CHAPTER 12
SOME LESSONS FROM CAPITAL MARKET HISTORY

Answers to Concepts Review and Critical Thinking Questions

1. They all wish they had! Since they didn’t, it must have been the case that the stellar performance was not foreseeable, at least not by most.

2. As in the previous question, it’s easy to see after the fact that the investment was terrible, but it probably wasn’t so easy ahead of time.

3. No, stocks are riskier. Some investors are highly risk averse, and the extra possible return doesn’t attract them relative to the extra risk.

5. The market is not weak form efficient.

6. Yes, historical information is also public information; weak form efficiency is a subset of semi-strong form efficiency.

9. The EMH only says, within the bounds of increasingly strong assumptions about the information processing of investors, that assets are fairly priced. An implication of this is that, on average, the typical market participant cannot earn excessive profits from a particular trading strategy. However, that does not mean that a few particular investors cannot outperform the market over a particular investment horizon. Certain investors who do well for a period of time get a lot of attention from the financial press, but the scores of investors who do not do well over the same period of time generally get considerably less attention from the financial press.

10. a. If the market is not weak form efficient, then this information could be acted on and a profit earned from following the price trend. Under (2), (3), and (4), this information is fully impounded in the current price and no abnormal profit opportunity exists.

   b. Under (2), if the market is not semi-strong form efficient, then this information could be used to buy the stock “cheap” before the rest of the market discovers the financial statement anomaly. Since (2) is stronger than (1), both imply that a profit opportunity exists; under (3) and (4), this information is fully impounded in the current price and no profit opportunity exists.

   c. Under (3), if the market is not strong form efficient, then this information could be used as a profitable trading strategy, by noting the buying activity of the insiders as a signal that the stock is underpriced or that good news is imminent. Since (1) and (2) are weaker than (3), all three imply that a profit opportunity exists. Note that this assumes the individual who sees the insider trading is the only one who sees the trading. If the information about the trades made by company management is public information, it will be discounted in the stock price and no profit opportunity exists. Under (4), this information does not signal any profit opportunity for traders; any pertinent information the manager-insiders may have is fully reflected in the current share price.