

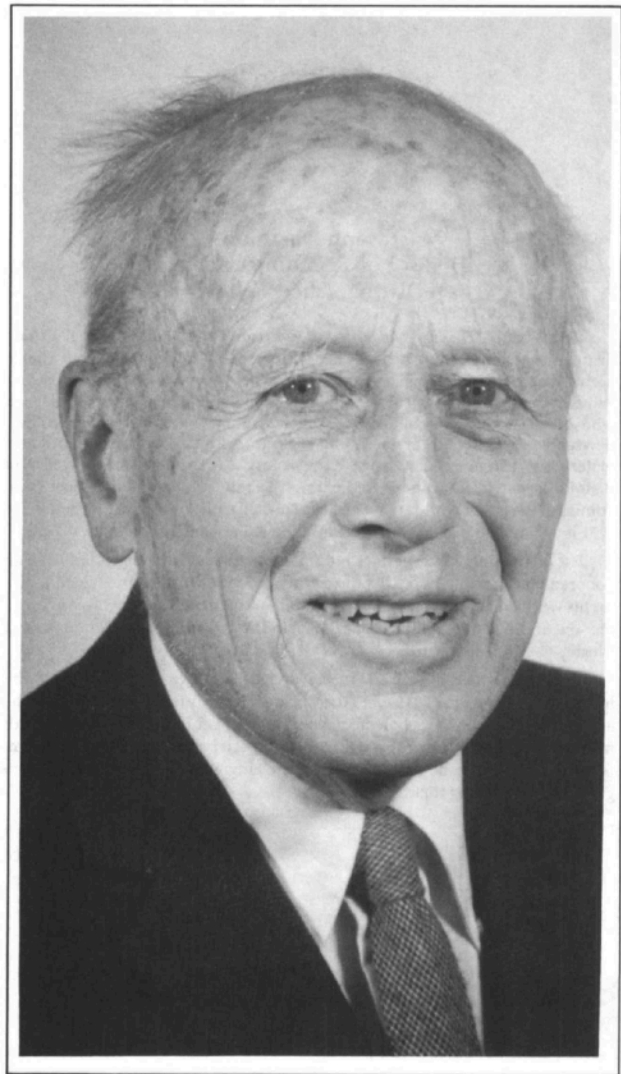
[1982 HES Distinguished Fellow citation for Joseph Dorfman. Published in the History of Economics Society *Bulletin*, vol. 4, no. 1 (July 1982), pp. 5-6.]

Joseph Dorfman
History of Economics Society
Distinguished Fellow

By his study, *The Economic Mind in American Civilization*, Joseph Dorfman distinguished himself and brought honor to the discipline of the history of economic ideas. His scholarship is comprehensive in scope, meticulous in detail, and accurate in its findings. It not only draws on the principal works of the men whose ideas he describes but goes beyond it to letters, manuscripts, broadsides, newspapers, pamphlets, sermons and esoteric writings. He has brought to his materials an extensive knowledge of the history of men and events as well as of their ideas, and he has combined the three in a remarkable way that places economics in the larger world. What he has achieved truly merits the title he gave to it. It is a statement of the economic mind in American civilization.

His distinction however does not rest on that alone, and he would have an honored place among us for his historical account of Institutional Economics: for his work on Veblen, certainly, which is a source of delight as well as of information, and also for helping us to understand and value John R. Commons and Wesley C. Mitchell.

Joseph Dorfman once said, in the preface to an early volume, that the historian in seeking to add to what the world knows "is moved by the hope of the approval of posterity - people he never will see." Let him know that his work need not wait for the future to judge it, that its merit is recognized by his contemporaries, the people he has seen, and their judgment is that he has a distinguished place among them.



Professor Dorfman could not be present at the reading of his citation as Distinguished Fellow. He sent these remarks to be read in his absence:

I greatly regret that I cannot be with you this evening to share - in person - the pleasure you have given me with your award. It is sad but true that by the time intellectual accomplishments are recognized, physical abilities may no longer be capable of appropriate support.

The trials of a scholar's life are many. Its rewards are few. But those few rewards are precious indeed.

One treasured experience is watching former students grow and develop as professionals and scholars. We all take pride and pleasure in the contributions of our intellectual heirs and in the continuity of scholarly dedication.

But the rarer and more highly prized reward is the freely given recognition and expression of appreciation by one's peers. In granting me your distinguished fellow award for 1982, you tell me that my work is valued by an audience of the most discriminating and demanding critics.

For this honor, I thank you all as members of the History of Economics Society. I thank too my wife and family whose support has been critical to my career.

Finally, I gratefully acknowledge my own teachers. In many ways it is their work and skill as scholars and mentors that your award recognizes: Clarence Ayers at Reed College, Wesley Clair Mitchell and John Maurice Clark at Columbia share this Distinguished Fellowship with me, for in honoring me, you honor them.

I thank you most sincerely.

Joseph Dorfman