

physical violence were the wives and mothers of striking coal miners. This was of course the progressive era of reform and upper-class Pennsylvania women were not to be left behind. They organized relief efforts for the poor, participated in the settlement house movement, and ran their own organizations. The suffrage movement with all its fractiousness gained strength in Pennsylvania. An uneasy alliance between women of different classes that emerged from the YWCA movement was complicated by issues like socialism. The YWCA did serve as an important place for black-and-white women to work together. The arrival of the Great Depression brought hardship to many, but offered women new opportunities in the garment industry.

The final chapter is titled epilogue but tries to be much more than that. It also begins a hurried and unsatisfying glimpse into the period of World War II. Because this is such an important era for women in industry, sports, and the military, it is disappointing to be offered so little. Better to leave the subject alone entirely than offer such cursory treatment.

The author has an engaging writing style, which readers will enjoy. The text is enlivened with numerous black-and-white pictures from the period. Unfortunately, several did not reproduce well and are of poor quality. The book does include a bibliography as well as notes, although at times statistics are quoted without references. The text jumps around a bit and events occasionally lack solid explanation, but overall the narrative is clear and straightforward. Those interested in Pennsylvania history will enjoy reading about the lives of women from areas they know.

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Kenneth Warren. *Industrial Genius: The Working Life of Charles Michael Schwab*. (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2007. Pp. xiv, 285, illustrations, notes, index. Cloth, \$35.00.)

Charles Michael Schwab's legacy is indelibly inscribed into the fabric of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. Despite the demise of the steel empire he created, the city still wrestles with filling the void left behind by what was the second largest steel producer in the United States. Providing jobs and tax revenues, the city depended on Schwab's creation and when it was no longer around to

provide support, the city found itself floundering and directionless. So, who was Charles Schwab?

Kenneth Warren's biography of Charles Schwab focuses on the business life rather than Schwab's personal life. That may be because this story has been told before. A prefatory note to the work alludes to Robert Hessen's *Steel Titan: The Life of Charles M. Schwab*, which is a fuller telling of Schwab's life. However, new material became available since Hessen's work. Warren bases his story on this new material and a foundation of financial and production statistics supported by correspondence among three main principals: Andrew Carnegie, Henry Clay Frick, and Schwab.

Beginning with his first job at the Edgar Thompson plant in Braddock in 1882, Mr. Schwab never lacked ambition and ability, although he mainly relied on hard work. Others may have been more gifted intellectually but it appeared no one could out work him. Later in life he advised young men to "... give all his time, all his energies to work—just plain hard work." He further added "Don't be afraid to imperiling your health by giving a few extra hours to the company ..." (185). From this biography it is not difficult to suppose this was Schwab's philosophy when he entered the industry in the early 1880s. For the next 50 years his managerial abilities and gift for hard work melded particularly well with the events as they unfolded.

This belief in hard work may explain his success and attitude towards unions and the working man—in a way he didn't expect any less of them than he did of himself. As the superintendent of the Homestead plant of the Carnegie steel empire, Schwab, along with Henry Clay Frick, was instrumental in breaking the union during the Homestead strike of the 1892. The union movement throughout the United States was set back for decades by that defeat. Schwab's tenure at Homestead was successful and Andrew Carnegie took notice appointing him to the Presidency of the Carnegie Steel Company in 1897. Success followed success and by 1901 he reached what most would have considered the culmination of his career when he was appointed the first President of The United States Steel Company. However, he failed to successfully negotiate an internal power struggle and resigned from U.S. Steel to lead Bethlehem Steel.

With Schwab at the head, Bethlehem became the second largest steel producer in the country. Schwab took advantage of the opportunities provided by World War I, and his company realized profits like never before. During the war Schwab also lead the Emergency Fleet Corporation. Under his leadership

the Corporation provided supply and troop transport ships for the war effort. After the war Schwab slowly distanced himself from direct involvement in the company. Bethlehem Steel nevertheless continued to be a major player in the industry. Under Eugene Grace, Schwab's protégée, the company continued what Charles Schwab started.

Whatever Schwab offered his peers throughout the years of his life, hard work, hard work, and more hard work was the perhaps the most enduring. With regard to work, Schwab treated himself like the common laborer: as he worked them to exhaustion, so too he worked himself. He was, however, compensated better. Even in his later years he never pretended to be something other than a hard working executive. Unlike Carnegie with his philanthropy or Frick and his art, all Schwab did was work. Still, for most of his career, Schwab's belief in hard work and his devotion to the industry blinded him to the conditions of the working man. But eventually even Schwab had second thoughts about the common laborer. In 1931 at the funeral of his brother-in-law, he remarked that "I am very much ashamed of the way we treated our labor . . . our working men were treated as machines" (229). But by then it was too late for remorse, as the damage to labor had already been done and Schwab was no longer in a position to make a difference, if he even wanted to help.

While I enjoyed this biography, it presents Schwab in isolation from any analysis of his character. Who was Charles Schwab the person? I don't know that the general public would appreciate the sterile nature of Warren's work. Warren never allows the reader to get close to Schwab: page after page he tells us what he did at work but seldom tells us why. While Schwab's single-minded determination and capacity for hard work were apparent, we never get to what was driving him. What kind of person drives himself relentlessly, and why? Was it for the recognition or the money? To the extent that a narrative can discern Schwab's character this biography comes up short; I can only conclude that it wasn't meant to explore his character.

Having grown up in the shadow of Bethlehem Steel, Charles Schwab's creation cast an influential shadow over my life. The omnipresence of the "steel" governed our thoughts and lives directly and indirectly. We measured our lives by when we would join the workforce. It appeared to us that the plant had always been there and would always be there. Today what is left of Schwab's creation is a desolate landscape used as the backdrop for futuristic Hollywood movies. Actors traverse the grounds where the drama of Schwab's life played itself out along that of countless thousands of laborers. Now

the actors mindlessly mouth their memorized lines oblivious to the history underneath their feet—and, that too is part of the legacy of Charles Michael Schwab.

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Kenneth Warren. *Big Steel: The First Century of the United States Steel Corporation, 1901–2001*. (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2008. Pp. xviii, 424, illustrations, maps, bibliography, appendix, notes, index. Paper, \$27.95.)

Americans in the early twenty-first century have learned the hard way that size and assets in the corporate world do not necessarily mean success or even survival. A century ago this was by no means clear. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the era of pools, trusts, monopoly, and the emergence of the modern corporation, it was reasonable (and sometimes correct) to assume that “bigness” invariably conferred tremendous advantages. Such was the world into which U.S. Steel was born in 1901, at its inception the largest industrial corporation in the world. Marveled at as a model of modern industry and corporate structure, for many Americans U.S. Steel long *was* the American steel industry, as solid as its signature product. For others, it was the model of a corporation large enough to dominate its markets, operate by its own rules, and determine the fates of communities throughout the industrial heartland.

As Kenneth Warren’s corporate history ably demonstrates, U.S. Steel’s reality was always more complicated than its public image. Warren appropriately recognizes the many economies of scale that gave the new corporation a strong start in life. He also, however, explores the many diseconomies attendant to its massive size and the circumstances of its creation, showing convincingly that the corporation was from the beginning hamstrung in important ways by its size, structure, operating assumptions, and history. To some degree, these problems continued to dog the corporation through its most successful decades and even factored, along with more recent developments, into its crises in the 1970s and 1980s.

In exploring the history of U.S. Steel, Warren focuses on a few key areas, primary among them top-level executive decision making, corporate policy,