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NEWSLETTER

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The Newsletter of the Cliometric Society

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Report on the Economic History Association 2015 Annual Meeting

This article was written by Matt Davis, Juan Ilich, Carlos Eduardo Hernandez, Jeremy Land, Keith Meyers Jakob Schneebacher, Joshua Stachura, and Sebastian Tello, and it was edited by Mary Eschelbach Hansen.

The 75th Annual Meeting of the Economic History Association convened in Nashville, Tennessee, from September 11-13, 2015. The theme "Diversity in Economic History" was chosen by President Robert Margo and the excellent papers were chosen by the program committee of Martha Bailey, Tomas Cvrcek, and Suresh Naidu. The local arrangements committee (Jeremy Atack, William Collins, Claudia Rei, and Peter Rousseau) provided terrific Southern hospitality.

Thanks also to the following for their support: Nashville Public Library, Nashville Public Library Foundation, Andrea Blackman (Manager of Special Collections, Nashville Public Library), Vanderbilt University (College of Arts and Sciences and Department of Economics), Terence E. Adderley, Jr. (Chair, Vanderbilt Economics), Boston University, Global Financial Data, and the Cambridge University Press. A special shout-out goes to Elizabeth Atack of the Nashville Public Library for smoothing the way for the reception's beautiful venue and for giving up her time to help coordinate, run security, and clean up. Finally, thanks to Alex Hollingworth and Keith Myers (Univ. of Arizona) and Lana Sooter (EHA Administrative Coordinator) for their assistance in many ways, large and small.

The opening session of the conference was on Race and Economic Outcomes in the First Half of the Twentieth Century. Because Richard Baker (College of New Jersey) had his flight cancelled, Bob Margo (Boston Univ.) helped him out by presenting "School Resources and Labor Market Outcomes: Evidence from Early Twentieth Century Georgia" in his stead. In the paper, Baker asks if race-specific differences in school inputs can explain differences in school outputs. By using plausibly exogenous variation in Georgia school funding, Baker assesses the effect of funding on school-level student attainment and later earnings. White males, but not African-American males, benefitted from increased school expenditures. Discussant Trevor Logan (Ohio State Univ.) questioned whether funding distress is best simulated by the smooth projection used by Baker. He suggested that the author would benefit from additional consider of why there is no effect for African-Americans.

William Collins (Vanderbilt) then presented joint work with Marianne Wanamaker (Univ. of Tennessee), "Intergenerational Mobility in the Shadow of Jim Crow." Collins and Wanamaker build a linked data set to observe fathers and sons in 1880-1900 and 1910-1930 to study relative black-to-white intergenerational mobility and its correlates. They construct occupational and income transition matrices for blacks and whites, and compare actual black transitions to the counterfactual built by feeding the black father-son pairs through the white transition matrices. They find stark racial differences in both upward and downward mobility, conditional on the father's status, and that migration correlates strongly and positively with upward mobility for blacks. The discussion focused on ways the variable choice and definition might have introduced biases. Margo argued that using pre-1940 occupational income scores is problematic because it understates upward mobility for blacks. He also worried that the authors missed some late-life mobility, especially among blacks. Melinda Miller (U.S. Naval Academy) pointed out that the method omits families where father and sons do not live in the same household, a point that Collins conceded is important. Finally, Ellora Derenoncourt (Harvard) asked to see the trends broken down in more regional detail, akin to Raj Chetty's recent work on a similar subject.

To end the session, Tim Larsen (Vanderbilt) presented "The Strange Career of Jim Crow: Labor Scarcity and Racial Treatment in the Postbellum South." Larsen asks whether economic forces can decrease non-market discrimination such as violence and political discrimination. The paper investigates how labor scarcity (measured as death rates per county in the American Civil War) in the Postbellum South affected racial violence (lynching) and political participation (voter turnout) and finds significant and persistent effects in the expected directions. Two topics came up in discussion. Several commenters were interested in tracing the long-term effects for lynching as Larsen had done for voting. Larsen replied that the measure of lynching changes over the period in question.

Awards Announced at EHA

Jose-Antonio Espin-Sanchez (currently Yale) was awarded the Alexander Gershenkron Prize for the best dissertation in economic history of an area outside he US or Canada for *The Illiquidity of Water Markets*, which was advised by Joel Mokyr at Northwestern.

Andrew Goodman-Baco (currently Vanderbilt and a Robert Wood Johnson Health Policy Scholar at UC-Berekely) was awarded the Allan Nevins Prize for the best dissertation in US or Canadian economic history for *Three Essays in Health Policy Evaluation*, which was advised by Martha Bailey at the University of Michigan.

Price Fishback and Valentina Kachanovskaya (both Arizona) were awarded the Arthur H. Cole Prize for best article published in the *Journal of Economic History* this year for "The Multiplier for the States in the Great Depression," which appeared in March 2015.

Laura Salisbury (York University) was awarded the Larry Neal Prize for the best article published in *Explorations in Economic History* for "Selective Migration, Wages, and Occupational Mobility in Nineteenth Century America," which appeared in July 2015.

Gregory Clark (UC Davis) was awarded the Gyorgy Ranki Biennial Prize for outstanding book on the economic history of Europe for T*he Son Also Rises: Surnames and the History of Social Mobility* (Princeton University Press, 2014).

Price Fishback (Arizona) was awarded the Jonathan Hughes Teaching Prize for excellence in teaching economic history. ▪

The session on Innovation started with a presentation by Michela Giorcelli (Stanford) on "The Effect of Management Practices and Technology Diffusion on Firm Performances: Evidence from the US Marshall Plan in Italy." Giorcelli collected data from the period 1940-1970 from Italian companies that took American assistance on behalf of USTAP. There was increased productivity for up to ten years after technology and management assistance from the US was received. Both technology and management were complementary to production rates in post-WWII Italy.

Francesco Cinnirella (Ifo Institute, Munich) and Jochen Streb (Univ. of Mannheim) presented "Religious Diversity and Innovation: Historical Evidence from Patenting Activity." The paper expands research on the relationship between economic outcomes and religious composition by considering the case of 19th Century Prussia. It shows how innovation shifted from independent inventors to large firms. In the chemical, electrical and machine building sectors of the cities of Cologne, Frankfurt, Dortmund and Gdansk, there was an inverted U-shape relationship between religious diversity and patenting activity.

Last but not least, Elisabeth Ruth Perlman (Boston Univ.) presented "Dense Enough to be Brilliant: Patents, Urbanization, and Transportation in Nineteenth Century America Market Access." The paper revisits Sokoloff´s (1988) hypothesis that increased transportation infrastructure led to greater market access, which fostered economic development and innovation by creating denser urban centers with strong civil society networks. Data from a geo-coded database of patents issued between1790 and 1900 show that 30-70% of patenting occurred while rail networks were growing rapidly in the decade of 1850-60. 15-30% of patenting occurred in the following decade.

The session on Finance and Housing prices featured a lively debate from each of the three presenters on how inequality expresses itself in the housing market. Jason Barr (Rutgers) and Fred Smith (Davidson) opened the panel with "What´s Manhattan Worth? Land Value Index from 1950 to 2013." Using data on vacant land sales and on all open market sales in Manhattan, the authors construct a land value index for Manhattan from 1950 to 2013. They trace three major cycles (1950 to 1977, 1977 to 1993, and 1993 to 2007). Land prices in New York since 1993 have risen at an average annual rate of 15.8%. The total value of Manhattan is between

$784 and $867 billion.

Ronan Lyons (Trinity College Dublin) presented "Measuring House Prices in the Long Run: Insights from Dublin, 1900-2015." He uses two hedonic regression models to establish trends in housing prices. In the first half of the twentieth century there was a steady fall in prices, but there was a rapid increase from the 1940s, except for a brief periods.

"No Price Like Home: Global House Prices, 1870-2012" was presented by Katharina Knoll (Free Univ. of Berlin), Moritz Schularick (Univ. of Bonn), and Thomas Steger (Univ. of Leipzig) and closed the session. The paper shows that the real estate prices in 14 advanced economies followed a hockey-stick pattern. However the various components of house prices behave quite differently: increases in total values are above construction costs but below land prices, since income accelerated more slowly than real estate prices, the patterns determined long-run trends in wealth-to-income ratios.

The session on public health interventions sessions was opened by Werner Troesken (Univ. of Pittsburg). The first paper, "Watersheds in Infant Mortality: The Role of Effective Water and Sewage Infrastructure, 1880-1915," was presented by Marcella Alsam (Stanford) and co-authored with Claudia Goldin (Harvard). The paper uses a reform in Boston Greater Metropolitan Area that habilitated both clean water and sewerage infrastructure across municipalities from 1880 to 1915 to estimate the effect of clean water and sewerage on infant mortality. Clean water and sewerage were complementary and accounted for 37 percent of the total decline in (log) infant mortality in treated municipalities. Joshua Lewis (Univ. of Montreal) asked about the interpretation of the results. Since the implementation of sewerage came quickly after clean water, it is possible that the observed effect is simply the lagged effect from the clean water intervention and not the effect of having both interventions acting together. Participants asked about the cost of the program and suggested that the authors could use the location of municipalities (downstream versus upstream from the main source of water).

The second paper in the session was "Origins and effects of the rural public health programs in North Carolina" and was presented by Jonathan Fox (Freie Universitaet Berlin). This paper considers rural infant mortality rather than urban infant mortality. It evaluates the effects on of the County Health Organization (CHO) which started in North Carolina in 1911. The public health initiative led to a reduction in mortality by diarrhea and enteritis but did not reduce overall infant mortality. The discussion was led by Carolyn Moehling (Rutgers) who noted that counties with high death rates were more likely to establish a CHO. She suggested using other sources of variation like quantity and source of funding or characteristics of the program such as differences in the staff composition (nurses vs. non-health professionals). Audience comments concerned (1) the impact of the treatment of manure, and (2) the potential for non-trivial heterogeneity in the effects on blacks and whites.

The third paper was "Pollution and mortality in the 19th Century" and was presented by Walker Hanlon (UCLA). Hanlon argues that pollution has been overlooked as a possible explanation for relatively high mortality rates in the nineteenth century. The author uses the industrial structure of districts to capture exposure to pollution. Differences in pollution explain a third of differences in mortality. The discussion was led by Werner Troesken who suggested looking at other causes of mortality as placebo test. Also, regulations on the amount of coal use in different industries could be a potential source of variation to identify the effects.

To open the session on Colonial Africa, Leigh Gardner (LSE) presented "De-compressing History? Pre-colonial Institutions and Local Government in British Colonial Africa," which is written with Jutta Bolt (Univ. of Groningen). Gardner and Bolt show the links between pre-colonial and colonial institutions. By mapping per capita spending on education and other forms of investment in human capital along the Gold Coast of Africa, they show that areas with greater levels of state capacity prior to colonization had higher revenue under British rule. Local sate capacity was higher where there were more centralized societies, and it was also influenced by economic change during the colonial period. John Fourie (Univ. of Stellenbosch) commented. He praised the use of local, non-European sources and suggested that the authors give more attention to the relationship between local and national revenue. He urged them to examine other possible reasons for the correlations in order to eliminate them. Audience members wondered if there was a European impact along the Gold Coast prior to full colonization.

In the second paper of the session, Federico Tadei (Bocconi Univ.) searches for a way to quantify colonial extraction in French Africa in "Colonial Trade and Price Gaps in Africa." Tadei argues that to understand the relationship between colonialism and modern underdevelopment we need to understand the magnitude of extraction from Africa to Europe and the level of institutional development by colonizers. Tadei compares local African port prices with world market prices to estimate the extractive capabilities of colonial institutions. African prices were substantially lower than world market prices. Claudia Rei (Vanderbilt) praised the method of measuring colonial extraction and the data collection effort. She suggested that the author consider the difference between world prices and French prices and that he explore transportation costs. More than one audience member was concerned that the "world prices" were not truly competitive.

To close the session, Marlous van Waijenburg (Northwestern) presented "Financing the African Colonial State: The Revenue Imperative and Forced Labor." Her paper is part of growing interest in the role of the state in African economic activity that is focused on the coercive nature of African and colonial governments. Her aim is to understand the relative importance of forced labor in building fiscal capacity. She finds that Sub-Saharan Africa had difficulty in extracting revenue locally due to collapsed social structures. It relied on forced labor to expand public works and infrastructure. She measures how much money was saved by the state's use of forced labor, and she finds that some states extracted significant percentages of their budgets as labor. Peter Lindert (UC-Davis) praised the paper's substantial quantitative and contextual analysis. He reinforced the fact that coerced labor was a large share of extracted value by colonial governments, but was a tiny share of regional production. He sparked a general discussion on how van Waijenburg could further compare labor costs to governmental expenditures and revenues.

The panel on The Future of Economic History closed the first day of the conference. It brought together four economic historians to discuss their "predictions" on where the field is heading. William Collins focused on data processing. He emphasized the trend of declining technology costs (e.g. GIS, faster CPUs, digital imaging) costs associated with complex analysis. Collins warned that heterogeneous rates of expansion of data may draw scholars away from "data poor" topics. He emphasized that these data-scarce settings may be important. Kris Mitchener (Santa Clara) talked about "4-D economic history." 4-D stands for Digitally Driven Data Design and is more than simply "big data." The new techniques use advanced software and complex algorithms to construct fascinating new data sets. He emphasized the possibilities for interdisciplinary collaboration. Ran Abramitzky (Stanford) documented that economic history is earning much more space in top economic journals. In 1970 only 1.5% of articles in the top five journals were economic history; 30 years later the percentage was 5%. Although the share is small, the growth is undeniable. Ran noted that, while economic historians care about past societies for their own sake,

Graduate students selling their wares.

mainstream economists only care about the past if it helps to understand the present. Finally, Naomi Lamoreaux (Yale) lamented how economic history has morphed into a subfield of economics rather than remaining a multi-disciplinary field. She argued that the contribution of economics is compromised if we do not appeal to the middle ground: economic historians and economist-historians should "talk to one another."

Saturday morning began with a stimulating look at a new data on post-abolition outcomes. Lisa Cook (Michigan State) talked about her work on "The New National Lynching Data Set," which tries to correct flaws in the existing data on lynchings to enable new work on racially-motivated violence. The new data set includes 5,000 observations, many from before 1882. Cook shows that lynching was prevalent throughout the entire country, that lynchings of Native Americans and Asians were previously undercounted, and that lynchings shifted from the West to the South over time. Correlates of lynchings include racial composition, the literacy gap, and legal executions. Gavin Wright (Stanford) gave extensive comments. He wanted more evidence that the non-South, non-black lynchings were really were the same type of activity as black-South lynchings. He advocated for broad look at various forms of racial violence and intimidation, beyond lynchings. Finally, he suggested that Cook consider towards racially-differentiated migration in her explanation of lynchings.

Christian Dipple (UCLA) presented joint work with Jean Paul Carvalho (UC-Irvine) entitled "The Iron Law of Oligarchy: The Post-Slavery Caribbean Sugar Colonies." Motivated by the theoretical literature on the expansion and contraction of democracy, the authors build a model in which an old elite controls the state but a new elite can coordinate popular revolt. The new elite may be co-opted by the old elite, resulting in no material improvement for the masses. They consider first the freeing of slaves and a later change in bankruptcy laws in 14 Caribbean micro-states. Political events and voting records are consistent with the predictions of the model. Discussion focused on the incentives of the elites. Alan Dye (Barnard) asked why the new elites, who were planters like the old elites, did not have the same incentives. He asked the authors to consider whether both the old and new elites were both losing support to a rising middle class.

To close the session, Joshua Rosenbloom (Univ. of Kansas) presented "The Impact of the Civil War on Southern Wealth Mobility," a joint project with Brandon Dupont (Western Washington Univ.). The paper links about 2,500 records from the 1870 census back to 1860 to investigate how the Civil War and the emancipation of slaves affected Southern wealth holders. A relatively large number of top wealth holders retained their position in the wealth distribution, but there was considerably more upward mobility in the South in the 1860s. While women became more prevalent as top wealth holders between 1860 and 1870, and the South lost considerable wealth over the course of the war, the composition of the top 1% of wealth holders was ultimately relatively stable. Two topics were covered in the discussion that followed: the wealth-versus-income choice and the relevant timeframe for change. John Parman (William and Mary) argued that, while a focus on wealth has definite advantages (for instance, it is less subject to transitory shocks), it also has drawbacks, namely, it can only be measured by the 1860 and 1870 census. On the latter issue, Susan Wolcott (Binghamton Univ.) questioned whether extending the study to include the 1880 census might not be informative.

Christopher Cotter (Vanderbilt) opened the on nineteenth century finance and banking with "Railroad Failures and the Panic of 1873." The paper shows that during the Panic of 1873 railroads were less likely to default if their bonds had state guarantees. Land grants encouraged railroads to build in riskier, less populated areas, contributing to railroad insolvency. Benjamin Chabot (Chicago FED) arrived just in the nick-of-time to deliver his comments. Chabot thought the paper does a good job of separating real and financial shocks; the audience was more skeptical. The audience members pointed out that the West had no variation in finance (it was all land grant). Dick Sylla (NYU) urged Cotter to think about the role of the decline in European demand for railroad bonds.

Manuel Alejandro Bautista Gonzalez (Columbia) presented "A City between Nations: Domestic and Foreign Currencies in New Orleans, Interregional and External Trade of the Antebellum South, 1856-1860." The author builds a new data set of prices for various regional bank notes and international currencies to argue that monetary plurality in New Orleans provided necessary liquidity during the financial crisis of 1857. Discussant Matt Jaremski (Colgate) appreciated that the paper adds to the existing price current data from other cities at the time and pointed out that fluctuations in the New Orleans exchange rates seem to correspond to macroeconomic events. Jaremski noted that the discounts on bank note discounts seemed small and suggested that Gonzalez look into his own work on the topic, to which the audience chuckled.

Haeilim Park (U.S. Treasury) and John Bluedorn (IMF) presented the final paper of the session, "Stopping Contagion with Bank Bailouts: Micro-Evidence from Pennsylvania Bank Networks during the Panic of 1884." Using s new dataset the authors investigate the impact of a private sector-orchestrated bailout of systemically important banks in New York City by the local clearing house. A diff-in-diff analysis shows that the New York clearing house indeed contained the contagion through intervention. Discussant Mary Rodgers (SUNY-Oswego) lauded the effort and suggested extensions. Peter Rousseau (Vanderbilt) commented that the "Panic" of 1884 might not be the most informative episode regarding the role and impact of the clearing house's intervention.

The session on the Quantity-Quality Tradeoff in Historical Perspective opened with Vincent Bignon (Bank of France) and Cecilia Garcia-Penalosa's (Aix-Marseille/CESifo) "Protectionism and the Education Fertility Tradeoff in the Late 19th Century France." The authors exploit the implementation of the 1892 Meliné Tariff and subsequent restrictions on cereal imports to identify the tradeoff. The authors argue that such protections would increase agricultural rents and wages in cereal producing regions. If education is important in manufacturing but not agriculture a tariff will alter the relative value of education in cereal producing regions, and the authors find reversals in education trends in cereal producing regions following the implementation of the tariff. Discussant Paul Sharp (Southern Denmark) praised the paper but had two main criticisms. He worried about the assumption that education didn't have returns to agriculture during the period of modernization in agriculture. He also wondered if the tariff was truly exogenous: Did farmers in cereal producing regions push protectionists into power?

Gregory Clark (UC-Davis) provided a summary of his work with Neil Cummings (LSE) titled "The Child Quantity-Quality Tradeoff, England, 1750-1880: Is a Fundamental Component of Economic Theory of Growth Missing?" The authors that family size was related to unobserved socio demographic factors and not education. There is little evidence in the surname sample suggesting that family size affected the wealth of offspring's or educational attainment. If it is assumed that there was no fertility control within marriage, then variation in family size is "natural" and the quantity-quality tradeoff is a "myth." Discussant Tomas Cvrcek (University

College London) noted that "absence of evidence is not evidence of absence." Cvrcek took issue with Clark's assertion that he'd disproved the Beckerian notion of the quantity-quality tradeoff/ He also found the assumption that there was no fertility control prior to 1880 unrealistic.

The final presentation of the session examined the fertility-human capital relationship for female cohorts. Faustine Perrin (Lund) presented her "Clio's Role for Economic Growth: New Findings on the Quantity-Quality Trade off in 19th Century France," which she coauthors with Claude Diebolt (Strasbourg) and Tapas Mishra (South Hampton). Perrin began by discussing the bidirectional relationship between female education and fertility: Increases in education can lead to decreases in fertility, but increased fertility can prematurely end education and human capital accumulation. The paper shows the existence of a sizable negative relationship between education and fertility, but this endowment effect disappears for the part of the distribution with low fertility. Discussant Philip Ager (Southern Denmark) called for a more structural approach to model the bidirectional relationship.

Joyce Burnette (Wabash College) opened the session on Women in Marriage and Labor Markets with "The Gender Gap in Turn of the Century Swedish Manufacturing," which she coauthored with Maria Stanfors (Lund). Looking at a sample of cigar makers and compositors that included men and women with the same jobs, Burnette and Stanfors find that a wage gap grew with experience and urban location. Discussant Jessica Bean (Denison) praised the extremely rich data with allowed the authors to use individual characteristics to help explain some of the wage gap. She suggested a comparison with issues that might highlight significant and surprising differences between 1900 and modern day. Anne McCants (MIT) asked about the hopes and expectations of the Swedish women. Audience members also wanted more about historical context.

The second presentation was "Migration, Marriage and Social Mobility: Women in Sweden during Industrialization." Martin Drive and Bjorn Eriksson (both Lund), and Francesco Scalone (Univ. of Bologna) use census and GIS to follow the migration of women and their marital status. Women who stay close to home are more likely to marry, and are also more likely to marry someone from the same social status. Women who migrate further are less likely to marry are more likely to marry higher up the social ladder. Discussant Laura Salisbury (York Univ.) praised the timely topic but wanted a more nuanced interpretation of the data that focused on decisions and constraints of women.

The final paper of the panel was Marc Goni's (Univ. of Vienna) "Assortative Matching and Persistent Inequality: Evidence from the World's Most Exclusive Marriage Market." Goni uses the British upper class in London as a case study and provides a combination of historical context and quantitative data. He shows that there was an increase in royal women marrying commoners during the shutdown of the Royal Ball during the years that followed Prince Albert's death. In a lively and humorous comment on Goni's paper, Gregory Clark suggested that the London case study ought to be the focus because of the wealth of data. He suggested that literacy rates could play a role in the part of the paper that discusses a broader section of society. Anne McCants (MIT) asked if men were also marrying outside of their social classes. The audience offered many ways that the research could go further.

Johan Fourie (Stellenbosch Univ.) opened the session on post-Colonial Africa with "The Efficiency of Cape Colony Railways and the Origins of Racial Inequality," a joint project with Alfonso Herranz-Loncan (Univ. of Barcelona). The paper uses social savings calculations for 1873 to 1905 to measure the contribution of railroads to growth. About half of the Colony's increase in labor productivity came from the railway. Black areas were disproportionately underserved by the new railroads, with consequences that the authors argue last until today. Two topics came up repeatedly in discussion. First was the definition of the right counterfactual, and second was the motivation of the government in building the railroads. On the latter, Ted Fertik (Yale) asked whether the railroad paths were racially motivated. On the former, Marlous von Waijenburg questioned whether the usual social savings approach really yielded the right counterfactual because the spatial structure of economic activity might have been very different in the absence of railroads. In a similar vein, Bishnupriya Gupta (Univ. of Warwick) suggested that the authors should explore the impact of the railroads on the labor market, in particular the wages in mining.

Eduardo Montero (Harvard) presented "Blood Rubber: The Effects of Labor Coercion on Development and Culture in the DRC," a paper co-authored with Sara Lowes (also Harvard). They examine the long-term effects of exploitative institutions and labor coercion on development outcomes in the DRC today. Their identification strategy relies on a geographic regression discontinuity design. Areas inside former rubber concessions have worse development outcomes today. Market access is one mechanism. In ongoing experimental work, they are looking for a mechanism through culture. Discussion centered on the government policies during the blood rubber period. Steve Nafziger (Williams) asked if exploitation mainly occurred in river basins, and if that could confound the results. Leigh Gardner (LSE) wanted to know how the rubber concessions interacted with the railroad or mining development. She wondered if outmigration might be part of the story.

Johannes Norling (Univ. of Michigan) presented "Family Planning and Fertility in South Africa under Apartheid." He examines a government policy to provide free family planning services to residents of townships and white-owned farms that started in 1970. In these areas, the birthrate declined by one third relative to the rest of the country. Child deferral (spacing) accounts for some, but not all, of the decrease. The policy coincided with increased employment and higher income for their children in adulthood.

Marianne Wanamaker (Univ. of Tennessee) wanted a theory or mechanism to make sense of the patterns in the data and to evaluate alternative explanations for the results. Marlous von Waijenburg and Eduardo Montero wanted to know about the relationship to fertility rates in other African countries and about heterogeneity within the sample. Lastly, Gavin Wright questioned the government's objectives, given that at the same time there was African migration into South Africa.

The session on Inequality in the Long Run started with a presentation by Guido Alfani and Sergio Sardone (both Bocconi Univ.) of "Long Term Trends in Economic Inequality in Southern Italy." The authors study Naples and Sicily between 1550-1800 with data from project EINITE (Economic Inequality across Italy and Europe). They use using catasti and riveli archives, the equivalent of modern-day tax declarations to regional governments. The declarations specify components of wealth (real estate, capital), credits and debts, income and movables such as animals or boats. Inequality was more acute in urban places than rural

Dancing the night away at the President's party!

centers. There was a continuous increase in inequality. Simone Wegge (College of Staten Island & the CUNY Graduate Center) also presented on real estate assets and their effect on inequality. "Inequality in Wealth: Evidence from Land Ownership in Mid-19th Century Germany" shows an upward trend in equality from the XVIII to the XIX century in the then-agricultural region of Hesse-Cassel in Germany. Inequality varied widely. Inequality was higher in more densely populated areas and in places that had indivisible inheritances. A panel of a subsample of places shows an increase in inequality between the 18th and 19th centuries.

The session concluded with the presentation of Se Yan (Peking Univ.) of "Civil Exams and Social Mobility: Jinshi's Exam Performances and Official Careers in Ming China (1368-1644)." Data on civil service exams confirms that high grades promoted upward mobility, but the benefits fell over time. Family background influenced both exam results and the likelihood of employment in the public sector, showing that many positions may have been kept by the ruling elite.

Discussants in the session highlighted the commonalities of the papers. They all showed growing inequality through historical analysis of the various components of wealth.

The plenary Session was Contemporary Inequality in the United States. Jacob Vigdor (Univ. of Washington) repeatedly stressed that President Margo would not let him discuss trends back beyond the year 2000. Vigdor graphically illustrated the black-white divide in the United States. Income, employment education, home ownership, life expectancy, physical ability, and family structure all favor whites. Median prime age white men earn more than double that of their black counterparts. Although black-white inequality is known and recognized by most, if not all, and the end of the presentation surprised many in the audience. Vigdor showed that racial disparity is smaller in the South than in the rest of the US. When asked by an audience member why the former home of slavery is now less unequal, Vigdor replied that the recent demise of American manufacturing affected the South very little because the region was relatively unindustrialized.

Gary Solon (formerly Michigan State, now Arizona State which drew some audience "aughs" spoke about intergenerational income immobility. He presented simple, clear linear regression models of immobility with the coefficient interest representing intergenerational income elasticity: Child Income= $\alpha + \beta \cdot$(Parent Income)+ ε. (Smaller Betas correspond to more mobile societies; Beta=1 means that children's expected income level is exactly identical to parent. Other rich countries (e.g. Sweden, Canada) have much smaller income elasticities than the US. Recent data suggest that the US Beta is closer to 0.5 rather than earlier believed. Solon suggested that the War on Poverty may have offset additional declines in mobility.

Martha Bailey (Michigan) spoke last. Bailey criticized the critics of the War on Poverty. She argued that the War on Poverty reduced poverty cut poverty by over 33% overall, with big impact on African Americans and the elderly. Reducing poverty of the elderly was instrumental in allowing human capital development; it freed middle age heads of household to send children to college rather than supporting poor grandparents. Medicare increased family disposable income, some of which was spent on college. In closing, Bailey argued that the War on Poverty was apolitical, as so its effectiveness has been dismissed by both parties.

In his Saturday evening presidential address, Robert Margo (Boston Univ.) revisited the evolution of the black-white difference in per-capita income between 1870 and 1940. Previous estimates implied convergence from 1870 and 1900 and stagnation from 1900 and 1940. Margo finds that convergence between 1870 and 1900 was slower than previously thought, and he find convergence instead of stagnation between 1900 and 1940. Because there is a long-run trend towards convergence, the dynamics of the black-white per-capita income ratio can be studied with an autoregressive model of intergenerational mobility. He estimates intergenerational elasticity in the black-white per-capita income ratio of 0.8, which is much larger than his 0.5 estimate of the elasticity of income within race (0.5). Margo suggests the higher elasticity is explained by two factors: (1) Black-white disparities in human capital (e.g. educational attainment) have eroded over time at a slow pace; (2) The market assigns value to "whiteness" (e.g. behavior, speech, appearance, culture), which has a large persistence both in its demand and its supply.

Perhaps the organizers would have scheduled the start of Sunday morning's sessions at a later hour if they had realized just how long economic historians would dance at the President's Party after the banquet Saturday night. (Editor's note: Check Instagram or Facebook if you missed it!) Yet Dan Bogart (UC-Irvine) was his usual cheerful self as he called the session on Institutions and Long Term Development to order.

The session began with "Crecimientos: Refinancing the Public Debt in Castile before 1600," by Carlos Alvarez-Nogal (Universidad Carlos III) and Chrisopher Chamley (Boston Univ.). Philip II refinanced the long-term debt not though coupon reduction but by a process that increased the capital of the annuity with the coupon unchanged. This was accomplished in a system in which the bonds were not serviced centrally, but locally by cities.

"Collective Action and Representation in Autocracies: Evidence from Russia's Great Reforms" is a joint project of Paul Dower (New Economic School-Moscow), Evgeny Finkel (George Washington Univ.), Scott Gehlbach (Univ. of Wisconsin-Madison) and Steven Nafzinger (Williams). The authors use data on institutional design during the Great Reforms and data on peasant disturbances to show that peasants got less representation in assemblies where there had been more unrest previously. Serfdom had also more common where unrest occurred. Elites were likely aware of the unrest and responded to curb the influence of restive groups.

The final presenter in the session was Dongwoo Yoo (West Virginia Univ.). His "Mapping and Economic Development: Spatial Information Matter" shows just how essential maps are for development. IV estimates show that good mapping increases growth and a history of mapping techniques suggest that endogeneity is not severe. Good maps aid in both public finance and private transactions by enhancing security of property rights and encouraging investment.

The session on Migration in Economic History began with Rowena Gray's (UC-Merced) presentation of "Evaluating a great Migration: Chain Migration and its Influence on Housing Prices in New York City, 1880-1950." Gray links rental information from newspaper ads to information about disamenities and amenities of the property using historical GIS maps of Manhattan to construct a quality-adjusted rent index. She then uses Ellis Island passenger records to make an instrument for immigrant demand. Katie Shester (Washington and Lee) worried that the newspaper sample suffered from selection bias in two ways. Listings may favor units with more amenities and which amenities are listed may change over time. She suggested a comparison of neighborhood-level sample stats with Census tabulations.

Jason Long (Wheaton) and Henry Siu (Univ. of British Columbia)'s "Refugees from Dust and Shrinking Land: Tracking the Dust Bowl Migrants" was next on the agenda. The paper focuses on the Oakie migration.

They show that the characteristics that usually kept people in place (like having younger children) did not affect the probability of migration out of the worst parts of the Dust Bowl. However, farmers in the Dust Bowl were less likely to move, and overall out-migration was only lightly higher than outmigration had been in the 1920s. Falling in-migration accounts for the falling population. Katherine Eriksson (Cal. Poly. State Univ.) wanted to know if the logit regressions did an equally good job explaining movers and stayers in all periods. Michael Haines (Colgate) called for the authors to break "farmers" into owners, share-croppers, and laborers.

The session closed with James Sidola's (Colby College) presentation of "Making the Move: The Impact of the 1906 Disaster on Business Relocation and Industry Clustering." The San Francisco earthquake and fire of 1906 destroyed 28,000 buildings. Businesses operating in the 500 blocks that were destroyed were 30 percentage points more likely to move, and to move far. This disrupted business and industry patterns and may have reduced benefits of industry clusters that had existed before the disaster. Edson Severnini (Carnegie Mellon Univ.) wanted more about what characteristics of city blocks created natural advantages. He also wanted some additional consideration of market structure; for example, were retail businesses affected more or less than manufacturing firms?

Elena Esposito (European Univ. Institute) began the session on Slavery by presenting evidence that malaria played a significant role in the spread of African slavery across the US colonies. In "Side Effects of Immunities: the African Slave Trade" she shows that slavery spread faster in areas more conducive to malaria, but that this effect was only visible after the introduction of a virulent strain of the disease. Slaves originating from the most malaria-ridden parts of Africa were valued at a premium in slave markets. Discussant Walker Hanlon called the paper "fantastic," and he was curious about the size of the effect in terms of numbers of slaves.

Conor Lennon (Pittsburgh) contributes to the longstanding debate on why slave prices were much higher in the Deep South than the Upper South by adding a new explanation: the likelihood of slave escape. In "The Impact of the 1850 Fugitive Slave Act on Slave Prices," he exploits the passage of the 1850 Fugitive Slave Act, which required Northern states to return escaped slaves, as a natural experiment in changing property rights. Not only did the gap in slave prices decrease after the passage of the Act, but that the Act's effect on prices is largest in border states where escape to the North was (previously) easiest. Discussant Jonathan Pritchett (Tulane) framed the paper as a story of migration and requested more evidence of trends on slave prices prior to the Act. Yannay Spitzer (Hebrew Univ.) asked why the price gap persisted at all, given the level of market integration and asked about the effect of other events in the 1850s, such as a cholera outbreak and the tobacco boom.

Mohamed Saleh (Toulouse School of Economics) presented "The Cotton Boom, Slavery, and Land Inequality in Nineteenth-Century Rural Egypt." The cotton boom in Egypt during the American Civil War gave rise to plantation slavery in Egypt. First the boom led to consolidation of land into large estates. Consolidation fed the institution of agricultural slavery, which was previously rare. He uses a diff-in-diff approach to show the increases in both slavery and landholding inequality in districts favorable to cotton cultivation, but not districts more favorable to wheat or other crops. Discussant Eric Chaney (Harvard) wondered why agricultural slavery was rare in Islamic societies. He was also curious about why Egyptian planters seemed to perceive high cotton prices as a permanent, given that they knew the cause was the American Civil War. Warren Whatley (Univ. of Michigan) wanted to know about how the episode related to the history of slavery more broadly.

The session on U.S. Policy Effects in the Great Depression and World War II was chaired by Price Fishback. Dan Fetter (Wellesley) and Lee Lockwood (Northwestern) presented "Means-tested Old Age Support and Private Behavior: Evidence from the Old Age Assistance Program. The OOA programs were state-administered and means-tested pensions authorized by the Social Security Act. OOA was a bigger program than federal Social Security until the 1950s. OOA was quite different from state-to-state. OOA reduce labor supply by about 11 percent for men 65-74, about three-quarters of the impact came through the income effect.

Sebastian Fleitas (Univ. of Arizona), Price Fishback, and Ken Snowden (Univ. of North Carolina-Greensboro" closed the session with their presentation of "Why Does Recovery from Mortgage Credit Crises Take So Long?" They study the major mortgage crisis of the Depression. Because building and loans, the major home mortgage lenders, had a mutual structure helped to mitigate the crisis by delaying dissolution of the B&L. The delay helped homeowners in default but (of course) imposed costs on other B&L shareholders.

Taylor Jaworski (Queen's Univ.) closed the session with his presentation of "World War II and the Industrialization of the American South." Jaworksi shows that, though manufacturing in the South boomed during the war, it did not generate the kind of spillovers that catalyze successful industrialization. More recent improvements in regional outcomes are not connected to the war efforts.

The final session of the conference was on the Transmission of Culture. Vicky Fouka (Universitat Pompeu Fabra) examines the effect of English-only schooling laws on the assimilation of German communities in "Backlash: The Unintended Effects of Language Prohibition in US schools after World War I." Many states passed laws requiring English-only primary education during and immediately after WWI. The author uses a regression discontinuity design and shows that individuals exposed to the English-only laws were more likely to marry within the German ethnic group, name their children with decidedly German names, and less likely to volunteer for service in WWII. Discussant Richard Hornbeck (Univ. of Chicago) appreciated that the paper in being both timely (with relation to EU assimilation politics) and timeless (as a constant societal issue). He liked that the paper tells us not just that the backlash exists, but where it is largest.

Melinda Miller (US Naval Academy) looks at assimilation of American Indians in response to federal assimilation laws. In "Assimilation and Economic Performance: The Case of Federal Indian Policy," she also uses names as a measure of assimilation. Miller identifies that assimilation in 1900 is correlated with the economic development of reservations today. The effect is strongest at lower levels of assimilation and diminishes. Discussant David Wishart (Wittenberg Univ.) told of meeting the voice-actress who played Pocahontas and of working with a group of American Indian youth. He wanted to understand what assimilation meant for the younger generation. Matt Davis (American Univ.) asked about individuals having both a "European" and an "Indian" name, a situation the author noted was common but that putting the European name on the Census indicated greater assimilation, or at least being exposed to an Indian Agent with a stronger desire for individuals to be assimilated.

Trevor Kollman (RMIT Univ.) closed the conference with "Racial Segregation in the Interwar United States: A Dynamic Segregation Approach." The paper considers how communities "tipped" from majority white to majority black. He uses the Schelling model to estimate the proportion of minority residents at which a census tract would "tip" in a number of US cities. He finds numbers for the interwar years that are generally lower than modern estimates. Discussant Justin Buciferro (Eastern Washington) asked if white residents were really responding to the presence of minority families or to the fact that other whites leaving. He also wanted to know more about the preferences of the black migrants. David Mitch (Univ. of Maryland, Baltimore County) asked for more information on how property values played into the "flight" decision of white residents.

The 76th meeting of EHA will take place in Boulder, Colorado, from September 16-18, 2016. The theme chosen by association President Lee Alston is "Economic History and Economic Development." More information is at http://eh.net/eha/economic-history-association-2016-annual-meeting-2/. ▪

Letter from the Editor

Dear Colleagues:

I apologize for the delay in getting this issue of the *Newsletter* out. Thanks for your patience.

I had hoped my tardiness might allow me to include a remembrance of Douglass North (November 5, 1920 – November 23, 2015). Unfortunately, it did not. Please look for them in the summer 2016 issue.

A special thanks goes to Martha Bailey for sharing the materials she prepared to honor Bob Margo's many contributions to economic history.

Finally I'd like to make a plea to my colleagues who are advisors to graduate students, and especially those who advise students who receive support to attend Clio or EHA: Please encourage your students to respond to my requests for reporters. Even though I have spread the job across many more reporters than we did "back in the day," I have a hard time getting folks to volunteer.

Thanks so much, and Happy New Year!

Mary Eschelbach Hansen, *Editor*

An Interview with Leandro Prados de la Escosura

Leandro Prados de la Escosura, D. Phil. (Oxford) and Ph.D. (Complutense, Madrid), is Professor of Economic History at Universidad Carlos III, Madrid. He is Research Fellow at the CEPR, a Research Associate at CAGE, and Corresponding Fellow of Spain's Royal Academy of History. He has been appointed Honorary Maddison Chair at the University of Groningen (2015-2019).

Professor Leandro Prados de la Escosura has taught at Georgetown University (Prince of Asturias Professor) and University of California, San Diego. He has been Leverhulme Visiting Professor at the LSE and a Visiting Fellow at All Souls College, Oxford, the LSE, and the European University Institute. He served as President of the European Historical Economics Society (2001-2003) and in the Executive Committee of the International Economic History Association (2006-2012). He is member of the Editorial Board of Cliometrica, and the Advisory Board of the European Review of Economic History, Explorations in Economic History and the Scandinavian Economic History Review.

This interview was conducted by Claude Diebolt on December 12, 2015, and has been lightly edited for ease of reading.

Your first article was "El comercio exterior de España, 1790-1830: una reconsideración" *and your first book* Comercio exterior y crecimiento económico en España, 1826-1913: Tendencias a largo plazo. *Was there already a cliometric addiction?*

My first article was a translation into Spanish of the first paper I presented at Oxford as a graduate student back in 1978. It was my early attempt to evaluate the impact of the loss of Spanish overseas empire at the time of the Napoleonic Wars and was influenced by the Cliometric debate on the colonial burden.

My first book drew on my Spanish Ph.D. dissertation (my first doctorate). My Ph.D. was an assessment of the trade-growth relationship in 19th century Spain. The results rejected the Dependentist interpretation that blamed openness for Spain's backwardness and confirmed Irving Kravis' view of trade as a handmaiden of growth.

I was an early addict to Cliometrics. By the time I completed my economics degree (Madrid, 1973) I came across Peter Temin's reader on the new

economic history. Under Franco's dictatorship, Spanish economics students and faculty were highly politicized. Economic history provided an opportunity to understand how we had reached such an unenviable situation. I found out years later that colleagues in Latin America, South Africa, and socialist Europe had similar experiences. Let me tell you, Claude, that after democracy was restored, economic history has never been so popular among economists again!

As a young economic historian I organized several quantitative economic history seminars in the spirit of Cliometrics and, together with my friend Pablo Martín-Aceña, organized a conference on the new economic history in Spain in 1983 that appeared as a book (1985).

Since your Master's degree, what were the important steps of your career? Who was your spiritual mentor?

I was lucky to get a job at the university as soon as I finished my five-year degree. It was the beginnings of university expansion in Spain. I was interested in economic development but, at the time, economic history was by far the best academic option in Madrid, so I chose it.

The late Gonzalo Anes, a distinguished scholar who had investigated agricultural crisis in early modern Spain from a Ricardian perspective, was the Professor of Economic History. He had been trained as an economist (unlike most economic historians who were historians) and ran a lively seminar in which we, young scholars influenced by Marxism, had good arguments. He had regular guests among whom I remember Nicolás Sánchez-Albornoz, the historian of Latin American population, who came back to Spain for the first time from exile; Sir John Elliot; Gabriel Tortella, then, at Pittsburg; and the late Douglass North.

The return of Gabriel Tortella to Spain made a deep impact among young economic historians. He was quite different form the usual Spanish academic: young, congenial and approachable. Gabriel had been a students' leader in the 1950s in which he visited Franco's jails twice, and in the 1960s had gone to do a Ph.D. in Economics at Madison, Wisconsin, a hot spot for economic history at the time. In Madrid, Gabriel became the mentor of a group of us, introducing a new approach to economic history that emphasized the rigorous application of economic analysis to historical questions. He led the creation of the Asociación de Historia Económica, an economic history association opened to those interested in Iberian and Latin American economic history, organized the first conference on Spanish economic history, and launched the first peer-reviewed journal in Spain's social sciences, Revista de Historia Económica, now mostly in English and published by Cambridge University Press. Gabriel encouraged us to continue graduate studies abroad. The Civil War and Franco's dictatorship had severed Spain's links to international academic institutions. Those like Gabriel who went to study abroad in the 1960s resumed the pre-Civil War tradition and even those in my generation, who left in the 1970s, represented a tiny minority.

In addition to Gabriel's encouragement, Gonzalo Anes's help was crucial for me to get funding to go to Oxford. He also helped me to overcome my reservation to having Max Hartwell, someone I saw as a reactionary, as my supervisor. I was always grateful to him for that. Max was my supervisor only for a short time (as he became director of the Centre for Socio-Legal Studies), but I remember him as intellectually stimulating, approachable, and extremely tolerant of other people's ideas. We kept in touch until he passed away.

My main intellectual influence was, however, Patrick O'Brien. I met Patrick when I arrived in St. Antony's College, Oxford, in 1976, and only a year later we started our long academic and personal relationship. Max Hartwell suggested that his first student, Patrick O'Brien, should supervise his last one. At the time Patrick was completing his seminal contribution with Çaglar Keyder, Economic Growth in Britain and France 1780-1914 (London: Allen & Unwin, 1978).

Patrick was a most stimulating and demanding supervisor. My meetings with him were brainstorming sessions in which Patrick was always a step ahead of me, thinking aloud about the challenges of my research. He read carefully—and then destroyed—every sentence I wrote. I remember re-writing seven times what I considered the best chapter of my dissertation. Patrick has been for me an example of intellectual rigor and generosity. I owe him most of what I have accomplished.

My Oxford experience was most fruitful. I learnt scholarship through seminars and personal relations. I also left behind the inflexible ideological constraints that dominated Spanish society after Franco.

The accidental fact that foreign degrees were not accepted in Spain at the time forced me to write two doctoral dissertations. I had to return to Madrid to complete a Ph.D. and thanks to my friend and "elder brother" Piero Tedde I got a research grant at the Bank of Spain. In addition to completing a Ph.D. after two years intensive work, I got a tenured Associate Professorship in a national competition at a time when openings were very scattered.
My Oxford dissertation provided me with the opportunity of applying, in the spirit of early Cliometrics, simple economic analysis to reinterpret historical narrative. I wrote a thorough revisionist interpretation of Spain's economic performance in the long nineteenth century (1780s-1913), providing a revisionist picture of the economic transition from the Ancien Régime to the liberal society in Spain, in which I rejected the pessimistic interpretation grounded in the Latin American Dependentist School and neo-Marxist thinking.

My return to Spain was most challenging. In developing societies, being entrepreneurial is a prerequisite to creating the right academic environment to live in. This means, for example, that if you want to attend an academic seminar, you have to organize it first. I did that for the first time in 1983 and, then, together with Pablo Martín-Aceña, for some years. When I joined Carlos III University, the economic history seminar moved here and still is active. I also participated in the launching of Carlos III University, which aimed at creating a research university. There, I had the opportunity to put together a group of economic historians to which Pedro Fraile, James Simpson, Antonio Tena, and Juan Carmona joined from the start, and later incorporated a long list of first class economic historians. During the last 25 years, our economic history group has behaved as a de facto post-doc program. Financial constraints and extreme academic regulations make the academic salary range very narrow in Spain. Thus, we have managed to recruit excellent new Ph.D.s, who after a few year years, leave for positions with better career prospects elsewhere. We feel very proud when we find them as faculty in top world universities.

In the 1990s I oriented my research towards comparative economic history of Southern Europe and the impact of colonial independence of Latin America on both the former colonies and their Iberian colonizers. Patrick O'Brien and I addressed the role of agriculture in European industrialization and the costs and benefits of European imperialism.

I carried out a long-run investigation that led me to the construction of historical national accounts for Spain since 1850 that would appear in book form in 2003. This study placed Spain alongside the countries that had long historical series of GDP per capita. I learnt much from the seminal work done on historical national accounts, and especially from Charles Feinstein, who was inspirational for me when I visited All Souls College, Oxford, in 1997. I spent a whole decade collecting, processing, and constructing the series. This endeavor seems unthinkable today, as it would represent a huge opportunity cost for young economic historians in economics departments. Perhaps becoming full professor at an early age helped me.

I was fortunate to be able to count on the encouragement of Angus Maddison, who was putting together his world database on world GDP and GDP per capita and needed data for Spain. (Actually my recent research with Carlos Álvarez-Nogal on Spain's performance since the middle ages, published in the EHR, was initially stimulated by Angus, who wanted me to go as far back as to Roman Spain.) From our first meeting in 1987, in which we talked extensively about the Spanish Civil War (1936-39), Angus and I got on well. I remember an anecdote about Angus and Spanish historical GDP. Reading The Economist once I found a graph comparing per capita GDP for several countries, Spain being one of them. It sounded familiar but I had not published my estimates yet. Angus had already included my preliminary and highly provisional estimates in his country sample! Years later, when I felt secure enough to publish the figures, I got a good reception by economists and economic historians who congratulated me: They found my figures reassuring because they resembled Maddison's!

I also contributed to the on-going debate on the comparison of living standards –measured by real output per capita—challenging Angus Maddison's fixed-base real-income comparisons.

In the 2000s I expanded my investigation on long run economic performance in Spain. In cooperation with J.R. Rosés, I investigated the sources of growth in modern Spain (published in the JEH and EEH). Simultaneously, I explored how the fruits of growth were distributed. I investigated the evolution of inequality and absolute poverty in modern Spain. Also, in cooperation with Carlos Álvarez-Nogal, I explored Spain's contribution to the Little Divergence within Europe by addressing the decline of early modern Spain and the rise and fall of preindustrial Spain since the Reconquista. We found that Spain had been a frontier economy until the 16th century. It had relatively high standards of living and low inequality prior to become poorer and more unequal after 1600. In comparative perspective, this represented a unique episode of reversal of fortune, to use Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson's expression.

At the beginning of the new century I finally overcame my reticence about doing Latin American economic history and became a practitioner. For many years, since my days at Oxford, I had a great interest in Latin American history. However, its complexity prevented me from doing it. It was John Coatsworth, who together with Victor Bulmer-Thomas and Roberto Cortés Conde, planned to edit an economic history of Latin America, who defeated my resistance. Economic historians in Latin America tend to specialize on their own countries–or in regions within them–so a more ambitious endeavor such as an economic history of the subcontinent required a bold and, as in my case, ignorant, scholar. I had edited with Samuel Amaral a volume on the consequences of independence on both colonies and colonizer in the early 1990s and was the rational choice. I found myself in a field in which there was a wide collection of piecemeal research, rigorous but not very ambitious, and a series of think pieces by non-Latin American scholars, who had written grand interpretations on the basis of very thin evidence. So I set as my task to build bridges between the two strands of literature. As I result I wrote a chapter on the consequence of independence in which I challenged the over-simplistic negative assessment of post-colonial performance in Latin America. My main contribution was to question the use of the United States as a yardstick for Latin America. Post-independence Latin America had much more in common with post-colonial Sub-Saharan Africa or Asia in term of per capita GDP, climate, and human capital endowment than with the contemporary U.S. My rejection of the pessimistic view was re-enforced in a paper questioning the existence of "loss decades" in the half a century after independence that tried to contradict the re-statement of the conventional view by Robert Bates, John Coatsworth, and Jeff Williamson. Later, I challenged the view of Latin America as an ever-unequal society, as it was portrayed in distinguished contributions such those of Stan Engerman and Ken Sokoloff. Inequality was low in mid-19th century Latin America, rose during the first globalization, and continued during the first half of the 20th century to reach the high plateau where it has remained with ups and downs, until today. What was unique of Latin America was not its level of inequality prior to the early 20th century but the fact that it has not declined after 1950. I am glad Jeff Williamson has recently stressed a similar view.

When did you start regularly attending Clio/EHA? What was your experience as member of the Board of Trustees of the Cliometric society?

I was teaching at UCSD in 1984-5 when I attended an all-UC economic history meeting at UCLA. Peter Lindert told me about the First World Congress of Cliometrics that would take place at Northwestern. I had met Larry Neal and Stan Engerman in Oxford and knew by name and work many of the big names in Cliometrics. Evanston was the opportunity to meet them in person. I remember well Bob Fogel, Peter Temin, Paul David, Jeff Williamson, and Joel Mokyr, the local host. It was a great conference. I was part of the tiny group from outside the U.S. that made the Congress international. The group included, among others, Gianni Toniolo, Giles Postal-Vinay, and myself. In my case, it was love at first sight. No lengthy and boring presentations, no academic hierarchies, everyone had read the papers in advance, and debates were intense without losing the sense of humor. I attended the annual conference the year after and still remember Joel Mokyr's friendly advice to "file my paper in the litter bin" as I had enough potential to do better!

In the autumn of 1987 I organized a conference on comparative economic history of Spain and Italy. Patrick O'Brien suggested improving the conference by having first class discussants. I was lucky. Ivan Berend, Angus Maddison, D.N. McCloskey, Joel Mokyr, Sam Williamson, Jon Cohen, and Alan Milward attended and made great comments. During the conference, McCloskey, Mokyr, and Williamson proposed that I should be the local host of the Second World Congress of Cliometrics. I could not say no. During a leave of absence at the European University Institute, Florence, together with Sam Williamson, we organized a huge conference–by Cliometric standards–with about 100 participants. It was at Santander, in northern Spain, where I had been appointed professor in 1988. The Congress was great in every respect: participation, debate, and social events. A group of Europeans (James Foreman-Peck, Rainer Fremdling, Gunnar Persson, Giles Postal-Vinay, Jaime Reis, Gianni Toniolo, and myself…) thought the conference would be the starting point of a Euro-Clio group. However, the weak participation from large European countries persuaded us that we needed to follow an alternative approach. The year after, during the IEHA Congress in Milan, the European Historical Economics Society (EHES) was created. EHES, under James Foreman-Peck's leadership, expanded through western Europe, and rather less successfully to the East, raising funds for workshops that allowed us to have bi-annual meetings starting in 1991. We kept the Clio style of meeting up to 2003, when I was the host in Madrid.

Europe was unlike the U.S. in which Cliometricians co-existed with and then took over the Economic History Association. In Europe there was not a continental association. National ones were usually under the control of local bosses who were traditional in their approach and not too friendly to the application of explicit economic analysis to historical issues. This situation posed a dilemma for us. We could remain a small bunch of people in intellectual agreement as cliometricians or become the building block of a wider European association of economic historians. In fact, the launching of the European Review of Economic History was crucial for the decision we finally made. The success of the new journal, a broad church from its beginnings but clearly oriented towards a Cliometric approach, persuaded some of us to push for a more open and inclusive society. It was the bold and clever initiative of Sevket Pamuk to organize a massive conference in Istanbul in 2005 that defeated any resistance and opened the way to the de facto European economic history association EHES has become during the last decade.

You lived in many different places. What are the similarities and differences in doing Cliometric research around the world?

In my view, quantitative and analytical economic history—as Cliometrics has often been labeled outside the U.S.—has been less neo-classical in the rest of the world. I would dare to say that the less-developed the country or region, the more relevant economic history is for current economic and political debates. In Southern Europe or in Latin America a new interpretation of economic history can easily become a matter of public debate. History matters for current debates in Latin America, and this percolates up to the work of international institutions. Such is the case of the World Bank office for Latin America and the Caribbean, which usually provides a historical insight for any relevant issue. In this respect, "presentist" economic history, in which today's problems are approached with a historical insight, may contribute significantly to contemporary debates. The relevance of economic history in less-developed regions reminds Cliometricians in the advanced world that history actually matters.

What is your vision about the future of Cliometric research?

Cliometrics won the battle among economic historians worldwide sometime ago. Mainstream economic history is now the offspring of Cliometrics. There are still large pockets of resistance that can be easily identified at national economic history conferences in Europe and Latin America (and perhaps also in Asia), but in international conferences Cliometricians (although not with that name) prevail. Thus, I don't envisage a challenge coming from within economic history. I think the real and worrying threat is falling into irrelevance by addressing narrow issues.

In my view, what makes economic history relevant and intellectually appealing is thinking "big." This is why the views of Max Weber, Fernand Braudel, and Alexander Gerschenkron became widespread (and are still around). The economic historians' agenda is written these days by other social scientists (Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson, Angus Deaton, Oded Galor, or Branko Milanovic, to cite a few) that draw largely from the pool of ideas provided by those distinguished and "qualitative" economic historians from the past. Perhaps excessive specialization has rendered economic history narrow-minded and inward-looking. The replication of standard techniques from applied economics makes economic history results predictable and hardly challenging. Moreover, the conventional tools from neoclassical economics are insufficient to deal with the institutional and technological change that constitutes the central challenges in economic history. This helps explain the paradox that, just when economic history is more present than ever in the social sciences, openings for economic historians are declining across world academic institutions and economic history departments are disappearing.

We have lectured economists and other social scientists that economic history provides a laboratory of natural experiments that can be extremely useful for social scientists, and they have learnt the lesson. You cannot read a political science, sociology, demography, or economics journal without coming across a historical insight on a contemporary problem.
Our comparative advantage differs from that of empirical economists because, by addressing long-run questions, what is exogenous for most social scientists becomes endogenous for us. But it requires something more than just IV techniques. We need to explain persistence and move away from the "compression of history" (Gareth Austin dixit). All things that have occurred in the last few centuries cannot be attributed to remote shocks that render economic policies, institutional change, and technological change irrelevant in historical explanations!

Fortunately, in the new cohorts of economic historians there are those who have a strong training in social sciences and historical intuition, and hopefully they will lead the way. We should take advantage of the ongoing debates on the causes and consequences of the Great Recession (secular stagnation, productivity slowdown, inequality, etc.) to put economic history back at the center of political and economic debates.

Let's talk about the imperfection of datasets. How can we do it better according to your experience with GDP series for example?

I think we have made significant progress in comparing the level of development across countries and over time. We now look at aggregate performance using GDP or GNI, while still in 1980 economic historians would focus on industrial output or yield per hectare. Although Paul Bairoch made an effort to place the debate about aggregate performance over time in terms of GNP per head, it was only since the publication of Angus Maddison (1982) Phases of Capitalist Development that economic historians started using the same analytical tools employed by economists. Thanks to Kravis, Summers, and Heston's work and their way to facilitate access to it in the Penn World Tables, and, especially, to Angus paramount work (plus his ability to twist friends' arms to produce national estimates he could add to his dataset), we have comparable figures, however crude, of GDP per head across countries and over time. The Maddison Project, in the spirit of Angus, keeps updates and expands Angus' work. Happily, the Maddison Project is located at Groningen where the Penn World Tables are now also based. Hopefully there will be opportunities for reconciling both data sets.

Two main challenges, though, remain ahead. One, much discussed but far from solved, is the misleading picture provided by using a fixed benchmark over long time spans. The most used one, pioneered by Angus Maddison (and maintained in the Maddison Project), is to make comparisons in 1990 international prices (projecting backwards per capita GDP levels in 1990, expressed in 1990 'international' dollars, in purchasing power parities), with volume indices taken from historical national accounts. Perhaps, its most obvious shortcoming is the severe index number problem it introduces; that is, the fact that the basket of goods and services produced and consumed in 1990 becomes less and less representative as one moves back in time, since preferences and relative prices change as a result of modern economic growth and technological change. As we teach our undergraduates, economic growth brings with it changes in relative prices but, by using constant 1990 Geary-Khamis dollars, we implicitly reject this idea. Of course, the challenge is to provide frequent benchmarks so we mitigate the index number problem. This implies a significant and cooperative effort. Nonetheless, we should openly accept the anachronism of expressing levels of income per head in remote periods in 1990 Geary-Khamis dollars. Convenience should not replace scientific rigor.

Another, less obvious, problem is how historical GDP are constructed and spliced to modern national accounts. Not long ago it was made public that Nigeria's GDP figures for 2013 had been revised upwards by 89 per cent, as the base year for its calculation was brought forward from 1990 to 2010. As a result, Nigeria became the largest economy in Sub-Saharan Africa. Though spectacular, this is not an exceptional case. How should this revision affect GDP time series and, consequently, the country's relative position? Should the existing historical series be re-scaled in the same proportion?

Official national accounts are only constructed in a homogeneous way for short periods and are usually available from mid-twentieth century onwards, sometimes only for the latest decades. Thus, when a homogeneous long-run GDP series is required, various sets of national accounts using different benchmark years and constructed with dissimilar methodologies need to be spliced. Different choices of splicing procedures to derive a single GDP series may result in substantial differences in levels and growth rates and, hence, in significant biases in the assessment of economic performance over time. The obvious solution would be computing GDP for the years covered by the old benchmark with the same sources and procedures employed in the construction of the new benchmark. However, this option is beyond the resources of an independent researcher.

A simple solution, widely used by national accountants (and implicitly accepted in international comparisons), is the backward projection, or retropolation, approach, that accepts the reference level provided by the most recent benchmark estimate and re-scales the earlier benchmark series with the ratio of the new to the old series in the year at which the two series overlap. The practical advantage this procedure is that it preserves the earlier benchmark's rates of variation. Usually the most recent benchmark provides a higher GDP level for the overlapping year, as its coverage of economic activities is wider. Thus, the backwards projection of the new benchmark GDP level with the available growth rates implies a systematic upwards revision of GDP levels for earlier years.

An alternative to the backward projection is the interpolation procedure that accepts the levels computed directly for each benchmark-year as the best possible estimates, on the grounds that they have been obtained with 'complete' information on quantities and prices, and distributes the gap or difference between the 'new 'and 'old' benchmark series in the overlapping year at a growing rate.

The choice of procedure makes a significant difference for GDP levels and growth rates. When the levels for earlier years are re-scaled upwards with the retropolation procedure, the country in question becomes retrospectively richer. Alternatively, interpolating each original benchmark tends to raise the economy's rate of growth and, hence, casts a lower initial GDP level. Differences between the results of the interpolation and retropolation procedures appear much more dramatic when placed in a long run perspective, that is, when the spliced national accounts are projected backwards into the nineteenth century with volume indices taken from historical accounts series.

The bottom line is that splicing national accounts must be handled with extreme care, especially when countries have experienced intense growth and deep structural change, as there is a risk to bias their income levels upwards and, consequently, their growth rates downwards.

Your current research is on welfare and inequality, and also on economic freedom in the long run. Can you give us a preview?

I have an interest on the evolution of well-being over time. Economists usually address well-being in terms of GDP per head. However, well-being can equally be viewed as a multi-dimensional phenomenon that is affected not just by material goods, but also by many other elements, including health, education, political voice, environment and personal insecurity. I decided to follow Amartya Sen's capabilities approach that makes well-being dependent on a combination of 'functionings' ('doings and beings') and 'capabilities' (the freedom to choose among alternative bundles of functionings). A practical application is the concept of human development, defined as "a process of enlarging people's choices" (UNDP, 1990, p. 10). Human development means enjoying a healthy life, acquiring knowledge and achieving a decent standard of living, and provides a long run view of human well-being.

I found substantial gains in world human development since mid-nineteenth century, especially over 1913-1970. A major advance across the board took place between 1920 and 1950 just at the time of backlash against economic globalization, which resulted from substantial gains in longevity and education. Thus, while real GDP per head stagnated or even declined as world commodity and factor markets disintegrated, health and education practices became increasingly globalized and result in a major advance in human development. Although the gap between OECD and the Rest widened in absolute terms, an incomplete catching up took place across the board between 1913 and 1970. Since 1970, the variance in the Rest's performance has been large.

Social dimensions have driven gains in human development across the board over the long run. Education and, to lesser extent, life expectancy at birth appear to lie behind the limited catching-up in human development in the Rest.

The only period in which substantial gains in longevity were achieved in the Rest was that of the epidemiological or first health transition, which was experienced in developing regions over 1920-1960s, Since 1970, longevity gains slowed down in the Rest as the early-life, first health transition was exhausted. At the turn of twentieth century a second health transition started in the advanced countries, with mortality falling among the elderly as respiratory and cardiovascular diseases were fought more efficiently by generations whose health and nutrition in childhood had been better (Cutler et al. 2006). The Rest's absence from this second health transition helps to explain why the developing regions have fallen behind in terms of human development. This largely explains its failure to catch-up with the West despite the educational expansion and the recovery, at the turn of the twentieth century, of growth in per capita income.

This research led me to another question: is market freedom effective at enhancing wellbeing? Or would be constraining economic freedom a more efficient way to increase net human welfare?

A tension has long existed between (1) the view that perceives the extension of (negative) economic freedom as the most effective way to promote welfare and equality (that is, positive freedom) and (2) the view that stresses welfare and equality as prerequisites of (negative) economic freedom. It often assumed that society faces a trade-off between preserving individuals' (negative) freedom to enhance their well-being, and constraining this innate freedom so that individuals, by enhancing their positive freedom, achieve well-being.

Does this trade-off apply in the long run? The purpose of my ongoing investigation is to establish whether such a trade-off exist over time, or only during specific periods. Thus, I have been constructing indices of economic freedom and human development that, together with additional evidence on political freedom and income inequality, will be the basis of the research.

The results I have gotten on economic freedom for a sample of developed economies suggest that economic liberty was higher in 2007, the eve of the recent recession, than at any time over the last one and a half centuries, but its evolution has been far from linear. Over 1850-2007, improvement in economic freedom represented nearly three-fourths of its maximum potential. From the mid-nineteenth century to the eve of the First World War steady advancement of economic liberty took place across the board in

OECD countries. During the first half of the twentieth century, economic freedom suffered a severe setback. Economic freedom expanded in the second half of the twentieth century and peaked at the beginning of the twentieth-first century, with two expansionary phases, the 1950s and, especially, the post-1980 period, in which economic freedom expanded until the eve of the current recession.

My preliminary results tend to reject the existence of a long-term trade off between economic liberty (a negative freedom) and human development and political freedom (positive freedoms). Liberty, both negative and positive, have thrived across the OECD over the last hundred and fifty years. These results lend support to the view of freedom as indivisible, as exposed by Hayek, Friedman, and North, and also by Sen and Rawls. Enjoying full political rights, leading the life one has reasons to value, and avoiding interference or coercion by others have been largely complementary in the OECD over the last one and half centuries. To what extent such an association exists for other world regions would be the next step in the research.

Selected Publications by Leandro Prados de la Escosura

Books

Exceptionalism and Industrialisation: Britain and its European Rivals 1688-1815, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press (2004).

El progreso económico de España, 1850-2000 [The Economic Progress of Spain, 1850-2000], Bilbao, Fundación BBVA (2003).

De imperio a nación. Crecimiento y atraso económico en España (1780 1930) [From Empire to Nation. Growth and Economic Backwardness in Spain (1780-1913)], Madrid, Alianza (1988)

Comercio exterior y crecimiento económico en España, 1826 1913 [Foreign Trade and Economic Growth in Spain, 1826-1913], Madrid, Banco de España (1982).

Chapters in Books

'Capitalism and Human Welfare', in L. Neal and J. G. Williamson (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Capitalism*, 2 vols. Vol. 2 The Spread of Capitalism, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press (2014), pp. 501-529.

'The Economic Consequences of Independence', in V. Bulmer-Thomas, J.H. Coatsworth and R. Cortés Conde (eds.*), The Cambridge Economic History of Latin America,* New York, Cambridge University Press, (2006), vol. I, pp. 463-504.

Articles in Peer-Reviewed Journals

"Economic Freedom in the Long Run: Evidence from OECD Countries (1850-2007)," *Economic History Review* 69, 2 (2016). http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/store/10.1111/ehr.12130/asset/ehr12130.pdf?v=1&t=ik2wd0ju&s=87f9c17e926bf12b18a6b104816c46c5b27be84c

"Mismeasuring Long Run Growth. The Bias from Spliced National Accounts: The Case of Spain," *Cliometrica* (2016) 10 (3). http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s11698-015-0131-4

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"The Rise and Fall of Spain, 1270-1850" (with C. Álvarez-Nogal), *Economic History Review* 66, 1 (2013), 1-37

"Lost Decades? Economic Performance in Post-Independence Latin America," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 41, 2 (2009), 279-307

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"International Comparisons of Real Product, 1820-1990: An Alternative Data Set," *Explorations in Economic History* 37, 1 (2000), 1-41.

"Agricultural Productivity and European Industrialization, 1890-1980" (with P.K. O'Brien), *Economic History Review* XLV, 3 (1992), 514-536.

"Was Spain Different? Spanish Historical Backwardness Revisited" (with C. Molinas), *Explorations in Economic History* 26, 2 (1989), 385 402

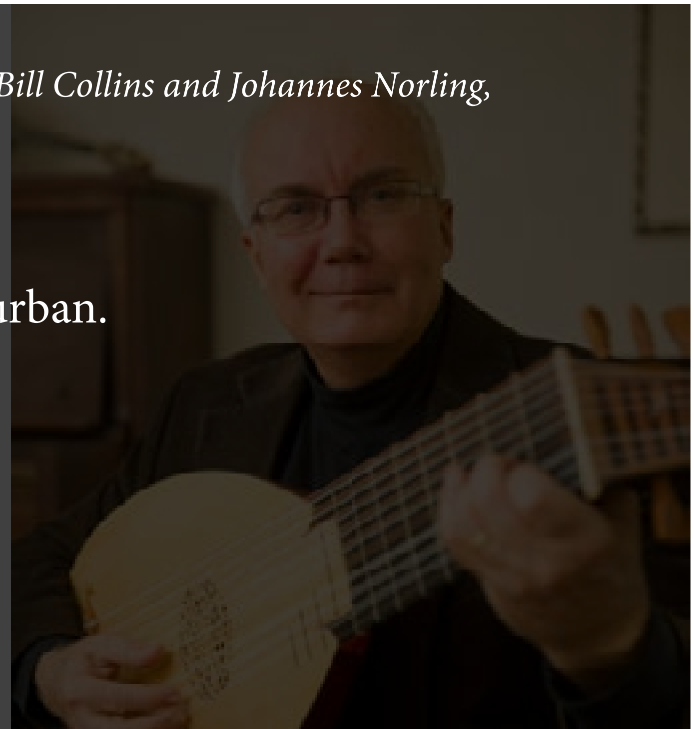
"El comercio exterior de España, 1790 1830: una reconsideración," *Hacienda Pública Españo*la 55 (1978), 339 349. ▪

Robert Margo Blues

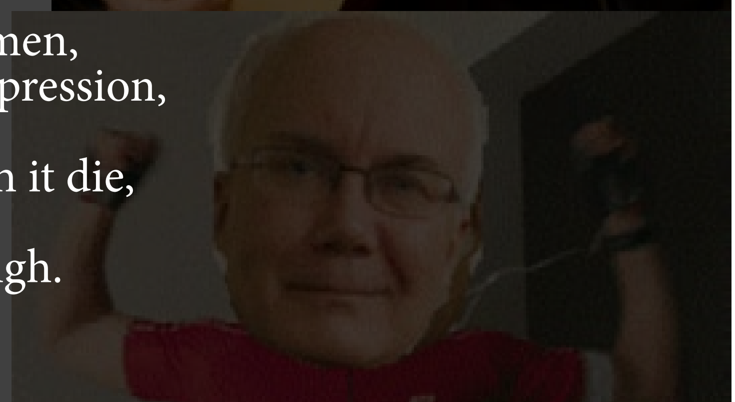
(Adapted by Martha Bailey, with the assistance of Bill Collins and Johannes Norling, from Johnny Cash's "Folsom Prison Blues.")

When Bob was just a student,
Bob Fogel told him, son,
history is your future, but don't forget urban.

He wrote on schools and wages,
in cliometric style.
When he heard that data calling,
he danced a jig and smiled.

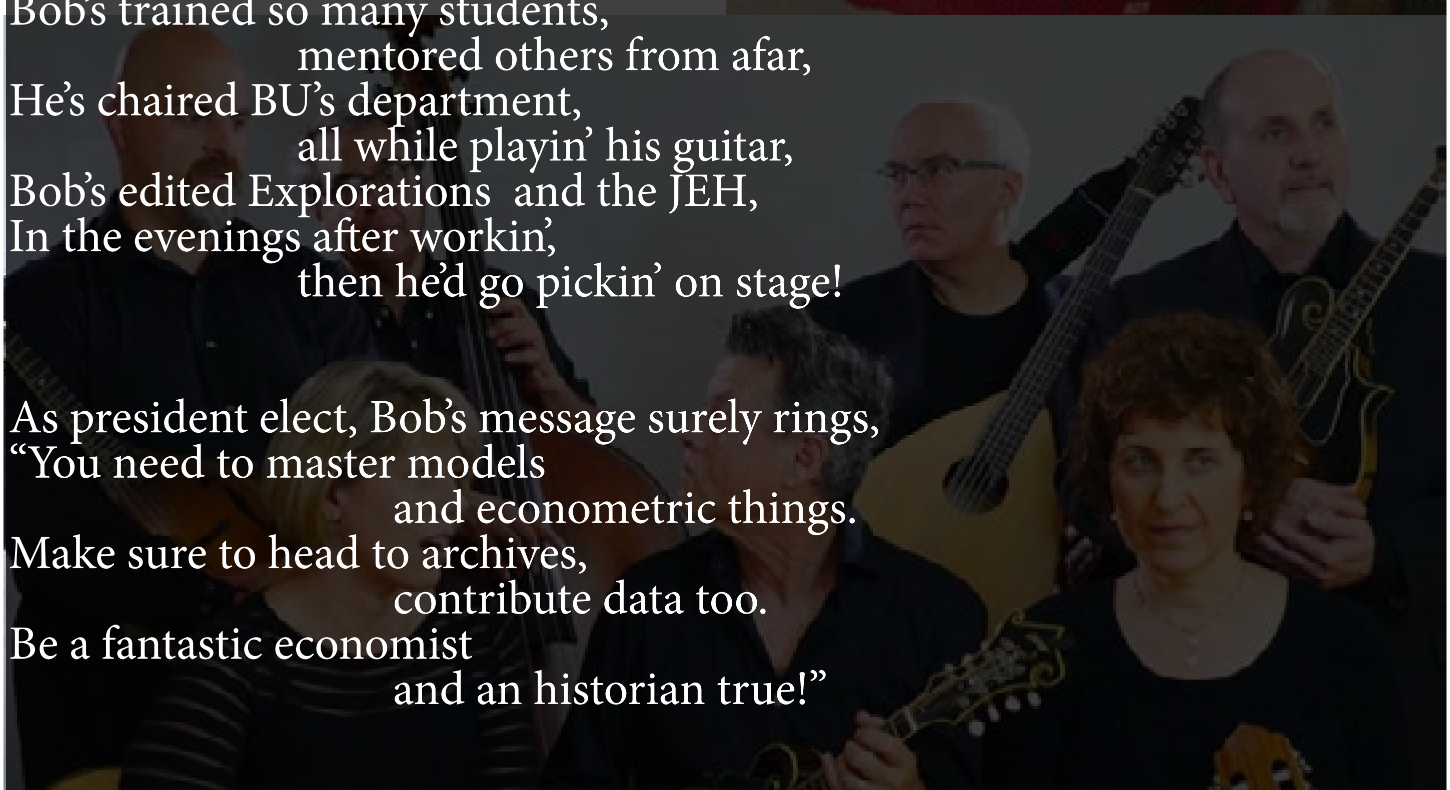


Bob had ideas coming,
about riots and post-men,
Ante-bellum puzzles and Great Compression,
He shot down faulty history
just to watch it die,
Bob corrected muddled thinking,
raising history high.



Bob's trained so many students,
mentored others from afar,
He's chaired BU's department,
all while playin' his guitar,
Bob's edited Explorations and the JEH,
In the evenings after workin',
then he'd go pickin' on stage!

As president elect, Bob's message surely rings,
"You need to master models
and econometric things.
Make sure to head to archives,
contribute data too.
Be a fantastic economist
and an historian true!"



An Interview with Alan Olmstead

Alan L. Olmstead is Distinguished Research Professor at the University of California, Davis. He dedicated his career to UC-Davis, where he was first appointed to the post of "Acting" Assistant Professor in 1969 and later went on to be Director of the Agricultural History Center and the Institute on Governmental Affairs. Among his many contributions to economic history are three books, three edited volumes, and co-editorship of the Millennial Edition of Historical Statistics. He has earned the Vernon Carstensen and Wayne D. Rasmussen Awards from the Agricultural History Society, the Cole Prize and the Alice Hanson Jones Prize from the Economic History Association, in addition to many other awards and honors. He served as President of the Economic History Association in 2007-2008 and was elected a Fellow of the Cliometric Society in 2010.

Interviews for this piece were conducted by Mary Eschelbach Hansen in Nashville and Washington, D.C., on September 11 and November 11, 2015. Transcripts were lightly edited and amended through e-mail correspondence.

You earned Master's degrees in both History and Economics at Wisconsin. Which did you enroll in first? Why'd you do both?

I went to Madison to do labor history. But then

I went to visit Jeff Williamson. He told me, "You don't want to be a labor historian, you want to be an economic historian!" He sent me off to take micro theory, econometrics, and so forth. When I told him I couldn't take those classes, he replied, "Oh, you can take 'em." Of course it wasn't as math-intensive then. I got some books and boned up on my math, and even though I had been a history major at San Jose State, I had taken calculus and really liked it.

As a result, I never really saw my official history advisor, ever, and I may have forged some signatures for the first few years. I'm probably the only person – alive or dead – who had 'Frederick Jackson Turner', 'John R. Commons', and 'Elizabeth Brandeis' as their advisors on their bursar's card.

I submitted my MA thesis for history and took the econ prelims shortly after. My MA thesis was on The Bank for Savings in New York and then my dissertation was on savings banks more generally.

Williamson was also how I got the idea to look at savings banks. I went into Williamson's office after having read Michael Harrington's book on poverty in America,[1] which was all the rage for radicals back then. I told him I wanted to work on the history of poverty. Jeff told me: "Okay! Go write about savings banks!" I said, "What?!" Well, of course, they were founded to help the 'provident' poor.

By the time I got onto this, there had been some pretty substantial work by Lance Davis and Payne and Davis,[2] and there was an article by Fishlow on English savings banks,[3] as well as some older texts. I wrote to the President of The Bank for Savings of New York and never got a reply, so I went there and asked for an appointment with him, and got it. He said he'd love to help me and handed me the "history" of the bank, you know, with the pictures of the past buildings and past presidents. I told him, no, I want to know if you have any old documents or anything. He sent me to a vice president. She opened a drawer and there was the first

[1] Michael Harrington, *The Other America; Poverty in the United States* (New York: Macmillan, 1962).

[2] See Lance Edwin and Peter Lester Payne, "From Benevolence to Business: The Story of Two Savings Banks.". *Business History Review* 32(1958): 386-406; and Davis' dissertation "United States Financial Intermediaries in the Early Nineteenth Century: Four Case Studies," Johns Hopkins University, 1956.

[3] Albert Fishlow, "The Trustee Savings Banks, 1817–1861." *The Journal of Economic History* 21(1961): 26-40.

mortgage loan, but not much else. Here we were – the president, the vice president, and this 20-something grad student – and the guy in the hallways says, "I know where those documents are!" It was the messenger.

The three of us followed the messenger down into the basement of the bank. He opened the door to a big room, full of documents. It turned out that the bank's vault had the minutes going way back, even to a year or so before the bank was formally founded. Here was a record of every nineteenth century depositor and their accounts. I used one bank as an entrée to the next. It was all just sitting there, in the heart of New York, and it had never been used.

When you were at Wisconsin, there were a lot of people doing economic history, weren't there?

It was a great place. In economics, at one time or another, when I was a student, there were: Rondo Cameron, Jeff Williamson, John Bowman, and Ralph Andriano.[4] The last year I was there Nate Rosenberg came. In the history department there was Eric Rampart, Mort Rothstein, and the Bogues. It was an exciting place to be.

How did you get from savings banks to agricultural research?

I went to Davis for my first job and published the book on savings banks a couple of years after. I was looking for new topics. There were just fabulous resources on agriculture in the UC-Davis library. I kept hiding out, looking at state and federal reports, things of that sort. At that time, one of the flagship articles in economic history was Paul David's paper on the reaper.[5] I was using that in my graduate class and just started wondering, "What if you changed this? Does this assumption matter?" I didn't plan to write a paper on the reaper, but it led there.[6]

There was an Agricultural History Center at Davis. Of course, they had the journal *Agricultural History*, and they were writing bibliographies and things of that sort. I went to some ag history conferences, and I organized one. Jim Shideler, who was the journal editor and a professor of history, asked me if I'd like to be the Center's director. He put together the team of people that made it happen. I got release time for the appointment and wrote a research proposal – if I found it today I'd probably laugh a bit – to study the causes and consequences of technical change in agriculture, more generally, beyond the reaper. Once I got to the Center, I sort of pushed it in the direction of being an economic history center as well as an agricultural history center. One thing led to another.

One thing led to a lot of money coming though there!

A fair amount, yes.

How did you pull that off?

The first grants were Hatch grants,[7] which was the source of funds for a lot of people all across the school of agriculture. This wasn't quite as extensive as going to the NSF. I got RA time, conference travel. Other funding from the center came from the USDA – we wrote bibliographies on contract. The journal had its own funding. We had some funding from the graduate dean in agriculture.

This is when the All-UC group got going. There had been an earlier conference organized by Roger Random and Richard Sutch and Harry Scheiber (who at the time was at San Diego) and Al Fishlow in around 1972. When I took over at the Ag History Center, I went down to visit Harry Scheiber to give a paper, and he suggested that we have another conference. So we did. I borrowed heavily on the proposal for the earlier conference and then we kept writing them. Eventually we got more-or-less permanent funding for the All-UC group. We started doing a lot of other things. We got money for graduate student research support, and we got money to host visiting speakers. We were running two or three conferences a year. A lot of people helped carry the load, of course. Roger and Richard, Mary Yeager and Eliot Brownlee, and many others.

My more major fundraising came later when I took

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[4] Read a lovely tribute to Ralph Andriano in an Wisconsin alumni interview at http://www.uwalumni.com/news/honored-economist_wisconsin-roots/.

[5] Paul A. David, "The Mechanization of Reaping in the Ante-Bellum Midwest," in Henry Rosovsky, ed., *Industrialization in Two Systems: Essays in Honor of Alexander Gerschenkron* (New York, 1966), pp. 3-39.

[6] The first of several articles that it led to was Alan L. Olmstead, "The Mechanization of Reaping and Mowing in American Agriculture, 1833-1870," *Journal of Economic History* 35(1975): 327-52.

[7] For a description see http://nifa.usda.gov/program/hatch-act-1887-multistate-research-fund; for some recent research on the impact of grants under the Hatch Act see Shawn Kantor and Alexander Whalley, "Knowledge Spillovers from Research Uni-versities: Evidence from Endowment Value Shocks," *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 96 (2014): 171-88.

over the Institute for Governmental Affairs in 1984.

I didn't know until I read your CV for this interview that after you headed up the Ag History Center you headed up the Institute of Governmental Affairs (IGA). What is the purpose of the Institute, and how did you get involved with it?

The IGA was the biggest center of social science research activities on campus. It had the ability to fund projects and seed projects. It had a fairly large staff: it had its own library and librarian; it had an editor. The idea was to provide research to support Sacramento. A lot of people did local or county research into, for example, cities with elected mayors versus cities with a more active professional manager. It was important to me to start supporting people who could publish with good academic presses and in good journals. So I transitioned to a structure of programs built around star researchers. We started conference programs, seminar programs, and significant outreach programs. Rather than being tied to the legislature or governor's office, we tied these programs to more permanent research and public policy agencies in the state like the Franchise Tax Board and the Department of Transportation, places with an ongoing presence and ongoing set of needs. I was really in a privileged position. I was working with many of the best social scientists in a half dozen departments at Davis. It was a lot of fun.

What advice do you have for us who sometimes get frustrated with our administrators and think we might want to see if we can do a better job?

I don't think I should give advice, but I'll tell you what I did. I spoke my mind. I prided myself in not going along with the academic fad of the moment, or supporting the administrator who was trying to create something to put on his or her CV just to get a better job someplace else.

When did you start regularly attending Clio/EHA? We've had a few colorful stories in these pages from the meetings in 1960s and 1970s. What's your favorite story? (Give us one you can actually tell in a public form.)

Well, I have a lot stories that I can't tell you then, and they all involve me! Really, though. I do have fond memories of one session, not long after *Time on the Cross* came out.[8] Richard Such and Bob Fogel were taking the chalk out of each other's hands. That was quite exciting.

Many of our readers will have read the Roundtable *in the recent* Journal of Economic History *about* The Half Has Never Been Told.[9] *Do you think the gap between quantitative economic history and "narrative" economic history is getting wider rather than narrower?*

For a long time historians and economists haven't been talking with each other. Now with the "new history of capitalism" there is, in some sense, an improvement. Historians and economic historians are talking about the kind of things we are all interested in. Historians of the new capitalism are doing less cultural, or Foucauldian, work than some other historians are doing. We can be on similar, if not the same, wavelength. Of course, the Roundtable was on a book that I believe need more critical discussion than some reviewers gave it. The specific disputes out there for people to consider for themselves.[10]

Tell me about your long-time co-author Paul Rhode and how you came to work with him.

I've been privileged and blessed to have a research relationship with Paul. Paul grew up in Davis. When Paul was an undergraduate, John Roemer (now at Yale), told me to look out for him, because Paul had been in one of John's classes. Paul did spectacularly in my undergraduate econ history class and I hired him as an RA. One thing led to another, and he worked for and with me on several projects. At the same time he was working on his own things, one of which led eventually to a Cole Prize-winning paper in the JEH on California agriculture.[11] Paul went on Stanford on fellowship and we began to co-author—or maybe he was "senior" author. It's a testament to his good humor that he's been able to put with me for so long!

When did you retire from teaching? I see that you are busier than ever! You have a book in progress. Will you

[8] Robert William Fogel and Stanley L. Engerman, *Time on the Cross: The Economics of American Negro Slavery* (WW Norton & Company, 1995).

[9] The Roundtable is in Volume 75, Issue 03, September 2015, pp 919-931 (doi: 10.1017/S0022050715000996) on Edward Baptist, *The Half Has Never Been Told: Slavery and the Making of Ameri-can Capitalism* (Basic Books, 2014).

[10] Two blogs with useful posts and links on the topic: http://pseudoerasmus.com/ and http://bradleyahansen.blogspot.com/.

[11] Paul W. Rhode, Learning, Capital Accumulation, and the Transformation of California Agriculture." *The Journal of Economic History*, 55 (1995): 773-800.

give us a preview?

I retired from teaching in 2009. In the last year I've given 15 or so seminars or lectures on *Arresting Contagion*. I've been able to talk to a lot of high-ranking agriculture and public health officials.

What's next? A book on slavery and cotton. We have this very large sample on cotton picking that we've accumulated over more than a decade with the help of RAs and hired local researchers. That sample is the heart of our 2008 JEH paper (see selected bibliography below) and featured in *Creating Abundance*. But what we've published so far dealt with plantation-level aggregates. There's a lot more we can say about gender, age, location, and productivity in picking using the individual-level data. Picking is a crucially important activity to study because it was peak-load activity; it says a lot about the total process. We are hopeful that this book will provide some insights about long-standing debates in economic history as well as insights for the new historians of capitalism.

What, in your opinion, is the most important thing economic historians can do to contribute?

During the financial crisis, a lot of people were calling for more on economic history to help with understanding the crisis, including folks such as Alan Greenspan, who (of course) had just left the Fed. But I don't think we economic historians are best at responding on short notice to calls for specific research. What we do best is building substantial databases to try to explain the development process, describing the status of people at various points in time, and (especially) considering the rise of institutions, their actions, their possible capture. What can we learn from this history about how to protect today's institutions and how to build tomorrow's institutions. What can we take away from history to help prevent people from behaving badly?

One of the main themes of Arresting Contagion is that these issues are fundamental. We know there's a free-rider problem. So how do you build institutions for collective action? How do you do that in a federal society in which the central authority has very little police power, while diseases don't pay any heed to state boundaries? How do you deal with the asymmetric information? How do you create incentive structures to get people to cooperate for the public good? How do you create punishment structures to get people to cooperate for the public good? These are enduring questions that apply to diseases, global warming, the increase in resistance to antibiotics, and the shortening half-life and reduced effectiveness of antibiotics. If we are doing to deal effectively with these issues in the future it certainly helps to understand how people dealt with them in the past.

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President Margo's party!

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Susan Carter, Scott Gartner, Michael Haines, Alan L. Olmstead, Richard Sutch, and Gavin Wright, eds., *Historical Statistics of the United States: Earliest Times to the Present, Millennial Edition,* 5 vols. Cambridge University Press, 2006. Also available in an electronic edition.

Save the Date!

World Congress of Cliometrics

The 8th World Congress of Cliometrics will be held in Strasbourg from July 4-7, 2017.

http://www.cliometrie.org/en/conferences/world-congress-of-cliometrics

The World Congress is designed to provide extensive discussion of new and innovative research in historical economics and econometric history, with an expected 80-90 papers to be selected for presentation and discussion.

The World Congress website for paper submissions, hotel reservations, and conference registration will open in November 2016. Those wishing to present a paper should provide an abstract and a 3-5 page summary of the proposed paper.

We particularly encourage paper proposals from graduate students. A grant from the National Science Foundation provides competitive support for travel and accommodations for students on the program.

Each paper is devoted a 45 minutes session, in which authors have 5 minutes to make an opening statement and the rest of the session (40 minutes) is devoted to discussion among all conference participants in the spirit of the annual Cliometric conferences.

All sessions will be held at the Strasbourg Convention Centre: http://www.strasbourg-events.com/en

Corrections

Volume 2015 Issue 1 of the Newsletter misstated the affiliation of Suchit Arora. Dr. Arora is now at the State Teachers Retirement System of Ohio.

On page 9 of the same issue, the quotation of Dr. Arora's comments on mortality in the Northeast were taken out of context. His suggestion to the authors was that fatality ratios (deaths divided by prevalence) may capture the psychological issues involved with demand for life insurance better than death rates do.

Alan L. Olmstead, *New York City Mutual Savings Banks, 1819-1861. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1976.*

Articles:

Alan L. Olmstead, "Biological Innovation and Productivity Growth in the Antebellum Cotton Economy," *Journal of Economic History*, vol. 68 (December 2008), 1123-71 (with Paul W. Rhode) (winner of the Rasmussen Award).

Alan L. Olmstead and Paul W. Rhode, "Hog Round Marketing, Mongrelized Seed, and Government Policy: Institutional Change in U.S. Cotton Production, 1920-60," *Journal of Economic History*, vol. 63 (June 2003), 447-88. (winner of the Cole Prize).

Alan L. Olmstead and Paul W. Rhode, "Reshaping the Landscape: The Impact and Diffusion of the Tractor in American Agriculture, 1910-60," *Journal of Economic History*, vol. 61 (September 2001), 663-98. (winner of the Rasmussen Award). ▪

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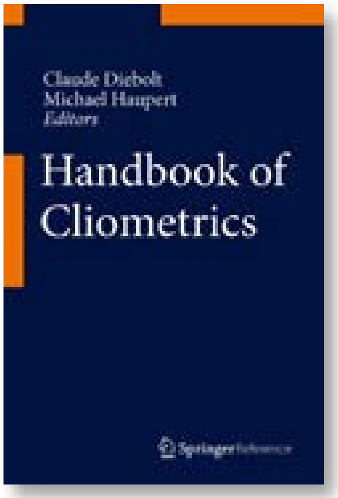

1st ed. 2015, XXII, 590 p. 59 illus., 34 illus. in color.

SPRINGER REFERENCE

C. **Diebolt**, M. **Haupert** (Eds.)

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