

about it? Reading *Stuck!* forces us to ask what are the requisite policy responses.

In conclusion, I found *Stuck!* a well laid out, valuable and sometimes touching book to read. It made no pretence at being a 'statistical analysis' of unemployment. At times I thought that the issue of 'where to from here' should have been dealt with. Michele Turner has succeeded in bringing the human face of unemployment to the surface.

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Managing with Micros, by Colin D. Lewis

(Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1983) pp. viii + 199, \$29.95.

A direct result of the silicon chip technology has been the development of the micro-computer. Micro-computers have taken the western world by storm and their true impact has yet to be realised. It is interesting to note that *Time* magazine, in 1982, declared a 'Machine of the Year', namely, the computer, rather than its historical Man of the Year. Micro-computers are now found in motor vehicles, washing machines and video games.

Against such a background, then, the book by Colin Lewis is timely. Lewis restricts himself to studying the micro-computer as it can be applied to small business. It would seem that the task of such a book is to cut through the jargon involved and allow the decision maker to see implications clearly.

The computer world has been criticised for its use of jargon. Whether it has more or less jargon than any other profession or trade is debatable. Nuclear physicists, for example, would use just as much jargon, but one suspects that nuclear physicists need to communicate mainly with their peers. This is not so with those dealing with computers. Because of the ubiquitous nature of computers, many persons, other than full time specialists, have to be able to appreciate the significance of the terms involved, if they are to make adequate decisions on how best to utilise these machines in their own particular sphere of work.

The book is divided into eight chapters, two which introduce the subject and six which are directed to specific application areas. Application packages covered are word processing, VISICALC, data base management and information retrieval, sales-purchase-ledger, stock control, and payroll.

The description of hardware in the text is well done with a good handling of the basic building blocks of a micro-computer. However, much impact is lost by giving simplistic descriptions of some manufacturers' equipment and including no less than seven photographs of visual display screens and five pictures of character printers. Furthermore, there is no treatment of 8 bit micros versus 16 bit micros.

The second chapter deals entirely with the industry in the United Kingdom, though the points made are generally applicable in Australia. However, the pricing details, being in pounds sterling, are not directly relevant in the Australian scene. Furthermore, the list of equipment is

limited, and the fact that the IBM personal computer is not mentioned is regrettable.

One wonders what the purpose is in 1983 for including a description of a word processing package in such a book. The best advice to any one wishing a description of a word processing system is to have a practical demonstration. The treatment in this text is superficial. Subjects handled by the author should have included: what is the cost effectiveness of word processing; what features are required; what are the limitations of various well known packages; what effect will a word processing package have on the organisation and processing flow of a small business?

Visicalc has become a household name synonymous with 'electronic worksheet'. This approach can be used in areas such as planning and budgetting, market forecasts, financial modelling, financial statements, stock valuations etc. The treatment in this area is excellent with examples of stock portfolio, cash flow, forecasting etc. Being a United Kingdom text the payroll packages investigated are quite specific, with examples included of Bank-Giro, the British tax scale, and specific tax forms. The treatment of stock control is comprehensive and gives a user, not familiar with such packages, a good feel for their scope and application. It is indeed unfortunate that the package for sales, purchase and nominal ledger is specific to the UK environment. The emphasis on value added tax (VAT) detracts greatly from the chapter. Those familiar with the term 'data base' on larger machines link the concepts of data base to hierarchical record structures, Codasyl or relational theory. In the micro-computer world, the term data base has an altogether different meaning.

The publishing of this book is timely for those in business wanting to come to grips with the mighty micro, and who wish to examine ways that they can use it in their own business. To such persons, it is an excellent primer. However, like all such texts, of its nature it will have a short life span as new hardware and applications are released. Furthermore, much of its material is oriented to the United Kingdom. In summary then, while texts such as this serve a very real purpose, it is unfortunate that the author did not include subjects such as cost justification and personnel considerations. In general, the book does not live up to its title, *Managing with Micros*.

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Micro Invaders: How the New World of Technology Works, by Ian Reinecke

(Penguin, Ringwood, Vic., 1982), pp. 272, \$6.95.

Technological change and the 'new technology' of microelectronics have received a good deal of coverage world wide in the last five years. In Australia, industrial disputes over the introduction of new technology, a government inquiry into the effects of technological change, and a well publicised and breathtakingly rapid spread of new technology have served to focus attention on the nature and effects of the new microelectronic