

The 2011 Distinguished Fellow of the History of Economics Society is Professor E. Roy Weintraub of Duke University. The nomination of Professor Weintraub came from Professor Mary Morgan (LSE) and Professor H. Spencer Banzhaf (Georgia State), and because their nomination letter provides such an eloquent statement of Professor Weintraub's achievements, I will read it out here, in its entirety.

"Professor Weintraub's research has focused on the history of mathematical economics. Anyone writing in this literature owes a considerable debt to Professor Weintraub and bears an obligation to confront his views. More generally, he has promoted an awareness of, and fostered contact with, the larger social and intellectual context in which economics developed. Through his influence, historians of economics are now in closer contact with literary studies, science studies, and the history of science. Taken together, his primary research and his influential historiographic approach constitute an exceptional lifetime achievement.

"Professor Weintraub's academic life began in mathematics and economics, with a BA in mathematics from Swarthmore (1964) and a PhD in applied mathematics from the University of Pennsylvania (1969), supervised by Lawrence Klein. His early interest in mathematical economics is exemplified by his books: *General Equilibrium Theory* (1974), *Conflict and Co-operation in Economics* (1975), and *Microfoundations: The Compatibility of Microeconomics and Macroeconomics* (1979). To a considerable extent, he defined the parameters of the debate, and his work remains essential reading thirty-five years later. This early interest in the foundational aspects of economics turned toward methodology and the philosophy of economics, through Lakatos's historiography, and, eventually, to history. The direction is already clear in *Microfoundations* (1979), in which he first introduces Lakatosian history as rational reconstruction as an explanatory tool. *Microfoundations* represents a key transition in Professor Weintraub's career, being simultaneously an important contribution to a contemporary debate while also arguably his first major contribution to the history of mathematical economics.

"His second milestone in that project, *General Equilibrium Analysis: Studies in Appraisal* (1985), is generally regarded as the most successful attempt to apply Lakatos's historical method to judge economic research programs on a standard of progressiveness. This work remains widely admired as a model analytical study: his deep knowledge of equilibrium economics enabled him to write with significant authority. Yet, increasingly, Professor Weintraub found the Lakatosian framework to be too Procrustean, and he began to doubt the authority of philosophy or methodology to illuminate history. Not one to do things by halves, in a widely cited (and twice reprinted) paper, "Methodology Doesn't Matter, But the History of Thought Might" (1989), Professor Weintraub repudiated philosophy and methodology as instruments for the study of the disciplinary basis of economics. Professor Weintraub's historical turn was complete with the publication of *Stabilizing Dynamics* (1991). With this volume, he established himself as one of the most original and creative historians of economics of his generation. Professor Weintraub's continued his engagement with the history of 20th century mathematical economics in *How Economics Became a Mathematical Science* (2002), as well as numerous shorter pieces. Each chapter of these books presents a distinct episode centered on the history of specific individuals and their context, each beautifully crafted and compelling in its argument. These narratives

demonstrate Professor Weintraub's ability to present messy, contingent, and local histories as compelling in themselves, while allowing the overarching themes to emerge naturally. We are deeply impressed by his ability to write in such a way; for this is how history strikes us on the ground as it is happening. The residual mystery is just how he manages to catch history on the wing, as it were, while yet exploring the wider, more significant disciplinary changes.

“More recently, Professor Weintraub has undertaken a project on life writing, introducing a new dimension to the history of economics. In 2005, working with Evelyn Forget, he organized the annual *History of Political Economy* conference on this topic. The papers from the conference were published as *Economists' Lives: Biography and Autobiography in the History of Economics* (2007).

“Always growing, always reaching out to wider intellectual communities, Professor Weintraub has produced seminal works connecting the history of economics to philosophy, literature, mathematics, and science. He has reshaped the way economics is conceived by its commentators, not only by prompting other scholars into a variety of new reflections, analyses, and criticisms, but also by offering a body of substantial research with which anyone working on his topics must come to terms. Because of Professor Weintraub's work, we think differently about mathematics and economics, just as we thought more carefully about appraising progress in economics because of his earlier Lakatosian forays.

“Our intellectual inheritance is richer for Professor Weintraub's research. But he has served our community in other ways as well. First, he served with distinction as the president of the History of Economics Society (2002-2003). Second, he has for three decades served as one of the associate editors of *History of Political Economy* (*HOPE*). In this capacity, he has been involved to various degrees in many of the annual *HOPE* conferences, having been the primary organizer not only of *Economists' Lives* (2005), but also of *Toward a History of Game Theory* (1991), and *The Future of the History of Economics* (2001). In addition, Professor Weintraub initiated *HOPE*'s occasional series of “minisymposia,” in which he has promoted explorations of the interface of the history of economics with restructuring economic knowledge (1991), the history of science (1992), feminist theory (1993), Marx and Keynes (1995 and 1994), science studies (1997), “prejudice” (2003), and the “misuse of history” (2005). In these ways, he has guided the direction of the profession while simultaneously providing opportunities for others—including many young scholars—to join the discussion.

“Third, Professor Weintraub has also provided an important service as one of the moving forces behind the creation of the Economists' Papers Project at Duke University. Beginning with the papers of the father and son, Carl and Karl Menger, the Economists' Papers have grown into an archive of more than forty distinguished economists, mostly from the 20th century, including the academic papers of nine Nobel prize winners (Kenneth Arrow, Leonid Hurwicz, Robert Lucas, Franco Modigliani, Douglas North, Paul Samuelson, Robert Solow, and Vernon Smith as well as, on microfilm, the papers of F.A. Hayek). It is also the official repository of the papers of the American Economic Association, the History of Economics Society, and of the editorial records of *HOPE*. Again thinking of others, Professor Weintraub did the legwork that persuaded the Duke Provost to provide funds to help defray the costs of visiting the archives for young scholars from around the world. Since its inception, Professor Weintraub has administered this fund and encouraged the

constant stream of historians of economics who visit Duke in order to use this unique archive.

“Finally, as a teacher and mentor of graduate students, Professor Weintraub has been a model of service as well as scholarship. In addition to including the work of young scholars in his edited volumes, he has published journal articles with students like Spencer Banzhaf, Ted Gayer, and Steve Meardon. (For one account of Professor Weintraub’s influence on his students, see S. Meardon, 2002.\*)

“Of course, we are not alone in noticing Professor Weintraub’s achievements. In addition to being elected president of the History of Economics Society (2002-2003), he has a unique record: the only person to date to win the prizes for the best book on the history of economics from *both* the European Society for the History of Economic Thought and the History of Economics Society for *How Economics Became a Mathematical Science*. He is widely in demand as a speaker at international meetings on the history of economics. He is one of the mere handful of economists who have been awarded a year-long fellowship at the U.S. National Humanities Center (1998-9).

“Few modern scholars in any university have traversed the terrain from mathematics via economics into the humanities, and contributed with such distinction as E. Roy Weintraub. Professor Weintraub is indeed “a genuine scholar to be cherished” (to quote a recent comment from a highly respected economist), a renaissance man, who sequentially reinvents his intellectual space and then makes others see it as his natural home.”

Please join me in recognizing Roy Weintraub as the 2011 Distinguished Fellow of the History of Economics Society.

\* “The Interesting Narrative of a Duke-Trained Historian of Economics, from Prospectus to Ph.D. to Profession; or, How I Learned to Love Weintraub and Start Worrying,” in *The Future of the History of Economics*, ed. by E.R. Weintraub, *History of Political Economy* 34(S): 272-283, 2002.