

**MEMORIAL RESOLUTION OF THE FACULTY
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON**

ON THE DEATH OF PROFESSOR EMERITUS JOHN M. CULBERTSON

John Matthew Culbertson, professor emeritus of economics, died on December 9, 2001, at age 80. He spent more than 30 years on the faculty, and, unusual in our field, achieved a second period of professional fame in the half-dozen years before his retirement in 1989.

John was born in Detroit, Michigan in 1920. He grew up in the small town of Walled Lake, Michigan and graduated as valedictorian of his class at Walled Lake High School. He enrolled at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, but his undergraduate education was interrupted by World War II. During the war he served as a lieutenant in the U.S. Army Air Corps, where he instructed pilots and later flew B-26s in bombing raids over Europe. After the war he returned to the University of Michigan, completed his undergraduate education, earned a master's degree, and later completed his PhD in economics, specializing in economic theory, money and banking, and public finance.

From 1950 to 1957 he served as an economist at the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System in Washington. He then came to the University of Wisconsin, initially in the School of Commerce, later moving to the Department of Economics. He specialized in teaching monetary theory and money and banking. In later years he enjoyed teaching the history of economic thought as well as a course in evolutionary economics that reflected his particular slant on economics and criticism of the methodology in mainline economics. During his career, he served as a visiting professor at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, the University of California at Berkeley, and the Sorbonne in Paris, France. He frequently testified before congressional committees on economic policy; he also served as a consultant to, among other organizations, the U.S. Treasury and the Federal Reserve Bank. In addition, he consulted with the USAID mission in Bolivia and often lectured abroad under the auspices of the United States Information Agency.

John published extensively in several fields and in a variety of forms, including books, journal articles, as well as op-ed essays for the *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, and *Milwaukee Journal*. He produced three major books on macroeconomics, and another book on economic development. During the 1980s he shifted his focus to international trade and gained considerable attention both inside and outside the economics profession. He produced a series of three books that vigorously challenged the conventional wisdom on international trade. He argued that unrestricted trade would reduce wages and living standards in the United States and the West.

John's interests and avocations ranged widely. He developed an early interest in art and architecture, and he was an accomplished oil painter and photographer. His musical talents were also noteworthy. In addition to enjoying classical music and jazz, he played the piano, accordion, and bagpipes. He was a skilled gardener, and the landscaping of his house could have won prizes. He traveled extensively, often accompanying his wife on trips to her professional meetings. Finally, John was an avid reader; his range spanned evolutionary theory to *Lord of the Rings*, about which he said: "Well, Tolkien created an entire world, and he should be credited for that." His strong opinions on his readings led to many stimulating discussions with his friends.

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He continued to lecture and travel until Parkinson's disease slowed his physical pace and dimmed his inquisitive mind. He is survived by his wife Fran, whom he met and married after World War II when both were undergraduates at the University of Michigan. He is also survived by four children, John, Joanne, Lyndall, and Amy, and by two grandchildren.

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