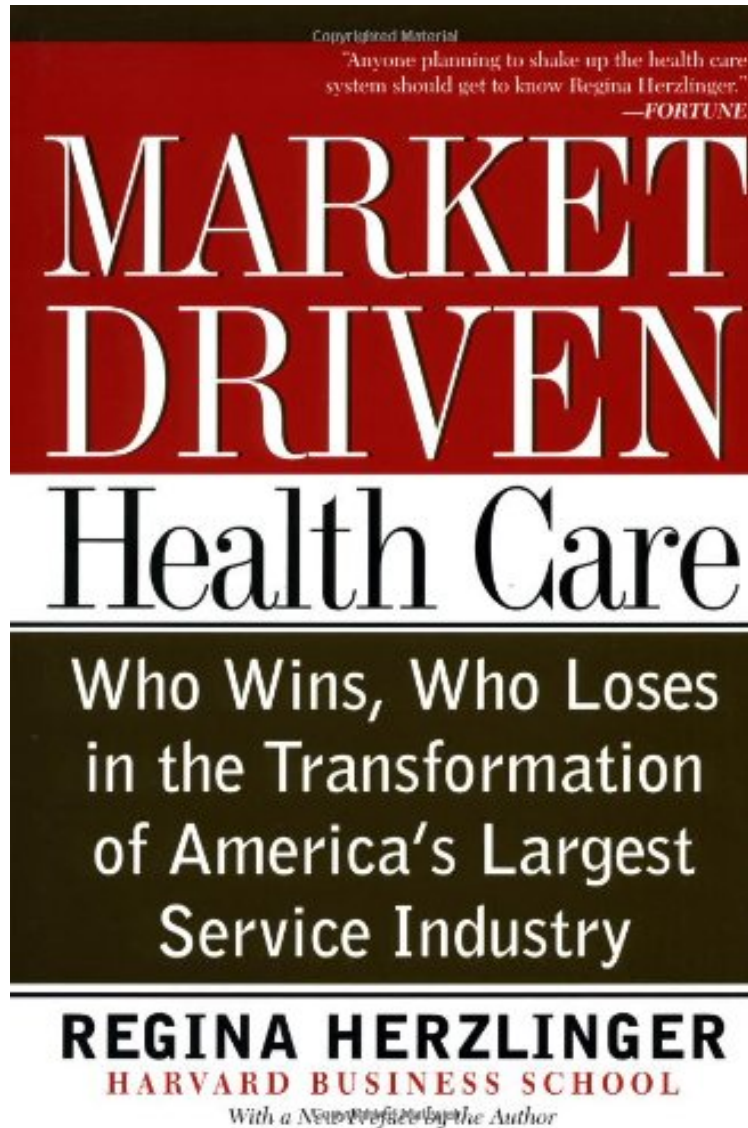


(Free pdf) Market-driven Health Care: Who Wins, Who Loses In The Transformation Of America's Largest Service Industry

# Market-driven Health Care: Who Wins, Who Loses In The Transformation Of America's Largest Service Industry

Regina Herzlinger

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By Dr. DaveRegina Herzlinger's "focused factories" of tomorrow are the "centers of excellence" of the 1980s. Both concepts are fine for metropolitan areas but ignore several important facts: 1. 80% of health care resources are consumed by 20% of the population, the elderly and very young;2. There are about millions of people who neither live in areas large enough to support such "factories" and lack the financial means to travel to them.3. Consumers are concerned largely with price and convenience, and secondarily with outcome. They have no basis by which to compare technologies (such as mammogram machines, as she suggests).4. Patients aren't paying the bills.Consumerism isn't a panacea. Patients have no idea what health care truly costs, equating cost with price. Physicians haven't been much help either, since they lack sound business sense and have been shielded from market sources for decades.The "solutions" at the end of the book appear to have been pasted together to meet a deadline instead of being carefully constructed with adequate supporting arguments. It is reminiscent of the cartoon of two scientists next to a blackboard covered with equations, one of which is "and then a miracle occurs."Finally, Herzlinger made the same mistake as Hillary Clinton. Physicians are not about to accept changes in their system made without their input. Ultimately, they still deliver the product and, unless one can figure out how to construct a health care system sans physicians, one must include them in any talk of reform.David A. Rivera, MDdrivera462@aol.com4 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Fatally flawed vision of focused health factories  
By GeorgeHalasz@Compuserve.comProfessor Herzlinger offers a fatally flawed vision of health reform, based on a persuasive premise: the absence of focused factories in the US health care system needlessly diminishes the quality of care and increases its cost. She thus concludes that not only is withholding focused factories uneconomical but also unethical.Agianst this, she seems to be unaware of the ethical conflicts of interests created in the system she envisions, which led Dr Linda Peeno, working as an HMO executive to conclude that she felt part of some psychology experiment whose design was to see how quickly those of us in the health profession abandoned our humanity.The lessons for the health profession and the risks posed by focused factories are clear: given our endangered integrity, we have an ethical obligation to end the strained silence while our professional integrity is rationed away. A Jerome Kassirer noted, to capitulate to an ethic of the group, I would add like a focused factory manager, rather than the individual patient, allowing market forces to distort our ethical standards will inevitably lead to the suffering of our patients and our profession. Ultimately if we adopt Herzlinger's vision for health reform, we risk becoming the economic agents of focused factories.George Halasz Australia

What happens when the demanding consumers who nearly brought the U.S. automobile industry to its knees focus the same kinds of pressure on the industry that represents one-seventh of the U.S. economy;health care? The health organizations that combine quality, convenience, information, choices, and lower costs will be the winners in this revolution. Regina Herzlinger, chaired professor at the Harvard Business School, distills the facts from the noise surrounding the one industry whose measures of success are life and death. In a thoroughly readable, anecdotal style, she pinpoints the drivers of change;the savvy consumer, the cost-conscious payer, and the rapidly improving technology;that will revolutionize the American health-care system. This is a must-read for those in every corner of the immense health-care web. With its strong narrative style, this is a book that will be read and talked about by everyone concerned about the future of American health care.

From Library JournalHerzlinger (Harvard Business Sch.) contends that improvements can be made to the American healthcare system by removing our current third-party payment system and allowing consumer demand to lead the healthcare market. Using eyewear as an example, Herzlinger shows how this consumer-driven market provides convenient, focused services with competitive prices. Most vision care services are not covered by medical insurance, forcing this sector of healthcare to respond to consumer demand. The author provides additional case studies, both within and outside the healthcare industry, that illustrate how team building, focusing on specific products and services, and prudent investments in technology can lead to convenient, cost-effective healthcare. While Herzlinger admits that abolishing the third-party payment system will present numerous difficulties, she includes suggestions for overcoming many of them. Written in a straightforward, readable style, this book is recommended for all libraries.?Tina Neville, Univ. of South Florida at St. Petersburg Lib.Copyright 1997 Reed Business Information, Inc. How does American business hold lessons for health care management and the health industry? Herzlinger's focus on consumer demands, changing market requirements, and business impacts on health organizations and structures provides an analysis of service providers' business practices, revealing how such providers succeed - and fail - in their jobs. -- Midwest Book About the AuthorRegina Herzlinger has been analyzing and researching the health-care industry for twenty-five years. Nancy R. McPherson is professor of business administration at the Harvard Business

School, she is a board member of numerous organizations inside and outside of the health-care field. Market-Driven Health Care received the 1998 James A. Hamilton Book of the Year Award from the American College of Healthcare Executives.