

American Capitalism: Readings in U.S. Economic and Business History

HISTORY 669
Fall 2008
Thursdays, 6:00-8:30p, TLF 2110

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and by appointment

This course explores key writings on the evolution of capitalism in British North American and the United States from 1607 to the present. The first two weeks are devoted to theoretical questions and methodological approaches central to business and economic history. We then move chronologically through major topics that engage social, cultural, political, and institutional dimensions of business evolution and economic growth and welfare.

Assignments:

Reading and class participation: Each student is expected to complete all the common readings (marked with an asterisk) and all or much of the review books for each week's class and to participate actively in class discussions. Class participation will comprise 30 percent of the course grade.

Review essays: Each student will be responsible for one weekly topic review essay of approximately 2,000 words that analyzes the common readings and review books from a one week of the course [student names are shown in the schedule of topics below]. The essay should be organized thematically, not as a sequential review of the books and articles. Although you should discuss the central thesis, organization, and sources of each book and article, the essay should be constructed around and dominated by the themes that you have defined. Each presenter should distribute her or his essay to members of the class electronically at least 24 hours before the class session in which she or he will present. You may use the short citation method for these essays – for example: (Chandler, p. 77). The review essay will comprise 30 percent of the course grade.

Synthetic essays: In addition, each student will write two 1,500-2,000-word take-home essays. These essays will respond to general exam-like questions chosen from a list of questions submitted by members of the class. The first take-home essay, due via email October 30, will pertain to course readings through and including October 23; the second, due December 18, will pertain to the remainder. The questions will be distributed one week before the due date. Each synthetic essay will comprise 20 percent of the course grade.

Books and articles: Course books are on reserve in the McKeldin Library (the Reserve desk is next to the check-out station on the first floor). Articles are available online through the course ELMS/Blackboard website.

Policy on absences and late assignments: If you need to miss or come late to class, please inform the instructor beforehand if possible. Written assignments turned in late will be penalized one full grade per 24 hour period unless otherwise arranged with the instructor.

Statement on Academic Integrity: The University of Maryland, College Park has a nationally recognized Code of Academic Integrity, administered by the Student Honor Council. This Code sets standards for academic integrity at Maryland for all undergraduate and graduate students. As a student you are responsible for upholding these standards in this course. It is very important for you to be aware of the consequences of cheating, fabrication, facilitation, and plagiarism. For more information on the Code of Academic Integrity or the Student Honor Council, please visit <http://www.studenthonorcouncil.umd.edu/whatis.html>

Weekly Discussion Topics and Readings

9/4 – Business History: Theoretical Foundations

Ronald H. Coase, “The Nature of the Firm,” *Economica*, New Series 4 (1937), 386–405.

Alfred D. Chandler, Jr., “Organizational Capabilities and the Economic History of the Industrial Enterprise,” *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 6.3 (1992), 79-100

Thomas K. McCraw, “The Challenge of Alfred D. Chandler, Jr.: Retrospect and Prospect,” *Reviews in American History* 15 (March 1987): 160-178.

Oliver E. Williamson, “The Theory of the Firm as Governance Structure: From Choice to Contract,” *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 16.3 (2002), 171-195.

Oliver E. Williamson, “The New Institutional Economics: Taking Stock, Looking Ahead,” *Journal of Economic Literature* 38.3 (2000), 596-613.

Naomi Lamoreaux, Daniel M. G. Raff, and Peter Temin, “Beyond Markets and Hierarchies: Toward a New Synthesis of American Business History,” *American Historical Review* 108 (April 2003): 404-433.

David B. Sicilia, "Cochran's Legacy: A Cultural Path Not Taken," *Business and Economic History*, 24 (Fall 1995): 27-39.

Kenneth Lipartito, “Culture and the Practice of Business History,” *Business and Economic History* 24 (Winter 1995): 1-41.

9/11 – Economic History: Cliometrics v. Narration

Robert W. Fogel, "The New Economic History: I. Its Findings and Methods," *Economic History Review* 19:3 (1966): 642-656.

Alfred H. Conrad and John R. Meyer, "The Economics of Slavery in the Ante Bellum South," *Journal of Political Economy* 66:2 (April 1958): 95-130.

Claudia Goldin, "Cliometrics and the Nobel," *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 9:2 (Spring 1995): 191-208.

Thomas L. Haskell, "The True & Tragical History of 'Time on the Cross,'" *New York Review of Books* 22:15 (October 2, 1975).

Donald N. McCloskey, "History, Differential Equations, and the Problem of Narration," *History and Theory* 30:1 (February 1991): 21-36.

Moses Abramovitz, "The Search for Sources of Growth: Areas of Ignorance, Old and New," *Journal of Economic History* 53:2 (June 1993): 217-243.

Paul David, "Clio and the Economics of QWERTY," *American Economic Review* 75:2 (May 1985): 332-337.

Robert Whaples, "Where is There Consensus Among American Economic Historians? The Results of a Survey on Forty Propositions," *Journal of Economic History* 55:1 (March 1995): 139-154.

9/18 – Merchants and Puritans

*John Frederick Martin, *Profits in the Wilderness: Entrepreneurship and the Founding of New England Towns in the Seventeenth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991).

Bernard Bailyn, *The New England Merchants in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1955).

9/25 – Capitalism in the Countryside: The Eighteenth Century [Debbie]

*James A. Henretta, "Families and Farms: Mentalite in Pre-Industrial America," *William and Mary Quarterly* 31:1 (Jan. 1978): 3-32.

*Winifred B. Rothenberg, "The Market and Massachusetts Farmers, 1750-1855," *Journal of Economic History* 41:2 (June 1981): 283-314.

*Christopher Clark, *The Roots of Rural Capitalism: Western Massachusetts, 1780-1860* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990).

Allan Kulikoff, *The Agrarian Origins of American Capitalism* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1992).

Joyce Appleby, *Capitalism and a New Social Order: The Republican Vision of the 1790s* (1984).

10/2 – Law, the State, and the Antebellum Economy [Jon]

*Guy S. Callender, "The Early Transportation and Banking Enterprises of the States in Relations to the Growth of Corporations," *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 42 (Nov. 1902): 111-162.

*Lively, Robert A., "The American System: A Review Article," *Business History Review* 29 (March 1955): 81-96.

*James Willard Hurst, *Law and the Conditions of Freedom in the Nineteenth Century United States* (Madison, 1956).

Oscar Handlin and Mary Flug Handlin, *Commonwealth A Study of the Role of Government in the American Economy: Massachusetts, 1774-1861* (New York, 1947).

William J. Novak, *The People's Welfare: Law and Regulation in Nineteenth-Century America* (Chapel Hill, 1996).

10/9 – Early Industrialization

*Cochran, Thomas C., *Frontiers of Change: Early Industrialism in America* (New York, 1981).

*Marc Egnal, *Divergent Paths: How Culture and Institutions Have Shaped North American Growth* (New York, 1996), Part I (chs. 1-8).

Wallace, Anthony F. C., *Rockdale: The Growth of an American Village in the Early Industrial Revolution* (New York, 1972).

Walter Licht, *Industrializing America: The Nineteenth Century* (Baltimore, 1995).

10/16 – Big Business: Chandler and His Critics

*Philip Scranton, *Endless Novelty: Specialty Production and American Industrialization, 1865-1925* (Princeton. 1997).

Alfred D. Chandler, Jr., *The Visible Hand: The Managerial Revolution in American Business* (1977).

William G. Roy, *Socializing Capital: The Rise of the Large Industrial Corporation in America* (Princeton, 1997).

10/23 – Regulating Big Business

*Thomas K. McCraw, K., "Regulation in America: A Review Essay," *Business History Review* 49 (Summer 1975): 159-182.

*Maury Klein, "Competition and Regulation: The Railroad Model," *Business History Review* 64 (Summer 1990): 311-325.

*Keller, Morton, "The Pluralist State: American Economic Regulation in Comparative Perspective, 1900-1930," in Thomas K. McCraw, ed., *Regulation in Perspective* (Cambridge, Mass., 1981), 56-94.

*Thomas K. McCraw, *Prophets of Regulation* (Cambridge, Mass., 1984), chs. 1-4, 8.

Gabriel Kolko, *The Triumph of Conservatism: A Reinterpretation of American History, 1900-1916* (New York, 1963).

Martin J. Sklar, *The Corporate Reconstruction of American Capitalism, 1890-1916: The Market, the Law, and Politics* (New York, 1998).

10/30 – Mass Marketing and Consumer Culture [Fred]

*Roland Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream: Making Way for Modernity, 1920-1940* (Berkeley, 1985).

*Harold G. Vatter, "Has There Been a Twentieth-Century Consumer Durables Revolution?" *Journal of Economic History* 27:1 (March 1967): 1-16.

*Martha L. Olney, "Advertising, Consumer Credit, and the 'Consumer Durables Revolution' of the 1920s," *Journal of Economic History* 47:2 (June 1987): 489-491.

William R. Leach, *Land of Desire: Merchants, Power, and the Rise of a New Consumer Culture* (New York, 1993)

Susan Strasser, *Satisfaction Guaranteed: The Making of the American Mass Market* (Washington, D.C., 2004).

11/6 – Money and Banking before 1933 [Chris]

*Bray Hammond, "Jackson, Biddle, and the Bank of the United States," *Journal of Economic History* 7:1 (May 1947): 1-23.

*Peter Temin, *The Jacksonian Economy* (New York, 1969).

*Richard Sylla, "Federal Policy, Banking Market Structure, and Capital Mobilization in the United States, 1863-1913," *Journal of Economic History* (December 1969): 657-686.

Richard H. Timberlake, Jr., *The Origins of Central Banking in the United States* (Cambridge, MA, 1978).

Ron Chernow, *The House of Morgan: An American Banking Dynasty and the Rise of Modern Finance* (New York, 1990), chs. 1-18.

11/13 – The Great Depression and the New Deal [Matt]

*Stuart Bruchey, *Enterprise: The Dynamic Economy of a Free People* (Cambridge, MA, 1990), ch. 14.

*Milton Friedman and Anna Jacobson Schwartz, "Factors Accounting for Changes in the Stock of Money" in *The Great Contraction, 1929-1933* (Princeton, 1965).

*Peter Temin, *Lessons from the Great Depression* (Cambridge, MA, 1989).

*John A. Garraty, "The New Deal, National Socialism, and the Great Depression," *American Historical Review* 78 (October 1973): 907-944.

Michael A. Bernstein, *The Great Depression, 1929-1939: Delayed Recovery and Economic Change in America* (New York, 1987).

Ellis W. Hawley, *The New Deal and the Problem of Monopoly: A Study in Economic Ambivalence* (Princeton, 1966).

11/20 – The Rise and Fall of Keynesianism [Bao]

*Herbert Stein, *Presidential Economics: The Making of Economic Policy from Roosevelt to Reagan and Beyond* (New York, 1984).

Robert M. Collins, *More: The Politics of Economic Growth in Postwar America* (New York, 2000).

Paul Krugman, *Peddling Prosperity: Economic Sense and Nonsense in an Age of Diminished Expectations* (New York, 1994).

12/4 – Economic Stasis and Deindustrialization [Lloyd]

*Barry Bluestone and Bennett Harrison, *The Deindustrialization of America* (New York, 1982).

*Robert H. Hayes and William J. Abernathy, "Managing Our Way to Economic Decline," *Harvard Business Review* 58 (July-August 1980): 67-77.

*David B. Sicilia, “The Corporation Under Siege: Social Movements, Regulation, Public Relations, and Tort Law,” in Kenneth Lipartito and David B. Sicilia, eds., *Constructing Corporate America: History, Politics, Culture* (New York, 2004), ch. 7.

*Nelson Lichtenstein, “From Corporatism to Collective Bargaining: Organized Labor and the Eclipse of Social Democracy in the Postwar Era,” in *Rise and Fall of the New Deal Order, 1930-1980*, Steve Fraser and Gary Gerstle, eds. (Princeton, 1989).

Michael A. Bernstein and David E. Adler, eds., *Understanding American Economic Decline* (New York, 1994).

Jefferson Cowie and Joseph Heathcott, eds., *Beyond the Ruins: The Meanings of Deindustrialization* (New York, 2006).

12/11 – The “New Economy” and the New Financial World [Bennie]

*Robert Brenner, *The Boom and the Bubble: The U.S. in the World Economy* (New York, 2002).

*Eric Guthey, “New Economy Romanticism, Narratives of Corporate Personhood, and the Antimanagement Impulse,” in Kenneth Lipartito and David B. Sicilia, eds., *Constructing Corporate America: History, Politics, Culture* (New York, 2004), ch. 11.

Thomas Frank, *One Market Under God: Extreme Capitalism, Market Populism, and the End of Economic Democracy* (New York, 2000),

Robert B. Reich, *Supercapitalism: The Transformation of Business, Democracy, and Everyday Life* (New York, 2007).