

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910784705703321
Titolo	The defining moment [[electronic resource] ] : the Great Depression and the American economy in the twentieth century // edited by Michael D. Bordo, Claudia Goldin, and Eugene N. White
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Chicago, : University of Chicago Press, c1998
ISBN	1-281-22314-X 9786611223144 0-226-06691-6
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (496 p.)
Collana	A National Bureau of Economic Research project report
Altri autori (Persone)	BordoMichael D GoldinClaudia Dale WhiteEugene Nelson <1952->
Disciplina	338.5/42
Soggetti	Depressions - 1929 - United States United States Economic conditions United States Economic policy
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Description based upon print version of record.
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and indexes.
Nota di contenuto	Front matter -- Contents -- Acknowledgments -- Abbreviations -- Time Line -- The Defining Moment Hypothesis: The Editors' Introduction -- 1. Was the Great Depression a Watershed for American Monetary Policy? -- 2. Fiscal Policy in the Shadow of the Great Depression -- 3. The Legacy of Deposit Insurance: The Growth, Spread, and Cost of Insuring Financial Intermediaries -- 4. By Way of Analogy: The Expansion of the Federal Government in the 1930's -- 5. The Impact of the New Deal on American Federalism -- 6. The Great Depression and the Regulating State: Federal Government Regulation of Agriculture, 1884-1970 -- 7. A Distinctive System: Origins and Impact of U.S. Unemployment Compensation -- 8. Spurts in Union Growth: Defining Moments and Social Processes -- 9. The Genesis and Evolution of Social Security -- 10. From Smoot-Hawley to Reciprocal Trade Agreements: Changing the Course of U.S. Trade Policy in the 1930's -- 11. The Great Depression as a Watershed: International Capital Mobility over the Long Run -- 12. Implications of the Great

In contemporary American political discourse, issues related to the scope, authority, and the cost of the federal government are perennially at the center of discussion. Any historical analysis of this topic points directly to the Great Depression, the "moment" to which most historians and economists connect the origins of the fiscal, monetary, and social policies that have characterized American government in the second half of the twentieth century. In the most comprehensive collection of essays available on these topics, *The Defining Moment* poses the question directly: to what extent, if any, was the Depression a watershed period in the history of the American economy? This volume organizes twelve scholars' responses into four categories: fiscal and monetary policies, the economic expansion of government, the innovation and extension of social programs, and the changing international economy. The central focus across the chapters is the well-known alternations to national government during the 1930's. *The Defining Moment* attempts to evaluate the significance of the past half-century to the American economy, while not omitting reference to the 1930's. The essays consider whether New Deal-style legislation continues to operate today as originally envisioned, whether it altered government and the economy as substantially as did policies inaugurated during World War II, the 1950's, and the 1960's, and whether the legislation had important precedents before the Depression, specifically during World War I. Some chapters find that, surprisingly, in certain areas such as labor organization, the 1930's responses to the Depression contributed less to lasting change in the economy than a traditional view of the time would suggest. On the whole, however, these essays offer testimony to the Depression's legacy as a "defining moment." The large role of today's government and its methods of intervention—from the pursuit of a more active monetary policy to the maintenance and extension of a wide range of insurance for labor and business—derive from the crisis years of the 1930's.

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