The Oxford Handbook of American Economic History



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American economic history describes the transition of a handful of struggling settlements on the Atlantic seaboard into the nation with the most successful economy in the world today. As the economy has developed, so have the methods used by economic historians to analyze the process. Interest in economic history has sharply increased in recent years among the public, policy-makers, and in the academy. The current economic turmoil, calling forth comparisons with the Great Depression of the 1930s, is in part responsible for the surge in interest among the public and in policy circles. It has also stimulated greater scholarly research into past financial crises, the multiplier effects of fiscal and monetary policy, the dynamics of the housing market, and international economic cooperation and conflict. Other pressing policy issues--including the impending retirement of the Baby-Boom generation, the ongoing expansion of the healthcare sector, and the environmental challenges imposed by global climate change--have further increased demand for the long-run perspective given by economic history.

Confronting this need, The Oxford Handbook of American Economic History is a two-volume set that affords access to the latest research on the crucial events, themes,

and legacies of America's economic history--from colonial America, to the Civil War,up to present day. More than fifty contributors address topics as wide-ranging as immigration, agriculture, and urbanization. Over its two volumes, this handbook gives readers not only a comprhensive look at where the field of American economic history currently stands but where it is headed in the years to come.

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Paul W. Rhode is Professor and Chair of Economics at the University of Michigan, a research associate at the National Bureau of Economic Research, and former editor of The Journal of Economic History. He is co-author (with Alan Olmstead) of Creating Abundance: Biological Innovation in American Agricultural Development and Arresting Contagion: Science, Policy and Conflict over Animal Disease Control.

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