

An introduction to business ethics

[Business](#), [Business Ethics](#)



The purpose of this paper is to carefully analyze the two required textbooks for this course. The two texts are: "An Introduction to Business Ethics" by Joseph DesJardins and "Supercapitalism: The Transformation of Business, Democracy, and Everyday Life" by Robert Reich. This paper will analyze the views of each author as well as address the differences and similarities between the two texts.

This paper will answer a number of questions, including: what are the views of each author in regards to socially responsible behavior, what are the ethical principals or theories the books address, how does each book address the concepts of ethical and unethical behavior, what are the general differences and similarities between both books, and how does each author's viewpoint incorporate stakeholder management and economic theory. The information and content presented throughout this paper is mainly based on the two textbooks, but additional information was gathered from multiple online scholarly sources.

The various conclusions reached throughout this paper should provide a detailed analysis of both books. Final Analysis Paper: Reich Versus DesJardins
In its simplest form, ethics is a system of moral principals that affect how people make decisions and lead their lives. It is the branch of study dealing with what the proper actions for individuals are. It helps us answer the question, "What do I do? Fundamentally, ethics is the method by which we categorize our values and then pursue them.

Ethics is concerned with what is good for individuals and society and covers a wide variety of dilemmas such as: our rights and responsibilities, the

language of right and wrong, and moral decision-making (“ What is Ethics,” n. d.). Ethics is a necessary requirement for human life. It is what guides us in deciding what course of action should be taken in various situations. Without ethics, our decisions, actions, and behaviors would be meaningless and random. Ethical standards allow us to correctly organize our goals and actions to accomplish what we value most in life.

While the study of ethics is undoubtedly important, the study of business ethics is essential to the success and existence of our current business world. Business ethics is defined as the behaviors that a business adheres to in its daily operations, activities, and correspondence with the world. Most people involved in business will, at some point or another, face ethical or moral decisions and dilemmas. “ These dilemmas will result in having to make choices by weighing the benefits of business decisions impart on individuals and groups with the negative repercussions that those same decisions have on other individuals and groups.

This is the core concept and dilemma most face when making ethical business decisions (“ What is Business,” n. d.). ” The difficulties and complexities of ethics, both in an individual context as well as a business context, are the foundations upon which Robert Reich and Joseph Desjardins based their books on. Robert B. Reich is the author of a book titled, “ Supercapitalism: The Transformation of Business Democracy and Everyday Life,” and Joseph DesJardins is the author of “ An Introduction to Business Ethics.”

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This paper will act as an analysis comparing the views and beliefs of each author. It will look at the viewpoints of both DesJardins and Reich and uncover the methods and implementation strategies dealing with ethical behavior and the ethical decision making process. It is clear that neither author condones unethical behavior, but their approaches to dealing with such behavior differ significantly. This paper will carefully and meticulously analyze both books and compare their similarities as well as differences.

While the heart of this paper will revolve around the concept of corporate social responsibility, we will also look at a number of other components of ethics and ethical decision-making. Before beginning, I will take a brief look at each book. Reich's book explores the transformation of American democratic capitalism into a system of supercapitalism in which corporations and the market exercise unrestrained power. It addresses the economy as hypercompetitive and turbocharged and explores the expanding disparity of income and wealth, the increase in job uncertainty, and corporate corruption, all as being part of a logical and efficient system.

While Reich addresses ethics in a more abstract and creative fashion, DesJardins book is straightforward and tailored to an academic audience. DesJardins book takes a more unique approach to business ethics than most other academic literature; however, the book still manages to carefully analyze the many components, theories, and philosophies associated with the study of business ethics. The book addresses concepts such as: ethical theory, corporate social responsibility, moral rights, employee's responsibilities, and globalization.

Although both books view ethics very differently, we will see that they still have many similarities in their methods and techniques. This paper will be broken down into various sections, each highlighting specific topics and concepts regarding business ethics. This paper will accomplish the following goals:

- Thoroughly address each books content, methods, theories, and viewpoints regarding business ethics.
- Address the similarities and differences between the two books.
- Provide a brief summary of both books.
- Highlight some of the books main topics such as: stakeholder management, economic theory, and profitability.
- Present an in-depth analysis of corporate social responsibility and the views both authors have regarding the subject.

DesJardins: Business Ethics “ An Introduction To Business Ethics” written by Joseph DesJardins is an academic textbook that incorporates current issues and topics with a straightforward and accurate evaluation of the field of business ethics. DesJardins uses a creative and distinctive approach to analyze business ethics from a multidisciplinary perspective.

The book offers a detailed analysis of many current issues and events while successfully integrating subjects such as philosophy, management, law, economics, and public policy into the subject. DesJardins focuses heavily on ethical reasoning and critical analysis throughout the book. The book is broken down into twelve chapters covering a wide range of topics such as:

ethical theory, moral rights, corporate culture, ethical leadership, marketing ethics, corporate social responsibility, international business, and globalization. The book begins by providing a detailed explanation regarding the importance of studying ethics.

The chapter discusses the reasons why business students frequently feel no need to take a formal course in business ethics. The chapter stresses the idea that the philosophical study of ethics will help business managers answer ethical questions of right and wrong that arise throughout everyday business activities and operations. It also explores the difference between ethos; the beliefs and customs a culture may follow, with a reasoned analysis of those customs as well as a logical defense of how we must live (“ An Introduction to,” 2003).

The first chapter sets the foundation for which the rest of the book is based. It helps us understand the importance of studying business ethics, the difference between doing good and doing well, how business ethics fits into the law, and the differences between morality, virtues, and social ethics. The remainder of the book is set up in a clear-cut and simple fashion. Each chapter begins with a list of discussion questions that are later reflected upon. The chapters are also divided into various subsections.

The entire book is informative, easy to follow, interesting, appealing, and precisely describes the various concepts related to business ethics. Reich: Supercapitalism “ Supercapitalism: The Transformation of Business, Democracy, and Everyday Life,” written by Robert Reich describes, from the authors perspective, our economic life in today’s capitalist economy and the

price we are paying for the political health of democracies. Robert Reich is a well-acclaimed author and political figure.

He was President Clinton's first secretary of labor and is currently a professor of public policy. Reich argues that, in recent decades, the United States has grown stronger as a capitalist economy and has grown weaker as a democratic nation. Reich begins the book by discussing the political and economic history that has led us to our current state of capitalism and democracy. He argues that democracy in the United States is in jeopardy, as more Americans are becoming immersed in their roles as consumers and investors, and are neglecting their roles as American citizens.

Reich addresses a concept and time period, which he calls the "Not Quite Golden Age" of American capitalism. This period spans from the end of World War II through the 1970's. Reich describes this period as: "a remarkable accommodation between capitalism and democracy, where a hugely productive economic system was combined with a broadly responsive and widely admired political system (Reich, 2007, p. 15)." During this period, the economic life of American citizens was described as stable and comfortable.

Large corporations, big labor, and the government plagued this period of stability and managed the interests of workers, consumers, and investors. Reich's main argument addresses how the spread of capitalism, on a global level, has yet to relate with the spread of democracy. This has led to negative social consequences, such as the widening inequalities of income and wealth, the reduction in our social safety net, and heightened job

insecurity. The book itself is divided into six chapters, ranging in topics from politics, to democracy, to the road to supercapitalism.

Reich uses tables and charts throughout the book to demonstrate how the economy has grown proficient and successful and how democracy is becoming less receptive to common values. I believe Reich is urging Americans to take a closer look at the success of capitalism, the decline of democracy, and how we need to rebalance the roles of businesses and the government. Reich describes, in detail, how we can attain vibrant capitalism and an equally vibrant democracy.