

Even the scope is unclear. The author, in the introduction, makes it clear (but without justification) that retailing of services is not covered, whilst one of the guest contributors states that retailing embraces, for example, money (banks), travel and leisure. The final chapter 'Conclusions' has a final sub-section 'Conclusions', after which the book finally ends.

It is a missed opportunity in the retailing literature, and the nearest it gets to OR is to mention, but not give, the simple EOQ calculation.

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REFERENCE

1. P. J. MCGOLDRICK (1990) *Retail Marketing*. McGraw Hill, London.

Statistical Inference for Branching Processes

PETER GUTTORP

John Wiley & Sons Ltd, Chichester, 1991. xii + 211 pp. £35.50

ISBN 0 471 82291 4

Dr Guttorp, an associate professor of statistics at the University of Washington, has produced a helpful review of the area of making statistical inferences on branching processes. The book introduces the subject, whose origins lie in the 18th century interest in the extinction of royal or aristocratic family lines, and provides a comprehensive guide to handling it statistically.

The book is primarily aimed at advanced graduate students, and would certainly be daunting to anyone without a fairly good grasp of statistics. The writing style is very readable, and liberally flavoured with examples and illustrations. However, the book (perhaps of necessity) includes pages of formulae and mathematical symbols which could be off-putting to the faint hearted (or busy!).

Dr Guttorp was not aiming to produce a business textbook; however, it would have been nice to see a wider variety of applications. Those which are presented are, however, very illuminating. Applications in family trees, mutations, physics, epidemics and whooping cranes are presented in some detail.

From a statistical point of view the book is fascinating. New classical approaches are presented, and a review of Bayesian approaches to the problem is given.

Overall I would highly recommend the book to anyone closely involved in the field (e.g. OR practitioners modelling epidemics and so on), but unfortunately for those of us seeking to apply the field more directly to commerce this hardly provides a mine of ideas.

JASON LOWTHER

Strategic Management; Concepts and Cases

JOHN H. BARNETT and WILLIAM D. WILSTED

PWS-Kent Publishing Company, Boston, 1989. 930 pp. £15.95

ISBN 0 534 87176 3

The book begins with 200 pages of 'Concepts', and concludes with a 500 item index to this part, mostly cross-referencing quoted authors. The remainder of the book consists of 37 'Cases' all based, it seems, on actual organizations in the United States. These are well written, in clear, interesting styles although with diverse content and structure.

Examples include Nucor, 'the most successful steel company', who did not, apparently, do any long range planning, Apple, Lincoln Electric, New Hampshire Ball Bearings Inc, who faced a possible takeover against the founder's death-bed wishes, several drinks companies, and, in contrast, Alcoholics Anonymous, who were experiencing conflicts with their basic non-business, non profit-making, spiritual philosophy. As usual, no clue as to the answers, or even how to analyse the problems, is given, although the text concludes with an interesting generalized approach to a