comparative advantage and find its niche in the markets of the world. Professor Das skilfully picks his way through various aspects of the neoclassical argument, concluding on page 147 that 'the Korean economic miracle is thus not the success story of *laissez faire* but of a pragmatic and non-ideological mix of market and statist forces.' The discussion of the phases of economic growth in South Korea is particularly interesting, and his section on the savings and investments strategies and policies of the economy are well worth reading since

they bring together new information on the very high levels of real savings in that economy. He does not take the view that the Koreans have followed a Japanese model of economic development, but that they have evolved their own particular institutions which have played a central role in their development success. The Confucian values of South Korea have been blended with, and underpinned committed outward-oriented export-led economic policies. The discussion on the Korean Chaebol and its contrasting Japanese Zaibatsu is particularly informative. The conclusion of his analysis, that the Korean success story was 'a kind of neoclassical intervention, not the invisible hand of the classical school' (page 191), is a sufficient summary of his general argument about the balance of factors which led to the economic success of South Korea. This neoclassical intervention was in the hands of a

centralised agency run by strong technocratic teams who were supported by a single-minded commitment of successive governments to economic growth.

Professor Das' book is recommended to those who would be interested in understanding the mix of economic, institutional and cultural factors that have contributed to the unique Korean economic growth success, and is a balanced and informative account of the theories and major arguments that have emerged over the causes of Korean prosperity. South Korea has lessons of a general kind but it is not a directly replicable development model.

Dr. John CATHIE  
*Wolfson College*  
*Cambridge, UK*