



The Rise of Big Business, 1860-1920 (The American History Series)

By Glenn Porter

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The fundamental and explosive changes in the U.S. economy and its business system from 1860 to 1920 continue to fascinate and engage historians, economists, and sociologists. While many disagreements persist about the motivations of the actors, most scholars roughly agree on the central shifts in technologies and markets that called forth big business. Recent scholarship, however, has revealed important new insights into the changing cultural values and sensibilities of Americans who lived during the time, on women in business, on the ties between the emerging corporations and other American institutions, on the nature of competition among giant firms, and on the dawn of modern advertising and consumerism.

This vast accumulation of notable new work on the social concept and consequences of economic change in that era has prompted Glenn Porter to recast numerous portions of *The Rise of Big Business*, one of Harlan Davidson's most successful titles ever, in this, the third edition. Those familiar with this classic text will appreciate the expanded coverage of topics beyond the fray of regulation and the political dimensions of the emergence of concentrated enterprise, namely the influence of the rise of big business on social history.

An entirely new bank of photographs and illustrations rounds out the latest edition of our enduringly popular title, one perfect for supplementary reading in a variety of courses including the U.S. history survey, the history of American business, and specialized courses in social history and the Gilded Age.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Glenn Porter is the Director Emeritus of the Hagley Museum and Library, an internationally renowned research library in business history and one of the leading American industrial museums. He is the author of numerous articles, chapters, and reviews, and the books he has written, co-authored, or edited include: *Merchants and Manufacturers: Studies in the Changing Structures of Nineteenth-Century Marketing* (1971); *Enterprise and Economic Development: Essays in Canadian Business and Economic History* (1973); *Regional Economic History: The Mid-Atlantic Area since 1700* (1976); *The Encyclopedia of American Economic History* (3 vols., 1980); *The Workers' World at Hagley* (1981); *The Papers of John D. Rockefeller, Sr.* (1991); and *Raymond Loewy: Designs for a Consumer Culture* (2002). While on the faculty of the Harvard Business School, he served as editor of the *Business History Review*, and he was also the general editor for two book series, at JAI press and at the John Hopkins University Press.

Dr. Porter served on the editorial board of the *Journal American History*, as President and Trustee of the Business History Conference, as Trustee of the Andalusia Foundation and of the WORLDESIGN Foundation, on the Department of the Interior's advisory committee on National Historic Landmarks, on the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's History Advisory Committee, and as President of the Independent Research Libraries Association. At Hagley, he headed the Regional Economic History Research Center before becoming Director of the Hagley Museum and Library in 1984. He retired from that post in 2002 and now enjoys life in New Mexico.

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"As for the general public, most Americans now clearly consider the existence of big business a normal and natural part of their lives, like the certainty of taxes and the four seasons. Many citizens, of course, continue to be deeply concerned about abuses of power by large corporations, the uncertain environmental effects of unbridled growth, and the dangers posed by the often intimate connections between business and government. Nevertheless, it is clear that the American political process has accepted the fact of the existence of big business, that large-scale enterprises are hardly likely to be destroyed or fundamentally altered via political action, though their behavior will continue to be constrained and influenced by political and social criticisms. This acceptance was not always so clear."

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