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978-0-521-44650-1 - The Spread of Economic Ideas

Edited by David C. Colander and A. W. Coats

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## **The spread of economic ideas**

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

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**This book is dedicated to  
ROBERT JONES,  
a good friend of Middlebury College**

Contents

List of tables	page ix
List of figures	x
Preface	xi
List of contributors	xiii
1 An introduction to the spread of economic ideas <i>A. W. Coats and David C. Colander</i>	1
<b>Part I From economist to economist</b>	
2 The state of economics: hopeless but not serious? <i>Robert W. Clower</i>	23
3 The invisible hand of truth <i>David C. Colander</i>	31
4 Faith, hope, and clarity <i>Robert M. Solow</i>	37
5 How ideas spread among economists: examples from international economics <i>Charles P. Kindleberger</i>	43
6 Journals, university presses, and the spread of ideas <i>Colin Day</i>	61
<b>Part II From economists to the lay public</b>	
7 How economic ideas turn to mush <i>Robert M. Solow</i>	75
8 The development of the ideas: strategic trade policy and competitiveness <i>David Warsh</i>	85

Cambridge University Press  
978-0-521-44650-1 - The Spread of Economic Ideas  
Edited by David C. Colander and A. W. Coats  
Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

viii	<b>Contents</b>	
9	Economics and the common reader <i>Donald S. Lamm</i>	95
	<b>Part III From economist to policymaker</b>	
10	Economic ideas and economists in government: accomplishments and frustrations <i>A. W. Coats</i>	109
11	The spread of economic ideas between academia and government: a two-way street <i>William J. Barber</i>	119
12	The exchange of favors in the market for commitments <i>James K. Galbraith</i>	127
13	How tax reform came about <i>Joseph J. Minarik</i>	141
	<b>Part IV Funding the spread of economic ideas</b>	
14	Doing good and spreading the gospel (economic) <i>Craufurd D. Goodwin</i>	157
15	Think tanks and the politics of ideas <i>James A. Smith</i>	175
16	The role of the NSF in the spread of economic ideas <i>Daniel H. Newlon</i>	195
17	Money and the spread of ideas <i>David C. Colander</i>	229
18	Changing incentives to make economics more relevant <i>Gordon Tullock</i>	235
	Bibliography	249
	Index	257

Cambridge University Press  
978-0-521-44650-1 - The Spread of Economic Ideas  
Edited by David C. Colander and A. W. Coats  
Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

Tables

1	Description of exceptional NSF economics program grantees 1958–79	<i>page</i> 200
2	Rational expectations awards from fiscal year 1958–79	208
3	Experimental economics awards from fiscal year 1958–79	211
4a	Public choice awards from fiscal year 1958–79	213
4b	Public finance awards from fiscal year 1958–79	216
4c	Law and economics awards from fiscal year 1958–79	218
5	Conferences, workshops, and institutes awards from fiscal year 1958–79	222

Figures

1	Large scale models and input–output,	<i>page</i> 206
2	Large scale models and input–output as a percentage of the Economics Program budget.	206
3	Rational expectations	210
4	Rational expectations as a percentage of the Economics Program budget.	210
5	Experiments	212
6	Public sector economics	219
7	Productivity	220
8	Productivity as a percentage of the Economics Program budget.	220
9	Conferences, workshops, and institutes.	226
10	Conferences, workshops, and institutes as a percentage of the Economics Program budget	226
11	Engineering interdisciplinary work.	227
12	Engineering interdisciplinary work as a percentage of the Economics Program budget.	227



Cambridge University Press  
978-0-521-44650-1 - The Spread of Economic Ideas  
Edited by David C. Colander and A. W. Coats  
Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

---

## Preface

The papers in this volume were originally presented at the Annual Middlebury College Conference on Economic Issues, which was funded by the Institute of Economic and Monetary Affairs. The institute has made it possible for Middlebury College to play a larger role in the economics profession than most other undergraduate schools. In doing so, it has exposed our students to a larger sense of economics than would otherwise be possible. We at Middlebury are extremely thankful to the institute for making that possible.

Running a conference is no easy task. Without the support of many individuals it would be an impossible undertaking. Two people stand out: Sheila Cassin, the Economics Department Secretary, and Helen Reiff, who acted as conference coordinator and saw that all went smoothly. They did the work and I took the credit: a simple arrangement, the inequities of which I am quite aware. Here, in the preface, which few read, I acknowledge my debt to them.

As you read the volume you will quickly see that this isn't a mere reprinting of conference papers. It's a book that fits together like a puzzle. The puzzle took a while to solve and had me piecing parts together – adding something here, subtracting something there – taking bits and pieces of the conference transcripts and getting the authors to turn them into full-blown papers. Doing so takes diplomacy (of which I have little), effort (of which I have lots), and a background spanning all of philosophy and the humanities. (My co-editor Bob Coats is strong where I am weak and I sincerely appreciate his efforts in helping me make the pieces of the puzzle fit together, even as he traveled the globe.) We, with help from a reviewer, my Middlebury College Senior Seminar on the Spread of Economic Ideas, and Helen Reiff, managed to “sort of” fit the pieces together. I thank them heartily.

Once the pieces “sort of” fit, the finishing crew came in. At Cambridge, that included our editor, Ina Isobe, whose diplomacy and

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978-0-521-44650-1 - The Spread of Economic Ideas

Edited by David C. Colander and A. W. Coats

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

xii      **Preface**

charm rivals my co-editor's, and our production editor, Louise Calabro Gruendel, whom I thank profusely for a superb job of editing and for keeping the book on schedule. Together with my personal editor, Helen Reiff, who smoothed my rough edges and provided me with general insights and specifics as well as an index, they made this into a polished manuscript. The end result is a neat fit. I thank them all.

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Middlebury, Vermont

David C. Colander

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Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

---

## Contributors

**WILLIAM J. BARBER** teaches at Wesleyan University, where his fields of specialization are the history of economic thought, the economics of energy, international economics, economic development, and “economists as policy advisors.” After graduating magna cum laude from Harvard he went on to Oxford University, where he obtained his Ph.D. He is the president of the History of Economics Society and is on the editorial boards of *World Development* and *History of Political Economy*. He has held many fellowships and other teaching posts. He is the author or coauthor of six books, some of which have had several printings in as many as six languages and/or have run to three volumes. He is the author of numerous articles, monographs, book reviews, and other contributions. Currently he is working on studies in American economic thought and policy in the years between World War I and World War II and studies of American economic thought in the 19th century.

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**A. W. “BOB” COATS** has been research professor of economics at Duke University since 1984, and is also emeritus professor of economic and social history at the University of Nottingham, where he

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-44650-1 - The Spread of Economic Ideas

Edited by David C. Colander and A. W. Coats

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xiv **Contributors**

was head of the department in that subject from 1964 until his early retirement in December 1982. He has held visiting appointments at fourteen different universities in the United States, Australia, Canada, and Israel. He obtained his B.Sc. and M.Sc. in economics from the University of London, and his Ph.D. from The Johns Hopkins University in 1953. Professor Coats has written extensively on various aspects of the history of economic thought and policy with special reference to the economics profession, the role of economists in government, and the methodology and sociology of economics. He has edited or coedited a dozen books, and has contributed many journal articles and reviews. In 1985–6 he was president of the History of Economics Society, and has been a fellow at the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Studies (1972–3) and the National Humanities Center, NC (1983–4).

DAVID C. COLANDER is the Christian A. Johnson Distinguished Professor of Economics at Middlebury College and the organizer of the conference from which these chapters derive. He is the author and editor of numerous articles and of ten books, including *MAP: A Market Anti-Inflation Plan* (with Abba Lerner) and *History of Economic Thought* (with Harry Landreth). He serves on the executive board of the Eastern Economics Association and on the board of advisors for the *Journal of Economic Perspectives*.

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978-0-521-44650-1 - The Spread of Economic Ideas

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## Contributors

xv

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DONALD S. LAMM graduated from Yale in 1953. After serving in the Counterintelligence Corps of the U.S. Army, he did graduate work at Oxford University. Since 1956 he has been with W. W. Norton & Company, after becoming president of the publishing house in 1976 and chairman in 1984. He has twice been a guest fellow at Yale University, giving a course on book publishing, and was the 1987–8 Ida H. Beam Distinguished Visiting Professor at the University of Iowa. He is chairman of the board of governors of Yale University Press and a trustee of the Roper Center.

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xvi      **Contributors**

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**DAVID WARSH** is an economic columnist who keeps close tabs on new developments in the field. He writes for the *Boston Globe* and is the author of *The Idea of Economic Complexity* (1984).