

Kevin Kline puts a high price on Michael Palin's finned friends in 1988's *A Fish Called Wanda*



WRITER REPLIES

WHAT'S THAT GOT TO DO WITH THE PRICE OF FISH?

Michael Mainelli and Ian Harris offer new solutions to some of the world's most challenging problems in *The Price of Fish*. Farah Dib speaks to Harris about why fresh ideas are needed to make sense of the world

What's the price of fish got to do with world economy?

Traditional theories of supply and demand are not sufficient to describe the way the world works. The price of fish is a perfect example of the shortcomings of conventional economics.

If you follow conventional economic theory, the price of fish would rise to mitigate demand and increasingly limited supply. Yet we have problems with over-fishing, pollution and hunger. The issues around sustainability are complex. Depletion of resources, together with climate change, are some of the most serious challenges facing the world today. We should not get caught up in a blame debate on whose fault it is. Instead, we want to encourage people to solve problems by focusing on what we can do to improve circumstances.

What do you hope this book will achieve?

Drawing on models developed in quantum physics, we combine four streams – choice, economics, systems and evolution – to offer a new way of viewing the commercial world and helping communities make better choices. We'd like it to give people a better understanding of the issues, even if they're not experts. On a political level, we stress that organisations and governments need to think differently about their decisions. People must work together to solve these problems and consumers should be given choices.

Where did you get the idea?

A few years ago, Michael and I approached Nicholas Brealey, our publisher, with our humorous management novel, *Clean Business*

Cuisine. He turned us down but asked us to come back when we were ready to write a serious book. When Michael became Gresham College's Professor of Commerce, Nicholas asked when we were going to be ready! The book is not a collection of those lectures, but it has evolved from them.

With all these problems, is it hard to be optimistic?

Humans are an ingenious species, and we have managed to solve tricky problems in the past. We need to be less fearful of solutions. Look at the developments in IT over the past few decades. Stuff that we couldn't even imagine has become reality. Similar progress will happen again if we let ourselves make sense of world developments without relying on traditional models.

THE PRICE OF FISH

A New Approach to World Economics and Better Decisions

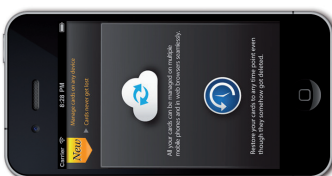


MICHAEL MAINELLI AND IAN HARRIS

Find out more

The Price of Fish, Nicholas Brealey Publishing, hardback £20. To find out more, visit www.priceoffish.info

THE APPETISER



CamCard iPhone, Android Free (limited version)

PM rating: ●●●●●

This app is impressive. In three simple steps it records contacts on your phone, saving you the trouble of holding on to business cards

and typing contacts up manually. Point your camera at a business card and CamCard recognises the text and saves the details on your phone. It recognises 16 languages and features include online backup and synchronising with other address books. But beware of transcription errors.

PHOTOS: ALAMY