



24 May 2008

## Dies academicus 2008 at the University of St.Gallen

Honorary Senatorship, Honorary Doctorates

**(HSG) At this year's Dies academicus, the University of St.Gallen conferred an Honorary Senatorship on Michael Hilti, an entrepreneur from the Principality of Liechtenstein, and awarded two Honorary Doctorates of Economics and one Honorary Doctorate of Law to, respectively, Prof. Robert H. Frank from the Johnson School of Management of Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y., Prof. Eric J. Johnson from the Columbia Business School of Columbia University, New York, and to Bo Vesterdorf, Former President of the Court of First Instance of the European Communities (CFI).**

*Lic.oec. Michael Hilti was appointed Honorary Senator. "The University of St.Gallen hereby honors his outstanding services as a model entrepreneur in the region and his promotion of the HSG."*

**Michael Hilti**, a Liechtenstein national, read Business Administration at the HSG and obtained a licentiate's degree in 1972. After his studies, he joined Chase Manhattan Bank. Since 1974, he has held various positions in Hilti Aktiengesellschaft, such as CEO and Delegate of the Board of Directors, Member of the Board of Directors, Chairman of the Board, and Chairman and Trustee of the Martin Hilti Family Trust. In addition, he is a director of Hilcona AG. In his capacity as an entrepreneur, he has put his stamp on the group of companies that is regarded as a world leader in the field of fastening technology. In an international comparison, it is considered to be an exemplary family firm, in which a sense of family represents a significant competitive edge. In 2003, the Hilti group of companies was therefore awarded the reputed Carl Bertelsmann Prize for commendable corporate culture, not least for its personnel management characterized by long-term thinking and dependability.

As one of the most renowned and successful employers in the region, Hilti Aktiengesellschaft is a many-faceted promoter of cultural and university activities, for many years also to the benefit of the HSG. Michael Hilti has been particularly strongly committed to the development of the HSG Institute for Leadership and Human Resource Management. Michael Hilti has been intensively and successfully involved in the continuing development of the University of St.Gallen for years as a member of the Executive Committee, a partner in research, a lecturer in the field of family business, as well as with widely utilized case studies developed at the HSG and in his company.

*The HSG awards an Honorary Doctorate of Economics (Dr. oec. h.c.) to Prof. Robert H. Frank. "The University of St.Gallen hereby honors his outstanding contributions towards the continuing development of economic theory and the application of this theory to urgent problems of our modern societies."*

**Robert H. Frank**, an American national born in 1945, first studied at the Georgia Institute of Technology, where he obtained a B.S. in Mathematics. In 1971, he was awarded an M.A. in Statistics by the University of California at Berkeley, and in the following year obtained a Ph.D. in Economics from the same university. He has been working at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, ever since 1972; first as an Assistant Professor, from 1979 onwards as an Associate Professor, and as Professor of Economics since 1986. Since 2002, he has also been H.J. Louis Professor of Management at the Johnson Graduate School of Management of the same university. From 1978 to 1980, he was Chief Economist on the Civil Aeronautics Board of the United States. From 1992 to 1993, he was a Fellow at the Center

for Advanced Studies in the Behavioral Sciences in Stanford, California, and in the academic year of 2000/01, he was French-American Foundation Professor of American Civilization at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales in Paris. Moreover, he has been a New York Times columnist ever since 2005.

Frank is an outstanding economist, who also has a strong interdisciplinary orientation and participates in public discourse at the same time. Possibly his most important contribution to economic theory is the "theory of positional goods". He pointed out that we do not buy goods for purposes of consumption alone but also in order to differentiate ourselves from others through the possession of such goods, and he was the first to subject the negative social effects resulting from the competition for such goods to a systematic analysis. In another contribution, he investigates the role of conscience in human behavior and thus also its significance in a model of economic behavior, with evolutionary aspects also playing a part. The combination of subject-specific brilliance and interdisciplinary competence is reflected in his wide range of writings. He has been published by the best economic journals.

Frank also has personal ties with the University of St.Gallen. Last year, he participated in a workshop on the topic of "Altruism", which was organized by Prof. Dieter Thomä in cooperation with the St.Gallen Symposium. He presented his theory of positional goods to a lay public in a didactically exemplary fashion.

*With an Honorary Doctorate in Economics (Dr. oec. h.c.), the University of St.Gallen honors Prof. Eric J. Johnson, PhD, for his "trail-blazing work in the field of Behavioral Economics, which has made a substantial contribution towards the understanding of individual decision-making behavior, as well as for his services to the promotion of this discipline."*

**Eric J. Johnson**, an American national born in 1954, studied at Rutgers University and Carnegie-Mellon University, where he obtained a Doctor's Degree in Psychology in 1980. After his time as Assistant Professor of Industrial Administration at this university, he joined the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania as Associate Professor of Marketing in 1987. He received tenure there in 1990, and was appointed Professor of Marketing, Decision Science and Psychology in 1992. Only five years later (1997), he was appointed David W. Hauck Professor of Marketing. Since 1999, he has been Norman Eig Professor of Business at the Columbia Business School of Columbia University New York. He is the Director of the Columbia Center for Excellence in E-Business. He recognized the significance of e-business early on and initiated a wide range of cooperative ventures with partner firms. Above all, he succeeded in developing the online medium as a tool of market research beyond transactions proper.

Prof. Johnson has done intensive work in three areas. The first concerns the interaction between how people process information and their preferences for certain products. Here, Johnson investigated the patterns of how information is received and processed and the resulting derivation of decisions concerning different options. The second area concerns the impact of the presentation of the decision-making situation on decision-making behavior. In numerous studies, Johnson provided evidence of people's proneness to allow the decision-making environment to guide them in their actual decision-making. What is also noteworthy is that in his third field, Johnson also made numerous methodical contributions, particularly in view of the further development of product-choice models. His work on these topics has been widely published in the best economic journals.

At the HSG, Johnson is a member of the Executive Committee of the Center for Business Metrics and a frequent speaker in various executive education programs and in the doctoral program. Through his German-born wife, he has close relations with Europe. He is a member of the Scientific Advisory

Board of the Max Planck Institute for Human Development in Berlin and Visiting Professor at the Max Planck Institutes in Bonn and Jena in the field of "Bounded Rationality"

*The degree of an Honorary Doctor of Law (Dr. iur. h.c.) was awarded to **Bo Vesterdorf**. "The University of St.Gallen hereby honors his crucial contributions to the continuing development of the law of the European Union as a Judge and President at the Court of First Instance of the European Communities, and also his active participation in the academic and political European discourse."*

**Bo Vesterdorf**, a Danish national born in 1945, read law at the University of Copenhagen. From 1974 to 1975, he was a lawyer-linguist at the Court of the European Communities, from 1975 to 1977 an administrator in the Legal Service of the Danish Ministry of Justice, from 1977 to 1979 an examining magistrate in Copenhagen, from 1979 to 1981 a legal attaché at the Permanent Representation of Denmark to the European Communities, and from 1981 to 1983 a lawyer in the Danish Ministry of Justice. In 1983, he was appointed judge at the *Ostre Landsret*, a court of appeal. Also in 1983, he became Head of the Constitutional and Administrative Law Division in the Danish Ministry of Justice. From 1984 to 1988, he was a Director in the Ministry of Justice with responsibility for the budget and personnel of the ministry, the legal police and the courts of law. In 1989, on the proposal of the Kingdom of Denmark, Vesterdorf was appointed judge at the newly established Court of the First Instance of the European Communities (CFI). From 1998 until his retirement in September 2007, he was president of this court.

Vesterdorf is one of the most influential judges in the history of European integration. He created a considerable academic oeuvre, which manifests itself in more than 50 essays, whose wide range of topics, theoretical foundation and practical relevance are impressive. He is very much in demand as a speaker at conferences worldwide which deal with issues of competition and state-aid law, constitutional law, administrative law, and the protection of human rights.

Vesterdorf has maintained friendly relations with the University of St.Gallen for many years. Ever since he assumed the presidency of the CFI, he has regularly been a speaker at the St.Gallen International Competition Law Forum (ICF) and has always contributed to the conference volume.