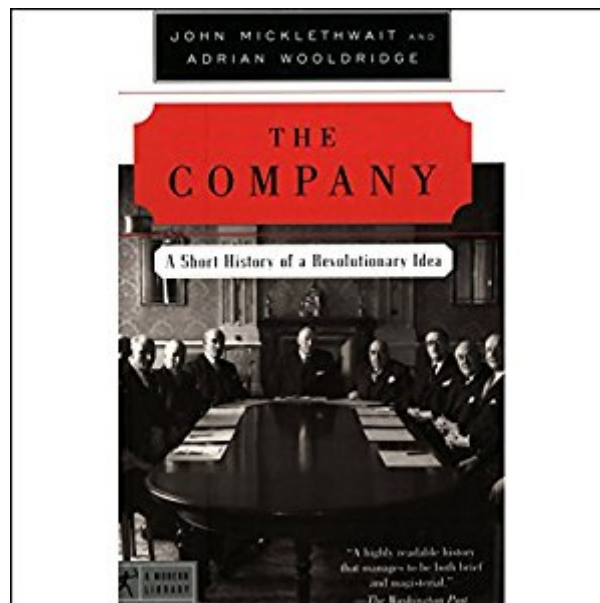




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The Company: A Short History Of A Revolutionary Idea [Modern Library Chronicles]



Synopsis

A unique history of Britain's most influential invention - from the East India Company to Enron. The present day might be called a corporate age but the power of the company is nothing new: From Renaissance Italy to the British East India Company, it is impossible to understand the history of the last few hundred years without placing the humble company at the centre of the picture. What other institution could have produced the slave trade, opium wars, the stock market and the British Empire, the 'company man' and globalization? The history of the company includes some shocking tales, since companies have always rewarded some of the most greedy and unscrupulous - but they have also undoubtedly shaped the modern world. Today companies are increasingly regulated, but will there always be a new South Sea Bubble or another Enron? The authors extend their historical account to look at the company's future, which is, surprisingly, as smaller and more diverse. They explode the myth of a 'silent takeover' by corporations and challenge the assumptions of the anti-globalization movement, but make the ongoing power of the company abundantly clear. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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Customer Reviews

Thanks for the book

The author narrates the history of business in such a pleasant way and all the information is so relevant and intriguing that I've read the book for a third time already, worth it definitely!

I enjoyed this short little history. It's worth a reread. Give a short history of the company and capitalism. I read the book because of the recent Supreme Court decision concerning companies. The book is just what it says it is, a short history. There is some commentary at the end as to where the company might go from here and whether or not it will survive. I would also read Debt, the First 5000yrs.

What a great read! The Company has enough detail in its pages to use it as a reference but it reads like a story.

There are few creatures more vilified in today's world than corporations. For some, companies are the instruments of evil, they exist to profit at the expense of ordinary people, and their chief executives are defamed for their greed and ambition. All the same, most people live off the checks they receive from those evil beasts; and, being the CEO of a large company offers comparable prestige with other esteemed professions. Wrestling with these competing images of corporations is part of what "The Company" aims at. John Micklethwait and Adrian Wooldridge, both of The Economist, embark on an ambitious project to show that the corporation lies at the heart and center of organized societies-more so than the state, the commune, the political party, the church, and others. Having put modesty aside, the authors deliver on their promise with great skill, both literary and scholarly. All pervasive in their narrative is a deep sense of historical perspective-of contrasting the companies of today with those of the past. This need of putting the present in context is extremely valuable in canvassing the role that corporations (and particularly multinationals) play in the world today. Several themes emerge in this historical journey. The first is the evolution of the company itself through a continuous political debate about its role and place in society. A second charts the different attitudes that societies have had towards companies; in particular the authors focus on the United States, Britain, Germany and Japan. At the heart of this book is the dialectic between society and company; the Virginia Company, for example, effectively introduced democracy in America in 1619. This helps explain why Americans have been more receptive to companies than have other countries. This is one of countless examples in the book that chronicle the immense impact that companies have had the world over. "The Company" not only explains the historical arguments that have been front and center of the debate about the role that companies should play, but it also captures the timeless forces that have shaped, and are likely to keep shaping, the debate in the future. Certainly a book no one would like to miss.

I have to write a report on the History of American Business, and chose this book as a guide as to where to do further research. I chose well. This book is amazing. Adrian Wooldridge really should continue writing even more books than he already has. This book gives great insight into the history of business without droning on and on in any one specific area. After reading this book, you are a better person simply because you feel like you just took an introductory course on business history without having to read that much.

Straightforward but highly interesting book about the development of the modern Corporation and its impacts in economical development. Mandatory reading to any corporate lawyer

An excellent read..useful for academics and lawyers interested in how the company model came about and grew

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