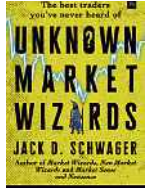


Book of the week

Unknown Market Wizards

The Best Traders You've Never Heard Of

Jack D. Schwager
Harriman House, £30



Jack Schwager is well known for his series of *Market Wizards* books, in which he interviews famous traders about their careers and trading strategies. The original 1989 *Market Wizards* is now regarded as an investment classic and he has written three sequels: *The New Market Wizards* (1992), *Stock Market Wizards* (2001) and *Hedge Fund Market Wizards* (2012). His latest, showcasing “the best traders you’ve never heard of”, contains lengthy interviews with 11 private traders who have made money for themselves, or run money for small private funds.

Six of the traders profiled specialise in buying and selling futures (an agreement to buy or sell a commodity or financial asset in the future at a set price). Given that trading futures is a very specialised area, most private investors (as opposed to professional traders) may be tempted to skip directly to the second half of the book, which deals with shares. That would be a mistake, however, because many of the futures traders provide lessons and ideas that could be applied to shares as well. One particularly interesting interview is with Jason Shapiro, who explains



“Every investor should find something in this book that will improve their trading and investing skills”

how he makes money by going against the consensus views of TV pundits.

The traders featured in the book follow a wide range of strategies and operate in different markets. Some attempt to find patterns within charts of past stock prices; others pay more attention to the performance and prospects of individual companies. Trader Chris Camillo uses a computer program to analyse Twitter and Facebook to spot emerging companies and trends before the market. This wide range of approaches means that the reader should come away from the book with several ideas for developing a trading strategy.

The more personal elements of the traders’ stories are instructive too. All are extremely successful, but most of them experienced

painful setbacks – many had to start from scratch after losing everything. This shows the value of persistence and underlines the fact that short-term trading is an extremely risky endeavour. As Schwager notes in the conclusion, even the best traders find that profits from trading are “inherently sporadic, while living expenses are continual”. Those looking to make money from trading should either find a firm or a fund willing to pay them to do it, or else “keep the day job as long as possible”.

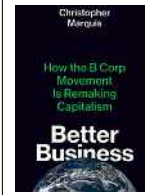
Whether or not you ever become a market wizard yourself, you should find something in this book that will improve your trading and investing skills. It’s well worth a read.

Reviewed by
Matthew Partridge

Better Business

How the B Corp Movement is Remaking Capitalism

Christopher Marquis
Yale University Press, £20



Over the past few years there has been a drive to create forms of business that are more “socially responsible”

and that go beyond maximising value for shareholders. Here, Professor Christopher Marquis of Cornell University looks at one of the most prominent movements to change the way business operates. To become a so-called B corporation, firms must change their charters so that they include commitments to serving stakeholders and the wider community, meet minimum sustainability standards, and report regularly on their social impact.

Marquis explains well what he sees as the problem with the traditional “shareholder primacy” model and provides a comprehensive history of how the movement for change started, including the struggle to give the B corporation model legal backing. He provides a lot of detail on how the certification process works and some interesting case studies of how individual firms adopted the model – and used it as a selling point to win the trust of consumers and workers.

Sadly, there is less information on how to decide between conflicting interests, or what happens when a company consistently fails to meet the required standards. The idea has struggled to take off and Marquis’s belief that companies will naturally adopt the structure out of self-interest is undercut by his support for legislation that would make it compulsory.

Book in the news... searching for the last Russian doll inside our paradoxical PM

Boris Johnson

The Gambler
Tom Bower
WH Allen, £20



Boris Johnson is a “perpetual paradox for admirers and opponents alike”, says Robert Shrimley in the *Financial Times*. He is a “loner who cannot bear to be by himself”; a “low-tax, big-state interventionist”; a “man determined to be marked in posterity but reluctant to put in the hard yards to ensure that he is remembered kindly”. In *Boris Johnson: The Gambler*, investigative journalist Tom Bower, who has previously written the

lives of Robert Maxwell, Richard Branson and Jeremy Corbyn, attempts to resolve these apparent contradictions and “find the last Russian doll inside the British prime minister”.

In contrast to the “thinly disguised contempt” infusing the biography of Corbyn, Bower clearly has “genuine respect” for Johnson, says Madeline Grant in *The Daily Telegraph*. Bower admires what he sees as Johnson’s “intelligence, stoicism” and “hard work”. He argues that many of Johnson’s personal problems stem from his “feral, *Lord of the Flies*-esque childhood”, a consequence of the behaviour of his “vain” and “selfish” father, Stanley. Overall, the book makes for a “colourful and often catty read” and makes a good case that, despite the “current dysfunctional state of

government”, the prime minister “should not be underestimated”.

Research suggests that many leaders have had damaged childhoods, so Bower’s argument that Johnson’s personal life was at least partly shaped by his “traumatised childhood” is “logical”, says Andrew Rawnsley in *The Observer*. Bower does not exactly use this as an excuse to apply a “softening gloss” to the “most ugly examples” of Johnson’s private behaviour, but does tend to grant him a “gold-plated alibi” for his mistakes in office, not the least of which was his “calamity-studded stint as foreign secretary”. Bower provides a good idea of the “inner demons” that drive the prime minister, but readers will emerge “little the wiser” about his subject’s core political convictions – or whether he has any.