

ground that just as it took violence to abolish human slavery, so also is violence necessary to free enslaved species.

The fatal flaw in all this tortured reasoning is the assumption that nature possesses human qualities and must be treated on that basis. Nash unwittingly exposes this anthropomorphism by attempting to equate environmental saboteurs with abolitionists, each group being represented as at the "cutting edge" of liberalism in its respective century. But the analogy makes no sense unless nature has the same rights as human beings, which, outside the hothouse atmosphere of bioethics, few will be willing to grant. Further, while in one mode Nash attempts to depict extreme environmentalists as Lockean liberals, he also portrays them as Leninists, breathing revolutionary fire and brimstone in the service of all creation. "Radical" and "revolution" are two of his most fre-

quently used words and, indeed, stripped of their political meanings are also appropriate in the sense that to revolutionaries the ends justify the means.

Recently an animal rights defender allegedly tried to murder the president of a firm that manufactures devices used in animal research. This incident recalls the 1960s, when good intentions proved for some to be a stage on the road to nihilism. It may also remind us of John Brown, who, in the best of causes, committed frightful acts. Though Nash does not recognize the distinction, there is a world of difference between terrorism and civil disobedience. One might suppose that a book about ethics would take note of it.

WILLIAM L. O'NEILL

Department of History,

Rutgers University,

New Brunswick, NJ 08901

Ethical Dissent in a New Mode

The Whistleblowers. Exposing Corruption in Government and Industry. MYRON PERETZ GLAZER and PENINA MIGDAL GLAZER. Basic Books, New York, 1989. xvi, 286 pp. \$19.95.

The 1980s have produced a dismaying procession of revelations of serious misconduct in every major institution of U.S. society. While those the public most often suspects of wrongdoing—greedy businessmen and politicians—have certainly provided their share of scandals, no sector of society remains unsullied. Educators, scientists, other professionals, and even religious leaders have also been caught violating the public trust. The apparent universality of ethical lapses makes this a book for everyone.

The story Glazer and Glazer tell—how it happens that certain courageous people expose wrongdoing at great personal cost—carries important lessons and warnings about failures of accountability in all sectors of society. Their account is both credible and compelling; their data come from extensive personal interviews and detailed historical documentation. Their scholarly aim is broad—to analyze the emergence, workings, and consequences of whistleblowing in the United States.

They begin by identifying the preconditions that gave rise to this particular form of ethical resistance. Courageous dissent was not new. What was new about the whistleblowing movement was that a continuous stream of dissenters succeeded in capturing the attention of key policymakers and the

public. Glazer and Glazer suggest that a variety of social and political developments in the 1960s and 1970s legitimated public disclosure of wrongdoing and gave those who reported it the belief that reform was possible. These included the success of the protest movements of the 1960s, the exemplars provided by early reformers like Ralph Nader and Frank Serpico, the support of key members of Congress and the press, the emergence of legislation to protect whistleblowers, and the formation of a network of organizations supporting them. All helped and encouraged the whistleblowers.

The key factor Glazer and Glazer identify as triggering much of the conduct whistleblowers exposed was the growth of regulation in the public interest, which made many traditional business practices illegal and imposed new costs. The business community vigorously resisted—publicly, by political lobbying and support of selected candidates, and privately, by evasion, stalling, failure to comply, and concealment. Glazer and Glazer suggest that a "new level of corporate lawlessness" emerged (p. 13). The suggestion seems plausible, but they do not present convincing data to document it. Whether the incidence of corporate misconduct or just the reporting of it increased is unclear.

For most readers the most interesting part of the book will be the analysis of what motivated the whistleblowers the authors studied and what happened to them after they had exposed wrongdoing. Glazer and Glazer interviewed 64 whistleblowers and their supporters over a six-year period, fol-

lowing many of them from the early stages of their resistance to its aftermath. All of those interviewed met a rigorous definition of whistleblowing that included moral motives, reasonable evidence, a serious danger to the public, and attempts to solve the problem internally.

Perhaps the biggest surprise in this book is that these whistleblowers were initially conformists and believers in the very organizations they later exposed. They usually assumed that when upper management knew what was going on it would be stopped; they only went public after they had tried all available channels within their organizations to correct the abuses they saw and found management unresponsive or protective of the wrongdoers. They became radicalized when management turned on them in retaliation rather than gratitude. The extent of the reprisals management unleashed against them and of the economic and social harm the whistleblowers and their families suffered as a result is shocking.

Glazer and Glazer seem to assume that the reasons managers retaliated are self-evident, with self-protection paramount. Behavioral scientists and management scholars will find this part of their analysis weak. Because their data come primarily from the protesting side of these particular incidents, they do not really know why the managers involved acted as they did.

For many purposes, it doesn't matter. The managers involved can be viewed as in some sense responsible for the wrongs in question. But to discover ways to change such behavior, we may need to understand why it occurred. Like other human beings, managers are subject to perceptual distortions, cognitive biases, and group pressures; in their managerial roles they must depend on others for information and often suffer from role overload. Glazer and Glazer's account does not inform us about the degree to which these and other factors figure in managerial misconduct and resistance to reform.

Their interviews led Glazer and Glazer to conclude that the belief systems of whistleblowers played a crucial role in their motivation. They do not specifically address whether they think managerial beliefs also help to explain managerial actions. The beliefs whistleblowers acted upon sometimes came from religious and ethical upbringing; in other cases they were based in a strong identification with a profession and its ethics. Sadly, the reference groups from which their beliefs were derived generally failed to support them in their whistleblowing. Most of the practical and emotional support they received came from public interest groups, members of the press, a small number of

elected officials, families, and close friends.

Despite the hardships all the whistleblowers endured, Glazer and Glazer expect the incidence of whistleblowing to increase because, first, they believe whistleblowing is becoming a "social movement tied together by a common ideology of accountability, emerging leaders who articulate its goals, national exposure, and organizations committed to implementing strategies to bring about reforms" (p. 242), and second, they do not expect the forces that gave rise to the movement to abate soon. By the end of the book they have abandoned the balanced and scholarly tone of their earlier chapters and become advocates. Most readers will probably understand and sympathize with their position.

The courage of the dissenters is inspiring and to some extent reassuring. It is nice to know that people exist who will act on their principles, whatever the costs, and we can hope that more will emerge if they are encouraged to do so. The book ends on that hopeful note.

But the main emotions triggered by the account are more likely to be anger and alarm—anger that in the cases of whistleblowing reported on, those in authority tried to cover up wrongdoing when it was revealed to them rather than correct it, alarm because, though they did not in the end succeed in the cases reported, we do not know how much of the time such coverups are successful. How many who speak out are silenced by the campaigns of intimidation launched against them? How many who could speak out are afraid to because they know of the costs others have borne? Most alarming is to contemplate what these silences might be hiding and how harmful to society it could be.

Clearly, what Glazer and Glazer's account reveals about our society and about those who manage its most powerful organizations is deeply disturbing. Management in this country has shown itself to have a frightening capability to protect itself by hiding misconduct and other defects with grave social consequences. Some managers have been all too willing and able to try to break those who, in the words of one whistleblower, were guilty of "committing the truth" (p. 209). But the authors' account is incomplete. Perhaps in other organizations reformers were heard and heeded. It would be nice to have a book that documented the instances when management was responsive and responsible before the public was watching so that we can learn more about how organizations of all kinds can encourage the reporting of errors and misconduct and generally foster accountability.

But that is not what this book is about.

Glazer and Glazer's research alerts us to the great difficulties of assuring accountability in our highly technical and complex society. They see whistleblowing as one way to achieve some measure of accountability. Few will quarrel with their hopes that whistleblowing will become easier. But the real cures lie elsewhere.

JANICE M. BEYER

*College of Business Administration,
University of Texas,
Austin, TX 78712*

Getting By in a Bureaucracy

Moral Mazes. The World of Corporate Managers. ROBERT JACKALL. Oxford University Press, New York, 1988. xii, 249 pp. \$21.95.

What would Max Weber write about bureaucracy had he begun his studies in 1980 rather than 1890? Robert Jackall suggests one path in *Moral Mazes*, a book that blends much of what we know about bureaucracy with fresh data on managerial ethics based on five years of qualitative fieldwork in three organizations. Although Jackall studied only private corporations, his findings seem generic to bureaucracies private or public. The larger question Jackall confronts is the moral underpinnings of organizational decision-making, specifically the death of the Protestant ethic in the workplace. Jackall argues that the absolutism of the Protestant ethic of an earlier managerial morality has given way to the ambiguities of a bureaucratic ethic. The book is full of interesting anecdotes, observations, and generalizations that flesh out this main point.

The new normative repertoire consists of sets of principles that managers use according to their immediate audiences and situational exigencies. For subordinates climbing the corporate level, principles such as "never embarrass your boss," "never stay in one job too long," "always follow your boss's cues," and "avoid making decisions, but appear willing to take risks" are paramount. Superiors when dealing with their subordinates should adhere to principles such as "always have a subordinate ready as a fall guy," "always back your people," and "separate yourself from the negative consequences of a subordinate's actions." And all managers should follow the maxims of "admitting a mistake only when it prompts concessions from adversaries (the norm of reciprocal concessions)" and "never [having] a relationship with a colleague that is irreplaceable." When representing the corporation to outside publics, managers must be flexible and adopt whatever stance is necessary to protect their personal (career) interests and

those of the corporation. Again, social context determines the normative repertoire from which managers choose. External communication directed toward stockholders, for example, calls for moral justifications based on efficiency and return on investment, whereas corporate responsibility is the moral language appropriate for communicating with the wider public. It is apparent that some of these principles are at odds with each other, creating daily tensions that managers handle through "cover stories" that weave seemingly improbable facts and contradictory principles into believable tapestries. In the world of the manager, form dominates substance; impression management and reading through it are the key to survival and success.

As mechanical as these rules may seem, their actual implementation depends on two local factors: the social style of the organization and the manager's personal competence. The *kinds* of cover stories one tells, *how* bosses back their people, and *how* people plan and execute career moves vary from organization to organization. Managers fail most often, Jackall implies, because they are socially incompetent: They follow a moral principle inappropriate in a particular context or follow the right principles but in a manner at odds with the prevailing social style in their organization.

These observations are intriguing on their own and demonstrate the fruits of careful field research. What makes *Moral Mazes* especially interesting, however, is Jackall's explanations of managerial ethics. It is here that he directly confronts the legacy of Weber.

On one level Jackall anchors his explanations in managerial self-interest, which emphasizes how managers exploit their surroundings for their own ends. But he goes beyond this explanation to make distinctively sociological arguments about how bureaucracy creates the conditions that compel managers to operate in this fashion. To do so he draws upon Weber. Weber argued that rational-legal bureaucracies, more than other forms of organization, efficiently utilize vast amounts of material and human resources toward collective goals because of their basis in formally rational procedures, including official top-down command structures within specific jurisdictions, objective measures of personnel competence, accounting methods for dealing with material and human resources, and the outward suspension of personal in favor of organizational interests. Weber also argued that bureaucracies experience tensions between formal (procedural) and substantive rationality (that concerned with outputs). Managers are at the crux of this tension because they