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Advances in Strategic Management, Vols. 1-5. by Robert Lamb; Paul Shrivastava  
Review by: Anne Sigismund Huff

*Administrative Science Quarterly*, Vol. 34, No. 4 (Dec., 1989), pp. 658-661

Published by: [Sage Publications, Inc.](#) on behalf of the [Johnson Graduate School of Management, Cornell University](#)

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**Advances in Strategic Management, vols. 1–5.**

Robert Lamb and Paul Shrivastava (eds.). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, 1983–1988. \$58.50, institutions; \$29.95, individuals.

Edited books are subject to suspicion. Most journal editors believe that the edited volume cannot possibly be honed to the quality standards ensured by blind review. Publishers worry either that the edited book addresses only a small number of readers in a specialty area or that it covers so many areas that potential readers will decide that the few chapters addressing their specialty interests do not justify purchase. Given an expanding set of management journals and conferences, and escalating book prices, many individuals considering *Advances in Strategic Management* are likely to follow similar lines of thought. What can an annual series like this one offer that is not being better delivered by other outlets?

One role for an annual series is to hold a mirror to a body of work for external and internal assessment. In a relatively small field this may seem to be more useful for external publics (libraries, practitioners, academics in other fields) than for researchers within the field being reviewed. On the other hand, self-reflection is particularly important for a young and borrowing field like strategic management. And the means of reflecting upon the field are limited. There are only two journals publishing directly in the strategy area, one (edited by Lamb) with a dual focus on academics and practitioners. Conferences augment this perspective, but the mirror they provide is somewhat distorted by the uneven need to expand vitae or justify conference expenses, and this overview of the field is less accessible to those who do not attend the meetings.

As a purposeful reflection on the state of the field, I found the first five volumes of *Advances in Strategic Management* to be timely and interesting, but (perhaps inevitably) they also seemed to represent key areas of inquiry unevenly. For example, a number of chapters draw attention to the international context of strategy. Pucik and Hatvany (I)<sup>1</sup> discuss human resource planning in Japan. Nonaka and Johansson (III) address organizational learning in Japanese companies. Snodgrass and Grant (IV) describe cultural influences on planning and control, again with an emphasis on Japan. Gladwin and Wasilewski (IV) suggest a series of propositions about the link between environmental interdependence and organizational design. El-Namaki (IV) discusses newly industrialized countries in the international market. These are each important topics for strategic management, but taken together they skirt around a revolutionary movement toward global competition. I wish that Lamb and Shrivastava had been able to find work that in aggregate confronted this important area more comprehensively.

Other topics given timely but regrettably limited attention include the strategic use of technology (addressed by Ford, III; Shrivastava and Souder, III), cooperative strategies (Astley and Fombrun, I; Fombrun and Astley, II), and the content of corporate-level decisions (Duhaime and Grant, III). The series does a better job of covering managerial attention and cognition (e.g., Shrivastava and Mitroff, I; Spender, II; John Dutton

1

The roman numeral following a reference indicates the volume in which the article appears.

658/ASQ, December 1989

## Book Reviews

and Freedman, III; Lyles and Mitroff, III; Jane Dutton, V; Stubbart and Ramaprasad, V), stakeholder analysis (Freeman, I; Mason and Mitroff, II), strategy implementation (MacMillan and Guth, III; Joyce, IV, and corporate venturing (Burgelman, III; Birley, Manning, and Norburn, V).

The series also includes interesting work on more specialized subjects. Three chapters consider alternative measures of performance (Hofer, II; McGuire, Schneeweis, and Hill, IV; Walter, V), and Woo (IV) offers models for assessing and managing firm value. Harrigan looks at temporary teams created for strategic transformations (I) and barriers to entry in mature industries (II); Jemison (III) discusses the role of the division general manager; Miller, Toulouse, and Belanger (III) discuss the relationship between executive personality and strategic choice; Hertz and Thomas (I) argue for the strategic use of risk analysis; and Chakravarthy (III) describes business-government partnerships as a means of sharing risk. A few chapters look at strategy in other settings, including MacMillan's (I) work on competitive strategies for not-for-profit agencies, Lorange's (V) discussion of strategy for an academic department and Mazzolini's (I) chapter on the international strategies of government-controlled enterprises.

The potential usefulness of these and other reflections on current work in the strategy field is enhanced by the fact that most chapters in this series have been contributed by respected figures in the field. In addition to the authors noted above, for example, Mintzberg coauthors a chapter on changing strategy at Air Canada in volume 4 (Mintzberg, Brunet, and Waters) and discusses generic strategies in volume 5. Ansoff discusses societal strategy (I), corporate capability for managing change (II), and corporate culture (Ansoff and Baker, IV). Snow and Miles (II) argue that context should be given more theoretic importance. There are also a few contributions by executives, including a short essay by Garvin (III), then Chairman of Exxon, on the difficulty of forecasting.

In addition to the inevitable lack of depth in important topic areas, I felt the overall portfolio of chapters in the first five volumes overemphasized planning issues (at least eight chapters are framed primarily in terms of planning) while including relatively little work that is directly informed by an economic perspective (exceptions include Harrigan's chapter on entry barriers, I, and MacMillan and Hambrick's chapter on asset parsimony, V). In terms of functional emphasis, at least five chapters focus primarily on human resource management, while relatively little attention is given to other areas. The few chapters that do look at other disciplines, such as the one by Maskowitz and Rabion on alternative strategies for product optimization (II) and the one by Assael on market segmentation (II), tend not to be closely tied to business or corporate strategy. Finally, the bias seems to be more toward process issues than questions of strategy content and more toward theoretic discussion than empirical evidence. Perhaps to reflect the field more evenhandedly may be asking too much of a series that appears once a year with an average of thirteen chapters per volume.

Another rationale for an edited series is that it would focus theoretic discussion and attempt to influence a few agendas

659/ASQ, December 1989

for empirical research. While Lamb and Shrivastava seem to straddle the fence on the purpose of this series, the five volumes published to date have given sustained attention to refining the definition of strategy itself. In the first volume, for example, Freeman suggests that a focus on stakeholders provides a philosophical foundation for defining strategy as well as a practical problem-solving tool for analysis. In the next volume, Mason and Mitroff suggest that broad analysis of stakeholder power subsumes the focus on rivals, threats to entry, and so on suggested by work based on industrial economics. Several other chapters in volume 2 provide different perspectives. Ansoff discusses the systems and structures that underlie the development of general management capability; Spender argues that unintentional strategic "recipes" can be found among groups of competitors; and Snow and Miles point to the importance of theoretical "overlays" that focus attention on environmental context and organizational/group/individual characteristics.

The opportunity for this kind of discussion is relatively limited in many fields, and *Advances in Strategic Management* provides a real service by creating a forum for the strategy area. The importance of the contribution is constrained, however, by the size of the audience these books reach and the subsequent use of the material presented. I feel this series has a relatively modest impact to date, especially given the quality of its contributors. One reason may be that the high price of a hardback book precludes purchase by many readers. More to the point, many people in the strategy field agree upon a subset of journals as key outlets for scholarly work, and they regularly monitor these outlets. The lack of a similarly broad-based agreement on a series such as this one dilutes the readership and the impact of the work.

One important reason for paying attention to the journals is that the review process provides quality control that is missing in this and other edited volumes. On the other hand, journal articles arrive so neatly sliced they're like bread from the grocery store. Purity and nutritional value are assured, but I would argue that we also need something more yeasty—publications that retain some of the provocative statements and side excursions that often make the paper first received for review more interesting than the version that ultimately gets published by the journal.

A relatively large number of articles in this series are written in rich and provocative ways. I found, for example, Astley and Fombrun's (I) discussion of "diagonal interdependence" among functional chains in different industries to be an interesting insight into a world of increasingly complex relationships. Similarly, in the most recent volume, Mintzberg (V) outlines a complicated set of "generic strategies" in a 67-page chapter that is replete with illustrative diagrams and charts and figures. It's a very complicated way of thinking about differences in strategy, perhaps too complicated, but one of the interesting aspects of this work is, again, that it describes a business within a matrix of related industries.

These are the kinds of ideas that have convinced me to give more attention to *Advances in Strategic Management* in the future. Lamb and Shrivastava persuade good people to con-

660/ASQ, December 1989

## Book Reviews

tribute papers on interesting topics; though the work included in the series is sometimes uneven, it is not readily available elsewhere.

In the future, I would like to see the editors do more to encourage real conversation in the work they include in the series. Joyce's (IV) article on strategy implementation, which addresses differences between his concept of implementation (developed with Hrebiniak) and Quinn's (1980) concept, stands out as the kind of contribution that is needed. Most authors talk past one another, citing but not engaging other work. Our willingness to each be a pioneer forging our own paths is another reason why this series has had less impact than it might have had. As we take the task of developing interactive conversation more seriously, we should take books like this more seriously.

### Anne Sigismund Huff

Professor of Strategic Management  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign  
Champaign, IL 61820

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Quinn, James Brian  
1980 *Strategies for Change*. Homewood, IL: Irwin.

### **Innovating to Compete: Lessons for Diffusing and Managing Change in the Workplace.**

Richard E. Walton. San Francisco and London: Jossey-Bass, 1987. 361 pp. \$25.95.

This book constitutes an extremely interesting and successful attempt to analyze the processes of organizational and social change in contemporary shipping and to generalize from it about the diffusion and management of change in the workplace.

The shipping industry, as often claimed by those close to it, is overburdened with tradition. This has often been manifested by long-established principles of organization of work on board, as well as by legal and institutional regulations that function to maintain the existing occupational structures (e.g., Roggema and Smith, 1981). Naturally, the process of change within such an industry has been complicated, slow, and characterized by resistance. Nevertheless, during the past twenty years, important and interesting attempts have been made in the fleets of various industrialized nations to introduce new work patterns and social relationships aboard ship and in the headquarters of the shipping companies on shore. A number of such attempts, in the form of "experiments," in various European countries and Japan have been reported and analyzed in the professional literature of shipping, but little has appeared in the more universal scientific journals or books in the fields of management, organization, and the behavioral sciences. Walton's book is a most comprehensive and penetrating analysis of the reasons for and the substance of the changes that have taken place in contemporary shipping. In addition, his analysis is well embedded in a theoret-

661/ASQ, December 1989