

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

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Fall 2007
HIST 220
SMPP 293

A HISTORY OF AMERICAN BUSINESS

Description: An examination of the origins and development of American corporate enterprise and management in the context of its economic, social, political, and legal environments.

Required Readings:

Materials available in the bookstore

- Walter Licht, *Industrializing America: The Nineteenth Century* (1995)
Louis Galambos & Joseph Pratt, *The Rise of the Corporate Commonwealth: U.S. Business and Public Policy in the Twentieth Century* (1988)
Nitin Nohria, et al, *Changing Fortunes: Remaking the Industrial Corporation* (2002)
Gary Cross, *All-Consuming Century: Why Commercialism Won in Modern America* (2000) (Selected chapters available on Blackboard)
Wyatt Wells, *American Capitalism, 1945-2000: Continuity and Change From Mass Production to the Information Society* (2003)
Olivier Zunz, *Making America Corporate* (1990) (Selected chapters available on Blackboard.)

Suggested Readings: (For additional reading, especially for students planning to take a field examination in business history.)

-Alfred D. Chandler, Jr., *Strategy and Structure: Chapters in the History of the American Industrial Enterprise* (1962); *The Visible Hand: The Corporate Revolution in American History* (1977); *Scale and Scope: The Dynamics of*

Industrial Capitalism (1990).

-Richard John, "Elaborations, Revisions, Dissents: Alfred D. Chandler, Jr.'s *The Visible Hand* After Twenty Years," *Business History Review* 71, no 2 (1997): 151-200.

- *The Cambridge Economic History of the United States*, vol II: *The Nineteenth Century* (1996); vol. III: *The Twentieth Century* (2000)

- Olivier Zunz, *Why the American Century?* (1998)

-Roland Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream: Making Way for Modernity, 1920-1940* (1985); *Creating the Corporate Soul: The Rise of Public Relations and Corporate Imagery in American Big Business* (1998)

-Clark Davis, *Company Men: White-Collar Life and Corporate Cultures in Los Angeles, 1892-1941* (1992)

-Sanford M. Jacoby, *Modern Manors: Welfare Capitalism Since the New Deal* (1997)

-Thomas Frank, *The Conquest of Cool: Business Culture, Counterculture, and the Rise of Hip Consumerism* (1997)

Outline and Reading Assignments:

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| 9/6 | Introduction: Business and American History |
| 9/13, 9/20 | Economic, Social, Political, and Legal Context of American Business Development in an Industrializing Economy
Licht, Introduction and chapters. 1-3 |
| 9/27, 10/4 | Railroads, Industry and the Emergence of "Big Business"
Licht, chapt. 4, 5-6
Galambos & Pratt, pp. 1-38 |
| 10/11 | Adjusting to Big Business: Antitrust Policy and the Origins of Modern Management
Licht, chapt. 7
Galambos & Pratt, pp. 39-70 |
| 10/18 | Shaping Modern Management : Labor, Advertising, Industrial Research, Public Relations, 1900-1929
Galambos & Pratt, pp. 71-99
Zunz, chapters 2, 4, & 5 (Available on Blackboard)
Cross, chapters. 1, 2 (Available on Blackboard) |
| 10/25 | MID-TERM EXAMINATION |
| 11/1 | Depression and War: Management and a New Political Economy |

- Galambos & Pratt, pp. 100-128
Cross, chapt. 3
- 11/8 The Post-War World of Business and American Preeminence, 1945-1973
 Galambos & Pratt, pp. 129-200
 Cross, chapters 4, 5
 Wells, Introduction, chapters 1-3
- 11/15 American Business Challenged: 1960-1970s
 Galambos & Pratt, pp. 201-266
 Wells, chapters 4-6
- 11/22 THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY
- 11/29 A New Corporate World: Restructuring
 1980s and 1990s
 Nohria
 Cross, chapters 6, 7
- 12/6 Business and a “New Economy”?

FINAL EXAMINATION (During scheduled examination period.)

Examinations:

There will be a mid-term examination, which will account for one third of the final grade. There will also be a final examination (accounting for two thirds of the final grade). The final examination will be divided into two parts. The first part of the examination will consist of questions addressing issues discussed since the mid-term. The second part of the examination will be an essay discussing the book by Nohria et al. The subject of that essay will be distributed in advance of the final.

Paper Option:

M.A. and PhD students interested in subjects related to business history should consider writing a research or historiographical paper for this course. In choosing the paper option the course’s grade will be determined as follows: mid-term exam, 25 percent; final exam, 50 percent; and paper, 25 percent.

