

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

- 1 Michel Foucault, 1972. [trans. A.M. Sheridan-Smith] *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, Tavistock, London, 1972, p. 46.
- 2 Michael Cole, Vera John-Stener, Sylvia Scribner & Ellen Souberman (eds), *Mind in Society - The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1978, pp. 24-37.

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**Research with a View to Implementation** by D. J. Gouws (Human Sciences Research Council, Pretoria, 1994), pp. 231, ISBN 0-9583801-5-5.

**Case Studies in Research with a View to Implementation** edited by D. J. Gouws (Human Sciences Research Council, Pretoria, 1994), pp. 248, ISBN 0-9583801-4-7.

These are not, I suspect, easily accessible texts. This could be unfortunate because their combined message is both important and opportune. The two sister volumes provide an investigation into the *implementation* of research findings. Not surprisingly it is illustrated in numerous ways, but with detailed and methodical nicety, that formal *planning* for implementation is a prerequisite for success.

The source material comes from the SAC/HSRC Programme (Science Advisory Council/Human Sciences Research Council) on the Implementation of Research, initiated in South Africa in the late 1980s. The background and source should not deter the interested reader: there is considerable methodological insight to be gained from a careful reading of the two volumes. Indeed, the first volume comprises an interesting, informative and important source of information.

The book is divided into three main sections. The first section outlines the SAC/HSRC investigation into the problems, circumstances, methodological considerations, personal and organisational factors which influence the success or otherwise of the implementation of research findings. (This investigation ran as a national programme from 1985 to 1990 and involved more than a hundred researchers.) The second section comprises the author's views as to what the main determinants of successful implementation are and relates to such topics as individual differences between researchers, the role of stakeholders and factors hindering or promoting successful implementation. In treating those topics the author reviews and collates a fairly wide range of psychological, sociological and organizational literature. In the final section of the book a concise 'implementation manual is provided'.

Overall the two books (the second comprises a series of case studies) examine the increasingly "crucial issue of planning and executing research in such a way that the optimal implementation of its findings is facilitated". At a time when research funds are becoming ever more scarce, when the competition for such scarce resources is much more ferocious than in earlier years, when the application and utility of research findings are of even greater social and economic importance, we see increasing attention being paid by most governments and funding agencies to priority-selection, evaluation and monitoring. The output stage, the potential *implementation*, the impact of research findings, the successful *application* of research findings, whilst obviously an important component of the resource-allocation process have not been subject to the degree of analysis that they merit. Gouw's two volumes are

therefore opportune and useful. They should be of interest to policy makers, research managers and administrators and to researchers themselves.

Post-apartheid South Africa is painfully aware of its limited financial resources with which to address the gargantuan social, infrastructural, basic-needs and socio-environmental mistakes which must be overcome if sufficiently rapid socio-economic progress is to be made. Above all, an effective translation of the new academic research agenda within South Africa to ameliorate the enormous contemporary social, economic and human problems, is required. This has been the subject of much recent study<sup>1</sup>. The effective implementation of research has therefore never been of greater importance; to plan for implementation is as important as the careful selection of the research agenda itself.

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- 1 T G Whiston, *Research Policy in the Higher Education Sector of South Africa*, Science and Technology Policy Series No. 3, FRD, Pretoria, 1994.

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**Capitalism, Culture and Decline in Britain 1750-1990** by W. D. Rubinstein (Routledge, London, 1994), pp. viii + 184, A\$27.95, ISBN 0-415-03719-0.

Rubinstein aims to explode what he calls the 'cultural critique' of the British economy. According to this view, British decline relative to other European economies and Japan since the glories of the Industrial Revolution, should be attributed to the anti-industrial spirit that permeated every sphere of British life. He attacks particularly Martin Wiener, Corelli Barnett and the early Antony Sampson. His contention is that, in fact, industrial decline was a transfer of resources and entrepreneurial energies into other forms of business life, commerce and finance, where Britain's comparative advantage always lay, even at the height of the Industrial Revolution. Britain's elite system and the public schools have always been positivistic, rational, moderate and pro-capitalistic in values. The 'cultural critique', Rubinstein maintains, purports to explain a historical non-event.

The reader should recall that comparative advantage is not the same as absolute advantage. Britain may have been better at finance than industry and therefore specialised in finance, while being less productive in both sectors than her trading partners. So Rubinstein's ingenious income tax evidence that the bulk of middle class incomes even in the 1860s was always earned in the metropolis and the home countries, not in the leading industrial counties, Yorkshire and Lancashire, does not *necessarily* tell us about the absolute productivity of British services. Rubinstein addresses this point by a direct, if impressionistic, sectoral comparison with the United States. British economic performances in banking, in the stock market and generally in the financial services provided by the City have always been superior to those of the United States and elsewhere, he claims. The most criticised period, since 1950, shows spectacular increases of material well-being measured by consumer durable ownership, and house ownership. They compare favourably with levels achieved in other countries, Rubinstein demonstrates, though the supporting comparative evidence here is