An Annotated Bibliography of Supplementary Readers for Instructors of English at El Camino College: English 1C

Corporate Greed and Corporate Responsibility

Brant, Marthalsikoff, Michael Fineman, and Tamara Howard-Lipper. "Going After Greed." *Newsweek* 140.3 (2002): 20. *MasterFile Premier.* Ebsco. Web. 28 Jan. 2012.

Though published in 2002, the article, nevertheless, details the crisis in the stock market and its impact on American investors by the outright dishonesty on the part of certain corporate CEOs. So severe was the crisis that then President George W. Bush and Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neal resolved to "lay down the law" to corporate America in the form of severe penalties for any proven dishonesty. One example of unprincipled behavior occurred on the part of WorldCom executives who hid four billion dollars in losses from their investors. However, the topic was a politically sensitive one—in that both President Bush and Vice President Cheney were worked for organizations that came under extreme scrutiny and considerable criticism for dishonest business practices. Of perhaps even greater concern is that the Democrats will seize upon this history to their favor in upcoming elections. Senate Democrats also sponsored a bill that called for the establishment of a new regulatory agency, independent form the existing SEC.

Carter, Adrienne, Amy Feldman, and Jason Zweig. "The Greed Machine." *Money* 32.13 (2003): 130-136. *Academic Search Premier.* Ebsco. Web. 28 Jan. 2012.

The writers explore the dramatic shift in the area of investment corporations from the concept of stewardship to that of salesmanship—particularly as the shift results in greedy and dishonest practices by corporations. Focusing on Putnam Investments, which, at the time this article's publication, was the fifth-largest investment firm, the authors detail the sordid practices of the company's CEOs and brokers. Basic to such practices is putting the company's profits first and the investors last. For example, in the previous five years, Putnam generated $3.7 in profits for its parent company Marsh & McLennan. Lawrence Lasser, CEO for Putnam Investments, earned at least $ 105 million in the same period. However, investors suffered substantial losses during the same time span. Not only did Putnam's Board of Directors fail to report any irregularities in "accounting" but also they approved of an increase of 27% for management fees. These trustees earned annually 203,000 to 388,000 four about two-dozen days work per year. Finally, over the previous decade, Putnam created 36 new funds and "euthanized" 13 others, and "when an investment fund caught fire, Putnam created a new fund. When it went cold, Putnam killed the fund, leaving the investors in the ashes."

Clark, Monica. "Faithful Take Money Out Of Big Banks To Protest Corporate Greed." *National Catholic Reporter* 48.1 (2011): 9. *Academic Search Premier.* Ebsco. Web. 28 Jan. 2012.

In a brief article, Monica Clark reports on a growing trend among churches in northern California to divest money from mega-banks that practice unprincipled mortgage practices and severe foreclosure policies. Most Holy Trinity Catholic Church in San Jose, for example, is closing its $3 million account with the local branch of the Bank of America and moving its monies to a local credit union to protest wide-scale foreclosure practices. A group of twenty-five interfaith churches in Santa Clara County have formed People Acting in Community Together (PACT) to hold banks accountable for practices in local community. Both these churches and their members are shifting funds from banks such as Bank of America and Wells Fargo to local credit unions. Pact leaders claim that between 2008 and 2012, in San Jose alone, more than 43,000 foreclosures will transpire with over 3,500 foreclosures occurring within the boundaries of Holy Trinity parish.

"Corporate Greed, The U.S. Economy And The United Auto Workers." *Massachusetts Nurse Advocate*.80.3 (2009): 6-7. *Academic Search Premier.* Ebsco. Web. 28 Jan. 2012.

This piece offers an "abbreviated history of recent United States corporate mismanagement, failure, bailouts, corruption, crime, fraud, and malfeasance." It makes for grim reading. Among the "highlights" of the piece are CEO Dennis Kozlowski who was found guilty of stealing over $150,000,000 from his company—Tyco. Much of his theft was spent capriciously, as in the two million dollar birthday party he hosted in Sardinia. Yet another vignette featured the Arthur Andersen Accounting firm (and of Enron) that was convicted of obstruction of justice by destroying evidence relating to an ongoing investigation. The firm, on the verge of dissolution, has seen 28,000 employees lose their jobs. And WorldCom CEO Bernard Ebbers was both found guilty and convicted of securities fraud, conspiracy, and of filing false documents that resulted in an eleven billion dollar accounting scandal.

"Countries ruled by greed are courting disaster." *Tri-State Defender* 8 Oct. 1997. *Ethnic News Watch (ENW).* ProQuest. Web. 29 Jan. 2021.

The article deals with the United Parcel Service (UPS) strike which illustrates for the writer the current "chasm" between the "haves" and the "have-nots." UPS signifies the current malaise of corporate greed in its policy of downsizing and of relying heavily on temporary employees, while profiting mightily by establishing foreign “sweat shops” overseas. While the wealthy profit, Americans are suffering both a high unemployment rate and low wages. The writer maintains that people are our greatest asset, and unless corporate types and the corporations that they represent understand this truth, American can, and will indeed, fail.

Dargis, Manohla. “A Corporate Culture Cornfed on Greed.” *The New York Times* 18

Sep. 2009. *Academic Search Premier.* Ebsco. Web. 28 Jan. 2012.

Though a movie review, the premise of the film and its theme seem all too real. Steven Soderbergh’s movie “The Informant!” is reviewed as a serious-comedy about corporate malfeasance. The fictional drug company, ADM, functions according to Dargis as a metaphor for corporate America, more specifically, corporate greed. The company attempts to cover up the results of a drug that it issued with disastrous consequences; “Lysine” is an amino acid fed to livestock. But an executive with a conscience begins an undercover operation by providing sensitive information to the FBI.

Felton, Carole. “Trading Places: Is Greed Still Good?” *Jewish Exponent* 2 Jan. 2003.

Ethnic News Watch (ENW). ProQuest. Web. 29 Jan. 2012.

In an unintentionally ironic essay from 2003, Carole Felton examines the efforts by some corporate CEOs to restore creditability to companies and to win back the investors’ trust that had been shattered by recent scandals. In one instance, she cites Henry Gomez of eBay Inc. who says the hiring of the new CEO Meg Whitman, whose reputation for integrity is well known, is a start in the right place. Marilyn Carlson Nelson, CEO of Carlson Companies, also insists that every employee—from top to bottom—must be responsible for his/her actions. Communication within the company is also imperative. And then New York Attorney General Elliot Spitzer, who functions as well as the Chief Investigator of Brokerage Misdeeds, must take steps to restore public confidence if there is to be an end to the panic and resulting chaos caused by wide spread malfeasance.

Furin, Major Timothy Austin. “Blood Money: Wasted Billions, Lost Lives, And

Corporate Greed In Iraq (Cover Story).” *Army Lawyer* 417 (2008): 50.

MasterFile Premier. Ebsco. Web. 28 Jan. 2012.

Major Furin reviews this book by *Los Angeles Times* investigative reporter T. Christian Miller, who conducted hundreds of interviewed, pored over numerous documents and official records, and took four trips to Iraq over a two-year period. Furin Lauds Miller for doing an outstanding job of supporting the thesis of the book—The U.S. government is failing in its task to rebuild Iraq through “politics” and “policies.” Three common themes emerge from the book: A lack of unity of effort between U.S. government agencies, a series of critical miscalculations concerning the status of Iraq’s infrastructure, and a “contracting process” wrought with fraud, waste, and abuse.

Gates, David. “Greed R.I.P. (For Now).” *Newsweek* 140.5 (2002): 37. *Academic Search Premier*. Ebsco. Web. 28 Jan. 2012.

According to Gates, the stock market “dropped like an elevator” as a direct consequence of an “infectious greed” on the part of corporations and corporate executives. Mr. Gates can certainly express himself—but, unfortunately, at least for me, too much of his essay is devoted to fashioning various tropes rather than offering both concrete, specific evidence, combined with careful subsequent analysis of these proofs. Though certainly well-written, this essay may serve very nicely for composition students who, all too often, rely on generalization and metaphor in lieu of evidence and detailed analysis.

Gibbs, Lisa. “CEO Greed.” *Money* 32.7 (2003): 102. *Academic Search Premier.* Ebsco. Web. 28 Jan. 2012.

Lisa Gibbs avers that “for the past two years, fund managers have come under criticism for failing to exercise their collective clout to speak out against ‘fuzzy’ accounting and ‘piggish’ CEO pay.” She interviews three managers who are pushing CEOs to behave both ethically and responsibly in treating their investors properly. Chris Davis of Davis Advisors, Bill Miller of Legg Mason, and retired Vanguard CEO John Bogle discuss the current crisis on Wall Street. All three fund managers agree on the current “disconnect” between executive pay and stock performance. And all three offer solutions to combat rogue behavior on the part of some CEOs: anti-stock options, meticulous spread sheets, and shareholder democracy. In fact, on this latter issue, Bill Miller claims that “right now, 99% of the shareholders could vote for something, and the board can ignore it.”

“Greed And Corporate Failure—The Lessons From Recent Disasters.” [Book Review] *Credit Control* 32.1/2 (2011): 86. *MasterFile Premier.* Ebsco. Web. 28 Jan. 2012.

This book’s authors take a series of case histories regarding failing corporations and the disastrous effects of these failures on the stock market and on its investors, and through a detailed analysis of each case, seek to illustrate the particular reasons for failure. The writers trace the various causes for failure and come up with six categories—each getting a chapter apiece devoted to it: “Poor strategic decisions,” “over expansion and ill judged acquisitions,” “dominant CEOs,” “Greed, hubris, and desire for power,” “failure of internal controls at all levels from the top downwards,” and “ineffectual or ineffective boards.” A greater emphasis must be placed on boards, and stockholders need more say.

Greenfield, Kent. “How to fix ‘Citizens United.’” *The Washington Post* 20 Jan. 2012. *ProQuest National Newspapers Core.* ProQuest. Web. 29 Jan. 2012.

Two years ago, the Supreme Court ruled that corporate-political expenditures were an issue of political speech, and as such, corporations’ donations to political elections were as important to the marketplace of ideas as that of free speech for individual citizens. As a result of the unpopular ruling, Citizens United opined that the “upcoming election will be swamped with corporate monies, and our democracy will not be better for it.” Moreover, many anti-corporate activists are now after an amendment that states “Constitutional protections are intended only for natural persons.” Greenfield disagrees with this proposed amendment. He insists that the court ruled correctly, but, ultimately, certain issues regarding corporate donations can certainly be modified by instituting “aggressive disclosure rules,” “limits on the political involvement of corporations,” and shareholders needing to approve any political expenditures.”

Hansen, Laura L. and Siamak Movahedi. “Wall Street Scandals: The Myth of Individual Greed.” *Sociological Forum* 25.2 (2010): 367-374. *Academic Search Premier*. Ebsco. Web. 28 Jan. 2012.

These writers distinguish in the matter of Wall Street scandals between sociological definitions of “trouble” (personal issues) and “structural or public issues” (Wall Street Crisis). The current economic crisis, if seen as the result of individual behavior, is at best inaccurate because “the environmental pressures and competition, the culture and ideology of Wall Street, the formal and informal structure of corporations, the executive and employee compensation structures, all operating within the broader regulatory system, are responsible for some of the scandals we are witnessing.” In other words, it is futile to pin individuals for this disaster—or so I understand: “Psychological explanations in terms of character, personality, or traits such as greed are totally inadequate.” Yet individuals entrusted with the earnings of others do make choices; do they not?

Huffington, Arianna. “No More Pigs At The Trough: How To Cure Infectious Greed.” *Nation* 276.4 (2003): 26-28. *Academic Search Premier.* Ebsco. Web. 28 Jan. 2012.

Ever since the 1990s, according to Huffington, corporate “tricksters” have pillaged the U.S. economy with impunity—this widespread malfeasance—occurred in spite of the fact that a few of the most heinous offenders were being prosecuted and punished. She argues that at the heart of the matter the corporate scandal is ultimately a political one.

For Example, corporate monies corrupt politicians who subsequently pass laws or do not pass laws that make such corporate crime possible. Huffington urges the adopting of a national "Clean Money, Clean Election" policy, wherein we have the full public financing of elections. In the meantime, she urges introducing the following reforms (they span several pages) a few of which I will mention: "Treat stock options as the expenses they are; prohibit accounting firms from providing consulting services while auditing a company's books; outlaw offshore tax havens and, in the meantime, bar companies that move their headquarters overseas from competing for government contracts."

"Income Tax Rates Hit Small Businesses Much Harder." *The Wall Street Journal*

25 Jan. 2012. (Eastern Edition). *ProQuest National Newspapers Core.*

ProQuest. Web. 29 Jan. 2012.

This article offers a series of replies from readers regarding the economic onus put on small businesses via current high federal tax rates. According to a writer, the increased tax rates result directly in small companies laying off employees. And a respondent opines that the job creation leading to economic recovery begins with small businesses producing jobs. Because of the cause & effect nature of these laying off and hiring practices, federal government should eschew burdening small businesses with corporate-like taxes.

"Is Greed Good?" *Economist* 363.8273 (2002): 21-26. *Academic Search Premier.*

Ebsco. Web. 28 Jan. 2012.

According to the essayist, "In the 1990s, a shared greed nurtured by a symbiotic relationship between Wall Street and company bosses made rich men and women of them all." Although Adam Smith argued two hundred years ago that capitalism must not be judged by the motives of the capitalists but, rather, by the "fruit" of their actions, today, managers who are not owners, but who act for their owners, may not run the firm in the best interest of the shareholders. Another problem with corporate greed and its disastrous results rests with the board of directors of a particular corporation. These boards all too often fail to ensure the reality that managers truly serve the long-term interests of investors. A solution to this problem lies in holding board members accountable when things go wrong—generally, there is no financial penalty because companies buy insurance in the event of such failures. Crucial as well is that two board committees—compensation and auditing—perform their jobs punctiliously. Finally, large institutional investors need to involve themselves actively in insuring proper money management on the part of the corporations which they have invested in.

Jackson, Jesse L., Sr. "The America of Jefferson and of King." *Los Angeles Sentinel* 7 Jul.-13 Jul. 2005. *Ethnic News Watch (ENW).* ProQuest. Web. 29 Jan. 2012.

The Reverend Jesse Jackson explores contemporary America, which, so he argues, is beset by a gross economic inequality between the few and the many. All too often, the privileged few seek to turn their wealth into political power at the cost of the commonwealth. And in the history of the United States, "free markets" for the wealthy generally resulted in employment in "Satanic mills" for the vast majority of citizens. In the current economic crisis, Americans must, once again, resolve to pursue social and economic justice in order to overcome the power bought by political money, which is spread by corporations in order to buy the influence of lobbies, and thereby to enact laws favorable to the few at the expense of the many.

Jackson, Russell A. "Keeping GREED At Bay (Cover Story)." *Internal Auditor* 66.1 (2009): 28. *MasterFile Premier.* Ebsco. Web. 28 Jan. 2012.

Jackson addresses a very specific audience in this essay—those whose profession is internal auditing. Though somewhat technical, the piece is still comprehensible, and the writer offers some interesting points regarding the significant role played by internal auditors in corporations. Among other caveats, he stresses that auditors do not and should not act as "sheriffs." All too often what managers do is murky at best. However, he emphasizes the fact that there is a place for "greed audits," which, if carefully used, can reveal potentially inappropriate behavior on the part of managers and to which auditors may avail themselves to curb such behavior. Yet, the auditor must not place himself/herself in the position to determine between "theft" and "risking capital," which, so he maintains, are two very different activities. Finally, a valuable resource to which internal auditors may avail themselves is the "culture and employee perception survey," that, once again, if used appropriately can signal disturbing trends and suspicious behaviors on the part of managers who have been entrusted with investing shareholders' funds properly, ethically, and responsibly.

"A less-than-super fix." *The Washington Post* 18 Jan. 2012. *ProQuest Natonal Newspapers Core.* ProQuest. Web. 29 Jan. 2012.

Presidential candidate Mitt Romney favors a policy wherein political candidates would be allowed to collect unlimited donations from backers and would also permit the campaign committees to assume total responsibility for the expenditure of these funds. The writer, however, disagrees with this proposal, claiming that such a policy, if enacted, would further undermine the already fragile public confidence in the system.

Lin, Sam Chu. "'Slave Labor' Suit Filed." *Asianweek* 8 Sep. 1995. *Ethnic News Watch (ENW).* ProQuest. Web. 29 Jan. 2012.

As a result of the exploitation of seventy-two Thai immigrant workers rescued by authorities from an El Monte "sweatshop," The Asian Pacific American Legal Center (APALC) has filed a suit on behalf of sixty-four of these Thai workers who were virtually "enslaved" at the factory. Julie Su, an attorney for APALC, charged that workers had their wages illegally deducted, that these workers had their mail censored, and that all of their movements were closely monitored. Furthermore, if any of the workers fell ill, no medical help was made available to them, and they were charged exorbitant prices for basic necessities. One reason for this slavery, according to Su, is that only three inspectors are available to monitor all of the area's garment manufactures. And she opines that "the real bad guys are the American corporations" because of a 100% markup in clothing between the manufacturers and the retailers—a practice that results in low wages for employees in order to ensure high profits for businesses.

Meyers, Bernie. "IF YOU GOTTA ASK, YA DON'T GET IT! Round and Round We Go and Where Do We Stop?" *The Jewish Press* 9 Jan. 2004. *Ethnic News Watch (ENW).* ProQuest. Web. 29 Jan. 2012.

In a grimly humorous scenario of a fictitious corporation's practices, writer Bernie Meyers asks two disturbing questions: Where does corporate greed start? Where are the so-called watchdogs to prevent this wide scale plundering? Meyers uses Haliburton, the corporate giant, as an unfortunately and all-too-common example of nefarious business practices. The corporation "gobbled up" billions of dollars in "unbid" Iraqi rebuilding projects and then overcharged the U.S. Government millions of dollars on fuel overcharges.

Murray, Charles. "The New American Divide: The ideal of an 'American way of life' is Fading as the working class falls further away from institutions like marriage and Religion and the upper classes become more isolated." *Wall Street Journal (Online)* 21 Jan. 2012. *ProQuest National Newspapers Core.* ProQuest. Web. 29 Jan. 2012.

Using two fictitious neighborhoods representing the upper-middle class that resides in the Boston suburb of "Belmont" and the lower-class neighborhood of "Fishtown," in the city of Philadelphia, Charles Murray dramatizes the current, ever-increasing economic gap between these classes. All inhabitants in Belmont are college graduates and members of professional classes. At one time, Americans did share a "common culture," wherein there was general equality represented in shared beliefs such as, marriage, honesty, hard work, and religiosity. However, over the past fifty years, or so Murray argues, we have witnessed a collapse of this equality. Upper classes, hyper-educated and economically elite have distanced themselves from lower classes that have withdrawn from America's core cultural institutions. Murray then limns these dramatic changes by examining both fictitious communities and their wildly divergent differences which result in disastrous results for the nation as a whole.

"Reflections on America's Educational System and the Corporate Sector." *Vital Speeches Of The Day* 73.7 (2007): 299-302. *Academic Search Premier.* Ebsco. Web. 28 28 Jan. 2012.

In a speech delivered at the Graduate Commencement for Baldwin-Wallace College in Berea, Ohio in 2007, Ronald B. Richard, President of The Cleveland Foundation, stressed his life-long interest in education, though he has spent the bulk of his life in private enterprise. But for the past four years, he has been involved as a major funder of public and private educational institutions. Education is the bedrock upon which our society is built says Richard, and, as such, is important to ensure economic success and stimulating employment. But our nation is at a crossroads, a crisis, in that our public educational system is imploding with potentially disastrous results for both individuals and the country as a whole. He concludes the lengthy but powerful speech by both asking and answering some highly disturbing questions regarding the failing American educational system and the equally and correspondingly failing business sector with subsequently grim results for all Americans.

Rubin, James R. "How to build support for a corporate conscience." *The Washington Post* 22 Jan. 2012. *ProQuest National Newspapers Core.* ProQuest. Web. 29 Jan. 2012.

In this brief article, James Rubin poses a fundamental question concerning corporations: "When does corporate social responsibility (CSR) become an integral way for companies to engage shareholders and to build or to maintain trust in the company?" Business ethicists use the term "shared value" to refer to the corporations' understanding the significance of the trust placed in them by shareholders, and the subsequent sense of responsibility for their doing so, and for going beyond shareholders' interests into a fuller involvement in the larger scheme of things. For example, he refers to Coca-Cola's deep commitment to insuring the access of arable water to people globally.

Sanders, Bernie. “Corporate Responsibility: There Oughta Be a Law.” *Forward* 19 Jul. 2002. *Ethnic News Watch (ENW).* ProQuest. Web. 29 Jan. 2012.

Bernie Sanders scrutinizes the “cancer” of corporate greed in this pointed essay. For example, he claims that he is not discussing the “few bad apples” that appeared in recent news. He maintains that over the previous five years, nearly one thousand corporations were forced both to correct their financial statements and to acknowledge publicly their dishonesty. He further bemoans the absence of corporate ethics in the matter of moving operations abroad, avoiding paying taxes, laying off loyal workers, and then taking billions of dollars of corporate welfare from the government. He poses a couple of thought-provoking questions regarding stemming the tide of greed: “What are elected officials really going to do about it?” “How do we change the pervasive culture of greed, and the role of the congress, and the White House, so that we can end this dishonest corporate behavior?”

Sloan, Allan. “The Jury’s In: Greed Isn’t Good.” *Newsweek* 139.25 (2002): 37. *Academic Search Premier.* Ebsco. Web. 28 Jan. 2012.

The writer refers to the recent, notorious scandal involving Arthur Andersen’s destruction of Enron documents in order to hinder a federal investigation. Behind this and similar scandals is the notion that “greed,” being far from good, drives people to cut corners for a dubious short-term gain. Clearly, he argues, there is a dire need to regulate corporations stringently—the unregulated policy of previous years did nothing but fuel the burgeoning phenomenon of wide scale greed.

Warren, James. “Aon’s Move to Britain and a Fleeting Notion of Corporate Citzenship.” [National Desk] *The New York Times* 20 Jan. 2012 (Late Edition East Coast). *ProQuest National Newspapers Core.* ProQuest. Web. 29 Jan. 2012.

In moving its headquarters to London and incorporating in Britain, Aon, the formerly Chicago-bred insurance brokerage, is definitely seeking to avoid paying federal taxes by remaining in America. But top executives also profited wildly from the relocation. Chief Executive Officer Greg Case was awarded (in addition to his 1.5 million dollar salary and his seventeen million dollar stock award last year) $135,000 “foreign service allowance” paid semi-monthly and a $336,000 annual housing allowance.” Other officers will also profit mightily from the move.

Williams, Joe 111. "Corporate greed puts profits before people." *Recorder* 6 Oct. 2000. *Ethnic News Watch (ENW).* ProQuest. Web. 29 Jan. 2012.

Joe Williams argues that "corporate greed has consumed the principles and the guidelines of Western society." In so doing, it has ravaged the erstwhile value of "people before profit." For the average American (in the midst of a thriving economy) utility bills rise, as do gasoline prices, grocery bills, and interest rates—while salaries remain stagnant. Money, he suggests, is not the cause of the current economic problems—rather, it is greed itself.