

Introduction

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Introduction

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This issue of *POROI: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Rhetorical Analysis and Invention* is a full one. It contains a multi-faceted series of contributions on economics; two essays of rhetorical criticisms about how *Harry Potter* has been, or seeks to be, read; and a series of reports on current topics in the rhetoric of science and technology.

The rhetoric of economics is a revered topic at POROI. Deidre McCloskey's *The Rhetoric of Economics* is one of our seminal and paradigmatic texts. Perhaps the flurry of reflections on economics we present here was stimulated, at least indirectly, by the sudden collapse in 2008 of the trust on which the market mechanism depends and the immediate rush of governments into the vacuum thus created. However that may be, we have four essays on economics by a total of seven authors.

First, there is a stimulating and well-focused dialogue between McCloskey and John Lyne (another first-generation POROI participant) about government regulated versus libertarian *laissez-faire* economics. We then turn to historical studies. These take us back, first, to the scene in 18th century Scotland and England where economics as we know it was born. Aida Ramos and Philip Mirowski tell us about Sir James Steuart's alternative to Adam Smith. David Depew contrasts Adam Smith with the Smith of legend and compares him to one of his first fans, the great rhetorician and parliamentarian Edmund Burke. Finally, David Hingstman and Tom Goodnight round off our economic colloquium by contrasting the ideological uses to which the figures John Maynard Keynes and Friedrich Hayek have been put in controversies stimulated by the recent Great Recession with the way they were actually positioned to each other in real debates that unfolded in 1932 in response to the Great Depression.

Harry Potter is such a phenomenon that it is difficult by now to tell the text from the context in which it was read. Kim Nguyen studies the politics of this phenomenon from the angle of the War on Terror with which it coincided. Rebecca Ingalls gives us a theologically-informed reading of the novels.

POROI: An Interdisciplinary Journal of rhetorical Analysis and Invention has happily agreed to serve as portal through which the Association for the Rhetoric of Science and Technology (ARST) makes known some results of its yearly deliberations. Much of the work of rhetorical scholars of science and technology consists of monitoring and intervening in vexed interactions at the boundary between experts and the public. Occasionally, the

public can become fanatically too interested in matters scientific and technical. The more common problem, however, is that the general public is not as interested in scientific and technological matters as democratic citizenship in a cutting-edge society requires. In this issue, we present crisp summaries composed by panels of ARST members on strategies for getting publics involved, on how to negotiate informal and formal measures of risk, on how productively to involve patients in their medical treatments, and about how to process new developments in neuroscience. These reports are introduced and explained by ARST's current president, Karen Taylor. The four reports, in which no less than thirteen authors took a hand, also contain useful, up-to-date bibliographies. POROI is happy to welcome these and future official communications from ARST.

POROI: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Rhetorical Analysis and Invention eagerly awaits your submissions. The journal's website gives instructions.

The Editors