The point is simply that judgments and meanings are made within human speech communities. We "make people willing to see certain bases" in economics rhetorically. And the rhetor, the good person skilled at speaking (as Quintilian put it), is just what Klein is recommending. We economists are skilled at making the simple, mixed fact-and-intellectual-tradition judgments most people miss: to mention the judgments I have made today reading the newspaper, that it is Ianan, for example, for Vietnamese sheep farmers who produce $70 of product per sheep to be paid $200 of subsidies per sheep by Norwegian taxpayers to do it; that when non-Vietnamese artificial fingernail technicians in California complain about the non-FDA approved ingredient used by the Vietnamese at half the salons, they are protecting their incomes, not the consumers; or that California freeways would have optimal congestion instead of the insane amount they have now if they were not free.

I do not think Klein makes his case against "fancy models or econometrics" quite explicit (it should be noted, to speak of ethos, that Klein himself is very well versed at least in fancy models, and can perfer irrelevant existence theorems with the best of them, so he speaks from knowledge, not ignorance). He may inadvertently leave the impression that something is actually being accomplished of a scientific character in mainstream economics—though the word "scholasticism" suggests he shares my doubt. My doubt is that anything much of value scientifically has come out of American academic economics since Samuelsonian economics took over the center in 1950. I disagree that "model building and econometrics are great blessings" at any rate in their Samuelsonian form: existence theorems plus statistical significance have been known for decades to have nothing whatever to do with scientific thinking. The nouvelle Chicago concession in the 1980s to theorem-provers in Stanford and Harvard has made the situation worse and worse. Now, as Klein notes, nothing of value gets into journals of economics. I read a paper earlier today by a young economist who believed that the behavior of medieval English peasants can be deduced, with no recourse to facts, from blackboard assumptions (for example, that the peasants loved each other and would help one of their number who fell on bad times).

My point is that the above-they voluntary scholasticism that Stigler and his heirs at Chicago, such as Gary Becker and Robert Lucas, recommend is phony as science. This despite their Nobel prizes. God bless 'em. The emperor has no clothes. Incidentally, people usually say it was a little boy in the Andersen story who made this observation. I have checked, and report that the gender of the child is not actually specified. I prefer to think of it as a little girl, since females are more apt to see through male illusions than males are.

So I agree with Klein, but would go further in getting back to Adam Smith. We need people to take their courage in hand and start doing real economic science. That science will be policy-relevant, all right, as relevant as old Adam's unscientific books of 1776 and 1790.
well-documented in Klein's paper). That Klein's asserted moral imperative is valid, given his premises, is as obvious as the assertion that a physician, observing a human being about to ingest a liquid which (unbeknownst to that human being) medical science knows to be likely to induce a fatal disease, has a moral duty to inform, nay, to persuade that individual concerning the dangers involved in drinking the liquid. An economist who is himself convinced concerning the real dangers to society implied by government interventionist policies unquestionably has a moral duty—of course a duty the priority of which must be judged in the context of other relevant moral obligations incumbent upon the individual economist—to speak out to the relevant decision makers concerning those dangers. Were Klein to confine his argument to the above, he could applaud the perceptiveness and the moral acuity of his position in this fine paper. Unfortunately, however, Klein is not content with the above.

Klein argues his case not merely by exhorting economists to inform (or to persuade) the public concerning the knowledge that economic science can provide, but, most importantly, by exhorting economists to exercise their influence, as do parents on their children, to change the values of the public. But Klein's economists should not take the interests of the members of society as given and fixed; they should "provide guidance about what their listeners' interests should be" (ibid., italics in original). It is here that one fears that Klein has gone too far—in fact he has, this writer submits, gone astray.

Klein rightly observes that the moral duty of a liberty-loving economist to speak out on policy, derives to a considerable extent from the reputation for truthfulness which the economist enjoys. It is precisely because his reputation guarantees a respectful hearing, that the economist has a moral obligation to speak out. In Klein's words, when "an economist argues against licensing restrictions, the argument persua-des because of its logical cogency and factual support, but also because it comes from a sincere, scrupulous and capable economist." This writer submits that if the economist deliberately goes beyond teaching members of society what policies will promote their welfare as they see that welfare, and proceeds to attempt to persuade them to give up what they believe to be in their deepest interests (in favor of what the economist believes to be in their deepest interests)—the economist will rapidly lose the very reputation for scrupulous disinterestedness that now provides at least part of the basis for the validity of Klein's asserted moral imperative.

When Stigler, in his sermon against what he viewed as preaching by economists, called on economists to stop addressing the public, he was indeed wrong. But he was wrong not because economists, in their capacity as economists, should be preaching (in the sense of seeking to persuade listeners to change their own deepest moral rankings), but because it is not necessary for economists, in their capacity as economists, to preach at all. Economists have information and insights, based on "logical cogency and factual support," which they can communicate to the public without preaching to the public (in the sense of seeking to have it rethink its deepest values). (The reader should not misunderstand me: certainly every seasoned teacher knows that to teach calls for the art of persuasion (the same art required for successful preaching), but there is a fundamental difference between (a) persuading (i.e. teaching) a listener as to which is the shortest way to get to point B from point A, and (b) persuad-

ing that listener that B is a morally preferable place in which to live than A. To persuade, in the sense of successfully transmitting a logical argument or factual information, is to teach. And the art of teaching does often call for the wiles of Madison Avenue. So long as what is being transmitted is a matter of demonstrable logic or fact, such persuasion is still "teaching." On the other hand, however, to persuade in the sense of changing the deepest values of the listener, is to preach. One may indeed have a moral duty to preach. This is true for the scientist as it is for any human being; but it remains nonetheless true that preaching is simply not part of the activity of the scientist qua scientist.) Our concern here is, that by exhorting the liberty-loving economist to preach in his role of economist the case for loving liberty as a pure value, (rather than confining himself to his professional task of teaching how a free market society can generate prosperity and the fulfillment of human goals) Klein is contrib-

uting to the erosion of that very aura of sincerity, scrupulous honesty, and objectivity, on which the economist's professional influence with the public depends.

No one was a more passionate exponent of the case for the free market society that his remarkable teacher, Ludwig von Mises believed that the very sur-

vival of mankind depended on the economist's succeeding to transmit the teachings of economic science to the public. A glance at the closing paragraphs of Mises's monumental Human Action reveals the deep and passionate moral convictions that drove him to pursue his scientific career with an integrity that made him not merely un-

popular, but a virtual outcast in the mid-century economics profession (except as it was by the interventionist fashions of the time). In all this Mises was obeying pre-

cisely that very moral imperative that Klein has rightly emphasized in this paper.

But, at the same time, no one was more emphatic than was Mises, on the need for economists to adhere strictly to wertfreiheit, i.e. to present their scientific conclu-
sions, particularly their normative conclusions, in a way that takes account, not of the values held personally by the economist as a human being, but only of the goals of those to whom the economist is providing his professional advice. (To cite Mises as a shining example of the exponent of wertfreiheit, is not to deny that a good deal of his own scientific writing was unsuccessful in concealing the underlying moral passion that drove him, so that it misled many readers to see Mises as being not at all wertfrei!) Now, it is admittedly the case that many modern philosophers no longer accept (as this writer, at least as a practical matter, does accept) Mise's sharp distinction be-

 tween the demonstrated conclusions of science on the one hand, and the expression of personal judgments of value, on the other. Klein is certainly entitled to argue, contra Mises, that when people disagree on values, they are ultimately disagreeing on mat-


ters of fact. But our deep concern for the potentially dangerous implications of Klein's thesis as he has presented it, does not depend on the ultimate philosophical truth of Mises's distinction. Even if, at some level of philosophical determination, Klein's re-


duction of any categorical distinction between scientific propositions and judgments of value is decisively upheld, these implications remain fully as dangerous (for the very ideological positions that Klein holds dear, and that have motivated his paper), as we have shown them to be.

For the simple truth is that, regardless of philosophical argument to the contrary, the person-in-the-street does agree with the Mises-Weberian distinction. The pub-

lishers' online platform.

TWO CHEERS FOR KLEIN'S PLA
Klein, the competent economist, exhorts his fellow economists, on moral grounds, to enlighten public policy through their scientific expertise. He is able to do so because he is a competent economist. But in engaging in such moral exhortation he is, of course, speaking not qua economist, but as the morally concerned citizen (deploying the results generated by science).

Klein is rightly and righteously preaching. But when Klein urges his fellow economists to seek, qua economists, to change the deepest interests of the public, he is urging them to muddle the line between their role as scientists and their identity as morally concerned human beings. In so doing, one fears, Klein is encouraging economists to surrender the very reputation for sincerity and scrupulous objectivity, on which the potential influence of economists over the public depends.

A PLEA TO ECONOMISTS?

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(May 1997 - May 2000)

The last two centuries have seen, as Martin Wolf noted in the Financial Times, 6 September 1999, a continuing battle between command-and-control and market mechanisms for organizing society. On this battlefield, it has been the economists who have devised and honed the intellectual weapons, even if it has been political leaders, from dictators to liberal democrats, who have put them into use. As Keynes said, "Madmen in authority, who hear voices in the air, are distilling their frenzy from some academic scriblerians a few years back" [1936].

With Karl Marx on one side, Hayek and Friedman on the other, and Keynes as a middle-way in between, the ideas of economists have been beacons for their myriad followers. You will recall the story of the Soviet military parade, with weapons of ever increasing mass destruction, culminating in a small van containing some men in grey suits. "Who are they?" asked an onlooker; "Economists" was the response. "But why?" "You should see the destruction and havoc that they can cause."

Clinton was supposed to have claimed that his election campaign had to have a major focus, "It's the economy, stupid." When a Presidential candidate in the United States, or a party leader in most G7 countries, approaches elections, he will now usually have individual economists as advisors and will have economic programs to put before the electorate. Certainly leading politicians will also have scientific advisors, but scientific issues are rarely as electorally crucial as economic ones. I find it hard to believe that economics, and economists, do not figure sufficiently prominently on the public scene.

Nor are such economists always behind the scenes "eminence grises." When I observe the role of Larry Summers, Stan Fischer, Joe Stiglitz, to name but a few, I do not feel that economists are shrinking violets constructing complicated formulae in ivory towers. Moreover, the recent trend towards giving central banks operational independence to set interest rates, so as to achieve an objective for price stability mandated by the politicians (and hence indirectly from the electorate) has led numerous economists to shift from a purely advisory towards a more directly decision-making mode. A majority of academically trained professional economists currently serve on the Bank of England’s Monetary Policy Committee.

The claim made by Martin Anderson, cited by Daniel Klein, that in his four-year experience, that not once "in countless meetings on national economic policy, did any-