Renegades of the Empire

Jeffrey Barlow
Pacific University

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Renegades of the Empire

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Review by Jeffrey Barlow <barlowj@pacificu.edu>
Editor, Interface


There are many reasons for being interested in the world’s largest corporation, Microsoft, and in its Chairman, Bill Gates. There are, appropriately, many books that one could read. [1] These range from highly critical exposes, to tomes lauding the corporation as a business model for others and its Chairman as a far-sighted visionary.

Michael Drummond is a professional journalist with a number of works on disparate topics to his credit. [2] His book is a relatively old one given the volatility of the industry, though still in print. It is particularly useful, however, for the nature of the author’s approach, and for the period when it was researched and published.

Drummond chose to focus on a team of three men who worked within Microsoft. Although each were very strong personalities—one of Drummond’s sources refers to them as “obnoxious lunatics” (p. 111) they worked well together for a period and were known collectively as the “Beastie Boys.”

From Renegades of the Empire, we get many valuable insights into the corporation at a critical period in its existence. It had begun as a freewheeling company that encouraged cutthroat competition, both in its markets, and within its ranks. The Beastie Boys mastered this corporate style to carve out an empire within the empire. But this style caused significant problems, resulting internally in a still brutally confrontational corporate style, but one that increasingly valued procedures and hierarchy by 1999, the year of publication.

These changes were in part the consequence of the actions of the Beastie Boys themselves as they shouldered others aside in their search to push their own ideas, and particularly their own software approaches to Microsoft’s product line. This struggle focused upon the software engineering of the critical Windows operating system, and upon the Internet browser Internet
Explorer. The Boys insisted that Microsoft had to develop as a stable platform for computer
gaming, and their work eventually evolved to be DirectX, which did indeed become an important
stage in the development of Windows as a gaming environment.

On the browser side, however, they championed “Chrome” an element of the OS that eventually
failed to be significant, at least in the manner in which they themselves had intended.

The critical changes that affected both the Beastie Boys and the Microsoft Corporation at the
time related directly to the management styles and competitive practices portrayed so vividly in
Drummond’s work. The corporation was increasingly the target of lawsuits, and the United
States’ government began examining not only specific charges of alleged anticompetitive
practices, but also the very question of its nature as a potential or actual monopoly. And all this in
the period before foreign governments, too, began attacking the corporation in European courts
with the resultant fines and legal strictures.

The approach of Renegades of the Empire is also its weakness. The book can best be thought
of as a massive oral history focusing upon the very interesting group of the Beastie Boys as the
vehicle for understanding the corporation itself. However, the list of voices is staggering,
witnesses come and go, opinions differ widely, and at the end we feel that we have achieved
significant, but limited insights.

Because of its delineation of the corporate culture as seen in the careers of three men, and
because of their involvement in the development of two controversial software developments
which proved to be significant, one as a success, and one as a failure, we think this book well
worth reading. But for a more extended understanding we would follow it up with a more recent
publication, to be reviewed in our next issue.…

Footnotes:

[1] Book that focus on the corporation include: Slater, Robert. Microsoft Rebooted: How Bill
Gates and Steve Ballmer Reinvented Their Company – Portfolio, 2004; Cusumano, Michael
A. MICROSOFT SECRETS: HOW THE WORLD’S MOST POWERFUL SOFTWARE
COMPANY CREATES TECHNOLOGY, SHAPES MARKETS, AND MANAGES PEOPLE. Free
Press, 1998; Stross, Randall E. The Microsoft Way: The Real Story of How the Company
Outsmarts Its Competition. Perseus Books Group, 1997; Wallace, James, and Jim
Erickson Hard Drive: Bill Gates and the Making of the Microsoft Empire –
HarperBusiness, 1993. Among those focusing on Gates, including those he authored, are:
Gates, Bill. Business @ the Speed of Thought: Succeeding in the Digital Economy. Warner

[2] See list at Amazon.com at

-above&field-keywords=Drummond%25252C%252520Michael&search-type=ss&bq=1&store-name=books/ref=xs_ap_l_xgl14/104-4020143-6763900

The author appears to have no personal web page.

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In Renegades of the Empire, Michael Drummond, writing with the same insider access and narrative drive as Kidder, shows how three of Bill Gates's front-line warriors engage in subterfuge, backstabbing and high-level political intrigue to build and sell Chrome, a ground-breaking browser technology. In an exclusive agreement with the author, the three high level employees will lift the curtain on many of Microsoft's controversial practices. Their stories of ambition, lust for power and conquest reveal the Darwinian struggles that go on behind the walls of fortress Microsoft.

Product Id

Renegades of the Empire is a 1999 book by Michael Drummond. Renegades is an odd book, focusing primarily on a small political faction within Microsoft and two projects with which it was identified. Drummond's LinkedIn profile lists as an accomplishment, "Managed Shiite, Sunni employees as Baghdad bureau chief at the height of the U.S. military surge," so presumably he knows something about in-fighting! In my mind I compare Renegades to four previous books with similar themes: *Sing the Body Electronic* is an on-the-ground account of the near-collapse of the gEncarta Kidsh project at Microsoft; *Microserfs* is a fictionalized treatment of ambitious employees at the company; *Crystal Fire*, focusing on Bell Labs, is an analogous story of three men attempting to push their. RUNS on real time and always running unless your computer is shut off. This game starts you in the stone age and play on earth growing in tech levels and at level 20 you can start a new empire on the moon along with your earth empire at work. natural resources can be found and used by every team. Every team spawns on a different spot on the earth. face real challenges like sickness, starvation, power outages, storms, natural disasters, many other challenges like the ice age. their are 25 tech levels, the tech levels you gain do trigger events. you can be an alien race after you take over earth. you can Add to Favourites Comment Renegades Of The Empire. By scryer41. Watch. 0 Favourites. 0 Comments. 106 Views. enterprise galaxy nebula planets space star stars startrek spaceship starship trek.