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KIRKUS

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REVIEWS



The story behind the lost
Dr. Seuss manuscript
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YOUR CASH IS FLOWING
Why every entrepreneur
needs to think like a CFO

Homza, Kenneth M.

Homza Press (208 pp.)

\$16.00 paper | \$9.99 e-book

Jun. 26, 2014

978-0-9897069-0-2

A “fractional CFO” offers useful snippets of financial advice to small business owners.

Homza, who works on a contract basis as a “fractional” (part-time) CFO for small businesses, debuts with a book that acts as a kind of armchair adviser. More an assemblage of bite-sized essays than logically organized chapters, the book is an easy but potentially enlightening read for the busy business owner. The author touches on a smattering of both financial and organizational topics and issues, including financial statements, financial plans, key indicators, receivables, payables, working with a banker, effective management teams, setting strategy, problem-solving, and more. Homza writes with a strong, authoritative voice in a no-nonsense style, dishing out counsel clearly borne of professional experience. “Get the entire organization focused on a few key numbers so that everyone has an appreciation for the results of the organization,” he says. When businesses are “languishing,” Homza observes, “I see that the problem with many is that they have no Push. No one is setting the tone or holding people within the organization accountable for goals and objectives.” The author draws a distinction between working in a business and on a business: “Too many small business owners find themselves working in the business. This means they are working on day-to-day operational issues,” he says. “Ask yourself: what you are doing today which will alter the course of your business over the next three to five years?” And as for those office plants, “one of the first things that I look for when I walk into an office is whether anyone waters the plants...what I am really looking for is whether anyone goes above and beyond to take care of little things that are usually not in anyone’s job description.” Some readers may think these pithy observations are tossed out casually and lack substance, but most small-business owners should be able to find ample wisdom in these pages.

A business how-to for some and a collection of helpful reminders for others; makes for an engaging light read.

{ INDIE }

WARRIOR

Irving, Terry

Ronin Robot Press (299 pp.)

\$2.99 e-book | Jun. 25, 2015

Irving’s (*Courier*, 2015) historical thriller, the second in his Freelancer series, offers a provocative reinterpretation of the infamous Wounded Knee incident.

Irving reprises the picaresque role of Rick Putnam, a motorcycle-riding courier and war-hardened Vietnam veteran. Set in 1973, the story centers on the Wounded Knee debacle in South Dakota, in which members of the American Indian Movement seized and occupied a small town within the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. In this fictional version, the activists, surrounded and beleaguered by U.S. law enforcement, are increasingly threatened with the possibility of a final, deadly raid that ends the standoff once and for all. Rick joins his Native American friend Eve Buffalo in an attempt to sneak badly needed supplies past the blockade surrounding the town. The area is crackling with violence, riddled with various tribal factions all deeply territorial, suspicious of outsiders, and accustomed to spontaneous bouts of violence. Rick, troubled by the political intrigue he encountered (and barely survived) in the previous novel, uncovers yet more subterfuge regarding the collusion of the federal government with corrupt officials within the Bureau of Indian Affairs. What follows is an action-packed adventure that includes nefarious government forces, intramural tribal conflict, and motorcycle gangs. Rick remains the constant through the two volumes: he’s still a chain-smoking, wisecracking tough guy haunted by memories of service in Vietnam. His character can be a bit overdrawn, flirting with caricature as the wounded but incorruptible warrior with “eidetic memory.” However, his developing romance with Eve humanizes him, adding a layer of complexity and vulnerability. Once again, the story’s pace is torrid, moving from one taut scene to another while the historical drama of Wounded Knee facilitates Irving’s principal strength: rendering the wildly implausible believable. Rick’s irrepressible wit will help readers through the sometimes-dark material. In response to a Native American introducing himself as Pete Talltrees, Pawnee out of Oklahoma, Rick responds, “Rick Putnam, BMW out of Washington DC.”

A brisk, suspenseful adventure nestled in real, historical drama.