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Book Reviews

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BOOK REVIEWS

CONTEMPORARY TRANSPORTATION; Donald F. Wood and James C. Johnson, 3rd ed., New York: Macmillan, 1989.

This text has been vastly revised for the third edition and now includes some critical chapters that acknowledge the management problems in transportation in the post-deregulation era. While the world turned upside down in 1980, or thereabouts, the transportation principles texts did not necessarily do so. To some extent, they could not. How can one write about "principles of transportation" when the principles are no longer well established? Granting that many of the true principles of the discipline remain intact regardless of the deregulatory climate, much of what filled the pages of basic transportation books became dated. This new edition of Contemporary Transportation is one of the first general transportation texts to fully acknowledge the necessary changes.

The introductory section of the text contains a chapter that should be of particular assistance in building transportation undergraduate majors--"Transportation Employment and Careers," Chapter 3. Given the "will it get me a job" orientation of undergraduate business majors, this chapter helps to focus on what happens to transportation majors when they graduate. The carrier section of the text contains one chapter on each of the five modes, plus a chapter on intermodal and auxiliary carriers. It also incorporates Chapter 11, "Pricing, Rates, and Negotiations," a specific area omitted from some of the major texts currently on the market. The shippers' section has a chapter on inbound logistics, as well as the traditional physical distribution and traffic management chapters. The final section, Carrier Management, looks at public sector, private sector, and international transportation. A new chapter has been added on the increasingly important area of the emerging or en-

trepreneurial carrier or logistician. Each chapter has some mini-cases at the end which help to emphasize some of the points related to the subject matter in the chapter.

One approach that the authors use in the text seems to be of increasing importance: computer screens as graphics to support text material. They show Yellow Freight's ZIP rating system in their discussion of pricing, rates and negotiations. If any criticism can be made of this approach, it is that it should be used more and used in other areas than rates. One reality of the post-deregulation era in transportation is the increasing use of computers in every aspect of the business.

While it would be nice to see more material on each of the five modes of transportation, that is not possible in a principles text that covers as much material as this one does. The book is well written, well-researched, and organized in a useful way. It is recommended for any undergraduate survey course in transportation, or as a supplement in an introductory graduate course.

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LAW AND ECONOMIC REGULATION IN TRANSPORTATION;

by Paul Stephen Dempsey and William E. Thoms.

(Quorum Books, 1986). Pp. xi 349. ISBN #0-89930-138-X

It has been over a dozen years since the first signs of economic deregulation surfaced in the transportation industry. The regulatory reform movement brought major policy changes to the once static operating and pricing environments. Even though many segments of the industry were deregulated, there are still several important reasons why practitioners as well as students might find an examination of past laws and regulatory practices valuable. First, despite deregulation, it must be realized there are still major portions of the transportation legal structure which remain intact. More importantly, recent changes in the competitive structure of the transportation industry have focused new attention on the results of deregulation. These events may force a policy shift away from the free market toward some form of economic reregulation of select modal segments.

It is difficult to resolve current policy problems without a thorough knowledge of the history of transportation legislation and regulatory environment. The text, Law and Economic Regulation in Transportation, provides an easy, readable, and practical format to build this comprehensive understanding of the past, present, and future transportation policy direction.

The book contains eight chapters examining three separate but interrelated topics. The general subject matters include: (1) the history of transportation regulation, (2) a detailed examination of economic regulation, and (3) select topics in transportation law.

Chapter 1 provides a brief synopsis of the growth of domestic transportation law. The text does an adequate job of providing a legislative framework for understanding the economic regulation of

all modes of transportation. The discussion begins with the public toll roads of the late 1700's and traces current regulation up to the legislation of the early 1980's.

The next three chapters detail the legislation, court cases, and rules which supply the basis for economic regulation. Chapter 2 covers current and past policies involved with entry, exit, and adequacy of service for the various modes. This chapter provides insight into policy decisions related to the competitive structure of the transportation industry. Chapter 3 is an overview of rate regulation for all the individual modes. This chapter examines the rationale for rate regulation and the changes to pricing policy as a result of deregulation. Chapter 4 examines issues surrounding antitrust practices and financial regulation of the modes. This chapter is extremely useful in understanding today's complex regulatory environment. Currently, there is confusion over the changing role of rate bureaus, application of antitrust regulations and the reversal of several recent merger decisions.

The last four chapters cover select subjects of law and economic regulation in transportation. These include: liability, government involvement in rail operation, labor legislation, and mass transit. Chapter 5 explores liability issues in transportation beginning with its evolution from common law. This topic could be of particular interest to practitioners since it describes changes in liability caused by regulatory reform in the rail, motor, and air segments.

Chapter 6 examines the role of the government in the operation of the nation's domestic rail system. Specifically, the chapter describes the past and present government involvement with Amtrak, commuter passenger services, and ConRail.

No text written about transportation law is complete without a brief survey of labor legislation. Chapter 7 provides a concise explanation of the legislation utilized in the resolution of transporta-

tion industry labor disputes. Topics include a brief summary of the pertinent labor laws as well as a discussion of specific labor issues such as the protection of the transportation employees jobs.

The final chapter includes subjects which are often times not covered in a text of transportation law and regulation. Chapter 8 provides an overview of the origin and structure of mass transit's legal environment.

Law and Economic Regulation in Transportation can be effectively utilized as an introductory transportation law text as well a supplement to advanced transportation policy seminars. The material has application for students with limited knowledge of transportation law as well as industry practitioners who require more specific and detailed information.

Overall, Law and Economic Regulation in Transportation provides a useful, practical, and comprehensive understanding of the legal and economic regulation in the transportation industry.

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