

# NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

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## Annual Alumni Update

Another year has passed, and another new chair has been appointed at the Northwestern Economics department. **Bill Rogerson**, after two years of inspiring leadership, was offered the job of chief economist at the Federal Communications Commission and has departed for Washington DC. He will be back, we all hope and trust, in a year or two, but he had to give up the chair-ship of the department so the Dean asked me to take over.

This is the sixth annual *Update*. The department has changed a bit since last year. Two of our tenured faculty have regrettably left: **Ian Domowitz** has joined the Department of Finance at Pennsylvania State University and **Chris Udry** has left us for Yale. They will be missed. A substantial number of people are on leave: In addition to Bill, **Rebecca Blank** is still a member of the Council of Economic Advisors and is making her mark in an age when being in Washington is as interesting as it ever was. **Eddie Dekel** is on leave in Israel, not a boring place either, **Alan Taylor** was seen in Buenos Aires this fall, and **John Panzar** could be found fall quarter among our antipodes in New Zealand. Less exotic were Philadelphia where **Martin Eichenbaum** spent the fall and Berkeley, where **Rob Porter** was Ford Professor in the fall quarter.

Because of all this mobility, some administrative changes turned out to be necessary. Thus we have a new Director of Graduate Studies, **Joseph P. Ferrie**, and a new Director of Undergraduate Studies, **Burton Weisbrod**. Our previous Director of Undergraduate Studies, **Bob Coen**, was appointed Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies at the College. We added one permanent member to our department, **Marco Bassetto**, who finished his Ph.D. at the University of Chicago. Marco does Macroeconomics (his advisors were Tom Sargent and Robert Lucas) and his arrival here constitutes a welcome addition to our macroeconomics group.

As you undoubtedly know, Northwestern University boasts its first Nobel Prize awarded this year to a current faculty member. While it was not (yet) a member of the economics department who walked away with this cool million bucks but a chemist, it obviously was a substantial boost to the morale of the entire University. Moreover, one of our Alumni, **Avner Greif**, was awarded this year one of those prestigious MacArthur "genius awards."

A major change at Northwestern has been the renaming of the College of Arts and Sciences to become the Judd A. and Marjorie Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences in recognition of their generous support of the College. Within the economics community some have voiced the idea that we may have an interest in doing the same to the department and we are inviting bids for anyone who wishes -- for the right price -- to have a major economics department named after her or him. I cannot reveal our reservation price yet, but we are open to suggestions...

Meanwhile, back in Arthur Andersen Hall we are getting ready for the construction project that is about to begin this spring. For more than a year, once again, we will have to live with the inevitable noise and dust that come with a big construction project, many of us in temporary and cramped offices. There is light at the end of this tunnel, because when this project is over we will all move into a considerably more spacious environment on the third floor of AAH. Until it is over, however, we will have to bite the bullet.

As always, we had our annual reception this year at the Atrium in AAH. An excellent turnout of both faculty and graduate students celebrated the beginning of the year and applauded loudly when our annual awards to our star Teaching Assistants were handed out. This year's winners were Ben Chabot, Federico Ciliberto, Una Okonkwo, Craig Peters, Paulo Santiago, Henry Siu, James Sullivan, Randal Watson and Michelle Zaharchuk-Alexopolous. As always, each received a certificate, a one-year subscription to *Econometrica* and the satisfaction of a job well-done.

We have a number of visitors in the department as always. **Lars Stole** is a theorist from the University of Chicago Business School is visiting us for the Fall, teaching a course in information economics. **Daniel Rich**, associate professor at Illinois State University, will be teaching undergraduate courses for us throughout the year. His research fields are labor, applied econometrics and transportation. **Gordon Green**, a MEDS Ph.D., is also visiting us for the year. His interests are equilibria in markets with asymmetrically informed agents and bidding models in competitive markets. **Laura Owen** from De Paul University is teaching a course in American Economic history and **Anne Hanley**, who also taught for us last year, will teach European Economic History again. **David D. Haddock**, who is in his thirteenth year of teaching at the Northwestern Law School, will be teaching Law & Economics to the undergraduates during the Winter Quarter. **Gillian Hutchinson** will visit us from London this winter to teach Labor economics and statistics. This spring we hope to welcome world-renowned mathematical economist and game theorist **Robert Aumann**, who has been appointed to a Nemmers visiting fellowship.

A number of faculty families expanded in number as a result of voluntary actions. **Jeff Ely** got married. **Rosa Matzkin** gave birth to her son Adrian.

Some more selected details about the faculty's research achievements and recognitions this year:

**Joseph Altonji** was recently appointed to the Committee on National Statistics of the National Research Council. He and Christopher Taber received a three year grant from the National Institute of Child Health and Development to study the effectiveness of Catholic schools and single sex schools.

**Gadi Barlevy** was awarded an NSF Award for Beginning Academics for 1998-1999.

**Ron Braeutigam** is in the second year of a two year term as President of the European Association for Research in Industrial Economics and was reappointed as Director of the Business Institutions Program.

**Louis P. Cain** (adjunct Professor) continues to serve as chair of the economics department at Loyola University and was appointed a consultant at Merriam Webster.

**Eddie Dekel** continues to serve as Associate editor of three of the journals in his area, *Econometrica*, *Games and Economic Behavior*, and *the Journal of Economic Theory*. He received a 3 year NSF grant (joint from economics and political science).

**Martin Eichenbaum** was elected to be a fellow of the Econometric Society. In addition he was asked to be an associate editor of the *Journal of Monetary Economics*, the *Review of Economic Dynamics*, and the *Journal of Macroeconomics* and was awarded a 3 year NSF grant.

**Jeffrey Ely** received an NSF award for "Nash Equilibrium and the Evolution of Preferences."

**Joseph Ferrie** was appointed Associate Editor (Internal Migration), *Historical Statistics of the United States, Millennial Edition*, serves as Chair of the Nominating Committee of the Social Science History Association and was awarded an NSF Grant for his project "Longitudinal Micro Data for the Study of Long Run Changes in Economic Mobility in the U.S., 1850-1990"

**Robert J. Gordon** was awarded a NSF grant for the period 9/1/98 - 8/31/00 on "Problems in the Measurement of Prices and Productivity."

**Hilarie Lieb** (adjunct lecturer) teaches classes related predominantly to issues of labor economics. Recently she was appointed vice chair of the United Way Discrimination Priority Grants Committee.

**Charles Manski** was appointed Chair of a new National Research Council Committee on Data and Research for Policy on Illegal Drugs.

**Kiminori Matsuyama** was invited to give the first Fukuzawa lecture, given at the Far Eastern Econometric Society Meeting, to be held at Singapore, next summer.

**Joel Mokyr** recently finished a four year term as co-editor of the *Journal of Economic History*. He continues as Editor in Chief of the *Oxford Encyclopedia of Economic History*.

**Dale Mortensen** continues to serve as President of the *Society of Economic Dynamics*. From April to September, 1998, he visited at the Center for Labor and Social Research (CLS), a research center associated with the University of Aarhus in Denmark. He has been invited to present the Zeuthen Lectures at the University of Copenhagen in the year 2000.

**Leon Moses** is heading a study of pricing the use of the Panama Canal after it comes under the control of the Panamanian government in 1999. The project is jointly run with the Andersen Accounting firm.

**Bruce Meyer** was elected to the National Academy of Social Insurance, was reappointed to the editorial board of the *Journal of Public Economics*, and received a new 3-year NSF Grant this Summer.

**Rob Porter** is the Ford Visiting Research Professor at Berkeley this fall.

**Paula Ramada** continues her work on efficiency properties of alternative market equilibria for economies with incomplete markets.

**Ian Savage** had his federal Department of Transportation grant to study the economics of transportation safety regulation extended for another year and was reelected to a second three-year term as a committee member of the national Transportation Research Forum.

**Christopher Taber** joined the NBER (public economics group). He received two grants as a CO-PI, one from the NSF with James Heckman, and one from the NIH to study Catholic Schools with Joe Altonji.

**Teresa Waters** received two major grants from DHHS and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and was appointed as a Member of the National Peer Review Committee, Patient Care and Outcomes, American Heart Association.

**Burt Weisbrod** was awarded the Lifetime Research Achievement Award, Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Associations (ARNOVA)--fall 1997. He was appointed Phi Beta Kappa Visiting Scholar, 1998-99 and appointed to NIH National Advisory Board, 1998-2001, by Secretary of Health and Human Services, Donna Shalala.

**Mark Witte** has been a lecturer for the department of economics and serves as an advisor in the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences.

**Asher Wolinsky's** NSF Grant "Topics in the Organization of Firms and Markets" has been renewed.

# Robert Eisner

1922 - 1998

Northwestern University  
Department of Economics  
Evanston, Illinois



Robert Eisner in 1994

Dear Alumni:

Just as our annual newsletter went to press, we learned that Robert Eisner, William R. Kenan Emeritus Professor of Economics, passed away. He died on Wednesday, Nov. 25 from a bone marrow disorder. He was 76.

Bob Eisner taught at Northwestern since 1952. For decades, it was close to impossible to go through the economics program at Northwestern, either as a graduate or an undergraduate student, without taking a course from Eisner. Everyone who ever studied with Bob will remember his enthusiasm for economics and his high standards. Any of you who would like to reflect upon Bob's qualities as a teacher and write down some memories is asked to send his/her memories to us, and we can use some of that material in the memorial service. Those of you who knew Bob personally might want to write directly to Edie, the address is Edith Eisner, 800 Lincoln St., Evanston, IL, 60201.

For many years he was one of the most visible and best-known members of our faculty. He was a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and President of the American Economic Association in 1987 and recipient of the John R. Commons Award of Omicron Delta Epsilon in 1994, to cite but a few of his many professional recognitions. A scholar of impeccable standards and rigor, Bob Eisner was always deeply interested in social and human problems. Mathematical elegance and statistical precision mattered to him but in his hands they served a goal of improving social welfare in some definable way. In innumerable columns and op-ed pieces in the most widely read papers and many TV appearances and interviews, Bob elaborated his unique vision of the economy, and his influence on the thinking and decision-making readership was considerable.

Bob was an unrepentant Keynesian Liberal. For him, unemployment, sluggish growth, under-investment in social overhead capital and education, and inequality mattered far more than inflation or taxes. In an age in which few members of the profession stood up

against the political winds, Eisner declared that the Federal deficit was an accounting mirage and irrelevant, savings were adequate and need not be further encouraged, and that social security is a system that works and can be rescued from future difficulties by modest measures. Even those who disagreed with him respected his intellectual integrity, his fine analytical mind, his deep knowledge of economics, and above all his conscience and belief in the ability of enlightened economic policy to make a difference.

Bob Eisner was chair of the department when I came to Northwestern in the fall of 1974 and one of its central and most influential members until his retirement in 1994. He worked just as hard after his retirement. I used to kid him about his liberal views in our many conversations on the third floor of Arthur Andersen Hall, though he knew that I agreed with much of them. Bob was a true believer, never in doubt, never apologetic, without any of the cynicism and sophistry so common among academic economists these days. It is a species that, sadly, is growing rapidly extinct.

Robert Eisner was the kind of scholar who gave academic Economics a good name. The Department is proud to have counted him as a member for four decades. He will be sorely missed.

There will be a Memorial Service for Bob Eisner in the latter part of January on the Evanston campus. Exact details will be put on our internet site (<http://www.econ.nwu.edu/>) and can be obtained as well by emailing or calling the department.

Memorial donations may be made to the Robert Eisner Economics Fund, Northwestern University, Department of Economics, 2003 Sheridan Road, Evanston, IL 60208, or to Roycemore School, 640 Lincoln St., Evanston, IL 60201.

Joel Mokyr