

these rules to join the EU have realized stronger growth “than might otherwise have been achieved.” Lippit does however realize that Europe’s primary problems are structural: an aging population, poor incentives that encourage workers to remain or to become unemployed, and labor rigidities and regulations that discourage job creation and diminish relative productivity rates.

Chapters 14–16 return to the topic of income inequality and strategies to lower poverty rates. The strategies include the redistribution of land, incentives to increase the wages of low-skilled labor, utilizing monetary policy for micro loans to encourage entrepreneurship, increased government spending to promote farming and rural nonfarm businesses, increased expenditures on education and health care for the poor, increased world support for NGOs, and debt forgiveness from developed countries. Increased government expenditures would be paid for by higher tax rates on corporations and tariffs. If inflation should rear its ugly head, McKinley (chapter 16) tells developing countries not to worry—and, by the way, they can also use snake oil to cure the common cold.

The book will definitely appeal to fans of big government. I did enjoy most of the chapters: the level of intellectual discussion and analysis is high. Griffen’s allies and free market economists share a common goal of reducing world poverty rates, but the two groups differ as to the appropriate role of government and its degree of market involvement.

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Dishonest Dollars: The Dynamics of White-Collar Crime

Terry L. Leap

Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2007 (243 pages)

The immediate relevance of the issue of white-collar crime as discussed in this volume by Professor Leap is brought into clear focus when one considers his contention that we are a culture that is based on trust. When the butcher, baker, and corporate CEO are conniving to defraud the unwary consumer, the financial, environmental, physical, and psychological costs are exceedingly high. This book is far more than a simple investigative account of corporate misbehavior or an analysis of its economic effects or sociological characteristics; it explores multiple dimensions of white-collar crime, including its socioeconomic impact, the particular psychological characteristics of its perpetrators, and possible strategies to combat its growing prevalence.

Leap offers several explanations for the growth of crime in the business community and among the professional classes. The first has to do with the realities of the global economy: as manufacturing jobs are more and more relegated to workers in distant lands, an ever-growing segment of the population is engaged in white-collar work. Thus, more

and more people have greater access to power, money, and resources and, in turn, their incentive to commit illegal acts is increased. Furthermore, he adds a noteworthy cultural explanation: We are as fascinated with “crime in the suites” as we are repelled by it. “The win-at-all-cost mentality,” he observes, “is regarded as part of rugged American individualism that is at the core of a free-market society.” This corroborates his contention that crime is more than an individual pathology; it is also fostered by society as well as the structure and ethos of a given business or organization.

As to the moral dynamics involved in the choice to commit crime, Leap relies exclusively on a rational-voluntarist model. He has no sympathy for perpetrators in the corporate milieu: They cheat, lie, and defraud because they want to cheat, lie, and defraud. Although he classifies culprits into three general types that suggest an ascending order of malevolence—crisis responders, opportunity takers, and opportunity seekers—he has no more regard for the emotionally beleaguered and financially threatened manager who cannot resist committing one little peccadillo to take him or herself out of harm’s way than he does for the “power-seeking, ruthless self-promoters” who behind their “mask of sanity” regularly demonstrate a chilling absence of concern for others. In addition, he makes no moral distinction between the disturbing violence so often predicated of street crime and what many perceive to be the less violent and socially threatening tactics of white-collar crime, a conclusion that cannot be made often enough given the wildly disproportionate class and racial demographics of the prison population.

Leap is rigorous in his categorization and description of the various causes and types of white-collar crime and he does not shy away from the prescriptive as shown in an expansive section on strategies of prevention. Nor does he avoid the attempt to calibrate the future shape and prevalence of white-collar crime (the latter should stay the same or even decline slightly as baby boomers retire; the former will concentrate more in the areas of computer-related crimes and health-care fraud).

In general terms, the book is clearly written, provides a comprehensive classification of the various elements discussed in his theory, and regularly and effectively relies on examples and case studies. Individual business leaders and business school professors will surely benefit from the data and explanations offered as well as from the schema provided to enable organizations to analyze the various factors and conditions that require monitoring and emendation if white-collar crime is to be detected and, more importantly, avoided.

Those looking for a more detailed moral analysis of the white-collar phenomenon will not be as satisfied. In fairness, Leap is schooled in management, not in ethics. Economics is a cost-benefit discipline and so it is, perhaps, not surprising that he assumes that the utilitarian calculus is the only method underlying human moral choices. This stance should have at least been discussed and defended by the author rather than assumed, as there are other ethical methods (e.g., character ethics) whose insights would have significantly augmented the analysis. For example, utility does not account for examples he provides in which criminals speak of how they “knew” the decision to defraud was not in their best interest, but they did it anyway. Leap quotes a journalist who deliberately falsified

information: “I said to myself what I said every time those stories ran, ‘You must stop. You must stop.’ But I didn’t.”

The formidable research Leap conducted enabled him to write at length on the various types of crime being committed but was at times exhausting. A large part of the book is dedicated to description of the activities of white-collar criminals, and I felt restless at times as the data was disproportionate with the analysis.

Despite these shortcomings, the reader will benefit from Leap’s book. The model he provides is complex and comprehensive; he punctures the mystique that corporate crime is somehow more benign than muggings and murders; and he leaves us longing for a society in which those with whom we do business can be trusted to act honorably.

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The Age of Abundance: How Prosperity Transformed America’s Politics and Culture

Brink Lindsey

New York: Collins, 2007 (394 pages)

The culture wars have raged in America with particular intensity over the past forty years, a result of the great divide between the disciples of liberation emanating from 1960s ideologies and beliefs and the religious traditionalists in all faiths appalled by the threat to the inherited religious values of western civilization.

Brink Lindsey, vice president for research at the Cato Institute, has written a broad-ranging study tackling the origins and development of this cultural conflict. He offers a powerful argument concerning how a developing age of abundance helped diffuse the cultural tensions and promote a more libertarian culture. “The experience of recent years,” he writes, “has made it increasingly clear that the center did hold. It takes the form of today’s *modus vivendi*, a libertarian synthesis of core middle-class values and inclusive tolerance” (340).

Lindsey argues that the achievement of mass affluence resulted in major changes in values concerning race, sexuality, gender differences, and multiculturalism. The more open society that resulted came about because workers no longer were dependent as much on factories or giant corporations for their work; blacks were freed from the confines of Jim Crow segregation; and the dominance of political parties (and party bossism as well) was ended. These factors, along with the rise of different religious values and beliefs—everything from Aquarian new age religions to Mormonism to evangelical Christianity—contributed in the end, Lindsey believes, to greater freedom.

Lindsey explores this argument by focusing on a history of twentieth-century America. Abraham Maslow, a Brandeis University professor of psychology, is Lindsey’s hero throughout the book. Maslow saw the idea of human needs emanating in the form of a pyramid. When economic scarcity was the norm in America, as it was until the post-World