

[1988 HES Distinguished Fellow citation for Mark Blaug. Published in the History of Economics Society *Bulletin*, vol. 10, no. 2 (October 1988), pp. iv-v.]

Award of Distinguished Fellow to Mark Blaug, June 20, 1988

Dr. Blaug was introduced by Donald A. Walker as follows: Dr. Mark Blaug was born in the Netherlands in 1927, but migrated to England in 1940. He was evacuated to the United States in 1942, where he attended high school and Queen's College. He obtained an M.A. in 1952 and a Ph.D. in economics in 1955 at Columbia University, where George Stigler and T.W. Hutchison were his dissertation advisors. He worked as a statistician for the US Department of Labour and then began teaching at Yale University as an Assistant Professor of Economics, where he remained until 1962. At that time William Fellner was teaching the graduate course in the history of economic thought, but wanted to undertake other duties. He selected Dr. Blaug, who was then 27 years old, to be his replacement in that course. That was a wonderful opportunity for Dr. Blaug and one which had a permanent result, because the lecture notes that he developed over the four years in which he taught the course became the basis of his *Economic Theory in Retrospect*.

He was visiting Professor in the History of Economic Thought at the University of Manchester, 1960-61, visiting Professor in the Economics of Education at the University of Chicago, 1965-66, and Professor of the Economics of Education at the University of London Institute of Education, 1969-84. He recently became an emeritus of that institution but was immediately hired back to teach one-third time, so he is both an emeritus and an active teacher there. Moreover, he is also a consultant-professor at the University of Buckingham, England's only private university.

Dr. Blaug has contributed to the study of economic history of Britain, the economics of the arts, and the economics of education. In the latter connection, he introduced and disseminated human capital theory in Britain in the 1960s, advocating the analysis of rates of return to investment in education. He has been very active in policy formulation in connection with the economics of education--he has been to sixty-five lesser-developed countries, "giving good advice to bad governments." Of course, the principal interest of this audience is in his work in his other field of endeavor, the history of economic thought. It has always been intensely important to him, and has absorbed an increasing proportion of his attention. It is, he confesses, an addiction that he has been unable and unwilling to break.

Dr. Blaug's contributions to the history of economic thought have been many and varied. He is an expert on the classical economists. His doctoral dissertation and his first book were on David Ricardo. For many years he thought of Ricardo as the finest of economic theorists, but he has come to believe that Adam Smith deserves that accolade. In his many books and articles he has ranged over many other topics, including the work of John Maynard Keynes, the Cambridge controversy, and economic methodology. His magnum opus is *Economic Theory In Retrospect*, first published in 1962 and now in its fourth edition. Dealing with all important past doctrines, it has become a classic and will retain that status. The book strikingly displays meticulous scholarship, power of analysis, great erudition about the past, and depth of knowledge of current economic theory. In it, among other things, Dr. Blaug introduced the technique of uncovering the

mathematical structure of the theorization of literary economists, and did so without abusing that technique.

Dr. Blaug continues to be very productive. For example, he has just completed a forty-nine-page pamphlet reviewing *The New Palgrave*. If he is asked what is his current orientation and opinion about economic doctrine, he responds that he is a neoclassical economist--on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. He confesses, however, that on the other days of the week he holds heterodox ideas and is prey to an increasing interest in the history of heterodox economic thought.

In virtue of his many outstanding contributions to the history of economic thought, presented with clarity, forcefulness, and intellectual integrity over many years, I am very pleased this evening on behalf of the History of Economics Society to award Dr. Mark Blaug the title of Distinguished Fellow of the Society.

