AMERICAN RAILROADS: DECLINE AND RENAISSANCE IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Once an icon of American industry, railroads fell into a long decline beginning around the turn of the twentieth century. Overburdened with regulation and often displaced by barge traffic on government-maintained waterways, trucking on interstate highways, and jet aviation, railroads measured their misfortune in lost market share, abandoned track, bankruptcies, and unemployment. Today, however, rail transportation is reviving, rescued by new sources of traffic and advanced technology, as well as less onerous bureaucracy.

Robert Gallamore will discuss his recently released book, “American Railroads: Decline and Renaissance in the Twentieth Century” written with distinguished economist John R. Meyer (1927-2009). The book is a comprehensive history and analysis of the American Railroad industry throughout the last century. It covers the initial years of regulation by the Interstate Commerce Commission, antitrust prosecution of the James J. Hill and E. H. Harriman empires, Federal control of railroads during World War I, and the efforts to consolidate railroads into fewer and larger systems in the 1920s. The book also follows the rise in rail traffic during World War II, the deteriorating conditions in the 1970s and the sweeping changes brought on by deregulation and the Staggers Act.

Bio: Robert E. Gallamore, Ph.D, is a nationally recognized expert on railway and intermodal economics, technology, and safety. He has spent more than 40 years in policy and leadership positions in government, industry, academia, consulting, and the non-profit sector. From 2001 until retirement in 2006, Gallamore was Director of The Transportation Center and a professor in the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University. Since retiring from Northwestern, he has expanded his consulting practice, The Gallamore Group, and was co-developer of and co-instructor in a course for railroad executives at Michigan State University. Prior to joining Northwestern University in 2001, Gallamore represented Union Pacific Railroad at the Transportation Technology Center, Inc. (TTCI) in Pueblo, Colorado where he was AVP Communications Technologies and General Manager of the North American Joint Positive Train Control Program. Before this industry assignment, Gallamore was General Director, Strategic Analysis for the Union Pacific Railroad in Omaha and an executive with UP Corporation in New York City. Gallamore has also served in several positions with the federal government. He was Deputy Federal Railroad Administrator under President Jimmy Carter and earlier, was Associate Administrator for Planning of the Urban Mass Transportation Administration (now Federal Transit Administration) and System Plan Coordinator with the United States Railway Association (USRA), which established Conrail out of the facilities of the bankrupt Northeast railroads.

Dr. Gallamore received his A.B. from Wesleyan University and an M.A. in Public Administration and a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University.