



The Age of Heretics: A History of the Radical Thinkers Who Reinvented Corporate Management

By Art Kleiner

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In this second edition of his bestselling book, author Art Kleiner explores the nature of effective leadership in times of change and defines its importance to the corporation of the future. He describes a heretic as a visionary who creates change in large-scale companies, balancing the contrary truths they can't deny against their loyalty to their organizations. *The Age of Heretics* reveals how managers can get stuck in counterproductive ways of doing things and shows why it takes a heretical point of view to get past the deadlock and move forward.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Radical behavior is rarely acknowledged as a characteristic of the corporate world, where status quo is generally king and revolutionary thought usually banished to the fringes. In **The Age of Heretics**, however, journalist Art Kleiner shows that a powerful group of progressive thinkers really did exist within the realm of traditional business during the tumultuous 1960s. These figures actually helped transform that environment just as their better-known antiestablishment allies were reshaping other institutions throughout society.

From Publishers Weekly

Kleiner's freewheeling portrait gallery focuses on corporate mavericks of the 1950s, '60s and '70s who pioneered self-managing work teams, responsiveness to customers, grassroots organizing and other ways to imbue corporations with a sense of the value of human relationships. Starting with British management scientist Eric Trist, whose experiments in industrial democracy in the 1940s laid the groundwork for U.S. managerial innovations of the 1980s, Kleiner afterward profiles General Foods manager Lyman Ketchum, who launched the work-team concept at a Topeka pet-food plant in the early 1970s; he then discusses how Royal Dutch/Shell in England switched from rigid numbers-based forecasting to "scenario planning," a method of predicting alternative patterns of global energy demand. Also spotlighted are MIT computer scientist Jay Forrester's design of the "Limits of Growth" model of the world's economic future; community/labor organizer Saul Alinsky's drive to change Kodak's hiring policies; and Stanford Research Institute engineer Willis Harman's parapsychology experiments and his campaign urging the federal government to adopt an ecological ethic. Kleiner, a freelance business reporter who has edited *The Whole Earth Catalog*, serves up a smorgasbord of status quo-changing ideas.

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From Library Journal

The heretics that concern Kleiner, most recently an editor for *The Whole Earth Catalog*, are modern-day dissidents working for U.S. companies who chose to advocate change during the 1960s and 1970s. The changes ranged from experimental plants to new corporate boardroom philosophies. GM especially illustrated the latter when it nominated to its board of directors Rev. Leon Sullivan, who subsequently became "one of the key figures of corporate change." Like religious heretics, corporate heretics have encountered resistance to their new ideas, and some saw their careers effectively destroyed. But out of these new ideas came such concepts as management teams, the pursuit of excellence, the striving for corporate social responsibility, and shareholder activism. While Kleiner's book is packed with the names of corporate heretics, some of them are not clearly identified and their contribution to the corporate change movement is not really made clear. Recommended for larger academic libraries and collections with an interest in business history. —Richard S. Drezen, Washington Post News Research Ctr., Washington, D.C.

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Daniel Butler:

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