

At this time of year, *JMH* has the pleasure of announcing the best paper and reviewer awards from 2015. This award process is overseen by the publisher, Emerald, and is conducted as part of Emerald's *Awards for Excellence – 2016* programme. In determining *JMH*'s "best paper", the editorial team (Andrew Cardow, Adela McMurray, Wim van Lent, Katja Rost, James Wilson and myself) came down to three papers: "Activist manager: The enduring contribution of Henry S. Dennison to management and organization studies" (by Kyle Bruce), "C. Bertrand Thompson and management consulting in Europe, 1917-1934", (by Daniel Wren, Regina Greenwood, Julia Teachen and Arthur Bediean) and "Forgotten contributions to scientific management: work and ideas of Karol Adamiecki" (by Bart Debicki). Each of these three papers discussed surprisingly similar themes (the influence of a management theorist in the inter-war period) and built on significant original archival research. All papers were also good reads. Choosing between them was, therefore, a difficult task. Nevertheless, in the end, it was agreed that the Bruce paper, "Activist manager", should be deemed *JMH*'s "best paper award winner" for 2016 due to the depth of his research. Congratulations, therefore, to Kyle Bruce and also to the authors of the other two papers who will receive formal recommendation from Emerald as the "Highly Commended" papers of 2016. *JMH* and Emerald would also like to take the opportunity to thank all the reviewers who worked tirelessly behind the scenes, and without whose efforts this journal would not be possible. From this distinguished, if silent, army, we selected two reviewers as the recipients of the Emerald/*JMH* "Best Reviewer Award" of 2016, these being Anthony Gould (University of Laval, Quebec) and Gabrielle Durepos (Mount Saint Vincent University, Nova Scotia). Each of these reviewers distinguished themselves both by the promptness of their reviews and their deep and thoughtful advice. Thanks and congratulations to both.

Turning to the current edition, this issue brings to readers five papers, each of which is empirically grounded and conceptually reflective. In the lead article, Thomas Marx re-examines both the formative period of the US automobile industry and Alfred Chandler's famed precept that in business "structure follows [or should follow] strategy". Drawing on his lengthy career as a General Motors executive, Marx shows a commanding grasp of the operational dynamics within General Motors, Ford and Chrysler before Second World War. While popular perceptions emphasize ideas about uniformity and "mass production" within the pre-1939 industry, Marx's analysis highlights not only diversity of strategy *and* structure but also considerable organisational and strategic disharmony. While most consider that under Alfred Sloan's enlightened leadership General Motors gained an organisational advantage over its great rival, Ford, Marx demonstrates that Sloan's strategy of building up two semi-autonomous producers, namely, BOC (Buick, Oldsmobile Cadillac) and CPC (Chevrolet, Pontiac. GM of Canada) – where the former competed with "luxury" brands and the latter competed on price – produced "chaos and turmoil". In terms of their production and organisational methods, there was marked difference between the "Big Three", with Chrysler relying on outsourcing to a much higher degree than either Ford or General Motors. In short, while there was an alignment of structure and strategy over time in each of the "Big Three", nowhere were these same and nowhere did the structures and strategies adopted reveal a picture of unmistakeable success.

In the second article in this edition, James Wilson's study of the Portsmouth Naval Mill's manufacturing methods in the opening years of the nineteenth century calls into question many of our pre-conceptions about the nature of industrial change in general and of the Industrial Revolution in particular. At first glance, the Portsmouth Mill appears to epitomise the great entrepreneurial strides made by British manufacturers during the Industrial Revolution. Changed processes and practices, including steam-powered mechanisation, were introduced by Marc Isambard Brunel, one of the giants of Britain's Industrial Revolution. Following Brunel's changes, productivity soared. But as Wilson's thorough study of the Portsmouth's archives reveals, outward success hid profound problems. The success of Brunel's methods depended on the continuation of high levels of production. But high production would have also benefited the previous production system through greater economies of scale. The high cost of Brunel's changes, including the financial competition he (understandably) demanded for himself, made the whole exercise one of questionable financial benefit to the Navy. Relations between the Navy and Brunel varied between bad and poisonous. In the end, Wilson observes, "the war fleet stayed just large enough, just long enough for the Block Mills to breakeven, and repay Brunel's compensation". It was, however, like Britain's ultimate victory in the Napoleonic wars, a close run thing. Overall, what strikes the reader in Wilson's study is the enormous body of empirical research that is demonstrated and the use of statistical methods to make sense of this. In both regards, Wilson is a perfect model for any budding management historian. Serious outcomes in this discipline require serious work. In this article, such serious work highlights Wilson's standing as one of the world's leading management historians.

The third article in this edition, by Di Kelly, continues what has been a long-running intellectual thread in the pages of *JMH*, namely, a re-consideration of the ideas and influence of Frederick Taylor and the Taylor Society. Kelly does this through an examination of the career of Walter Polakov, a radical Russian immigrant to the USA who was widely considered to be a Marxist by his colleagues within the Taylor society (and outside). In undertaking her study of Polakov, Kelly adds to the substantial "revisionist" that has emerged in recent decades and whose prominent members include Chris Nyland, Kyle Bruce and Hindy Schachter with the last two named authors having articles on this theme in the last edition of *JMH*. Kelly's study indicates that Polakov, despite his radical, even Marxist ideas, "was not a stray outlier in the Taylor Society". Personally close to the noted thinker and practitioner, Henry Gnant was a seminal figure in the Taylor Society over the course of several decades, his influence extending into both American and Russian managerial practices. That such an individual was not only accepted but prospered within the Society emphasizes the point that others have previously made: that Taylor and the Taylor Society were far removed from the anti-labour caricatures portrayed in earlier research.

The fourth article in this edition is a co-authored study by two senior academics with well-established track records, Lee Parker and Philip Ritson. Together they explore the career and intellectual influence of one of Britain's most significant management theorists, Lyndall Urwick. As a scholar and practitioner, Urwick famously developed the concept of a managerial "span of control", which held that no supervisor can adequately manage more than six subordinates, a concept that implies that the management of 204 line employees requires two layers of middle-management, a lower level with 36 managers and an upper hierarchy of six

managers. Parker and Ritson trace Urwick's ideas, which proved a powerful support for Taylorism among British managers, to his long and distinguished service in First World War. Entering service in August 1914 as a member of the original British Expeditionary Force, Urwick served continuously until 1919, emerging from the Army as a lieutenant general. Subsequently serving as Director of the International Management Institute in Geneva, Urwick – like many of his generation – was profoundly influenced by his experiences in the trenches. However, while many came away appalled at what they saw, Urwick was deeply impressed by the organisational achievements of British industrial capitalism, which in the end out-produced its European foes. This intellectual legacy, Parker and Ritson argue, was both Urwick's strength and weakness. In the end, they suggest, Urwick's identification with the positive experiences of British war effort proved more a liability than an asset. As Parker and Ritson observe in their conclusion, "his First World War metaphors lacked currency for management both then and today". It is hard, however, not to have sympathy with Urwick and his generation who, 100 years ago, were experiencing horrors in the trenches that few others have experienced across the millennia.

In the final article in this edition, Ron Berger, David Lamond, Yossi Gavish and Ram Herstein explore managerial and structural changes in the international diamond industry. As the quartet identify, for most of the past 100 years, the diamond industry was characterised by a structural dichotomy, in which the supply of unpolished diamonds was dominated by a monopoly producer (De Beers), whereas the initial purchase – and subsequent polishing, classification and resale – rested with a network of family firms. As the authors demonstrate, this family network was dominated by Jews who, for centuries, had been excluded from other European occupations. The great strength of this Jewish network, it is argued, was internal trust and the capacity of families and communities to sanction those who failed to meet high commercial standards. In recent years, however, this long-established structure has unraveled. On the supply side, De Beers lost its *de facto* monopoly position in the face of new rivals from Russia, Canada and Australia. Large quantities of illicit "blood diamonds" also entered the market. Meanwhile, the historic role of Jewish intermediaries in the sale process was diminished as "trust declined in the industry". With new marketing centres such as Mumbai emerged, and the old established players losing their influence, it is argued that the international diamond industry faces a period of unprecedented uncertainty.

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