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Edited by Mary O. Furner and Barry Supple

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Edited by
MARY O. FURNER and BARRY SUPPLE

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Edited by Mary O. Furner and Barry Supple

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Contents

Foreword by Michael J. Lacey page xiii

Part I. The state and the uses of economic knowledge

- | | | |
|---|---|----|
| 1 | Ideas, institutions, and state in the United States and Britain: an introduction <i>Mary O. Furner and Barry Supple</i> | 3 |
| | The problem | 4 |
| | Some categories of economic knowledge | 11 |
| | Knowledge and institutions | 26 |
| 2 | Economic knowledge and government in Britain: some historical and comparative reflections <i>Donald Winch</i> | 40 |
| | The nineteenth-century legacy | 41 |
| | Academic recognition and public service | 46 |
| | The interwar state and economic knowledge: technocratic possibilities and hopes | 54 |
| | Some Anglo-American comparisons | 61 |
| | Ideas and action | 67 |

Part II. The state and economic performance

- | | | |
|---|--|----|
| 3 | Liberty by design: freedom, planning, and John Quincy Adams's American System <i>John Lauritz Larson</i> | 73 |
|---|--|----|

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-39424-6 - The State and Economic Knowledge: The American and British Experiences

Edited by Mary O. Furner and Barry Supple

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

viii

Contents

Adams's message	76
Adams's meaning	79
Inheriting the Revolution	84
Reaction in 1825	89
Liberty without design	97
4 Government as a laboratory for economic learning in the years of the Democratic Roosevelt <i>William J. Barber</i>	103
The administration and the state of the art, 1933–1936	104
The recession of 1937–1938 and its intellectual fallout	112
Consolidation of the Keynesian beachheads in 1940	120
Girding for war in 1941	122
Economic argument in the environment of all-out mobilization	128
The American Keynesians and their vision of postwar planning	133
The educational legacy of a dozen years	135
5 The emergence of economic growthmanship in the United States: federal policy and economic knowledge in the Truman years <i>Robert M. Collins</i>	138
The policy context: from the economics of scarcity to the economics of abundance, 1932–1946	139
The Council of Economic Advisers and the emergence of economic growthmanship, 1946–1952	146
The policy-knowledge interface	155
Perspectives and conclusions	168
6 The Treasury's analytical model of the British economy between the wars <i>Peter Clarke</i>	171
The role of the Treasury	173
Treasury personnel	175
The orthodox theory	177

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-39424-6 - The State and Economic Knowledge: The American and British Experiences

Edited by Mary O. Furner and Barry Supple

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

<i>Contents</i>		ix
	Changing the premises	189
	Conclusion	203
7	Old dogs and new tricks: the British Treasury and Keynesian economics in the 1940s and 1950s <i>George C. Peden</i>	208
	The “old dogs”	210
	The “new tricks”	214
	Policy-making, 1940–1945	218
	Policy-making, 1945–1951	223
	Policy-making, 1951–1959	227
	The compilation of economic data	232
	Microeconomic aspects of policy	234
	Conclusion	236
 Part III. Industrial maturity and economic policy 		
8	Knowing capitalism: public investigation and the labor question in the long Progressive Era <i>Mary O. Furner</i>	241
	Economic knowledge and the American New Liberalism	242
	Carroll Wright, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the limits of state power	246
	The United States Industrial Commission and the corporatist vision	268
	The Commission on Industrial Relations and democratic collectivism	274
	Ideological systems in tension	284
9	Economic inquiry and the state in New Era America: antistatist corporatism and positive statism in uneasy coexistence <i>Ellis W. Hawley</i>	287
	The context	288
	The Bureau of Agricultural Economics, 1922–1930	293

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-39424-6 - The State and Economic Knowledge: The American and British Experiences

Edited by Mary O. Furner and Barry Supple

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

x

Contents

	The National Bureau of Economic Research, 1920–1930	299
	Tension and conflict	307
	Recent economic changes	313
	The 1920s in perspective	320
	Conclusion	323
10	Official economic inquiry and Britain's industrial decline: the first fifty years <i>Barry Supple</i>	325
	Industrial performance and economic axioms	326
	Maturity, competition, and free trade	330
	The audit of war	337
	Industrial structures and economic performance between the world wars	340
	Industrial economics and structural dislocation	344
	Regional economic policy	346
	Industrial maturity, politics, and economics	351
11	Economic ideas and government policy on industrial organization in Britain since 1945 <i>Leslie Hannah</i>	354
	Industrial policy	354
	British antitrust policy	355
	The economist class	360
	Electricity: nationalization and privatization	363
	Conclusions and further research	371
Part IV. Economic knowledge and social action		
12	Economic knowledge and British social policy <i>Jose Harris</i>	379
	The problem	379
	Definition, convergence, and tension	381
	Theory and policy: an erratic relationship	383
	The “sovereignty” of facts	387
	The culture of policy: four epochs	391

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-39424-6 - The State and Economic Knowledge: The American and British Experiences

Edited by Mary O. Furner and Barry Supple

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

<i>Contents</i>		xi
13	Economists and the formation of the modern tax system in the United States: the World War I crisis <i>W. Elliot Brownlee</i>	401
	Taxation and economic knowledge before World War I	402
	Anticorporate, statist taxation and Thomas S. Adams	407
	Seligman versus Adams	411
	The state investigates	415
	The victory of “progressive capitalism”	421
	Tax reform under “progressive capitalism”	429
	Economic knowledge and the modern state	434
14	Population, economists, and the state: the Royal Commission on Population, 1944–1949 <i>Jay M. Winter</i>	436
	Population decline: some European initiatives in the 1930s	439
	The British debate in the 1930s	445
	Population and World War II: the origins of the Royal Commission	449
	The Royal Commission and its Economics Committee	450
	Conclusions and implications	458
	<i>About the authors</i>	461
	<i>Index</i>	465

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-39424-6 - The State and Economic Knowledge: The American and British Experiences

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[More information](#)

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[More information](#)

Foreword

This volume is the result of a symposium organized by the Woodrow Wilson Center's Program on American Society and Politics. It represents one element in a long-term project designed to reexamine in historical and comparative perspective relations between government activity and the development of knowledge in the domains of society, economy, and culture. The project began with the recognition that of all the activities undertaken by the modern state, the most neglected as a subject of study is the subtle and multifaceted role played by its agencies in helping to elicit, organize, assess, augment, employ, refine, and conserve in many fields the knowledge base upon which in complex ways contemporary life has come to depend. It is the hope of those who have supported and worked on the project that this volume and subsequent volumes will deepen understanding of the processes behind the development of knowledge itself, its diffusion, and its impact on changing social and cultural life. And so far as the agendas of the scholarly disciplines themselves are concerned, the hope is to highlight once again the usefulness of a historical approach to public affairs and to encourage closer collaboration of those concerned with the history of ideas and those who work on the administrative history of public institutions.

The project grew out of the daily life of the Woodrow Wilson Center, and a word of thanks is due to those former Center fellows and advisers who began these discussions and helped organize the program. The late Warren Susman, a gifted historian and interpreter of emerging trends in scholarship, was especially important in getting things started. This volume's editors, Mary O. Furner and Barry Supple, not only brought into being the present collection of essays but contributed importantly to the formulation of other aspects of the total project as well. Robert Cuff, Hugh Hecló, Don K. Price, and the late Jack L. Walker also assisted at key points in the course of things. Finally the Center grate-

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xiv

Foreword

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Michael J. Lacey, *Director*
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