

Announcements

The Editorial Advisory Board of the *Business History Review* and the Newcomen Society of the United States announce the winner of the 2001–2003 NEWCOMEN-HARVARD BOOK AWARD in BUSINESS HISTORY.

Robert F. Freeland, *The Struggle for Control of the Modern Corporation: Organizational Change at General Motors, 1924–1970* (Cambridge, 2001)

The Newcomen-Harvard Book Award is given once every three years to the best work in the field of business history published in the United States, as determined by the Editorial Advisory Board of the *Business History Review*. Winners receive a cash prize of \$4,000 and a scroll from the Newcomen Society of the United States.

The following are comments from a few members of our Editorial Advisory Board on Freeland's book.

My review of candidates for the Newcomen-Harvard award led me to favor Robert Freeland's *The Struggle for Control of the Modern Corporation*. This monograph offers a compelling and convincing reinterpretation of the history of General Motors, not least because its author was able to find the sources and the conceptual tools to get behind and carefully critique Alfred Sloan's broadly accepted representation of GM's course. Freeland offers an alternative and, to me, a more plausible view of Sloan as a broker between interests, rather than as an overarching theorist and practitioner of Executive Committee governance who generated rationally achieved decentralization. *Struggle* also shows the decisive effect of organizational politics on decision-making at GM and demonstrates how this pattern was linked to division managers' greater knowledge of production, marketing, and

costs relative to those in executive offices. The result was that the leadership's drive to convert situated knowledge into tradable, manageable information failed to encompass the diverse contingencies of production, styling, and marketing. Freeland, in my opinion, has reimagined Sloan (despite the eminent GM chief's efforts to craft his own image) as an effective leader who recognized complexity and unpredictability in the real world of "the job," but who disguised such contingencies as he publicly offered a persuasive, yet reductionist, account of rationality as management's core identity. Emphasizing the distinction between management as prescription and management as practice is a durably valuable contribution to our discipline, a contribution that makes Robert Freeland's *Struggle for Control* essential reading for contemporary managers and business historians, and, I suspect, for their successors.

Philip Scranton
Rutgers University, Camden

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Of the many excellent books published in business history in the past three years, none has made a bigger contribution—or a bigger splash—than Robert Freeland's *The Struggle for the Control of the Modern Corporation*. At a time when many business historians are focusing on relations between business firms and the wider environment, Freeland's book demonstrates that there is still much to learn by examining the internal workings of modern corporations, even well-studied ones like General Motors. In particular, Freeland's meticulous reconstruction of the executive and boardroom politics at General Motors from the 1920s to the 1960s dispels the notion that the adoption of the multidivisional model of organization in itself guaranteed GM's success. The reality was quite the opposite. The company's success from the 1920s to the 1950s depended on ignoring many of the management principles associated with the M-form for the sake of organizational harmony. When the leading shareholders eventually succeeded in imposing strict adherence

to the precepts of M-form management after 1958, the outcome was organizational discord, which contributed greatly, in Freeland's estimation, to the company's decline.

By combining extensive archival research with judicious application of insights from organizational sociology, Freeland has not only contributed to solving the riddle of the decline of General Motors' in the late twentieth century, but he has also helped to revive the study of corporate politics and to revitalize the "internalist" approach to business history.

Michael Smith
University of South Carolina

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Robert F. Freeland boldly and successfully challenges two icons of business history: the M-Form and the story of General Motors as told by Alfred D. Chandler and Oliver Williamson. Freeland demonstrates that strategy and structure at GM did not follow a smooth path. Rather, they resulted from internal struggles and negotiations among a variety of social actors. He has mastered the most recent developments in organizational theory. For business historians, the most important aspect of Freeland's work is his handling of the primary sources held by the Hagley Museum and Library. In doing so, he has made a great contribution to our understanding history *wie es eigentlich gewesen* (as it really occurred), which is the essence of scholarship in our field.

Franco Amatori
Università Bocconi

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I first became interested in Robert Freeland's work when I heard him give a presentation at the Business History Conference in the mid-1990s. His writing displays the same qualities that were so apparent in his lecture: a taste for scholarly controversy, a strong central theory (about the

political dimension of social order), focus on a major issue (in this case, decision-making in business), and, finally, careful archival research. In this original take on GM, a firm that is the source of more references than just about any other topic in business history studies, he has managed to prevent the field from falling into the traps of orthodoxy and undue reliance on conventional wisdom. The book not only offers first-hand evidence of furious conflicts between GM's top managers, whose views on what strategies to pursue differed from those outlined by its owners, but also describes how officers at the top resorted to the use of long-range planning and other management tools in order to gain managers' cooperation with corporate policies. European business historians had earlier pointed out the existence of disharmony in the American mecca of efficiency, but few were ready to believe them. Freeland's argument that the M-form may actually "undermine cooperation, and thus foster organizational decline" is a blow to the theories of efficiency that dominate our field. As a European, I believe that this argument has considerable relevance to current issues of globalization.

I had other, less obvious, reasons for liking the book. First, *The Struggle for Control* represents economic sociology at its best, presenting a reminder of the considerable influence that Talcott Parsons at one time exerted on Alfred Chandler. Although engaging in dialogue with sociologists is not as fashionable today as it was then, I consider conversations between scholars in these two fields to be vital to the future of business history. Freeland makes the point, for example, that one should not overlook "the social and non-rational bases of corporate governance." Moreover, sociology has been changing, particularly economic sociology, which is beginning to provide a substantial body of fruitful analyses.

Secondly, Freeland's book inspired me to reconsider Chandler's narratives and theories with new eyes. It is a mark of Chandler's greatness that his work (to which I, for one, am so deeply indebted) can attract reconsideration of such high quality.

Patrick Fridenson
École des Hautes Études

The ALFRED D. CHANDLER JR. INTERNATIONAL VISITING SCHOLARS in BUSINESS HISTORY PROGRAM. Harvard Business School is pleased to announce a new fellowship opportunity. The Alfred D. Chandler Jr. International Visiting Scholar in Business History Program invites established scholars in business history based outside the United States to spend a period of time in residence at Harvard Business School. The primary activities of Alfred D. Chandler Jr. International Visiting Scholars will be to interact with faculty and researchers, present work at research seminars, and conduct business history research. The program will encourage researchers to relate historical reality to underlying economic theories of business. Stipends associated with the program will be funded through the generosity of Alfred D. Chandler Jr., the Isidor Straus Professor of Business History, Emeritus, at Harvard Business School. Each year, \$14,000 will be available to support two visiting scholars (at \$7,000 each). Alfred D. Chandler Jr. International Visiting Scholars will get office space, an e-mail account, phone, computer, ID card, and access to the University's libraries, the HBS Intranet, and the fitness center in Shad Hall. The program requires a two-month minimum length of stay. Scholars may stay up to a maximum of six months. It is expected that the Scholars will be in residence at the School for the duration of their appointment and that they will be actively engaged in the intellectual life of the business history group.

To inquire about the 2006 applications, which are due on September 1, 2005, please contact:

Geoffrey Jones
Rock Center 113
Harvard Business School
Soldiers Field
Boston, MA 02163, USA
E-mail: gjones@hbs.edu

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HARVARD-NEWCOMEN POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP. Harvard Business School and the Newcomen Society of the United States support a postdoctoral fellowship in business history for twelve months of residence and research at Harvard Business School. Fellowships normally run for the academic year, July 1 to June 30; the stipend is currently \$46,000.

The purpose of the award is to enable scholars who have received a

Ph.D. in history, economics, or a related discipline within the past ten years to improve their professional acquaintance with business and economic history, to increase their skills as they relate to this field, and to engage in research that will benefit from the resources of Harvard Business School and the Boston-area scholarly community. The successful applicant will participate in the school's business history courses, seminars, and case development activities.

The annual application deadline is October 1 of the year preceding the fellowship. For additional information, write to:

Walter A. Friedman
Rock Center 104
Harvard Business School
Boston, MA 02163, USA
E-mail: wfriedman@hbs.edu

For further information and an application, visit our Web site at:
<http://www.hbs.edu/businesshistory/fellowships.html>

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The ALFRED D. CHANDLER JR. TRAVEL FELLOWSHIPS. The purpose of this fellowship is to facilitate library and archival research in business or institutional economic history, broadly defined. The program will encourage research concerned to relate historical reality to underlying economic theories of business. Individual grants range from \$1,000 to \$3,000; the total fund is \$15,000.

Three categories of applicants will be eligible for grants:

- Harvard University graduate students in history, economics, business administration, or a related discipline, such as sociology, government, or law, whose research requires travel to distant archives or repositories
- Graduate students or nontenured faculty in those fields from other universities, in the United States and abroad, whose research requires travel to the Boston-Cambridge area (to study, for example, in the collections of the Baker, Widener, McKay, Langdell, Kress, or Houghton libraries)
- Harvard College undergraduates writing senior theses in these fields, whose research requires travel away from Cambridge

The deadline for receipt of applications is November 1 of the calendar year preceding that in which the fellowship is to be used. For additional information, write to:

Walter A. Friedman
Rock Center 104
Harvard Business School
Boston, MA 02163, USA
E-mail wfriedman@hbs.edu
For further information and an application, visit our Web site at:
<http://www.hbs.edu/businesshistory/fellowships.html>

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BUSINESS HISTORY CONFERENCE. The 2006 annual meeting of the Business History Conference (BHC) will take place June 8–10 in Toronto, Canada, at the Munk Centre for International Studies of the University of Toronto.

The theme for the conference is Political Economy of Enterprise. Business, the political system, and government have influenced one another from time immemorial. This year's program theme invites us to reflect on those interactions. (In keeping with longstanding BHC policy, the committee will also entertain submissions not directly related to the conference theme.)

Potential presenters may submit proposals either for individual papers or for entire panels. Proposals also are invited for the Herman E. Krooss Prize for the best dissertation in business history. The Krooss Prize Committee welcomes submissions from recent Ph.D.s (2003–6) in history, economics, business administration, history of science and technology, law, and related fields. The BHC also awards the K. Austin Kerr Prize for the best first paper by a Ph.D. candidate or recent Ph.D. (2003–6). If you wish to participate in this competition, please indicate this in your proposal. Proposals accepted for the Krooss Prize panel are not eligible for the Kerr Prize.

The deadline for receipt of all proposals is October 15, 2005. For more information, please contact:

Dr. Roger Horowitz, Secretary-Treasurer
Business History Conference
P.O. Box 3630
Wilmington, DE 19807, USA
Phone: 302-658-2400
Fax: 302-655-3188
E-mail: rh@udel.edu

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The JAMES J. HILL LIBRARY will award a number of grants of up to \$2,000 to support research in the James J. Hill, Louis W. Hill, and Reed/Hyde papers. The James J. Hill Papers (1856–1916) are an extensive and rich source for studies of transportation, politics, finance, Native American relations, art collecting, philanthropy, urbanization, immigration, and economic development in the Upper Midwest, Pacific Northwest, and Western Canada. The Louis W. Hill Papers (1886–1948) document similar subjects, as well as Hill's involvement in the development of Minnesota's iron-mining industry and the development of Glacier National Park and the related tourist industry. Additionally, they detail social and cultural activities from the Gilded Age through World War II. The Reed/Hyde Papers (1853–1960) document the business activities, family, and social lives of four generations, beginning with Samuel Reed, a civil engineer who was best known for his work during construction of the Union Pacific Railroad in the 1860s.

The deadline for applications is November 1, 2005. For more information, contact:

Thomas White, Curator
James J. Hill Library
80 West Fourth Street
St. Paul, MN 55102, USA
Tel: 651-265-5441
E-mail: twhite@jjhill.org
Web site: www.jjhill.org/History/manuscript_program.html

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EUROPEAN SOCIAL SCIENCE HISTORY CONFERENCE. Call for papers, Sixth European Social Science History Conference, Amsterdam, The Netherlands, March 22–25, 2006.

The Sixth European Social Science History Conference is organized by the International Institute of Social History. The ESSHC brings together scholars interested in explaining historical phenomena using the methods of the social sciences. The conference is characterized by a lively exchange in many small groups, rather than by formal plenary sessions.

The Conference welcomes papers and sessions on any topic and any historical period. Further information and the electronic pre-registration form for the Conference can be obtained from the Conference Internet site at <http://www.iisg.nl/esshc> or from the conference secretariat:

European Social Science History Conference 2006
c/o International Institute of Social History
Cruquiusweg 31
1019 AT Amsterdam
The Netherlands
Telephone: +31.20.66 858 66
Fax: +31.20.66 541 81
E-mail: esshc@iisg.nl

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CENTRE for ECONOMIC POLICY RESEARCH. Workshop on “War and the Macroeconomy,” June 29–30, 2005, Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona, Catalunya. Organized by Alan M. Taylor and Hans-Joachim Voth.

With support from the Centre de Recerca en Economia Internacional (CREI) at UPF, Barcelona, and the CEPR’s Economic History Initiative, this workshop brings together economists, economic historians and political scientists who are examining the economic consequences of warfare. It will provide a forum for discussion of recent research about war’s impact on macroeconomic performance. Some of the possible topics include:

- How do wars affect economic growth?
- Do wars distort patterns of international trade?
- What is their impact on financial markets and monetary arrangements?
- Did the rise of the warfare state help or hinder institutional development?
- What are the implications of war for fiscal policy and public debt?
- How do terrorism and war affect happiness, as reflected in survey data?
- Do wars stimulate inventive activity?

Travel and accommodation expenses will be covered for all participants according to the new CEPR travel guidelines, but if you could contribute to the costs of your attendance from a research grant at your disposal this would free up space for someone else. Please indicate on your reply form whether you will be able to cover your own travel costs, or whether you will require funding. Please note that it may not be possible to accept all applications for attendance at this conference.

For more information, please contact Hans-Joachim Voth at voth@mit.edu.

ECONOMIC HISTORY ASSOCIATION. 2005 Meeting on “War and Economic Growth: Causes, Costs, and Consequences.” September 16–18, 2005, Toronto, Canada. The program will provide a historical or interdisciplinary perspective on the ways in which warfare has affected economies throughout history in various parts of the world.

The dissertation session, convened by Joe Ferrie (Northwestern) for the Nevins Prize and Anne McCants (MIT) for the Gerschenkron Prize will honor the top six dissertations in economic history completed during the academic year. Graduate students are encouraged to attend. Travel, hotel subsidies, meal discounts, and the possibility of scintillating conversations are all offered as enticements.

For more information on the dissertation prize and on attending, please contact:

Carolyn Tuttle
EHA Meetings Office
Lake Forest College
Box M4
555 North Sheridan Rd
Lake Forest, IL 60045, USA
E-mail: tuttle@ehameeting.com
Fax: 847-735-6193
Phone: 847-735-5137

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HAGLEY-WINTERTHUR FELLOWSHIPS in ARTS and INDUSTRIES. This is a cooperative program of short- to medium-term research fellowships for scholars interested in the historical and cultural relationships between economic life and the arts, including design architecture, crafts, and the fine arts. Fellows receive a stipend, make use of the rich research collections of both Winterthur Museum, Gardens and Library (www.winterthur.org) and the Hagley Museum and Library. These fellowships are intended to support serious scholarly work. They are available to both degree candidates and senior scholars, as well as applicants without advanced degrees. Applications are welcome from scholars and writers working independently as well as college and university teachers, librarians, archivists, museum curators, and scholars from fields other than the humanities. As much as possible, recipients should be prepared to devote their full time to the fellowship for the duration of their appointment. As centers for advanced study in the hu-

manities, Hagley and Winterthur are focal points for a community of scholars. Fellows are expected to participate in seminars, which meet at both institutions, as well as attend noontime colloquia, lectures, and other public programs offered during their research stay. Low-cost accommodations may be available at both institutions. Stipends are for a minimum of one month and a maximum of six months at no more than \$1,400 per month. The deadline for applications is December 1, 2005.

For more information, contact:

Dr. Philip Scranton

Center for the History of Business, Technology, and Society

PO Box 3630

Wilmington, DE 19807-0630, USA

Web site: <http://www.hagley.lib.de.us/grants.html>

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The HENRY BELIN DU PONT DISSERTATION FELLOWSHIP. This fellowship is designed for graduate students who have completed all course work for the doctoral degree and are conducting research on their dissertation. We invite applications from Ph.D. candidates whose research on important historical questions would benefit from use of the Hagley Museum and Library's research collections. Applications should demonstrate superior intellectual quality, present a persuasive methodology for the project, and show that there are significant research materials at Hagley pertinent to the dissertation. This is a residential fellowship with a term of four months. The fellowship provides \$6,000, free housing on Hagley's grounds, use of a computer, mail and internet access, and an office. Recipients are expected to have no other obligations during the term of the fellowship, to maintain continuous residence at Hagley for its duration, and to participate in events organized by Hagley's Center of the History of Business, Technology, and Society. At the end of residency the recipient will make a presentation at Hagley based on research conducted during the fellowship. Hagley will also receive a copy of the dissertation, as well as any publications aided by the fellowship.

Potential applicants are strongly encouraged to consult with Hagley staff prior to submitting their dossier. The deadline for submission is November 15, 2005.

For more information, contact:

Dr. Roger Horowitz
Center for the History of Business, Technology, and Society
PO Box 3630
Wilmington, DE 19807-0630, USA
E-mail: rhorowitz@hagley.org
Web site: <http://www.hagley.lib.de.us/grants.html>

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The GILDER LEHRMAN INSTITUTE of AMERICAN HISTORY. The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History invites applications for short-term fellowships in two categories: research fellowships for post-doctoral scholars at every faculty rank, and dissertation fellowships for doctoral candidates who have completed exams and begun dissertation reading and writing. The Gilder Lehrman Fellowships support work in one of five archives: the Gilder Lehrman Collection, on deposit at the New-York Historical Society; the Library of the New-York Historical Society; the Columbia University Rare Book and Manuscript Library; the New York Public Library Humanities and Social Sciences Library; and the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture (NYPL).

Fellowships range in duration from a week to two months. Fellowships are not available for scholars who live within commuting distance of New York City. Stipends range from \$1,500 to \$4,000. The deadline for submission is December 2, 2005.

Application materials should be sent to:

Gilder Lehrman Fellowship Program
The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History
19 West 44th Street, Suite 500
New York, NY 10036, USA
Tel: 646-366-9666
Fax: 646-366-9669
Web site: <http://www.gilderlehrman.org/historians/fellowship1.html>