Cultures of Expertise and the Public Interventions of Economists

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The inaugural winner of the Pulitzer Prize for nonfiction in 1964 was Richard Hofstadter's *Anti-intellectualism in American Life*. In a year mourning the assassination of a vibrant and eloquent president, the book spoke to a shared sense of loss and revolt. However, the popular acclaim it received was not matched by academic applause. The DeWitt Clinton Professor of American History at Columbia University collected only timid approval from his peers, who discounted the work as personal and polemic (Brown 2006, 139–40). Hofstadter would not have been surprised by this judgment, since he understood the difficulty of his task. Anti-intellectualism was a troublesome subject to historicize, brought into view by assembling disjoint bodies: the evangelical priesthood rejecting contemporary culture, democratic politics celebrating innate popular wisdom, a business interest applying a narrow pecuniary metric to value social worth, and the theorists of mass education favoring vocation and pragmatism over the

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life of the mind. Anti-intellectualism had not only corrupted the religion, politics, economy, and education of the 1950s but was also for Hofstadter (1963, 19) a chronic ailment of American culture, with recurring bouts of bashing intellectuals as "pretentious, conceited, effeminate, and snobbish; and very likely immoral, dangerous and subversive." The book has remained in print for half a century, a longevity that testifies to the force of its message succinctly carried by the title.

Through the pens of a multitude of writers, the examination of the status of the intellectual in culture has gained the uses of a trope (Townsley 2006) where alarm is sounded even if there is no agreement on the threat. One can read that "real intellectuals are only found elsewhere, in other countries, in the past, or in the mind; intellectuals aren't speaking out when they should be; once upon a time intellectuals were important; only intellectuals have ever thought intellectuals were important; happy is the land which has no intellectuals; . . . some variant on what one may call 'the 3-D version'—the decline, disappearance or death of the intellectual" (Collini 2002, 207). In this tangle of writings, intellectuals are either too many, too few, or too bad, and they have died many deaths, although remaining vital enough to die again.

The noun *intellectual* is a capacious term.[1] In its vast semantic field one finds definitions that may or may not include the professoriat, writers, artists, bohemians, the avant-garde, and the professional classes. Commentators and analysts typically work around some combative duality, such as clerks against laymen (Julien Benda), traditional against organic intellectuals (Antonio Gramsci), universal against specific intellectuals (Michel Foucault), legislators against interpreters (Zygmunt Bauman), or public intellectuals against academics (Russell Jacoby), to name the most prominent formulas.[2] The distinctions are not merely markers of some historical development; they are charged with moral purpose. They intend to describe the natural kinds of the life of the mind but also to adjudicate on the proper conduct for intellectuals: a commitment to the universal values

1. For a genealogy of the term and its traffic, notably in Britain, see Collini 2006, 45–65. Collini argues that the term is not as foreign to the English language as generally assumed. Most other writers suggest the term originates either as the label for nineteenth-century Russian men of letters (*intelligentsia*) who challenged the autocracy of the czar (Seton-Watson 1960) or as a label for both individual and class that owes its significance to the Dreyfus affair at the turn of the century, when a group of writers campaigned for the exoneration of a French Jewish army officer from fabricated charges of treason (Charle 1990).

2. Some recent binaries seek to describe changes to the identity of intellectuals and their media of communication, such as print-versus-screen intellectuals (Frank 2005) or curtly old-versus-new intellectuals (Davis 2009).

of justice and peace (Benda), to social change (Gramsci), to community (Foucault), to communicating across communities (Bauman), to universality and discourse to the public (Jacoby). To write about intellectuals is in the above sense to elaborate identities and to cast intellectuals as either champions or usurpers of civic life.

Anti-intellectualism was infused with the moralizing vigor so characteristic of its subject. But its sights were trained less on the standing of knowledge in the polity than on the exceptional character of the American polity. At the book's conception lay Hofstadter's disappointment and puzzlement at Adlai Stevenson's failed bid for the presidency and the rise of Joseph McCarthy. Hofstadter could not agree with his friends at the *Partisan Review* who in a 1952 symposium—"Our Country, Our Culture"—proclaimed the end of a struggle between America and its men of letters and the arts. Beyond the West Village, America did not value ideas. To interrogate the place of intellectuals in culture has been to examine national character, inviting (un)complimentary glances across borders. France gets the most admiring attention. The iconic Jean-Paul Sartre competes with the Dreyfusards as exemplars for intellectual engagement for both American and British commentators, and American authors have directed similar admiration for the British gentility of the interwar period (Collini 2006, 221–44).

The essays contained in this volume stay at a safe distance from Manichaean narratives of progress or regress and their national scorekeeping. We do not set out to resolve the conflicting definitions of the public intellectual or to assess the volume and quality of literate culture across borders. Instead we approach the "intellectual" less as a "social type [than as] the capacity to make a public intervention" (Eyal and Buchholz 2010), a capacity many actors may claim and that is constructed in time and place.[3] Our strategy is to privilege action over actor and to contextualize interventions and their range of diversity.

The title of our volume—*The Economist as Public Intellectual*—signifies our desire to study the encounters between economists and their publics. From the vantage point of the history of twentieth-century economics, our selection of cases will appear peculiar for its inclusion of journalists and other nonacademics. As we shall see, many of the participants in popular discourse have lacked doctoral credentials and university offices. The identity of the economist is, not unlike that of the intellectual, also subject to contestation and conflicting definitions across our period of

3. For a review of the sociological canon on intellectuals, see Kurzman and Owens 2002.

study. The full reach of economics is realized by the circulation of its discourse and practices and by their influence on an expanded set of actors that include media and knowledge brokers. From the vantage point of intellectual history, our focus on the economist may appear quaint. The twentieth-century economist has been the epitome of the expert, with access to the corridors of power and relying on a discourse that is inscrutable to the wider public.[4] The economist appears as the negation of the humanist, who is the preferred stand-in for the men and women of ideas. Not all economists fit this representation of gray insider, and some of the exceptions, Irving Fisher, John Maynard Keynes, John Kenneth Galbraith, and Milton Friedman, are subjects of essays in the volume. More importantly, our studies of the public interventions of economists offer an expanded, and we hope provocative, view of intellectual life. Our vantage point enables us to observe how publicity has served different purposes in evolving configurations of academe, business, government, and media in the course of the twentieth century, at times meeting democratic ends, at others epistemic, on occasion ludic.

The unifying claim of our collection is that economists' public interventions have been of profound consequence for both the structure and the content of the public sphere. In the volume we constrain ourselves to a long twentieth century in the United States and the United Kingdom, fenced at one end by the Progressive Era and Fabianism and the ongoing economic crisis at the other.[5] In this introductory essay we rehearse a tentative chronology that connects the volume's essays with the outlying literatures of intellectual history and the sociology of knowledge, while exploring the evolving relationships between economists and their publics.

Social Intelligence

At the turn of the century, the site for the meeting of knowledge and civic action was the city. In the 1880s one looked to Paris, London, Frankfurt,

4. The twentieth-century economist stands in stark contrast with the political economist of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries inhabiting coffeehouses and filling pages of magazines. To examine that difference would add fascinating layers to the story we sketch here, but we could not do justice to it in this volume (see, e.g., Collini 1993).

5. A criticism that can be laid upon our conference and this volume is that they reflect a narrow geographic focus. The narrative(s) one can devise looking at public life in the United States and in Great Britain would surely be enriched by considering developments in other nations. The sociology of economics offers us a glimpse of what there is to gain (Fourcade 2009). We consider the present volume as a starting point, and it is our hope that this effort will stimulate scholarship on this vast topic.

Berlin, New York, Chicago, and Cleveland to find experimentation in social policy and its principal actors: the Fabians, left liberals, and progressives. The best illustration of the period's combination of knowledge, action, and place is the social survey movement in the work of Charles Booth's *The Life and Labour of the People of London* (1889–1903) and in Jane Addams's and Florence Kelley's remarkable careers, as both social workers and social thinkers, that culminated with their *Hull House Maps and Papers* of 1896. While modernity crossed oceans, politics, philanthropy, and publishing shared tight quarters in the urban setting (Rodgers 1998).

London had perhaps the longest exposure to the emerging force of the partnership between social science, reform, and social policy. London had given refuge to the revolutionary thinkers of the 1840s and volunteered printers and pulpits for their ideas. Yet the British were the least likely to recognize transnational debts. American social scientists returning from study in Continental Europe were the most vocal about novel visions for science and society that they freighted with their doctoral degrees. Upon their return, the urban-based world of learning was being dismantled and reconfigured around the college campus. They participated in affirming the secular university as a privileged site for knowledge.

The story of the emergence of American social science has been well researched and told. A. W. Coats, Mary Furner, Thomas Haskell, and Dorothy Ross have collectively shown how in the early decades of social science, controversy ensued when the radical energy of the professors met the conservative priors of legislators, trustees, and university presidents. One available response was to draw on the city to counter academicization. Hence, when protesting social scientists left Columbia University to found the New School for Social Research, they relied on the staff and offices of the magazine the *New Republic* and on New Yorkers as mature students who cared not for a degree but valued intellectual engagement (Bender 1993). In Britain, the Fabians' London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) was conceived in 1895 at a time when Sidney Webb's attention was focused on the reform of public education in London. The school began with virtually no dedicated staff. Classes were in the evenings and conferred no degrees. Like the New School decades later, the LSE drew on city resources, even the "enemy," with funding from the London Chamber of Commerce. Integration into the University of London in 1900 aligned the LSE with emerging academic standards (Dahrendorf 1995).

A different response to the threat of patrons was the creation of professional institutions. The examples most significant for the story of economics are, in the first generation, the various learned societies, and later

the American Association of University Professors, the Brookings Institution, the National Bureau of Economic Research, and the Social Science Research Council. These organizations both competed and collaborated with universities to establish the social science professions as the primary constituencies to deliberate on knowledge disputes. Economists seem to have held a preference for this professional response. Wesley Mitchell, who famously founded the National Bureau of Economic Research (in 1920), was also among the dissidents converging on the New School (in 1919), but he soon abandoned that venture. With the judgment that upon a more conventional platform he could effect change in economics, he returned to Columbia (Bender 1987).

The pre-twentieth-century generation of American social scientists saw themselves providing leadership to the mass citizenry, be it through the Knights of Labor and the People's Party in the United States or the Labour Party in Britain. At Wisconsin, Richard T. Ely, John R. Commons, and Selig Perlman lectured to the labor movement as an integral part of the act of knowledge production and of the necessary development of that movement (Fink 1997). Social science prided itself on providing understanding and blueprints for "social control" that would fortify the polity against the disruptive forces of private interest (Rutherford 2011). Irving Fisher's biography is animated by the moral and civic zeal that moved this generation of scholars. Facing the prospect of his mortality, this inventive academic, with unfailing confidence in his intelligence and intelligibility, launched himself into educating the public and reforming society. Robert W. Dimand (this volume) reviews Fisher's efforts to guide public opinion on subjects, notably public health and international relations, that lay beyond his academic expertise. Neither politics nor economics brings Fisher and the Wisconsin trio together, but their enthusiasm for public education and engagement are strikingly similar.

In the United States, World War I and labor unrest in the 1910s shattered social scientists' and political philosophers' confidence in the efficacy of mass politics. Walter Lippmann was both witness to and theorist of the nascent disappointment with popular deliberation. The youthful Lippmann, true to his teachers William James, George Santayana, and Graham Wallas, held high hopes for democratic engagement in *A Preface to Politics* (1913) and *Drift and Mastery* (1914). As Craufurd Goodwin (this volume) shows, Lippmann's war experience with propaganda and as handler of government advisers led him to favor increasing discretion for experts in such later writings as *Liberty and the News* (1920), *Public*

Opinion (1922), and *The Phantom Public* (1925). John Dewey's response to Lippmann occasioned one of the most important set pieces of political philosophy of the 1920s and the interwar period (Fink 1997). Goodwin shows that Lippmann's stance as commentator on the economy, and as proto-Keynesian, stood between his pre- and postwar proclamations. Lippmann never tired of educating his readers, carrying them to the cloistered conversations of experts and political decision makers, but he also never invited his public to arbitrate in the crucial deliberations. He would take them to the threshold but no farther.

In Britain, the contrast between economists' pre- and postwar expectations of the public was less stark. The professionalization of economics was imbued with the elitism of Oxbridge and the imperial civil service, leaving little room for a populist imagination (Maloney 1985). Chris Godden (this volume) examines how economic writers in the interwar period worried that the public might not comprehend the challenges facing the British economy and would be likely to resist and delay a necessary transition. While part of their campaigning was the defense of free trade, which had the longest and most distinguished of pedigrees, these economists also addressed the managerial class to persuade it to embark on new investments and the necessary adjustment to a new world economy. The most compelling voices of the letters and of broadcasting, and certainly the most remembered, were from those with apartments at Bloomsbury, and prominent among them was the economist John Maynard Keynes.[6] Roger E. Backhouse and Bradley W. Bateman (this volume) reveal an unfamiliar Keynes, more journalist than academic, mindful of the copyright and syndication of his words and attentive to all aspects of the printed medium. Using the *Manchester Guardian* and the *Nation and Athenaeum* to carry his policy prescriptions to a liberal and sympathetic elite, Keynes's goal was not to educate the public. He sought to create, for the benefit of the policy maker and the educated readers, venues beyond the Houses of Parliament and the international summits for reflection and consensus deliberation. Publicity served as a trial of ideas, with urgency and the strain of persuasion clarifying the issues and parsing right from wrong. To

6. Although the answer falls beyond the remit of our studies, it would be interesting to know whether and how the roles played by different media (electronic, both radio and television; print, both newspapers and magazines) may have varied between the UK and the United States and how the roles and influence of different media within each country evolved over the century. One hypothesis worth exploring is whether through the influence of the BBC, radio and television were privileged media for public intellectual expression in the UK.

move public sentiment was thus not the only, nor was it the dominant, purpose achieved by activating public controversy in interwar Britain.

The unraveling of the Progressive Era and social scientists' depressed expectations about public education and engagement were shadowed by the development of social science metrics. Changes to epistemic standards and enthusiasm for mathematics and statistics aligned with new uses for social science in the public sphere. If the mass public could be manipulated and was unlikely to show the capacity for reason and judgment, as wartime propaganda had so clearly demonstrated, perhaps social scientists could mediate the communication between state and citizenry. Sarah Igo (2007) has traced the career of several projects describing the United States, its "Middletown" (Muncie, Indiana), its sexuality, its political opinion, and has shown what filters and slants obtained from applying the social science lenses. It is in this period that polling takes hold of the political imagination and of mass campaigning and marketing (Herbst 2003). Thomas Stapleford's (2009) history of price indexes reveals how economics stood in for the voice of the consumer public and the substance of their grievances. Irving Fisher ran an Index Number Institute from his home with numbers as the necessary complement to his weekly syndicated newspaper column (Dimand, this volume). To the above, one should add the multiple business barometers that spawned from economics faculties and were soon taking over the covers of magazines such as *Business Week* or Keynes's *Manchester Guardian* supplements. As Gil Eyal and Moran Levy (this volume) argue, these attempts at measurement are interventions in the public sphere, with the capacity to frame discourse, agendas, and the cast of authoritative actors. Tools for social and economic observation construct images of the public, their lives, feelings, opinions, and finances, and feed these images into the media space and the deliberations of the state. With greater prominence in the United States and in international organizations, indicators of various kinds have gained in prominence, reinforcing a culture of trust in numbers (Porter 1996).

Popularization

Economists' access to policy making in Britain deepened in the interwar period with a series of institutional innovations. The Economic Advisory Council was created in 1930 with the purpose of installing economists as the prime minister's "eyes and ears on economic questions." Initially economists were asked to compete for the PM's attention alongside busi-

nessmen and trade unionists, but soon the chambers of economic advice were cleared of any "representative" undertones to rely solely on the technocratic ideal and on economists' deliberations (Howson and Winch 1977).[7] Unlike the model of expert consultation then being adopted in the United States, the brief of British advisers included secrecy and exclusivity, and the record of their role is notoriously hard to evaluate. The war did not enhance the influence or public prominence of economists in Britain. Their service was focused on financing and on controlling inflation, and the Treasury itself was diminished by the creation of new ministries and a novel impetus in developing science and technology. War and militarization at midcentury were of profound consequence for the governance of British science and technology (Edgerton 2005), but, unlike the United States, celebrations of the expert were tinged by ambivalence. In addition, associations between social science and natural science were made only hesitantly or not at all.[8] The social sciences featured nowhere in C. P. Snow's famous Rede Lecture of 1959 on the "two cultures." They were neither "the sciences" nor "the humanities" and offered no distinctive political or cultural project for Britain (Ortolano 2009).[9] After Keynes's ubiquity, economists installed as government aides risked seeming invisible and mute.

One man connects all these important developments. Lionel Robbins was at the Economic Advisory Council and at the Economic Division, and in the aftermath of Snow's lecture, he was head of the committee that advised on the reform of higher education. As Susan Howson (this volume) shows, Robbins was a master persuader, and his talents worked best when applied to sway the Treasury and the government. While he would write to the public about the affairs of state, he was just as often addressing the state on behalf of the public in inquiry commissions on the arts and higher education, to name the most significant. Robbins's language was never moral or political: he spoke in the words of the Treasury and of state rationality

7. The successor to the Economic Advisory Council was the 1939 Central Economic Information Service within the Cabinet Office that led to the Economic Section of the War Cabinet, which after the war transitioned to the Treasury. In 1947 the Economic Planning Board was set up, staffed by economists.

8. So much so that the 1930s and 1940s project of enlisting science in the service of socialism, spearheaded by John Desmond Bernal, J. B. S. Haldane, Lancelot Hogben, Hyman Levy, and Joseph Needham, found no echoes in economics or in economic journalism (Werskey 1978).

9. In a "Second Look," Snow did recognize the "human sciences" as a possible third culture, but one subordinate to the primary pair, with the potential to soften the "difficulties of communication" between the two principals.

with sober calculations of cost and benefit or supply-demand analysis. Although Robbins is in many ways exceptional, his public posture was not unique. Like him, Alec Cairncross was a man of government who joined a grasp of the policy arena, its terms and players, with a sober public voice.

Technocracy was lived differently in America. On the eve of the publication of Hofstadter's *Anti-intellectualism*, President John F. Kennedy gave a much-remembered commencement address at Yale University. To the assembled youth the president lamented how his generation "enjoy[ed] the comfort of opinion without the discomfort of thought" and recruited the graduates to the task of "more basic discussion of the sophisticated and technical questions involved in keeping a great economic machinery moving ahead." The postideological polity proclaimed by Kennedy was one that Daniel Bell (1960) and others had tagged a few years earlier and that was in the making well before the Democratic Party's victory at the ballot box.[10] In tandem with their British peers, American economists had penetrated government; with Franklin D. Roosevelt's "brain trust" the professor had been called away from the opinion pages to become a thinking organ of the state (Barber 1996). Ostensibly, which is to say with publicity, economists would convene to imagine the policy alternatives of the state, as in the postwar Council of Economic Advisors or the Joint Economic Committee (Bernstein 2001).

Paul Samuelson had been an unofficial but influential economic adviser to the Kennedy campaign and to the president-elect. In 1961 he too was a president, of the American Economic Association, and at Christmas of that year, he had the privilege of addressing its members. Samuelson's address was a leisurely tour through the canon of economics, grading the originality and legacy of his forebears. He closed with the famous lines: "Not for us is the limelight and the applause. . . . In the long run, the economic scholar works for the only coin worth having—our own applause." The applause Samuelson certainly received on cue. One should be surprised by this statement's deflation of celebrity and civic engagement. Samuelson was regularly tapped for comment by the White House and Congress. He was often on the phone with the specialist press and in a couple of years would join *Newsweek* as a columnist alongside Henry Wallich and Milton Friedman. When the three professors joined *News-*

10. In the Kennedy administration, the personification of efficiency's dominion over political passion was a Berkeley economics graduate and former Ford executive, Secretary of Defense Robert Strange McNamara, who held court over a staff of RAND-trained "whiz kids" (Shapley 1993).

week they replaced Henry Hazlitt. A New York reporter with no formal training in economics, Hazlitt represented the economic journalism that flourished after World War II in business and newsmagazines. As Peter Boettke and Liya Palagashvili (this volume) review, Hazlitt offered a defense of orthodox economics enlivened by philosophical argument, appeal to tradition, and political intuition. Hazlitt was a crucial broker for many members of the profession in the anxious years of the early Cold War, who famously shepherded publication of Friedrich Hayek's *Road to Serfdom* in *Reader's Digest*. By 1960 the assertive technocrat seemed to dispense with such intermediation.

Yet the self-presentation of insulation from the callings of celebrity and public office was an important cultural value for Samuelson and his generation.[11] Science was a key to social mobility for those coming of age circa World War II (Hollinger 1995). The American model of science governance conceived during the war and fortified during the early Cold War conscripted scientists to the service of the state, generously funded by both federal and military agencies and finding through the state their privileged route to civic engagement (Mirowski 2002; Amadae 2003; Robin 2003). Service to the state came to mean the same as service to the public.[12] The preeminent status afforded the expert's opinion gave economists increased discretion in setting the policy agenda and the terms of knowledge brokerage and made them sought-after sources for the news media. As Rob Roy McGregor and Warren Young (this volume) show, Federal Reserve presidents, often economists in background or disposition, associated themselves with academic trends and attempted to make these intelligible and important to their constituencies. The public voices developed in this period in the United States were no longer tuned to move public sentiment but to expose the complexity and sophistication of economic science and to solicit public appreciation for it (Mata 2011). Popularization in the

11. The cultural and bohemian life of New York City has long held a grip on the historiography of the intellectual in the United States. Its popular appeal is enhanced by the fascinating lives of its inhabitants that in uncompromising and surprising ways challenged the mores of conservative society (Wetzsteon 2002). One central theme of the literature surrounding this group is their self-proclaimed status as independent from academe, business, and politics, another kind of insulation. Yet the New York intellectuals were never out of time or society, and they relied on family patronage and the readers of the complex of magazines to where their energies converged, such as the *Nation*, *New Masses*, *New Republic*, *Partisan Review*, *Politics*, and *Commentary*.

12. There were dissenters on the matter of conflating the state with the polity, and no case was more dramatic than that of Robert Oppenheimer (Thorpe 2008).

United States meant to make a case for continued public support for science and for trust in scientists, a discourse that bridged the social and natural sciences divide (Lewenstein 1992).[13]

Intellectual Life as Market

The prestige of economics (and social science more broadly) as a policy science began to unravel in the late 1960s.[14] Social scientists were unable to deliver what they had promised, not least consensus and value neutrality. This became apparent when the civil rights, antiwar, environmental, and feminist movements began asking the difficult questions. A series of scandals implicated social scientists with the choices and blunders of the state, and the privacy of their advice seemed to serve only moral obfuscation, as the scandal over Project Camelot put in the starkest relief (Nisbet 1966; Mata 2010). The immediate response to this crisis was a surge of moral argument and of ideology, which in its full, left-wing force proved ephemeral (Horowitz 2004; Ollman and Vernoff 1982). The longer-term legacy was very nearly the opposite. Among policy and corporate elites developed a metaphor of a market of ideas that deterred discussions of moral responsibility.

In the year of the publication of Hofstadter's jeremiad, George Stigler inaugurated the Occasional Papers series of London's Institute of Economic Affairs, with an essay titled "The Intellectual and the Market Place." Stigler's essay was at odds with the conservative representation of intellectuals. Joseph Schumpeter in *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy* (1940) had explained the revolt of intellectuals against capitalism as an outcome of deflated expectations. Although they were groomed for a position of influence, the reality of the capitalist economy made little room for intellectuals. The argument of disaffection was championed in the writings of Edward Shils and in his interpretation of Karl Mannheim's sociology of class. Shils (1972, 18–21, xii) wrote that although intellectuals were diverse in their traditions—scientism, romantic, apocalyptic, populist, and anti-intellectual—the critics all arose from "the alienated

13. One can identify efforts at popularization in Britain from the late 1960s, and closely associated with the careers of Peter Jay and Samuel Brittain, but their content was more directed to doctrinal disputes, that is, endorsement of monetarism, than the American counterpart of the 1950s and 1960s (Parsons 1989).

14. At the time Britain was expanding the number of economist advisers with the creation of the Department of Economic Affairs and the National Plan.

sector of the intellectual stratum." In other, later versions, the alienation theme led to representing intellectuals as a class with no "instrumental" role for commercial and civic life, and that hence resorted to justifying their claims to power with humanist critiques of capitalism. The historical precedent that spiked the dread of these writings was the Russian experience and contemporary readings of the rise of Bolshevism (Feuer 1975).

For Stigler in 1963, intellectuals were not alienated. They inhabited an ideal polity. Despite the evil looks exchanged between the worlds of business and of intellect, the two were surprisingly the same. He wrote that "both fields pay a fair amount of attention to packaging and advertising, and both fields place an absurdly high value on originality" (Stigler 1963, 5), and more fundamentally, both were voluntary systems. Rehearsing themes that appeared regularly in his scholarly and advocacy work, Stigler asserted the market system as a model polity, where "neither fraud nor coercion is within [its] ethics." It was not in punishing intellectuals for their ungratefulness that Stigler deserves our attention, since that populist vein was not so different from critiques leveled from the 1950s to the present day (Kahan 2010). What was novel was to conceive intellectuals inhabiting a polity where power and coercion were sterilized by the operations of a marketplace of ideas.[15]

It is significant that Stigler's essay was carried by the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA), an institution that revolutionized Britain's public sphere. The institute drew from a stock of local and international scholars and journalists to aggressively court the attention of politicians. Richard Cockett has chronicled how the IEA privileged academic contacts and notably university students to proselytize market solutions to Britain's troubled 1970s economy (Cockett 1994). Margaret Thatcher's victory in the polls and her budgets that rejected the sanction of accredited economists (and led to their sanctioned rejection) repositioned the economist in the polity. In selecting voices of influence, criteria of career or institutional prestige were trumped by ideology, the public relations machine, and the think tank apparatus. What was true of the Conservative Party would become true of Labour when the think tank Demos played a crucial role in developing New Labour doctrine.

From the 1903 Anti-Protectionism letter signed by sixteen economists to the letter signed by 364 economists in 1981 against Geoffrey Howe's budget, economists had joined together to amplify their authority in public.

15. See also the essays contained in Stigler 1982.

The collectivization of economists' public interventions is therefore not new, and it is its opposite that we should find exceptional. Economists in the twentieth century have relied on institutions of their own making, partnerships with journalists and editors, and partnerships with the state to make their voices and their knowledge effective in the polity. Only a few economists appear to owe their prominence single-handedly to talent and perseverance: Keynes, and perhaps Galbraith and Friedman. While Samuelson was eliding his own record as a media personality to construct the image of the economists' economist, Friedman and Galbraith, presidents-to-be of the American Economic Association, were writing successful mass-market paperbacks, and Samuelson's textbook was counting millions of copies sold. In the late 1970s and early 1980s both men tried the medium of television. An examination of their duel reveals that they were not battling alone. Angus Burgin (this volume) shows how the BBC conceived of Galbraith's *Age of Uncertainty* as science popularization, an ambitious, expensive, long-form essay on the history of social knowledge. To the eyes of conservatives and neoliberals, who promptly filled pages of reviews of the program, Galbraith's *Age* was propaganda. Friedman's *Free to Choose* was to counter Galbraith's elitism with lower production values but mass distribution. Significantly, *Free to Choose* in its message and visual language atomized social experience, placing personal testimony and direct observation on par with social scientific claims to knowledge (Rodgers 2011).

In the last third of the twentieth century, the values of "humanistic" or "scientific" culture were in many quarters replaced by material and market consciousness.[16] Expertise was unbound from occupational judgment and calls for representing social or public interests articulated through the state, to be sold skill-based and tool-based in the marketplace (Brint 1994). Changes to economists' values and self-images can be paired with a changing demography of the profession. Although in the twentieth century the number of yearly economics majors in the United States rose only modestly, and steadily, doctoral degrees nearly quadrupled between 1960 and 1970 and have remained at a high plateau.

16. Samuelson's "coin" was the symbolic acclaim of scientific equals; although Stigler was on the threshold of something else, he could endorse a similar disciplinary worldview. When Stigler asked himself the question "Do economists matter?" and set out on a canonical tour of his own, he found that economists had never steered history and so should not try. Their calling was to labor in disciplinary obscurity (Stigler 1976) and to expect their work to "inevitably and irresistibly enter into the subject of public policy" (Stigler 1965). Like Samuelson, Stigler did not follow his own advice.

So while the place of social scientists within the state was under challenge in the 1970s, their numbers were multiplying, fortifying an industry of economic consultancy (Fourcade 2009).

On matters of public import, economists are hired by the state and by private interests, and all sides in dispute, to participate in communicative practices in which economists might have limited discretion, as public relations experts orchestrate campaigns and their materials. It would be too extreme to say that the neoliberal moment has erased autonomy from the voices of economists; rather, its most striking feature is the increasing value attached to publicity and celebrity, as economists compete among themselves for contracts and attention. An example of a career poised between celebrity and the state is offered by Lawrence Summers. Early on a star faculty member at Harvard, tenured at a young age, Summers dedicated most of his career to advising government and the financial industry, a profile furthered by a string of appointments at the White House, a catastrophic tenure as president of Harvard, regular lecture tours, and a column at the *Financial Times*. Summers has courted controversy, and it has only enhanced his profile as an expert. The embrace of controversy is also apparent in the case of Gary Becker and Richard Posner (Fleury and Marciano, this volume): two accomplished scholars with resources to effect change on higher education, law practice, and academic research devoted themselves to writing a blog to an unidentified public. Although neither Becker nor Posner is dour in his scholarship, the riskiness and experimentalism exhibited in the blogging show them courting novelty and scandal. This late-century genre of economic discourse is predicated on capturing attention, more hits on websites, more copies of books and magazines sold, and it is epitomized by *Freakonomics*, the blog, the book, the movie, the consultancy company. Posner's *Public Intellectuals: A Study of Decline* (2003) can be read as a reflective exercise whereby one public intellectual visits the secondary literature to project his generation's conception of the polity and intellectual life as idealized markets. Not shying away from the usual tropes, Posner castigates the present state of culture for the low quality of opinion and punditry, but he does not seek the reference of enlightenment or humanistic values to edify his ideal polity. Instead, he breaks down the problem into supply and demand components to diagnose an absence of quality controls and to call for a better market of ideas.

The politics of attention shapes the kinds of questions asked in the public sphere, the questions one might ask about the economic crisis that began in 2007. Philip Mirowski and Edward Nik-Khah (this volume) offer a demonstration of how the echo chambers of networked think tanks can

shut down discussion, divert, and distract. They review how public ignorance about the causes of the crisis is constructed, with alternative accounts of government failure crowding out any examination of the rule of markets. Like Posner's review of intellectual life, the proposed solution by these contemporary actors is more and better markets. Mirowski and Nik-Khah reveal economists' new identity: in a polity conceived as a market, they are market designers.

Our introduction offers one itinerary of the insights contained in this volume. There is more in the pages that follow than we could do justice to in this space. The essays draw from the biographies of actors to ask how they perceived their location in culture, politics, and knowledge. The essays examine the individual talents and energies and the institutional resources deployed to achieve public influence. They interrogate the consequences of public engagement for the careers of actors. Our partial exercise was to sketch a chronology that begins a discussion of what might be the deeper factors animating changes to economists' public interventions. We have paid special attention to how cultures of expertise inflect the modes of public intervention. The two world wars and the crisis of authority of the 1960s emerge as watershed moments in revising standards of trust in experts and optimism over popular deliberation. We have drawn on a robust body of literature that traces the institutional inroads of economists into the state. We have also drawn on a growing literature on the role of para-academic institutions that amplify the voices of economists and distribute the economic logic across culture. In contrast, we still do not know enough about the history of economic media. Print, broadcast, and digital media all make an appearance in our volume, but we were unable to analyze in depth the role of economists and economics in their evolution. Similarly, although we know much about the history of professional organizations, learned societies, advisory functions in government, and think tanks, we still do not know enough about the role of economists in corporate circles and the public relations industry. Our assessment is that the historiography has reached a stage of maturity that beckons these new and exciting challenges.

All the essays in this volume testify, with some selection bias, that economists then and now have been occupants of the public sphere. But as we hope to show, the search for publicity is never unconditional. To understand economists' encounters with the public, we must appreciate the expectations they bring to the meeting and the institutional contexts that enable the encounters and that constitute the public sphere. We must admit

that Paul Krugman's blog posts for the *New York Times* today are nothing like Keynes's *How to Pay for the War* of 1940, and that luncheon seminars at the Brookings Institution in the 1950s bear no reasonable resemblance to the BBC series *Masters of Money* of 2012. Yet histories that connect the public utterances and interventions of economists are possible. They are fundamental to unlock a deeper understanding of the place of economic knowledge in culture.

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