Enterprise & Society's ToC
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Articles


New issues in academic journals

Business History (Vol. 63(3) 2021)

Australian Economic History Review (Vol. 61(1) 2021)

The Economic History Review (Vol. 74(1) 2021)

Interviews, Podcasts, and Virtual Events

H-Business editor Ashton Merk interviews Marc Levinson about his book Outside the Box: How Globalization Changed from Moving Stuff to Spreading Ideas.

The Asociación de Historia Económica Española has a new podcast and video interview series. The last interviews released discuss the book The political economy of the hospital in history (University of Huddersfield, 2020) by Martin Gorsky, Margarita Vilar-Rodríguez y Jerònia Pons-Pons (eds.), and an interview with Paloma Fernández Pérez on her research on the pharmaceutical industry and the history of hospital management.

On the latest Hagley Hangouts, Interview of Louisa Iarocci about her research project “Bin, Bag, Box: The Architecture of Convenience,” and Zachary Mann about his dissertation project “The Punch Card Imagination: Authorship & Early Computing History.”
Winner of the Hagley Book Prize (co-recipient)

Marcia Chatelain's book, *Franchise: The Golden Arches in Black America*, is a landmark for business historians interested in learning how to bring race into their stories. It is an account that will be widely read because of its graceful prose and incorporation of individual stories into the narrative. Its attention to structure and economics is woven through the lives of men and women who sought to improve their lives, and those of their communities, by pursuing careers within the McDonald's operation – and by protesting the company's many slights to African Americans. At one level it is an account of a large firm seeking to expand its market by adapting its sales practices to the communities in which it sought to expand by including members of that community in its operations. But that narrative is just the start – Chatelain asks, what did this mean for the political economy of the African American communities in which McDonald's operated? How did success of African Americans within McDonalds entrench inequality – and indeed, ensure the reproduction of racial equality within the alleged success of black capitalism. In her book, racial capitalism is not an account of the past – it is the way capitalism operates in our contemporary world to warp and constrain even what may seem to be progress for African Americans. For all these reasons, it is awarded the Hagley Prize for 2021 (Citation by prize committee delivered at the #BHC2021online conference).

To check Dr. Marcia Chatelain's media appearances click here and on H-Business editor Dr. Ashton Merk's podcast.

Winner of the Hagley Book Prize (co-recipient)

In *Unravelled Dreams: Silk and the Atlantic World, 1500-1840*, Ben Marsh spins an epic tale in which imperial conquest meets entrepreneurial failure. Skillfully weaving together the threads of business history, the history of technology, and environmental history set upon the loom of the Atlantic World, Marsh examines the forgotten story of the European obsession with producing this luxury commodity both to replace Asian supplies for home consumption of the ruling elite, and as a profitable imperial export in its own right. Through detailed analysis of individual mulberry trees and cocoons from Spanish Latin America to French and British North America, as well as the skilled indigenous workers, enslaved Africans, and European women who nurtured the silkworms into producing the finest threads, Marsh reveals the stubborn hubris of Europeans who refused to abandon their silken dreams despite repeated technological and environmental setbacks. More importantly, he demonstrates that the fabric of the Atlantic World historical narrative—full of the successes and tragedies of silver, tobacco, cotton, coffee, and sugar—is incomplete without weaving in the precious silken threads of this important failed endeavor (Citation by prize committee delivered at the #BHC2021online conference).
Finalists of the #BHC2021online Hagley Book Prize
(for more information about each book click on the cover)


Zachary Dorner, Merchants of Medicine: The Commerce and Coercion of Health in Britain’s Long Eighteenth Century (Chicago: 2020). For an interview with the author [here](#).


Brandon K. Winford, John Hervey Wheeler, Black Banking, and the Economic Struggle for Civil Rights (Kentucky: 2019). For an interview with the author [here](#).


Paige Glotzer, How the Suburbs were Segregated: Developers and the Business of Exclusionary Housing, 1890–1960 (Columbia: 2020). For an interview with the author [here](#).


Winner of the Ralph Gomory Prize

_Porcelain: A History from the Heart of Europe_ (Princeton 2020): This book is a beautifully written and richly illustrated account of the history of an important industry at the center of Europe, from the 18th century and to the present day. Focused on Germany but attentive to the broader global context, Marchand’s history of porcelain skillfully traces its long-run transformation from a luxury good imported from the East, to the product of state-supported manufactories focused on luxurious objects for the nobility and the rich, to a dynamic private industry serving the bourgeois middle class of Europe, to, finally, an industry in crisis, suffering from a severe reduction in appeal to consumers and hence falling production and sales. The book illuminates many topics of interest to historians of business, including the connections between mercantilist states and capitalism, the strategies for survival adopted by specialized small and medium enterprises in highly competitive industries, the effect of changing technologies on the conditions of labor, and the ways in which businesses shape (and are shaped by) consumer tastes and changes in the structure of society. Despite the broad sweep of time she covers, Marchand is deeply attentive to the historical texture of each period. The book is meticulous in its analysis of the industry’s changing competitive structure, technology, design and marketing strategies, labor relations, finances, consumption patterns and markets, and last but not least, of the changing ideas of beauty formed by an industry that often was, and still is, art. The book combines original archival research with a skilful synthesis of a large secondary literature. The author has assembled a large number of wonderful images from European museums and archives, which richly illustrate the book’s complex narrative about the German porcelain industry and its important place in the broader cultural and economic history of Europe (Citation by prize committee delivered at the #BHC2021online conference).
MEET THE OFFICERS
A series of interviews with the officers of the Business History Conference

For this issue of Meet the Officers I interviewed University of Georgia School of Law Associate Professor Laura Phillips Sawyer. She teaches Antitrust Law at the law school; international political economy at the UGA Terry College of Business; and US financial crises at the Honors College. Her research and writing focuses on the development of American antitrust law and policy across the twentieth century. Laura's background is interdisciplinary with expertise and teaching experience in history, law, political theory, and management--she adds that “Before joining the UGA faculty, I was on faculty at Harvard Business School in the Business, Government, and International Economy unit. I taught MBAs in the first year, required curriculum. Prior to Harvard, I held a postdoctoral fellowship at Brown University's Political Theory Project, where I worked with political theorists and political philosophers.”

As a Trustee, Laura played an important role in revising the BHC by-laws. She recalls that “Anne Fleming really led the effort along with Jennifer Black” and that “Neil Rollings, Ed Balleisen, and Roger Horowitz shepherded the efforts to have newly approved governance documents. One of the big changes in the bylaws was the role and job description of BHC Secretary-Treasurer. The new bylaws needed to “divide [the] responsibilities into two separate roles and then make recommendations on term lengths and such.” Laura and others helped revise the bylaws to make “adaptations to electronic communications.” Also, the pandemic played a major role in trustees’ activities. The Board connected through numerous conference calls and zoom meetings trying to reconfigure conference logistics, registration fees, and technological possibilities.” Laura thinks that the BHC has “implemented a strategy [to] maintain our focus on inclusivity, continue to highlight excellent scholarship, and, of course, bring people together.” Laura also serves on the BHC finance committee, and in the past as served on the emerging scholars committee (2010-2013), and on the 2018 program committee.

Laura has been very proud to serve the BHC in recent years. “Over the past few years, the trustees
[interview continued]

have tackled a wide range of issues and, as a group, we’ve openly and honestly debated some tough calls and ultimately, come to unanimous decisions. I’m proud of how we all came together on two issues: how to pivot during the pandemic and how to honor Anne Fleming after her sudden death. The pandemic threw everyone a curve ball, but the strength of the leadership (especially Ed, Roger, and Neil) and the dedication of the trustees and committee members kept the 2021 BHC meeting not only a possibility but really something unique and exciting. I know all the trustees, and countless other people as well, have grieved after Anne’s passing. She was a trustee, too, and everyone loved working with her. She had this unparalleled kindness and generosity about her, coupled with a lawyer’s perspicacious eye, that everyone will miss. I’m really proud of the award that was created in her honor. It brings together the BHC and the American Society for Legal History (ASLH) and created an award for best paper on the relation of law and business/economy in either Enterprise & Society or Law & History Review (on a rotating basis). When the time comes, I hope everyone will make a donation in her memory to keep this award alive for years to come.”

Since she first attended the BHC in 2009 (Milan), Laura has noted the ongoing “openness to change” of the organization. —As she notes, “The senior leadership in this organization has demonstrated a clear commitment to inclusiveness, which has required broadening the meaning of business history to include a variety of perspectives, methodologies, and critiques. Without abandoning a commitment to rigorous scholarship, I think the BHC leadership has been not only inviting to emerging scholars but also receptive to new approaches to business history. If you’re studying capitalism—in any of its variations across time and space—then this is the place to be.”

One of the main goals of the #BHC2021online was to provide a space for emerging scholars to share their research amidst the difficult and uncertain circumstances of the pandemic. When I asked Laura about one thing she wished she’d known when she was just starting out she replied, “I wish I had been more proactive in meeting senior scholars, asking about their work, and presenting my own arguments and ideas.” Laura urges graduate students to take advantage of networking. She says, “It can be awkward, but it has the potential to really improve your scholarship and provide support and friendship in a sometimes-
Isolating profession.” Laura added an important piece of advice to young or emerging scholars—“to study economics in some form or fashion. A grounding in economics enables a more robust critique of economic institutions and actors, but it’s also helpful on the job market. It is the lingua franca of our times, and emerging scholars in business history have to be more flexible than ever, it seems. Having a versatile teaching portfolio can be helpful. I’ve moved around quite a bit through my career, which I think reflects the growing interest in the history of capitalism, economic regulation, and market competition. (And the dictates of balancing family and career!).”

“What’s in store for the BHC in the next decade?” I asked Laura. She mentioned that “In response to the pandemic, we have all developed new technological and communicative skills. I think we’re going to see these new skills employed in exciting, and perhaps unanticipated, ways. I can imagine conferences that allow for virtual participation as well as panels or videos on business history that reach thousands through the web. The BHC membership possesses a tremendous reservoir of historical knowledge and I hope we, as an organization, find new ways to share that with broader audiences. The demand is there.”

Next in these series

Benjamin Waterhouse, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and 2019-2022 Trustee of the BHC.

Reach out to the editor
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