

# *In Memoriam*

## William C. Frederick

A colleague, role model, mentor, and friend of many, the loss of William Crittenden Frederick on March 16, 2018, at the age of 92, was a significant and momentous occasion. Bill's last official title was professor emeritus at the University of Pittsburgh, but he honorably carried many other major titles throughout his long career—professor, dean, major professor, division chair, president, and many others. In his personal life he was a loving husband, uncle, brother-in-law, neighbor, and friend.

After service in the US Army, Bill earned his BA and PhD in economics and anthropology at the University of Texas-Austin. He taught at Tampa University, the University of Florida, and the University of Kansas City, where he was also dean of the business school, and other institutions as well, finally settling at the University of Pittsburgh's Katz Graduate School of Business as associate dean, dean, and (having gotten administration out of his system) professor of business administration. Like many in our field, Bill transitioned from his first academic disciplines to newly emerging ones, providing an admirable example of lifelong learning. In his best years, he began to focus on corporate social responsibility, business ethics and values, and evolutionary interpretations of business behavior.

In the 1960s Bill began studying and writing about corporate social responsibility (CSR) and must be considered one of the founders of this academic discipline. In the 1970s he became well known for his successive developmental stages and conceptualizations of CSR<sub>1</sub>—corporate social *responsibility*; CSR<sub>2</sub>—corporate social *responsiveness*; and CSR<sub>3</sub>—corporate social *rectitude*. In the late 1990s, he suggested that we should move on to CSR<sub>4</sub>, which he proposed to be *consciousness*, and he theorized a new CSR acronym reflecting a broader and deeper concern for cosmos, science, and religion. Bill wondered whether CSR<sub>4</sub> was a “bridge too far” (Frederick 1998, 54)—a goal that stretched beyond the reach or interest of CSR scholars. He argued that it will depend on the intellectual and philosophical flexibility of the CSR inquiry, and only the future will tell.

Bill's books had an incalculable impact on the field as well. He coauthored five editions (1980-1996) of the textbook *Business and Society* begun by Keith Davis and Robert Blomstrom in 1966, and one of the earliest books on social auditing (Blake, Frederick, and Meyers 1976), written with David Blake and Mildred Myers, his wife and an accomplished scholar. More recently, Bill was committed to the concept of natural corporate management as reflected in his book *Natural Corporate Management: From the Big Bang to Wall Street* (Frederick 2012). In it he observed that business and nature are intertwined and that managers need to understand this linkage if they are to work effectively. He held that natural corporate management is an expression, a manifestation, and a consequence of a very long evolutionary process.

My favorite book of his is the popular, *Corporation, Be Good!* (Frederick 2006), which he proposed was “the story of corporate social responsibility.” He dedicated this book to fifteen of his doctoral students, many of whom are major names in the field today. Even into his nineties, Bill maintained a web site where he catalogued his own publications and published inspiring book reviews on topics of interest.<sup>1</sup> Demonstrating how energetic he remained, he authored the introductory chapter for a new volume in the Business and Society 360 series focused on corporate social responsibility (Frederick 2018).

Professional service often is an add-on in many business school professor’s lives. We academics know that research and publications are the coin of the realm, but Bill’s building and maintaining of essential professional organizations stand out as a major achievement in his life. Bill was one of the early founders and organizers of the Social Issues in Management (SIM) Division of the Academy of Management (AOM). I first met Bill in 1972 at one of the earliest meetings of the SIM Division. It was my first meeting as a professor and to my edification I watched him emerge as a significant leader in establishing the patterns, policies, and practices of this newly formed division. To my good fortune, I had the honor of following Bill’s leadership as he assumed and professionalized the roles of program chair and then division chair in 1975-1976. Bill remained enthusiastically active in SIM, presenting and discussing papers, mentoring doctoral students and colleagues, and serving as a role model many years beyond his retirement.

One of SIM’s and Bill’s early achievements during the mid-1970s was to play a role in helping our accrediting organization, the AACSB, consider how social issues and business ethics were to fit into their accrediting standards for business schools. Over a period of years, Bill actively led SIM’s charge to the AACSB to establish formal expectations for the teaching of social issues and ethics. SIM never got all it wanted with the AACSB, but with Bill’s tenacious guidance some constructive and firm standards eventually were established. These standards persist to this day as colleges and universities offer stand-alone courses and integrate social issues and business ethics into their curricula.

Another of Bill’s major, developmental contributions to our field came in the early 1980s when he became the primary bridge builder between SIM and the newly formed Society for Business Ethics (SBE) and its journal *Business Ethics Quarterly* (BEQ, launched in 1991). Bill encouraged many of us in SIM to join SBE, begin presenting papers at SBE, publishing in BEQ, and assuming officer roles in SBE. Bill was the first SIM chair to become president of SBE, and many others would follow over the decades. Bill was instrumental in encouraging SBE to permanently meet just prior to the AOM meeting, and many of the SBE members, who were predominantly philosophers in the beginning, began joining SIM. To this day, this mutual involvement and exchange has grown into one of the most outstanding, synergistic, academic partnerships in business school education history.

Bill’s teaching, research, and service merged into an impressive pattern of professional excellence. He was so accomplished in each of these integrated spheres that it is impossible to say which dominated his life. He moved with ease between and among them. Bill’s teaching was highlighted by his serving as major professor

and continuing mentor for many young academics who became quite well-known and accomplished in their own right in the fields of business and society and business ethics. As a consummate scholar, Bill continuously authored books, articles, chapters, and entries in dictionaries and encyclopedias, well into official retirement.

Doubtless much more could be said and remembered about Bill, but to most of us reading this journal, Bill will be thought of as an eminent scholar, leader, organizer, teacher, mentor, and friend to so many in the business and society and business ethics fields. He and his manifold contributions will be sorely missed. Whether you are a long-time participant in our fields or a budding academician, you will always be studying and quoting Bill Frederick's many and rich contributions—articles, books, book reviews, and other publications. Bill's diverse professional legacies will endure as long as researchers are pursuing these topics.

Archie B. Carroll, University of Georgia

#### NOTE

1. Mildred Myers tells me the website is active and will be kept active for those who wish to explore his research and writings: <https://www.williamcfrederick.com>.

#### REFERENCES

- Blake, David, William C. Frederick, and Mildred S. Myers. 1976. *Social Auditing: Evaluating the Impact of Corporate Programs*. New York: Praeger.
- Frederick, William C. 1998. "Moving to CSR<sub>4</sub>: What to Pack for the Trip." *Business and Society* 37(1): 40–59.
- . 2006. *Corporation, Be Good! The Story of Corporate Social Responsibility*. Indianapolis, IN: Dog Ear.
- . 2012. *Natural Corporate Management: From the Big Bang to Wall Street*. Sheffield, UK: Greenleaf.
- . 2018. "Corporate Social Responsibility: From Founders to Millennials." In *Corporate Social Responsibility*, edited by James Weber and David M. Wasieleski, 3–38, *Business and Society* 360, vol. 2. Bingley, UK: Emerald.