

Books that are noteworthy

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For the current issue of our Journal, we have selected the books that might very well be highly educational, entertaining, and joy to read. The first book offers simple suggestions on how to start your own – or family – business, and another how to learn from some key thought leaders for entire nation (the case of Israel) in our contemporary society.

So, first things first: Who is Henry Hutcheson? Henry Hutcheson is a Certified Management Consultant and the founder and president of Family Business USA. He specializes in helping family businesses and privately held businesses improve business operations, prepare for transition, secure wealth, and strengthen family relationships. He is the author of **Dirty Little Secrets of Family Business, published by Greenleaf Book Group, 2014, reprint-ed in 2016 and 2019, 248 pages.**

On his website linkedin page, we learn that: “Family Business USA assists family businesses with uncertainly surrounding succession, conflict resolution, improved communication, and enhancement of business operations. We also speak, write, and give seminars across the US about the various dynamics of family business. We take a completely comprehensive approach to working with family business. Family Business USA believes that Family Businesses are a System comprised of the Family, the Business, and the Owners. As such, changes in one area can impact entirely different areas. Think of a divorce, a family member joining or leaving the business, or alcoholism. This dynamic must be understood in order to be effective in addressing family business issues. Family Business USA consulting helps family members in business communicate better with each other, and plan for succession.

Mr. Hutcheson wrote much needed Dirty Little Secrets of Family Business, in which he presents indispensable information and instructions on essentials of family business. The book has nine chapters and covers in depth “money matters” in chapter four and “conflict resolution before family revolution” in chapter two. Topics of interest include such areas as compensation, entitlements, shareholder agreements and deciding on whether to sell or keep family business, the so-called exit strategies, succession planning and many other relevant issues. What is most remarkable that the reader can apply heaps of useful ideas and tips in any family business situations. This little book presents real life stories of family business dos and don'ts. Realizing that every family business is different and unique, there is no such a thing as a cookie cut strategy. The book nevertheless teaches many valuable lessons by taking a deep look at the powerful principles that make a family business successful. We intuitively seem to know it: every business once started as a single person or single-family undertaking. Even now, up to three fourth of all businesses are family businesses, yet two thirds do not survive even to the next generation.

It is reasonable to ask: why are family businesses so challenging? Is it because the family profits from love most, while business loves profits most? This is one of main message of the book, that these two do not easily converge. Yet, there is clearly need for them both. It is typical that most family businesses start often with single founder and single vision. The entrepreneur looks with more of a keen eye at the business landscape than the rest does. Even though everyone may look at the same business landscape, or opportunity, the key difference is that while average person looks and perhaps even sees the business opportunity, it is the entrepreneur who not only sees it -- but also seizes it! More and more new businesses are started and owned by women nowadays. This is desirable and good thing. It is undeniable however that women have the additional challenge of being a mother and also often ‘serve’ as a chief emotional supporter in the family. The main stabilizer and solid factor of success is therefore properly open communication where successful family business can thrive. The book dives deeply into the nitty gritty of how to achieve the desirable outcome that lead to enduring success. The book ends with some suggestions on setting up new owners for success – and especially on managing Millennials. With increasingly disruptive role that social media plays in our life the ideas of Hutcheson are well worth considering. The book is available, among others, from amazon, abebooks.

Start-up Nation: The Story of Israel's Economic Miracle is a 2009 book by Dan Senor and Saul Singer about the Israel's economy and business environment. The book describes and assesses how relatively small nation of about 8 million in just six decades of its existence as a new nation successfully produced more than sixty pivotal companies listed on the NASDAQ. That is far more than any other foreign nation could boast. No wonder the book quickly got to the top of the bestseller list producing more start-up companies on a per capita basis than many large and well-established economies of the world – including Japan and China. Senor and Singer abandon "the argument from ethnic or religious exceptionalism, dismissing 'unitary Jewishness' or even individual talent as major reasons for Israel's high-tech success" and analyze key factors that, in the authors' opinion, contribute most to Israel's economic growth: immigration and mandatory military service.

Here are some interesting endorsements that may provide perhaps the best recommendation: “Start-up Nation is a fun overview of a side of Israel you don't hear much about: the incredible success of its start-up companies, traced back to: 1. the multidisciplinary army training everyone gets at age 18, 2. a culture of embracing and learning from failure, 3. all those Jewish immigrants from places like Russia that show up with science and engineering degrees looking for something creative to do.”

LeeAnn commented: What country has the highest ratio of university degrees in its population? What country has the highest concentration of startups in the world? What country has more companies listed on NASDAQ than the entire European continent combined? If you answered "Israel" to any of these three questions you were right. Dan Senor and Paul Singer explain how Israel, a tiny country the size of New Jersey with no natural resources, in a constant state of war is still able to produce more start-ups than any other country besides the U.S. The emergence of Israel's high-tech sector put the small country's economy on track. Specializing in computer hardware and software, medical technologies and pharmaceuticals, Israel's technology sector became world renowned for its innovation: Flash drives, cardiac stents, camera-pills, instant messaging and shopping.com are only a few of Israeli-bred innovations that have emerged in the last few decades. So, how does this little powerhouse, admired and envied by so many around the world, do it against all of the odds? Compulsory Service in a Unique Military Another contributing factor is that Israel has a compulsory military service for all citizens over the age of 18, three years for men and two years for women. Innovation comes from having a unique perspective. Perspective comes from knowledge. Knowledge comes from a wide variety of experiences during a long life. In Israel, young people get experience, knowledge, perspective, and maturity at a much younger age, because the Israeli society jams so many transformative experiences into its people when they're barely out of high school. By the time they get to college, their heads are in a different place than their American counterparts.

There is also a cultural tolerance in Israel for what some call "constructive failure" or "intelligent failures." Most Israelis believe that without tolerating a large number of failures, it is impossible to achieve true innovation. In the IDF, there is a tendency to treat all performance, both successful and unsuccessful, both in training simulations and in live battle, as value-neutral. So long as the risk was taken intelligently, and not recklessly, even if the performance failed, there is something to be learned. Yosma Israel's economic miracle is due as much to immigration as to anything. Foreign-born citizens of Israel currently account for over one-third of Israel's population. That is three times the ratio of immigrants to natives in the U.S.A. Israel is now home to more than 70 diverse nationalities and cultures. The success of the Venture Capital industry in Israel grew even stronger with the creation of a program they named Yozma (Hebrew for "initiative"). A group of young bureaucrats at Israel's Ministry of Finance came up with the idea for a program where the Israeli government would invest money to create ten new venture capital funds Each fund had to be represented by three parties: Israeli venture capitalists in training, a foreign venture capital firm, and an Israeli investment company or bank. As a result of these efforts, Israel's annual venture-capital rose nearly 60-fold, from \$58 million to \$3.3 billion, between 1991 and 2000. Venture capital was the match that ignited the fire.

MashUps and Alacrity Mashups: There's also a multi-task mash-up mentality in Israel that produces an environment in which job titles and the compartmentalization mentality that goes along with them do not apply as much in Israel. Israelis will think nothing of working in fields that combine mathematics, biology, computer science, chemistry and other specialties. Everyone becomes a jack-of-all trades, thinking nothing of combining radically different technologies and disciplines. Alacrity: When an Israeli man wants to date a woman, he cheerfully asks her out that same night. He does not wait, mulling over his chances of rejection. When an Israeli entrepreneur has a business idea, he will start it that week. He does not wait mulling over his chances of failure. The notion that one should accumulate all of his credentials before launching a venture simply does not exist in Israeli culture. Too much time procrastinating can only teach you what can go wrong, not what could be transformative.

Clusters of People with Strong Bonds

Clusters in businesses are based on "geographic concentrations" of interconnected institutions (businesses, government agencies, and universities) in a specific field. Clusters are just communities of people who live and work and even raise families closely together so everyone is connected to each other in some way or another. This includes the same people who also serve together in the same military units fighting to defend their home turf against enemies who want to annihilate them for being Jewish, then go on to learn together at the same great universities, and go on to work at the same start-up companies, live in the same communities where they raise families where their children go to the same schools together, etc, etc... That same "social glue" that binds a cluster together also provides critical access to information and talented people in their fields. The cluster's sense of shared commitment and destiny on both a personal and professional level, like that of Israel and Silicon Valley, are not easy to create, but when it is created, it results in robust economic growth.

Robert Orlando is a filmmaker, author, and entrepreneur. Among his recent films one that is noteworthy is 'The Divine Plan'. He penned an excellent review of Paul Kengor book titled: *The Devil and Karl Marx*. Here below are some excerpts.

Paul Kengor is a teacher and writer who has always had an eye for the spiritual dimension in history, politics, and economics. (He was the perfect partner for me in our book and documentary film, *The Divine Plan: John Paul II, Ronald Reagan, and the Dramatic End of the Cold War*.)

Prof. Kengor's new book, *The Devil and Karl Marx: Communism's Long March of Death, Deception, and Infiltration*, is a hammer and sickle dismantling of the diabolical character of Karl Marx (1818-1883). As Michael Knowles writes in the book's foreword, "Kengor knows, like few others writing today, that terms such as collectivism and individualism only take the debate so far. . . Ultimately the fight comes down to spiritual warfare: good versus evil."

Indeed, Kengor's book is all about the clash of the modern, devilish forces of socialism and communism – the key Marxist systems – against the eternally divine force of faith. General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) The book opens with a portrait of Marx's formative early years, an approach similar to Paul Johnson's in *Intellectuals: From Marx and Tolstoy to Sartre and Chomsky* (1988). Johnson was accused of being moralistic for judging Marx's ideas through the lens of his character. Of Marx's writings, Johnson says their "actual content can be related to four aspects of his character: his taste for violence, his appetite for power, his inability to handle money and, above all, his tendency to exploit those around him."

Professor Kengor goes even further, depicting Marx as possibly under the Devil's spell. The young Marx wrote some very dark poems filled with the sort of anti-religious sentiments that would inspire his *Communist Manifesto*. "It is in part, a tragic portrait of a man," Kengor writes, "but still more broadly so, an ideology, a chilling retrospective on an unclean spirit that should have never been let out of its pit."

Here's an example from Marx's poem, "The Pale Maiden" (1837):

Thus Heaven I've forfeited,
I know it full well.
My soul, once true to God,
Is chosen for Hell.

Kengor (like Johnson) makes the case that Marx, a self-absorbed intellectual, never lived out his own convictions when it came either to money or the redistribution thereof, evidenced by his dismissive attitude towards providing for those under his care. For instance, Marx exhausted the resources and goodwill of his parents, and instead of becoming remorseful or apologetic, he defiantly disowned them once they were no longer of value to him. When it came to money, everything Marx touched turned to straw. His combustible life was filled with tragedy, debts, and, with the exception of the death of his wife Jenny, an apparent lack of regret in the face of his greatest losses. Family suicides, sexual exploits (including the possible abuse of a family maid) enflamed his life with bloody anger and fueled his revolutionary spirit. In this troubled background are the origins of his communist worldview – a complete rebellion against anything traditional or sacred. Thus the title of Kengor's book.