

## Chapter 1 : Broken Buildings, Busted Budgets: How to Fix America's Construction Industry

*Broken Buildings, Busted Budgets is the first book to document the impact of the construction industry on our nation's economy and highlight how this last remaining "mom and pop" industry is rife with inefficiency and waste costing the nation over \$ billion annually.*

Vedder, Richard Published by EH. University of Chicago Press, Barry LePatner, a veteran attorney specializing in construction industry affairs, argues that the American construction industry is an archaic, mom and pop enterprise with stagnant productivity and high and unpredictable costs, all of which is needlessly raising the cost of needed infrastructure improvements to our economy. The three expressions most used by LePatner to explain the problem are: The monopoly dimension arises because after firms sign contracts with a customer to construct a building, they are the sole provider of the product. Labor unions have often been successful in preventing cost saving innovation, and government regulations, especially building codes, often border on the inane. The whole argument proceeds from a huge assumption: On page 33, a graph is presented showing rising productivity from to about , and sharply falling productivity from to A bit later p. I am not so sure. First of all, the BLS which is in the Labor Department does not directly estimate productivity in construction. A quick review of the literature that I did revealed one study showing significant productivity decline consistent with LePatner , one study showing productivity gains albeit somewhat less than in the economy overall , and two studies that said productivity is virtually impossible to measure for a variety of technical reasons relating to construction price indices, starting with the customized nature of construction, the difficulty in measuring quality changes, etc. Thus the underlying premise of the book " construction is a traditional industry that has not modernized or innovated " is not as clear to me as it is to LePatner. Another assumption of LePatner is that massive potential economies of scale are not being realized. Again, I am not so sure. Economies of scale often come from making multiple units of a standardized product, and that has happened to some extent in housing, where large corporations are emerging. But much construction is customized units. Moreover, because of the inefficiencies created by varying local building codes, localized knowledge of the parameters of allowable production techniques and materials is needed, actually giving an advantage to smaller regional as opposed to national firms. While the book has some nice historical discussion, such as about the growth of mass production housing after World War II, deeper analysis of historical trends is limited and superficial. Why, for example, has unionized construction undertaken a big decline " is it for the same reasons that unions have declined elsewhere? LePatner advocates that the construction industry move to more fixed bid non-mutable contracts. He argues persuasively that much of the inefficient and sometimes corrupt change order process could be eliminated. If mass produced housing is more efficient as LePatner argues , why do most Americans eschew it for more expensive customized housing? Perhaps variety is the spice of life, and what LePatner views as inefficient, others would view as a rational exercise in individual preferences. Almost as an aside, LePatner comments on the inefficiencies of higher education which he argues contributes to low quality construction engineering training , opining pp. If his characterization of the construction industry is as perceptive as that on higher education, this book is probably a must read for those interested in this trillion dollar industry. However, the evidence is sufficiently murky that I am doubtful. He is now working on a book on economic growth and equality in the U.

## Chapter 2 : Barry B. LePatner | HuffPost

*Armed with Broken Buildings, Busted Budgets, everyone involved in the purchase or renovation of a building or any structure"from homeowners seeking to remodel to civic developers embarking on large-scale projects"has the information they need to change this antiquated industry, one project at a time.*

## Chapter 3 : Broken Buildings, Busted Budgets - Download Free EBooks

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*Broken Buildings, Busted Budgets has 47 ratings and 7 reviews. Michael said: The basic solution to the obvious issues that plague the US construction ind.*

### Chapter 4 : Broken Buildings, Busted Budgets: How to Fix America's Trillion-Dollar Construction Industry

*Broken Buildings, Busted Budgets is one of a very few sources of education and illumination for builders that I highly recommend. I wish it was much more widely read. I regret that "Consultant," in making his valid criticisms and raising legitimate questions, overlooked the value of the book.*

### Chapter 5 : racedaydvl.com | Broken Buildings, Busted Budgets | | Barry B. Lepatner | Boeken

*Across the nation, construction projects large and small- from hospitals to schools to simple home improvements- are spiraling out of control.*

### Chapter 6 : Barry LePatner | TOO BIG TO FALL

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*Labor unions have a long tradition of strength in the building trades because they often outsize and outwit employers, which traditionally are small firms with little expertise or training in labor matters.*