

**Call for Papers for the 2023
Family Business Review (FBR) Special Issue on
History-informed Family Business Research**

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Special Issue Theme

History is pervasive in family business settings, where values, beliefs, narratives, and artefacts of the founding family are handed down from generation to generation (Colli, 2003). The history of a family and its business therefore pervades family business goals, practices, and outcomes, creating a close link between the history of family businesses, their present traditions, and future aspirations (De Massis et al., 2016; Jaskiewicz et al., 2015; Zellweger et al., 2012).

Because of the prominence of history in family businesses, these firms have often been stigmatized as a form of business organization that is steadfast to its history and traditions, path dependent, conservative, resistant to changes and unable to adapt to dynamic and constantly evolving markets (Chandler, 1977; Morck & Yeung, 2003; Poza et al., 1997). Yet, family businesses remain dominant in any economy (La Porta et al., 1999), many of them are highly innovative (De Massis et al., 2018), resilient to crises, and equipped with the stamina to pursue entrepreneurial projects over generations (Jaskiewicz et al., 2016; Sinha, Jaskiewicz, Gibb, & Combs, 2020). The latter is consistent with emerging research suggesting that the history and traditions of families and their businesses do not have to be a rigid burden but, in some cases, can be a holy grail for enduring innovation and change (Erdogan et al., 2020; Jaskiewicz, Combs, & Ketchen, 2016; Suddaby & Jaskiewicz, 2020).

While researchers thus recognize the paradoxical nature of the family business as an organization that can be burdened or empowered by history, theory on how history

actually ties into family business' tradition, change, and aspiration remains scarce (De Massis, Frattini, Kotlar, Messeni Petruzzelli, & Wright, 2016; Erdogan et al., 2020; Sinha et al., 2020; Suddaby, Coraiola, Harvey, & Foster, 2020; Suddaby & Jaskiewicz, 2020). One reason for this unsatisfactory status quo is the weak connection between history and family business scholarship that has limited current understanding of what family business scholars can learn from the wealth of history and historical research, and how they can integrate related learnings in the study of family business (e.g., Colli, 2003; Colli & Fernandez Perez, 2020).

Considering the rapidly growing interest in studying the link between history and family businesses, we believe that it is warranted and timely to build a strong foundation for a *history-informed approach* to the study of family businesses, by which we refer to family business research that draws on historical research methods and/or leverages history as a key component (or variable) of theory or empirical analysis (Argyres et al., 2020; Sasaki et al., 2020; Sinha et al., 2020; Suddaby & Foster, 2017; Suddaby et al., 2020).

This Special Issue therefore calls for new, interdisciplinary research on family firms that extends our understanding of how and why history and historical research methods can enrich theoretical explanations of family business behavior and of temporal phenomena happening in family business settings. We call for both “history in theory” and “history to theory” studies. We call for original studies that propose novel and more fine-grained theoretical understanding of the role and use of history in family business processes as well as a reconceptualization of history and the use of history in family business research. At the same time, we encourage scholars to develop and apply historical research methods that allow them to use historical data and records to build and test their theoretical models about family business behaviors and outcomes. By doing so, this Special Issue favors the development and application of new perspectives and innovative methodological approaches for addressing critical questions in family business that favor a better integration of the academic fields of history and family business.

Manuscripts may address, but are not limited to, the following topics:

- How can family business phenomena be better theorized when the historical context where they take place, and the complex temporal dimensions through which they occur, are explicitly taken into account?
- How do family businesses and their actors use history to give meaning to the present, inform their expectations about the future, and make business and family decisions?
- What is the role of rhetorical history in shaping family business behavior, its determinants and outcomes? (Suddaby, Foster, & Trank, 2010). What is the relationship between narrative, story-telling, and history in the strategy processes of a family business?

- How can traditions be (re-)conceptualized in family business settings to better account for their ambivalent roles for family business' goals, behavior, and outcomes?
- How can history-informed research be used to manage the tradition and innovation paradox or other typical paradoxes characterizing family business behavior?
- How can family firms leverage their history, and/or resources pertaining to different points in their past, to make their way toward the future through acts directed to innovation (e.g., "innovation through traditions") and/or entrepreneurship (e.g., "entrepreneurial legacy"), or other vital organizational processes?
- How can change and innovation be used in a family business setting to perpetuate history and traditions (e.g., "tradition through innovation")?
- What are the distinctive organizational routines and capabilities that enable family firms to combine and reconfigure their history over time and build a bundle of valuable historical resources?
- What are the distinctive organizational routines and capabilities that enable family firms to adopt retrospective and prospective approaches to using their resources to concurrently perpetuate tradition and achieve innovation (e.g., "temporal symbiosis")?
- How do the past and the historical context inform how family-centered and business-centered goals are set in the family business context?
- How do the past and the historical context inform how new business opportunities are identified, evaluated and exploited? What's the role played by history for transgenerational entrepreneurship in the family enterprise?
- How can the assumptions behind transgenerational or path dependence-based predictions about family business behavior (e.g., decline in entrepreneurial attitude across generations) be understood when the historical context is considered?
- How did specific and non-recurrent events or actions in the history of the family and/or its business lead to particular firm behaviors, and to the development of organizational capabilities (or lack thereof)?
- What are the advantages of employing a historically embedded approach to improve current understanding of how family businesses learn, innovate, and make strategic decisions over time? How can such approaches be adapted and extended by family business scholars?
- How do family business phenomena and practices evolve over time, and how are they shaped by the interactions between family firms, families, and their histories?
- What are the unpredictable, nonrecurrent events either in the family or in the business system that change the course of history and the evolution of a family business organization?
- How do different actors, groups, or family business organizations perceive time when it is conceived as a complex, socially constructed concept?

- How do individuals and groups within family businesses conceive time in practice, and allocate their attention differently to the past, present, and future?
- How do different temporal foci and/or orientations of different actors within the family business, and /or their perception of the past, influence the behavior and performance of the family firm? How do such orientations change in the presence of specific situational factors, such as intra-family succession or business exit?
- How can an “historical cognizance” perspective (Kipping & Üsdiken, 2014) that incorporates period effects and historical contingencies into the theorizing process be useful to predict family firm behavior and its effect on family and business outcomes?
- How can historical research methods and historical data be useful to family business research for understanding the context of contemporary phenomena, identifying sources of exogenous variations, developing and testing informed causal inferences and theories, and supporting analyses of temporal phenomena occurring across generations?

Submission Process

Manuscripts must be submitted through the *Family Business Review* web site indicating “Special Issue History” as the manuscript type. The special issue guest editors will review the received manuscripts for publication consideration in this special issue of *FBR*. Editors reserve the right to desk reject complete papers if they are deemed underdeveloped for this issue.

Timeline for 2022 Special Issue on History

May 28/29, 2021	Paper Development Workshop at FERC Conference
July 1, 2021	Manuscripts due. Please submit manuscripts via the FBR online submission portal at http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/fbr (please be sure to select “Special Issue History” as the submission type).
Sept. 1, 2021	1 st round feedback on reviews provided to authors
Feb 1, 2022	Invited revisions due
April 1, 2022	2 nd round feedback on reviews provided to authors
Sept 1, 2022	2nd round invited revisions due
Nov 1, 2022	3 rd round feedback on reviews provided to authors
Jan 1, 2023	All papers & editor’s introduction finalized; contents transferred to Sage
March 2023	<i>FBR</i> Special Issue “History-informed Family Business Research” published

Paper Development Workshop

We encourage authors to attend the Paper Development Workshop (PDW) for this Special Issue before submitting their manuscripts. The PDW will be offered during the *Family Enterprise Research Conference (FERC)* at the University of Florida Atlantic University, Delray Beach, Florida on May 28-29, 2021. More information about FERC in 2021 can be found here: <https://business.fau.edu/ferc-2020/>. We will add more detailed information on the PDW to the webpage at the beginning of 2021.

About FBR

Launched in 1988, Family Business Review is an interdisciplinary scholarly forum publishing conceptual, theoretical, and empirical research that aims to advance the understanding of family business around the world. *FBR* has a 2-year impact factor of 6.188, ranking it 13th out of 147 journals in the category business.

Conclusion

We look forward to receiving your manuscripts and working hard with you to make this issue a success for our field. For questions, please contact any member of the Special Issue co-editors.

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