The Collected Short Works of Thorstein Veblen

Volume I, II, III

SERIES IN ECONOMICS

About the author

Thorstein Bunde Veblen (1857-1929) was an American economist and sociologist, notable for his contributions to institutional economics. Born in Cato, Wisconsin, of Norwegian-American parents, Veblen was educated in Carleton College, John Hopkins University and Yale University, graduating with a doctoral thesis on "Ethical Grounds of a Doctrine of Retribution". His contacts with philosophers, sociologists and other social scientists as much as with economists are reflected in the critical tone of his writing on economic issues and his witty description of capitalist economic and social structures. Following his academic appointment to the University of Chicago, he became an editor of the Journal of Political Economy and enjoyed widespread accolade for his books "The Theory of the Leisure Class" and "The Theory of Business Enterprise". His diverse writings are heavily influenced by the evolutionary turn apparent in much of social science at the time and seek social analogies of natural mechanisms of speciation, competition and selection. In contrast to the ideological divisions of his time, Veblen was disdainful of workers and entrepreneurs in equal measure, ascribing special role to functional knowledge and to engineers as a force for social innovation.



Summary

This three-volume collection contains Veblen's publications in academic journals and other scholarly press. The articles are organized under major chapters covering Veblen's pioneering thoughts on social organization; economic theory; social theory; institutions, social organization and economic performance; contemporary policies and social movements; social applications of evolutionary reasoning. Veblen made numerous seminal contributions on issues as diverse as the social role of science, the economic and social competition between entrepreneurs and engineers as well as a sobering criticism of the still under-appreciated preconceptions of economics as a science. The collection brings together much work that has been inaccessible in print and provides instructive reading for researchers on institutional economics, evolutionary economics as well as those with an interest on the history of economic thought. This edition has been professionally typeset from the original articles for easier reading and includes a comprehensive index. It is printed on quality, hard-bound volumes, resulting in an indispensable contemporary edition of Veblen's timeless ideas.

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