

# WORKING PAPERS IN ECONOMICS

**The Post 1945 Internationalization  
of Economics:  
The Australian Experience**

by

**P. Groenewegen**

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**THE POST 1945 INTERNATIONALIZATION OF ECONOMICS**  
**THE AUSTRALIAN EXPERIENCE\***

**1. Introduction and Background**

Australia was settled in 1788 by British citizens, often involuntarily. During the nineteenth century, the continent was developed into six British colonies which, during the twentieth century as the Australian Federation (Commonwealth)<sup>1</sup> first gained dominion status within the 'Empire' and ultimately complete independence within the British Commonwealth of Nations. For much of its two centuries of history as white settlement, Australia's heritage was British even though, from the beginning, non-British people were also settling this new country.

The Second World War and post-war reconstruction started to change this significantly. The Curtin (Labor) war administration shocked British Empire loyalists by seeking closer ties with the United States in its conduct of the war in the Pacific, thereby placing Australian interests clearly ahead of former Empire ties and affections. Post 1945 adjustment implied further 'breaks' with Britain,

1. Post-war immigration drew heavily on non-British settlers, first from war-torn Europe, then from the Mediterranean region and, largely from the early 1980s, from all parts of the world and especially South East Asia and the Pacific. With well over a third of its population non-British, Australia is now consciously becoming a multi-cultural society increasingly seeking its destiny in Asia.
2. A tendency to internationalize visible in being a foundation member of the League of Nations and its agencies, was manifested more strongly post 1945 with Australia as a foundation member of the U.N., active in many of its

agencies; involved with the World Bank, with GATT and with the IMF from the outset; and as a relatively early non-European member of the OECD. Such international proclivities will survive the current Asian-Pacific focus, which in fact supplements them.

Australia's economics and its universities reflect much of this history, though with a twist. Its first six universities developed within the capital cities of the original colonies/states, their practice based on British universities (Scotland and Oxbridge), initially hiring British staff and preparing for British style degrees. Economics entered Australian academe seriously from the start of the twentieth century.<sup>2</sup> However, well before that Australia enjoyed much vigorous, though not always rigorous, economic debate and from the beginnings its economic writers often critically adapted imported thought from the 'mother' country (and to a lesser extent, from elsewhere), to suit the needs, institutions and interests of this new, antipodean world. Following the example of the American Economic Association, Australians formed their Economic Association some years before Britain took this step, though this experiment, unlike its more solid British counterpart, petered out after little more than a decade (Groenewegen and McFarlane, 1990, Chapter 4). By the 1920s, when economics was taught at all six original universities, generally within a separate economics or commerce faculty, staff became increasingly Australian born, though educationally-finished in the United Kingdom (LSE, Cambridge) and orientated in its teaching to Australian problems. The Economic Society of Australia (and New Zealand until 1982), together with its journal, *The Economic Record*, likewise concentrated on Australian applied issues, thereby generating a distinctive Australian flavour to its economics, the reason why this period has often been called 'the golden age of Australian economics' (Scott, 1990; Groenewegen and McFarlane, 1990, pp. 6-7, 10, Chapter 6). Contact with Britain by young Australian academics as postgraduate students during the 1930s explains much of the rapid adoption of Keynesian economics during the late 1930s, the period of subsequent war time 'planning' and post-war reconstruction. Post 1945 changes in economics and Australian academe must be seen in terms of two major developments and their consequences:

1. Rapid growth in the number of universities from the original six to 19 by 1979, and to 36 by 1992 through the absorption of former Colleges of Advanced Education into the university sector after 1988. All teach economics (and/or business studies) so that the output of economics graduates has greatly increased.
2. This supply growth was largely induced by demand for economists within the public sector, in both secondary and tertiary education and, especially from the early 1980s, in a deregulated financial sector and, more generally, the business sector. The 1980s probably constitute the peak of this phenomenon (enrolments in economics at secondary school and tertiary institutions have started to decline during the 1990s). However, the power bases then established for economists, particularly in their dominant (domineering) role in the federal bureaucracy (Pusey, 1991) will continue to have repercussions well into the twenty-first century.

Some concomitant factors of this growth in economists on the mechanism for the transmission of economic ideas need to be noted. One is the increase in Australian economic journals, which commenced in the 1950s to raise the total to over ten by the 1990s from the solitary *Economic Record* in 1945. It symbolically combined with doubling (in stages) of the number of annual issues the *Economic Record* produced (from two to four) during the 1950s (Groenewegen and McFarlane, 1990, pp. 176-8). Secondly, regular, large scale economist conferences started in 1970; from 1977 on an annual basis (Scott, 1990, Appendix 10). These gradually replaced the monthly, semi-public lectures the Economic Society organised at the Branch level (the ACT Branch remains a noted exception to this trend), the one day symposia organised by the major branches (New South Wales Winter School, Victorian Autumn Forum) and the traditional economic segment of the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science (ANZAAS) Congresses which by the 1980s had greatly declined in importance. Annual economist conferences, combined with frequent and smaller, specialist conferences, are also increasingly being confined to the practitioners of economics in university, government, finance and industry which constitutes the

bulk of the Economic Society's membership (Scott, 1990, Appendix 3 shows that for 1982, 17.8 per cent of the membership were academics, 59.1 per cent were involved in other economic research and in business and management, of which 20.5 per cent worked in the financial, and 22.9 per cent in the public sector). The internationalization of Australian economics and economists as presented in what follows must be appreciated against this background of post 1945, and earlier, developments.

## 2. Internationalization of Americanization? The Groenewegen-McFarlane Hypothesis on Australian experience

Post 1945 Australian experience in economics has been depicted as its substantial Americanization (Groenewegen and McFarlane, 1990, Chapters 8-10), a development not apparently confined to Australia (on Sweden, see Sandelin, 1991, p. 214; and, for a variant, the picture of the absorption of Canadian economics "into an emerging, dominant, North American, if not global discourse" in Neill, 1991, Chapter 12; p. 204, for the quotation).

The Australian conjecture rested on various pieces of evidence. It cited Gruen (1979, pp. 230-32) on the strong American libertarian (public choice, Chicago, Virginia School) influence in public policy discussion from the late 1960s, its special importance among the younger economists at Monash and the Australian National University and, via their graduates, transmitted to the leading policy agencies of State and federal governments. This influence, particularly permeating Treasury, Finance and Industries Commission was sharply contrasted with the immediate post 1945 policy objectives of the pre-war trained gurus such as Coombs, Crawford, Giblin and Melville (Groenewegen and McFarlane, 1990, Chapter 9). In the portraits of the seven major post 1945 Australian economists identified in that study<sup>3</sup> (Arndt, Swan, Kemp, Corden, Salter, Harcourt and Turnovsky in order of birth), the two North American trained economists rarely, if ever, dealt with applied Australian issues and one, via his editorship of the *Economic Record*, appears to have exercised a strong influence in reducing the traditional high content of applied issues in that journal.

The concluding chapter of the Australian study posed the Americanization issue starkly in terms of the end of an Australian economics via the "fatal embrace" of steady Americanization. This diagnosis was based on the extensive experience of the two authors in Australian economics education at a variety of institutions<sup>4</sup>, and more particularly, the anecdotal evidence gathered on a number of relevant points. These concerned the practice of applying simplistic economic theory from the American texts often without adapting it appropriately to Australian institutions and conditions; American style graduate programs which paid insufficient attention to historical and institutional factors so essential for critical appreciation of the theory; an American research agenda which neglected important national issues or explicitly treated them as irrelevant; an American educational method, symbolised by the drive towards semesterisation and its greater emphasis on examining and assessment at the cost of less time for introspection and reflection; and, last but not least, the growing dominance of American, as against British, undergraduate texts, partly because their Australian counterparts were generally not forthcoming. Although these remarks embodied (and perhaps confused) with the Americanization process contemporary critiques of the dominant tendency in economic theory, and identified as American ideas and conceptions often imported from Europe by a Nazi induced intellectual immigration, they did contain elements of truth. American practice in economics appears to be differentiable from other styles, such as the traditional British (perhaps also an endangered species) and the European (Frey and Eichenberger, 1993). Moreover, rather than indulging in crude 'Yankee-bashing' as one of our reviewers saw it (Kenyon, 1994), the discussion implied little more than a plea for careful adaptation to local conditions of imported theory. This is clearly stated in the book's closing paragraph (Groenewegen and McFarlane, 1990, p. 238) and earlier in a paragraph some reviewers could have done well to highlight. Since this also refers to a major theme of that book - the need for adaptation rather than crude imitation in absorbing dominant ideas from abroad in a small, peripheral country - it may be quoted with profit:

The tenor of this discussion is that no matter how important the influx of American practice, it need not be a fatal embrace if critically accepted. This requires critical teaching of the theorems with students advised of their limitations from the start: criticism by academics of the populist demagogues selling the panaceas and “snake oil remedies” of the latest American fads whether it be multilateral free trade, privatisation, supply side economics (remember the Australian marketing of the Laffer Curve?), extreme versions of monetarism or the rational expectations movement. It also means tolerance of unconventional ideas, unless they can be unequivocally *shown* to be wrong. Australian economics in the past had a fairly good record in its willingness to test new ideas with critical scrutiny and to embrace at least some of the views of the non-specialist. Recapture of such sceptical values, assisted by common sense and study of the facts, can resist the American invasion of economics currently accelerating; after all, Australian economists of previous generations weathered the vulgarities of a Bastiat and the utopias of a Bellamy. Given return to greater emphasis on critical values in technical teaching, genuine empirical analysis, and a lack of faith in universal remedies imported from overseas, the American overdose in current economics need not be fatal to the continuation of an Australian economics useful to Australian problem solving and policy formation.

(Groenewegen and McFarlane, 1990, pp. 234-5).

### 3. Some Evidence on the “Americanization” of Australian Economics

The evidence for an Americanization of Australian economics hypothesis is consistent with a dating of the phenomenon from the end of the 1960s. Given the variety of interacting factors, the evidence is often suggestive rather than conclusive. It is also fragmentary but in combination presents an interesting picture of this aspect of the post-1945 process of internationalization in economics.

(a) **Major postgraduate qualification of economic staff at leading Australian Universities.** Table 1 presents the data for five out of the six original universities by

decade from the 1940s to the 1970s inclusively. It shows a steady relative increase in the importance of North American qualifications for the last of those two decades while the proportion of those with British qualifications remained remarkably steady. When the data of Table 1 are combined with those of Table 2 for the same five universities (with the caveat they are not fully comparable), this trend appears to have continued, if the sharp fall in North American trained staff at the University of Sydney is discounted. This is also the case when the overall position is compared. Given the remarks by Fred Gruen on the growth of libertarian views among younger economic staff at Monash and the Australian National University, the high proportion of American trained staff in these universities can be noted. Whether the data constitute evidence for a steady Americanization of Australian economics is more difficult to say.

In assessing the importance of these data for that task, the following should be noted. In Table 1, for example, staff turnover can affect the numerical outcomes, though with no bias in either direction. Secondly, inter-temporal comparisons should bear in mind that up to the end of the 1950s, the proportion of PhDs in Australian economics departments was very small but that by the 1980s it was almost a condition of employment for lecturers and above. Availability of staff from abroad is a further factor: international hiring success for a country like Australia depends partly on relative salary scales and their effective purchasing power, partly on the relative state of the domestic market for academics in the exporting country and partly, of some significance for the Australian case over the period in question, on the capacity of domestic production (home-grown PhDs) to supply the market. Only by the 1960s did Australian production of PhDs in economics begin seriously; the evidence for the 1980s and 1990s (Table 2) implies a rising proportion of Australian PhDs among university economics staff.

Despite these qualifications, the evidence of staff composition by origin of highest degree does indicate a degree of Americanization which began during the 1960s and continued to accelerate thereafter. In Australia’s case, this reflects partly a growing preference of Australian economics graduates to take their postgraduate studies in North America rather than Britain<sup>5</sup> if seeking an academic career. It also

probably reflects (especially with respect to the 1992 data in Table 2), the state of the American market for academics, and the desire, consciously expressed by a Review Committee of Queensland's Economics Department<sup>6</sup>, that a good economics department needs to have a significant proportion of young, North American PhDs to give it some proximity to the frontiers of the mainstream in key fields of teaching and research. The last supposition encapsulates the Americanization hypothesis concisely.

(b) **The Evidence from the Textbooks.** A study of major texts set in first year university economics studies at the five original universities (those mentioned in Table 1) likewise suggests a tendency at increased Americanization from the 1960s. This is less easy to tabulate. In 1945, at four of the five universities, Benham's *Economics* was the major first year text<sup>7</sup>, a situation that in some of these universities (Melbourne, Sydney, Tasmania) persisted until the mid-1950s. Tarshis's *Elements of Economics* was set at Adelaide (1949 to 1955) together with Hicks's *Social Framework* and Stigler's *Theory of Price*, a pattern partly followed by some of the other universities (Tasmania with respect to Tarshis, Sydney and Tasmania with respect to Stigler, and Sydney and Queensland with respect to Hicks). Boulding's *Economic Analysis* was briefly used at Sydney and Tasmania during the 1950s.<sup>8</sup> It may be noted in this context that Samuelson's *Economics* tended to be used for preliminary reading at Australian universities - like Hearn's *Plutology* by Marshall in the 1870s, it was considered "to be good for beginners". There were some exceptions. Adelaide used it as a main text from 1955 to 1958, again in the 1960s for several years and then (in its completely rewritten Australian version) during the 1970s; Queensland used Samuelson intermittently between 1957 and 1966 as a main first year text.

American texts began to dominate first year courses decisively from the 1960s. In Adelaide, Bain's *Price Theory* became a major text in 1963. In 1964 it was joined by Leftwich (which was retained until the early 1970s), by Lipsey's *Introduction to Positive Economics* (likewise retained through the 1970s), by Brennan (*Theory of Economic Statics*) from 1966 to the late 1970s.<sup>9</sup> At Melbourne, Bach's *Economics* was the first major American economics text (1966); it was replaced by Lipsey from 1967 to 1979, initially with Stonier and Hague's *Principles* as a British alternative

(until 1970). Supplementary texts to Lipsey then became Dooley's *Price Theory* (1971-72) together with Brennan, Leftwich, Mansfield, Bilas and C. . . ssively through the 1970s. Australian texts also supplemented at Melbourne: the Australian Samuelson in the early 1970s, Tisdell's *Economics of Markets* from 1979 for some years, together with books on macroeconomics and money by Jim Perkins, a prominent Melbourne staff member. In 1964, Queensland broke the local Gifford monopoly by adopting Bach, replacing it in 1967 by Ferguson and Kreps (*Principles of Economics*). When separate first year micro- and macro- modules were introduced from 1968 to 1972, Bain's *Price Theory* and McKenna's *Macroeconomics* were adopted initially, with Bain replaced by Ferguson's *Microeconomic Theory* from 1971. The story at the University of Sydney was very similar. Bach's *Economics* was the first year text in 1964 and from then American texts largely dominated. Ferguson and Kreps replaced Bach in 1965 until, from 1970, when Sydney introduced a complete micro-economics first year, texts set included Bilas, Leftwich, Bain, Mansfield, Hirschleifer and Hibden (*Price and Welfare Theory*). The return of a general 'principles' first year by the end of the 1970s was serviced first by Baumol and Blinder, followed by Dornbush and Fisher and, apart from occasional experiments with Australian texts such as Tisdell's, American texts and their workbooks continued to dominate. Tasmania reveals a similar story. Bach (together with Cairncross's *Economics* and Hicks's *Social Framework*) was the first American text (from 1961 to 1965), followed by Lipsey from 1965 to 1972 (supplemented by an Australian product by Tasmanian staff members Grant and Hagger) until a microeconomics first year brought first Mansfield (1972-76) and then Hirschleifer into prominence. There is little reason to doubt that this tale (with local variations) was replicated at Australia's other universities during the 1960s and after

Several other matters need to be mentioned in this account of how American texts came to dominate during the 1960s. First, the dollar shortage in the 'sterling area' of the post 1945 reconstruction era (which in Australia effectively lasted well into the late 1950s), made the adoption of American texts at that time virtually impossible. Secondly, the international publishing agreement for the English-speaking world placed Australia firmly within the British zone, a further factor stimulating adoption of British



texts until competitive pressure from American texts became simply too great, facilitated as this was by the setting up of agencies and branches within Australia. Thirdly, there were few Australian texts, and when they existed, these were set generally only within the university of their authors. Finally, although this account only relates to first year text, the same story can be told for later undergraduate years and for the postgraduate course work degrees at the Masters level which started to proliferate from the 1960s.

(c) **The Changing content of the *Economic Record*.** It is also instructive to examine the changing content of the *Economic Record*, Australia's first and continuing leading economic journal followed by *Australian Economic Review* and *Australian Economic Papers* (National Board of Employment, Education and Training, 1994, pp. 128, 145, 147, 152). Tables 3 to 5 present the data on origin of authors, nature of articles and books reviewed by place of origin for the *Economic Record* from 1945 to 1994 in five yearly averages.

Table 3 on authors by country of origin shows several clear trends with respect to the nature of contributors to the *Economic Record*. Most important is the dramatic increase in authors drawn from North America, especially after 1970. This is partly explained by the fact that Steve Turnovsky, a North American trained economist, held the editorial chair from 1973 to 1977. Equally striking is the drop in New Zealand authorship, encouraged by the creation of a *New Zealand Economic Papers* in 1966 and the formation of a New Zealand Association of Economists in 1973. Between 1970 and 1975 the *Economic Record* in fact lost virtually all of its New Zealand subscriptions (Scott, 1990, pp. 58-9). Australian contributors declined marginally over the decade, as did the relative (never substantial) number of British contributors and those from other (mainly Pacific) countries. In terms of the country of origin of contributors, some Americanization of the *Economic Record* is clearly visible.

Table 4, providing data on the type of article published in the *Economic Record*, likewise gives some support to an Americanization hypothesis, by indicating the sharp increase in theoretical (internationalized?) articles relative to the Australian

(and New Zealand) applied topics for the discussion of which the journal had been originally funded. Once again, the Turnovsky-as-editor factor was significant in this switch, since the shift to theory coincides to a marked extent with his editorship. Other factors make the data more difficult to interpret. This includes changes in editorial policy as a result of the establishment of *Australian Economic Review* with its explicit Australian policy focus; various attempts by the readership (membership of the Economic Society) to increase the "readability" of the *Economic Record* by concentrating on policy related and Australian applied issues, as well as the vagaries of the Australian policy cycle. Compared with the data in Table 3, the support these data give for an Americanization hypothesis is considerably weaker. In fact they may be equally well interpreted in terms of general internationalization hypothesis: an attempt by the editor to make the contents less parochial and thereby more attractive to the international market.

Table 5 examines book reviews by place of origin of books reviewed. The most striking feature of the table is the rapid reduction in number of publications reviewed per issue of the *Economic Record*. This makes the relative data more difficult to interpret apart from the difficulties in unambiguously identifying place of origin of a book from place of publication. Another difficulty noted (and remarked on earlier) is the international publishing agreement which places Australia in the British zone of influence. The strong performance of British books in relative terms may therefore disguise the extent of North American publications released under a British publisher imprint. The fluctuations in Australian books for review likewise require exogenous explanation. For the early post 1945 period, this reflects the relative scarcity of such books. Peaks (as in 1975-84) reflect conscious editorial policy to review the majority of key Australian publications. What is unambiguous in the data is the steady decline in importance of other Commonwealth publications and despite Australia's much heralded push into Asia, the almost total neglect of Asian/Pacific publications in the *Economic Record's* diminishing review columns. The table hints that the decline in reviews may in itself be a sign of Americanization though, as a former Secretary of the Economic Society reminded me, it is also a sign of the pressure on space by articles and notes in a journal with a growing population of potential contributors and a highly

cost conscious publications committee not anxious to increase the journal's effective size.<sup>10</sup>

The data from the changing contents of the *Economic Record* are therefore not clear cut, if only because of the many other factors which a changing academic, and economic, environment was continually introducing. The story is somewhat similar for the other academic economic journals subsequently introduced in Australia. The *Australian Economic Review* is largely devoted to Australian policy issues and its small proportion of foreign authors are either visitors addressing Australian policy issues, or persons invited to provide international comparative material and articles on issues (such as the economies in transition from the former Communist world) which have repercussions on Australian policy making. A survey of the contents of *Australian Economic Papers* from 1970 to 1987 (Groenewegen and McFarlane, 1990, p. 178) shows a high theoretical content (three-fifths of its articles were devoted to such topics, most, in line with the general trend in the professional literature, in highly mathematical form). Only thirty per cent of the contributions had a significant Australian content, with a strong econometric flavour in three out of four of these articles. The non-Australian orientation of this important journal can also be gauged by its high proportion of non-Australian authors (43 per cent, of whom many came from Europe, a facet probably explicable in terms of Harcourt's major editorial role which coincided with nearly the whole of this period). It also contained a substantially greater number of articles devoted to economic problems of countries in Europe, Asia and North America relative to the *Economic Record*. These are signs of a conscious division of labour between Australia's leading general economic journals, and of an increased internationalization of the profession.

(d) **Some implications of a recent Australian Professors survey.** A survey of 81 Australian economics (including econometrics and economic history) professors in late 1992 (Anderson and Blandy, 1992) provides perhaps the strongest evidence of the degree of Americanization that has taken place in Australian economics under the guise of internationalization. With a high response rate of 65 per cent<sup>11</sup>, the survey can be taken as a good indication of what the majority of the leaders of the Australian

academic economics profession think. The matter of greatest relevance for this paper concerns the degree of agreement among the respondents with a set of 44 economic propositions classified into micro- and macro-economics, normative and positive, with the normative micro-economic questions constituting nearly half (21) of the total. The questions were substantially derived from an earlier American survey (Kearl, Pope, Whiting and Wimmer, 1979), adapted for Australian conditions and for the time shift. Apart from noting a substantial concensus in the responses and the absence of any distinctive political bias (right or left) among the Australian professoriate, the survey authors also reported on some international comparative implications of the data they had gathered, using results from an earlier comparative study by Frey, Pommerehne, Schneider and Gilbert (1984). These conclusions are of particular interest for assessing the validity of an Americanization/internationalization hypothesis in Australia.

The first conclusion to be quoted is the following:

The Australian economists' responses are not significantly different from the US economists' responses in 13 cases out of 20, from the German economists in 12 cases out of 20, from the Swiss economists in 10 cases out of 20, from the Austrian economists in 7 cases out of 20 and from the French economists in 6 cases out of 20. Clearly the Australian responses are most like those of US and German economists and least like those of Austrian and French economists .... [W]e can conclude that, over a broad range of economic issues *Australian economics professors share a world economic culture with US and European economists.*

(Anderson and Blandy, 1992, p. 27)<sup>12</sup>

This conclusion becomes far less general when it is realised that post 1945 German economics has been strongly Americanised, in sharp contrast to Austrian, French (and on many issues) Swiss, and, for much of the period at least, that from Italy and other Mediterranean countries. On this evidence the American concensus is therefore not an international concensus.

Secondly, the Australian survey authors tested specific views of the sample provided by them and by Frey et al. (1984) on the “efficacy of market forces and competition” and, by implication, on the desirability of a relatively high degree of government intervention. To quote Anderson and Blandy (1992, p. 27) again:

The first point to notice is the *general* confirmation of Frey et al.’s five-country observation that there are indeed two distinct groups regarding attitude to the market economy. The United States and West Germany form a group as do France and Australia. The Swiss *just* fit into the former group rather than the latter.

Anecdotal evidence plus further findings on the differences between European economics and economists (Frey and Eichenberger, 1993) confirm the importance of distinguishing Americanization from internationalization. Frey and Eichenberger (1993, p. 185) indicate three major differences between North American and European economic practice. First, North Americans publish more widely in the journal literature and gather more citations than their international colleagues. Second, North American economic research tends to be focused on more abstract issues (set within the profession itself) than on practical issues which are less influenced by the fashions on what is in vogue in economic research. Third, North American teaching is geared much more to postgraduate studies, while in Europe most teaching is directed at the undergraduate level. Although things are changing, Australian can still easily be substituted for European in these propositions without very great difficulty. Relative to population, Australians gather far fewer citations than their North American colleagues if only because a still very substantial part of the contents of the Australian journals is devoted to Australian applied issues which only seldom appeal to overseas readers and hence get cited. The small number of Australian economists listed in *Who’s Who in Economics*, plus the remarks on the contents of Australia’s three leading journals, bear this out. The latter also supports the validity of the second proposition, although, as indicated with respect to the *Economic Record* and, to a lesser extent, *Australian Economic Papers*, this is rapidly changing with the sharp increase in (internationalized)

theoretical content of the *Economic Record*. Last, Australian university teaching remains dominated by the undergraduate level, with very large classes, particularly in the early years of study. Postgraduate teaching there is, of course, but apart from the specialised Research Schools at the Australian National University, there are no major graduate schools in economics if those directed at business and/or management studies to produce MBA’s are neglected.

In this context it may be noted that in postgraduate studies in economics, North American practices are increasingly being adopted at Australian universities. Masters degrees by course work, often preceded by a Diploma Course, have largely replaced the Masters by research degree which was traditional at the older universities until the early 1960s when, at Sydney, for example, it effectively constituted the only postgraduate degree in economics. The same trend is now increasingly visible at the PhD level where course work programs additional to a dissertation are replacing the traditional, pure research degree. This is again following an American pattern which ignores, in this author’s opinion, the high quality at Australian universities of many undergraduate honours programs in economics which, together with a good Masters course work programs, achieve as much, if not more, as the best PhD course work program in the United States. The last proposition derives from anecdotal evidence gathered from, admittedly good, students who have taken both the Sydney honours degree and ventured to American PhDs at institutions including Harvard, Yale, Berkeley, Chicago and Princeton. The change in Australian postgraduate economics education, ignoring as it does the highly selective and elitist honours undergraduate teaching tradition (borrowed from Scotland) is perhaps another case of uncritical Australian adoption of American practice in economics.

Let me add a fourth, anecdotal factor to the three propositions advanced by Frey and Eichenberger (1993). This concerns discrimination in the review columns of the *Journal of Economic Literature* in favour of North American books and against European books, particularly if they are published in languages other than English.<sup>13</sup> Since this journal is (rightly) regarded as a major international journal, and not just as the American journal it *de jure* is as an organ of the American Economic Association,

can this type of preference (justifiable though it is for members of the American Economic Association) be justified in its international role?

The last raises a number of important issues which more than justify academic research on the issue of Americanization and internationalization. These issues can be enumerated but not discussed, given the time constraint on this presentation. First, what are the international responsibilities of professional associations and journal editors in dominant countries in economics, especially towards the foreign section of their membership and their readers?<sup>14</sup> Second, how much of their international status is genuine when in many of these leading journals, few foreign books are reviewed and few outside authors are invited to contribute to their pages? On the other side of the coin, to what extent should there be room for a national element in the economics of a small, peripheral country, to preserve concerns about local institutions in the widest possible sense, and perhaps also, in matters of national interest? Dominant countries, all too often, present such national interests from their world position as equivalent to the world interest or, at least, the interest of their sphere of influence. Finally, to what extent, as will certainly be discussed in subsequent sessions, should genuine international action be supranational in which case the associated question should be asked, why are the International Economic Association and its publications not more esteemed than the American Economic Association and its journals?

#### 4. Conclusions

What else can be learned from the Australian experience? As in the case of the United Kingdom, the growing importance of North American professional economics, and its practices, has altered the list of leading institutions at the university level. The Australian professors survey (Anderson and Blandy, 1992, pp. 31-3) listed the Australian National University, Melbourne, New South Wales and Monash as the four major institutions for economics training; three of these, on the basis of the data in Table 2, had a well above average presence of staff with North American postgraduate degrees, a position to which the other leading university, Melbourne, also seems to be

moving. Is this a result of American concensus among the professors or something else?

Australian economics is also still producing some world leaders. The three years between the two editions of *Who's Who in Economics* almost doubled the number of prominent Australian economists in terms of international citations. However, some of the economists who featured in both editions (Corden and Harcourt) are no longer working in Australia. Following the (American) leader may therefore impose the penalty of hardly ever producing a first. Unlike Britain, Australia, for example, has not produced a Nobel Laureate in economics, nor can it be said to have produced a major impact on specific areas. An exception is Trevor Swan (now deceased) in the theory of growth. There has also been work about development of small countries with open economies, (Arndt, Corden) which has started from a perspective distinctly different from that produced on the subject in dominant countries (see Groenewegen and McFarlane, 1990, Chapter 8).

More importantly, and again different from the British experience as recorded by Backhouse (1994), Australian economics has not developed during the last decades by maintaining a distinctive Australian slant in specific topics. Moreover, where such slants formerly existed (as in equalisation in fiscal federalism theory, central wage determination in labour economics), they are now being demolished and/or savagely criticised by the young Turks with North American PhDs, to the apparent applause of the majority of the Australian professoriate. In short, Australian experience appears to show that although internationalization of a profession like economics need not do so, it can nevertheless produce what is increasingly beginning to look like homogenisation with, if not cloning from, its foreign role model.

## ENDNOTES

- \* Earlier versions of this paper were presented at Babson College, June 1994; Wollongong University and Victoria University of Technology in November 1994. Critical comments then received have helped to improve the final version of the paper. Research assistance from Mark Donoghue and Susan King, made possible through a grant from the Australian Research Council, is here gratefully acknowledged.
1. The Australian Federation came into being at the start of the twentieth century (1 January 1901) by combining the six original Australian colonies (States). By the 1990s, these partners in the federation have been effectively joined by two former federal territories, the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) and the Northern Territory. The federal structure of government spills over into that of many Australian organisations, such as the Economic Society of Australia, discussed below.
  2. For a discussion of the origins of economics teaching in the six Australian universities, see Goodwin (1966, Chapter 15) and Groenewegen and McFarlane (1990, Chapter 3).
  3. This selection was based on the economists included as Australian in Blaug and Sturgess, 1983. Its second edition includes five additional Australian economists, two of whom had taken their major postgraduate degree at Northern American universities, one at a British university and two at Australian universities.
  4. Although Groenewegen has taught continuously at Sydney (with short visiting research positions at the Australian National University and Macquarie University), McFarlane over the years has taught at Adelaide, Australian National University, Macquarie, New South Wales, Newcastle and Queensland. However, Groenewegen has had wide exposure to Australian

economics from his active participation in the Economic Society from the late 1970s to the early 1980s, and from his evaluation of economics research as member of an Australian Research Council panel in the social sciences.

5. Availability of scholarships was initially an important factor. In the early post-war years (up until the end of the 1960s), these were dominated by the British Commonwealth Scholarships and Rhodes Scholarships, directing postgraduate students to Britain (and in the case of the first, limited opportunities to study in Canada). American graduate studies were financially less accessible to the small number of Australian students eligible for overseas postgraduate study at this time. When growing demand for such study made the small pool of British scholarships more and more competitive, this financial advantage of British study declined in importance, making American studies more competitive.
6. University of Queensland, *Review of the Department of Economics*, May 1994, p. 22.
7. The exception was Queensland where Gifford's book, *Economics for Commerce*, dominated the textbook list until 1964, the effective retirement from the Queensland chair of its author.
8. Whether Tarshis's *Elements* and Boulding's *Economic Analysis* can be regarded as "normal" North American texts is highly debatable, even though both were working in the United States at the time their books were published. Tarshis was a Canadian by birth, but trained in Cambridge in the 1930s and his text was at one stage almost branded as "unAmerican" in certain circles (see Harcourt, 1993, pp. 79-80). Boulding was English by birth and by training, but spent his working life in North America, first in Canada and then in the United States. It was their Cambridge connection which gave the books an entrée into Australia at the then Cambridge dominated Adelaide, Sydney and Tasmania.

9. In addition, as stated in the previous paragraph, Adelaide used the Australian edition of Samuelson produced by two Adelaide academics and another local product, the excellent *Economic Activity*, by Harcourt, Karmel and Wallace.
10. At the Wollongong seminar, where a version of the paper was presented in November 1994.
11. This author, it might be noted was among the 35 per cent non-respondents because of absence overseas when the questionnaire was circulated.
12. The authors qualify the first paragraph of this quotation by stating: 'On a binomial test of this pattern of differences, however, not even the French economists turn out to be statistically different, at the 0.05 level of significance.'
13. The author in 1994 applied for a grant from the Australian Research Council to research this and similar issues in the context of the internationalization/Americanization debate, and to address within a historical perspective the impact of a dominant nation in a discipline such as economics. The application, sadly, was not successful. An anonymous assessor effectively vetoed the project by scoring it low on the ground that it was little more than an exercise in America bashing. This episode helps to indicate how sensitive this topic is in at least some Australian circles.
14. This may be compared with the practice of early issues of the *Economic Journal* (or for that matter, of the *Quarterly Journal of Economics*) in which a substantial proportion of foreign publications was reviewed and where, moreover, specially appointed foreign correspondents reported on national economic events which they believed had wider, or even international, economic significance. Is this practice now redundant given the flow of international comparative material from the international agencies (OECD, IMF, UNO)?

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TABLE 1  
Major Postgraduate Qualification by Country (UK or North America) of Staff at Five long-established Australian Economics Departments: 1940-49 to 1970-79 (all staff for decade)

	1940-49			1950-59			1960-69			1970-79		
	UK	US	Total	UK	US	Total	UK	US	Total	UK	US	Total
Adelaide	2	-	8	1	1	13	7	5	35	7	4	29
Melbourne	4	2	15	8	-	24	10	-	26	7	4	34
Tasmania	1	-	7	1	-	7	2	-	8	4	-	12
Queensland	1	-	3	1	-	7	3	1	17	11	5	26
Sydney	3	-	8	4	1	13	4	1	18	10	9	36
TOTAL	11	2	41	15	2	64	26	7	104	39	22	137
Per Cent	26.8	4.9	100.0	23.4	3.1	100.0	25.0	7.9	100.0	28.5	16.1	100.0

Source: Compiled from data in University Faculty Handbooks.

**TABLE 2**  
**Major Postgraduate Qualification by Country (U.K. or North America) of Economics Staff at Selected Major Economics Departments**

	1983			1992		
	U.K.	U.S.	Total	U.K.	U.S.	Total
Adelaide	6	3	23	4	6	28
Australian National University*	10	7	37	5	9	44
Melbourne	9	4	23	6	6	29
Monash	7	11	24	3	10	31
NSW	9	5	24	6	11	41
Queensland	7	4	26	6	3	32
Sydney	9	5	26	9	6	26
Tasmania	2	1	10	4	7	21
Total	59	40	193	43	58	252
Percentage	30.6	20.7	100.0	17.1	23.0	100.0
Total ) original five	33	17	141	29	28	136
Percentage ) from Table 1	23.4	12.1	100.0	21.3	20.5	100.0
ANU & Monash - Total	17	18	61	8	19	85
- Percentage	27.9	29.5	100.0	9.4	22.4	100.0

Source: *Commonwealth Universities Yearbook*, London, Association of Commonwealth Universities, 1984, 1993.

Note: Includes Faculties, Research Schools of Pacific Studies and Social Sciences.

**TABLE 3**  
***Economic Record* 1945-1994**  
**Authorship of Articles and Notes by Place of Origin of Author: (Percentage)**

	<u>Australian</u>	<u>American</u>	<u>British</u>	<u>New Zealand<sup>(b)</sup></u>	<u>Other</u>
1945-49	77.2	1.0	-	18.7	4.0
1950-54	73.3	1.0	5.1	13.5	8.9
1955-59	72.9	3.4	3.7	13.8	1.0
1960-64	81.2	3.3	4.3	9.4	-
1965-69	79.0	8.4	3.9	5.5	-
1970-74	68.7	16.0 <sup>(c)</sup>	3.9	4.9	-
1975-79	68.1	17.2 <sup>(c)</sup>	5.6	2.4	-
1980-84	82.2	9.6	1.9	2.4	-
1985-89	69.4	21.3	2.7	3.1	-
1990-94 <sup>(a)</sup>	70.0	20.4	2.1	1.9	-

N.B.

	<u>Australian</u>	<u>American</u>
1945-69	76.7	3.4
1970-94	71.6	16.9

- (a) Incomplete.  
 (b) New Zealand separated from *Economic Record* in 1982  
 (c) Turnovsky editor of *Economic Record* 1973-77.



**TABLE 4**  
*Economic Record 1945-1994*  
Articles Classified by Contents: 1945-1994 (Percentage)

	Australian Applied Topics	Overseas Topics	Theoretical
1945-49	47.8	30.5	17.0
1950-54	44.0	22.7	27.1
1955-59	42.0	21.4	33.7
1960-64	60.2 <sup>(a)</sup>	15.6	34.2
1965-69	62.3	13.0	28.5
1970-74	32.2 <sup>(b)</sup>	17.8	49.8 <sup>(c)</sup>
1975-79	35.4	8.3	61.2 <sup>(c)</sup>
1980-84	52.8	2.5 <sup>(d)</sup>	44.7
1985-89	45.5	2.8	51.2 <sup>(e)</sup>
1990-94 <sup>(f)</sup>	48.6	2.6	48.9

- (a) Credit squeeze, unemployment and policy debate generated many applied articles.  
 (b) *Australian Economic Review* commenced in 1968.  
 (c) Turnovsky editor of *Economic Record* 1973-77.  
 (d) New Zealand separated from *Economic Record* from 1982.  
 (e) 1988 Economists Conference and invited theory papers.  
 (f) 1994 not yet complete.

N.B. Australian Applied Topics                      Theory Articles  
 49.2% (1945-69)                                      28.1% (1945-69)  
 42.9% (1970-94)                                      51.1% (1970-94)\*  
 \* Turnovsky/*Australian Economic Review* factors.

**TABLE 5**  
*Economic Record 1945-1994*  
Book Reviews by Place of Origin of Books Reviewed (percentage).  
5 year averages

	Total	Australia	England	North America	Commonwealth	Asia/Pacific
1945-49	323	10.2	22.9	34.7	n.e.i.	1.9
1950-54	409	7.1	39.1	27.3	10.2	0.2
1955-59	169	19.5	37.2	31.3	9.3	0.5 <sup>(e)</sup>
1960-64	157	19.1	43.3	27.4	4.1	0.6 <sup>(e)</sup>
1965-69	193	31.6	31.6	19.2	2.5	0.5 <sup>(e)</sup>
1970-74	200	39.0	28.0	14.5	3.6 <sup>(b)</sup>	2.0
1975-79	150	52.0	28.7	10.0	4.0 <sup>(b)</sup>	0.0
1980-84	120	46.7	40.0	4.1	2.7	0.8 <sup>(e)</sup>
1985-89	210	30.9	43.8	10.9	2.5	0.0
1990-94(a)	182	21.4	47.8	16.1	1.0 <sup>(b)</sup>	0.1

- (a) Incomplete.  
 (b) Largely New Zealand publications.  
 (c) 1 publication only.

N.B. (1) Policy of preference for reviews of Australian books approximately 1965-84.  
 (2) International book publishers' arrangements makes Australia part of British publishing zone.  
 (3) Steady decline of reviews. 36.6 reviews per issue 1945-54; 8.25 reviews per issue 1980-89.  
 [Is this an Index of Americanisation?]

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