

Editorial

Don Lamberton has died. Don was one of the founders of *Prometheus* and the journal's general editor throughout most of its history. An obituary in this issue will discuss Don's impact on the journal. These are not auspicious times for critical journals that do not cling fast to a disciplinary core. By definition, top journals publish consensual papers that disregard thinking in all other disciplines. By this definition, *Prometheus* has never been a top journal and without Don's dedication and determination, it would have folded long ago. We will be marking his contribution with a special issue, edited by Tom Mandeville, a co-founder of *Prometheus*.

This issue contains five papers, the first of which Don would not have liked. Keith Glaister argues that the contribution of management to economic growth, though considerable, has been ignored. Don had little time for management or managers, arguing that they were particularly useless and deserved to be ignored. But Glaister is not really singing a *paean* of praise for the manager. Rather, he is asking why the role of the entrepreneur is appreciated while that of the manager is not. The entrepreneur is a hero: the manager most decidedly is not. And yet, the technology policy literature has long acknowledged the importance of incremental innovation in firm and economic performance, greater than that of the more dramatic radical innovation. While the latter is the province of the flashy entrepreneur, the former is the responsibility of the humdrum – and much neglected – manager.

Hans-Jürgen Engelbrecht uses New Zealand experience and practice to consider the inadequacy of GDP in the measurement of economic growth. The New Zealand Treasury complements its use of GDP with a 'living standards framework'. However, this also falls victim to the neoliberal compulsion to ignore innovation. The significance of the living standards framework is that this omission is made in the knowledge that innovation is the major contribution to living standards in the long run. The discussion turns to the need to go beyond standard welfare analysis and use a model of the innovation–subjective wellbeing nexus to assess the many, potentially very complex, wellbeing implications of innovation.

Innovation is also the subject of the paper by Andreas Pyka, who looks at innovation networks. He is specifically concerned with the intervention of policy makers in the innovation process on the grounds of market failure. Pyka protests that the greatest obstacle to innovation is uncertainty, which is not a result of market failure and is unlikely to be rectified by intervention. Rather, policy intervention is perhaps best guided by, and even directed towards, the networks which have come to be so closely associated with innovation.

On the grounds that more is learnt from failure than from success, many *Prometheus* papers dwell on what can go wrong with innovation. Don Kerr and Luke Houghton present three studies of the implementation of enterprise resource planning systems in the UK, Australia and Denmark. Theirs is not a happy tale. They find that the new systems are poorly integrated with existing systems, that

workers suspect management has a hidden agenda in its implementation of new systems, and that new systems often duplicate existing processes. Because there is little trust in new systems, they are unlikely to work well, which fulfills expectations of failure. Until there is more trust in enterprise resource planning systems and in those who install them, improvement is unlikely.

Natural scientists have more to say about climate change than social scientists, and neoliberal economists have hardly addressed the issue at all. Thus provoked, Larry Crump tests the economic world of Adam Smith in the real world of climate change. How, he asks, does supply of agricultural produce relate to demand in the face of climate change? Food security will become the primary issue, and should be the primary concern of the World Trade Organisation. National governments, with the same concern, will seek to compensate for the failings of the WTO. Adam Smith will be turning in his grave.

An interesting issue then, but a sad one too. It is the first since Don's death and *Prometheus* will not be the same without him.

Stuart Macdonald
General Editor