



McLane Scholars Reading Group

Freedom and Human Flourishing: Poverty, Prosperity & Happiness around the World

Fall 2021 Readings Schedule
Time: 11-noon (most Fridays)

Co-facilitator: Dr. Jason Aimone
Office: Foster 320.06
E-mail: Jason_Aimone@baylor.edu

Co-facilitator: Dr. Boris Nikolaev
Office: Foster 210.44
Email: Boris_Nikolaev@baylor.edu

Theme

The theme for the fall 2021 McLane Scholars' program is *Freedom and Human Flourishing: Poverty, Prosperity and Happiness around the World*. Participants will read and discuss works by scholars such as Deidre McCloskey, Daren Acemoglu, and James Otteson, among others, and examine the role institutions, culture, geography and even luck in promoting human flourishing. The readings will address a range of questions including:

- Is life getting better over time?
- What are some common myths about economic development?
- Why are some nations richer than others?
- Has global inequality increased and what should we do about it?
- Can foreign aid help the poor?
- Are traditional measures of socio-economic progress good indicators of well-being?
- What is the relationship between freedom and happiness?
- What is the future of socio-economic progress?

Summit (October 15-16, 2021)

On October 16-17, 2021, Southern Methodist University will host a summit with participants from all five programs that will feature group discussions and formal remarks from a distinguished scholar. This year, the speaker will be professor James Otteson (Distinguished Professor of Business Ethics at the University of Notre Dame). Please note that participating in the summit is required.

Required Books

All books that will be provided.

- Otteson, J. (2021). *Seven Deadly Economic Sins*. Glen Whelan.
- McCloskey, D. N. (2016). *Bourgeois Equality: How Ideas, Not Capital or Institutions, Enriched the World*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Easterly, W. (2014). *The Tyranny of Experts: Economists, Dictators, and the Forgotten Rights of the Poor*. Philadelphia, UNITED STATES: Basic Books.
- Lindsey, Brink and Steven M. Teles (2017). *The Captured Economy: How the Powerful Enrich Themselves, Slow Down Growth, and Increase Inequality*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Week 1 (September 10, 2021): Is Life Getting Better? [56 pages]

Facilitators: Dr. Nikolaev & Dr. Aimone

Book Readings

- Banerjee & Duflo (2011), Chapters 1 & 2. “Poor Economics” [31 pages] [\[read here\]](#)
- McCloskey, Chapter 1 - “The World is Pretty Rich, but Once was Poor,” [9 pages]
- McCloskey, Chapter 2 – “For Malthusian and Other Reasons, Very Poor,” [7 pages]
- McCloskey, Chapter 3 – “Then Many of Us Short Up the Blade of a Hockey Stick.” [9 pages]

Optional

- Thompson, Derek (11 February 2016). “America in 1915: Long Hours, Crowded Houses, Death by Trolley,” *The Atlantic*. [\[read here\]](#).
- Boudreaux, Don (20 February 2016). “Most Ordinary Americans in 2016 Are Richer Than Was John D. Rockefeller in 1916,” *Café Hayek*. [\[read here\]](#).

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- Hans Rosling – “The Magic Washing Machine.” [\[watch here\]](#) - 9:09]
- Gap Minder - explore patterns of population growth, income, health (life expectancy), income inequality, poverty, CO2 emissions, and education over time. [\[explore here\]](#).

Week 2 (September 17, 2021): The Puzzle of Growth: Why Some Nations are Rich and Other Poor? [52 pages]

Facilitators: Dr. Nikolaev

Book Readings

- Easterly, Chapter 2 – “Two Nobel Laureates and the Debate They Never Had.” [30 pages]
- Otteson, J., Ch. 4 – “Progress is Not Inevitable” [22 pages]

Optional Materials

- Sachs, J. D., Mellinger, A. D., & Gallup, J. L. (2001). “The Geography of Poverty and Wealth.” *Scientific American*, 284(3), 70-75. [\[read here\]](#) - 5 pages]
- Gorodnichenko, Y. and G. Roland (21 September 2010). “Does culture affect long-run growth?” *Vox CEPR’s Policy Portal*. [\[read here\]](#) - 4 pages]
- Acemoglu & Robinson, Chapter 3 – “The Making of Prosperity and Poverty.” [26 pages]
- North, D. C. (1994). “Economic Performance Through Time.” *The American Economic*

- Review, 84(3), 359-368. [[read here](#) - 9 pages].
- Acemoglu & Robinson, Chapter 11 – “The Virtuous Circle.” [34 pages].
- Alesina, A., & Giuliano, P. (2015). “Culture and Institutions.” *Journal of Economic Literature*, 53(4), 898-944. [[read here](#) – 46 pages]
- *Gates, Bill (26 February 2013). “Good Ideas, but Missing Analysis.” [[read here](#)]
- Gorodnichenko, Y., & Roland, G. (2017). “Culture, Institutions, and the Wealth of Nations.” *The Review of Economics and Statistics*, 99(3), 402-416. [[read here](#) – 17pages].
- *Nunn, N. (2012). “Culture and the Historical Process.” *Economic History of Developing Regions*, S108-S126. [[read here](#) – 19 pages]

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- Marginal Revolution University - The Puzzle of Growth: Rich Countries and Poor Countries [[watch here](#) – 8:32]
- Ted Talk: James Robinson – “Why Nations Fail.” [[watch here](#) – 18:33]

Week 3 (September 24, 2021): Sticks and Stones May Break Bones, but Words and Ideas Can Change the World [39 pages]

Facilitators: Dr. Aimone

Book Readings

- McCloskey, Chapter 51 – “Sweet Talk Rules the Economy.” [10 pages]
- McCloskey, Chapter 52 – “And Its Rhetoric Can Change Quickly.” [5 pages]
- McCloskey, Chapter 53 – “It Was Not a Deep Cultural Change.” [6 pages]
- McCloskey, Chapter 54 – “Yes, It Was Ideas, Not Interests or Institutions, that Changed, Suddenly, in Northwestern Europe.” [9 pages]
- McCloskey, Chapter 55 – “Elsewhere Ideas about the Bourgeoisie Did Not Change.” [9pages]

Optional

- McCloskey, Chapter 67 – “A Change in Rhetoric Made Modernity, and Can Spread It.” [10 pages]
- Easterly, Chapter 12 – “Technology: How to Succeed Without Knowing How.” [32 pages]

Meeting 4 (October 1, 2021): Foreign Aid and Development [38 pages]

Facilitators: Dr. Aimone

Book Readings

- Easterly, Chapter 11 – “Markets: The Association of Problem Solvers.” [36 pages]
- Gates, Bill (27 June 2017). “Giving Foreign Aid Helps America’s Economy.” [2 pages] [[read here](#)].

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- Bono – “The good news on poverty (Yes, there’s good news).” [[watch here](#) – 13:57]
- Easterly, William – “Why does foreign aid fail?” [[watch here](#) – 6:33]
- Stossel, John – “Foreign Aid – Stossel in the Classroom.” [[watch here](#) – 6:20]
- Marginal Revolution University – “Millennium Villages Project.” [[watch here](#) – 9:21]

Optional Materials

- Rosling, Hans – “Don't Panic: How to End Poverty in 15 Years.” [[watch here](#) – 59:18]
- Sachs, Jeffrey (21 January 2014). “The Case for Aid,” *Foreign Policy*. [[read here](#)]
- Zwolinski, Matt – “World Poverty: Foreign Aid vs. Charity that Actually Works.” [[watch here](#) – 3:40]
- John, A., & Storr, V. H. (2009). “Can the West help the rest? A review essay of Sachs' The End of Poverty and Easterly's The White Man's Burden.” *Journal of Private Enterprise*, 25, 125-140. [[read here](#) - 15 pages]
- Sachs, Jeffrey D. and Ayittey, George B.N. (2012). “Poverty: Can Foreign Aid Reduce Poverty,” In *Controversies in Globalization: Contending Approaches to International Relations*, 71-102. [[read here](#) – 31 pages]

Meeting 5 (October 8, 2021): Resentment Towards the Rich and Inequality [56 pages]

Facilitators: Dr. Nikolaev

Book Readings

- Otteson, J., Ch. 6 – “Equality of What?” [19 pages]
- Lindsey and Teles, Chapter 1 – “Rigged.” [14 pages]
- Richard Wilkinson - How Economic Inequality Harms Societies [[watch here](#) – 16:54]
- Stiglitz, Joseph (May 2011). “Of the 1%, by the 1%, for the 1%,” *Vanity Fair*. [[read here](#)] [4 pages].
- Stiglitz, Joseph (9 September 2016). “Standard Economics is Wrong. Inequality and Unearned Income Kills the Economy.” *Economics*. [[read here](#)] [10 pages]

Optional Readings

- Holcombe, R. G. (2015). Capital and labor, Past and present, in the context of Piketty's Capital. *The Review of Austrian Economics*, 28(2), 195-207 [[read here](#) - 13 pages].
- Roser, Max. “Global Economic Inequality,” Our World in Data. [[read here](#)]

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- “Thomas Piketty's ‘Capital in 3 minutes.’” [[watch here](#) - 3:14]
- “Income and Wealth Inequality: Crash Course Economics #17.” [[watch here](#) – 10:15]
- Marginal Revolution University, “Adam Smith on Inequalities of Wages.” [[watch here](#) –6:38]

Summit (October 15-16, 2021): “The Ethics of Redistribution” by James Otteson [75 pages]

Facilitators: Dr. Aimone & Dr. Nikolaev

Book Readings

- Otteson, J., Ch. 5 – “Economics and/or Morality?” [39 pages]
- Otteson, J., Ch. 7 – “Markets Are Not Perfect” [32 pages]

October 22 – Fall Break (no meeting)

Meeting 6 (October 29, 2021): Development, Regulation, and Entrepreneurship in the U.S. [46 pages]

Facilitators: Dr. Nikolaev

Book Readings

- Lindsey and Teles, Chapter 5 – “Occupational Licensing.” [18 pages]
- Decker, R., Haltiwanger, J., Jarmin, R., & Miranda, J. (2014). The Role of Entrepreneurship in US Job Creation and Economic Dynamism. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 28(3), 3-24. [[read here](#)] [21 pages].
- Litan, Robert E. and Ian Hathaway (13 June 2017). “Is America Encouraging the Wrong Kind of Entrepreneurship?” *Harvard Business Review*. [[read here](#) – 7 pages]

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- Occupational Licensing [[Stoszel](#) – 4:32] [[Institute for Justice](#) – 4:59]
- Sharing Economy [[Learn Liberty](#) – 2:59] [[Mercatus Policy Report](#) – 8 pages]
- Rent-seeking [[read here](#)] [[Learn Liberty](#) – 4:11]

Optional Materials (*Highly recommended)

- Carpenter, Dick M., Lisa Knepper, Angela Erickson, and John Ross (May 2012). *Licenseto Work: A National Study of Burdens from Occupational Licensing*. [[read here](#)]
- *Economic Innovation Group (2017). *Dynamism in Retreat: Consequences for Regions, Markets, and Workers*. [[read here](#)]

Meeting 7 (November 5, 2021): Social Entrepreneurship and Social Progress [48 pages]

Facilitators: Dr. Aimone

Book Readings

- Easterly, Chapter 11 – “Markets: The Association of Problem Solvers,” [36 pages]
- “Rethinking the Social Responsibility of Business: A debate featuring Milton Friedman, John Mackey, and TJ Rodgers. [[read here](#)] [12 pages]

Optional Readings

- Bornstein, David (13 November 2012). “The Rise of the Social Entrepreneur,” *New YorkTimes*. [[read here](#)]
- Clark, J.R. and D.R. Lee (2011). “Markets and Morality,” *Cato Journal* 31(1): 1-25. [[read here](#) – 24 pages].
- Fisman, Ray and Tim Sullivan (7 June 2016). “The Invisible Helping Hand: How a network of food banks learned to feed more people by embracing the free market,” *Slate*. [[read here](#)]
- Murphy, Richard M. and Denielle Sachs (2 May 2013). “The Rise of Social Entrepreneurship Suggests a Possible Future for Global Capitalism,” *Forbes*. [[read here](#)].
- Osberg, Sally R. and Roger L. Martin (May 2015). “Two Keys to Sustainable Social Enterprise,” *Harvard Business Review*, 86-94. [[read here](#) – 8 pages].

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- Gates, Melinda, “What can non-profits learn from Coca-Cola?” [[watch here](#) – 16:22]
- *Optional Materials*
- EconTalk – “How Prices Can Improve a Food Fight (and Help the Poor).” [[listen here](#) – 1 hour].
- Bono – “Global Social Enterprise.” [[watch here](#) – 1 hr 11 min]

Meeting 8 (November 12, 2021): Is Economic Growth the Best Measure of Social Progress? [54 pages]

Facilitators: Dr. Aimone

Readings

- Are we happy yet? Cato unbound [[read here](#)] [23 pages]
- Economist debate [[read here](#)] [16 pages]
- Frey and Stutzer (2007). Should National Happiness Be Maximized? [[read here](#) - 15 pages]

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- The Happy Planet Index [Nick Marks - [watch here](#) – 16:49] [[website](#)]
- Joseph Stiglitz – Problems with GDP as an Economic Barometer [[watch here](#) – 8:05]
- Amartya Sen on quality of life [[watch here](#) – 22:45]
- OECD Better Life Index [[explore here](#)]

Meeting 9 (November 19, 2021): Money and Happiness [32 pages]

Facilitators: Dr. Nikolaev

Readings

- Sacks, Stevenson, Wolfers. (2013). New Stylized Facts about Income and Subjective Well-Being. *CES Working Paper*. [[read here](#)] [13 pages]
- Kahneman and Deaton (2010). High Income Improves Life Evaluation but not Emotional Well-Being. *PNAS* [[read here](#) - 5 pages]
- Killingsworth, M. A. (2021). Experienced well-being rises with income, even above \$75,000 per year. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 118(4). [[read here](#)] [5 pages]
- Dunn, Elizabeth, Daniel Gilbert, and Timothy Wilson (2011). If money doesn't make you happy, then you probably aren't spending it right. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*. 21: 115-125 [[read here](#)] [9 pages]

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- Economic Freedom and Quality of Life [[watch here](#) – 3:08]
- Daniel Kahneman: The riddle of experience vs. memory [[watch here](#) – 20:06]

Optional Materials

- Nozick, Robert. Happiness. Chapter 9 from *The Examined Life* [[read here](#)]
- David, Buss. (2000). The Evolution of Happiness. *American Psychologist*. 55, 15-23. [[read here](#)]
- Epicurus on Happiness [[watch here](#) – 23:58]
- The Price of Happiness [[watch here](#) – 14:40]
- Inglehart, Ronald, Roberto Foa, Christopher Peterson, and Christian Welzel (2008). Development, Freedom and Rising Happiness: A Global Perspective (1981-2007). *Perspective on Psychological Science*. 3(4): 264-285 [[read here](#)] [22 pages]

November 26, 2021 – Thanksgiving Break (no meeting)

Meeting 10 (December 3, 2021): Automation, Robots and Work in the Future

Facilitators: Dr. Aimone & Nikolaev

Book Readings

- Ford (2015). “The Rise of the Robots: Technology and the Threat of Mass Unemployment.” Chapters 2 and 3 [45 pages]
- Swanson, Brett and Michael J. Mandel (14 May 2017). “Robots Will Save the Economy,” *Wall Street Journal*. [[read here](#)]
- McKinsey Global Institute Debate – “Automation, Jobs, and the Future of Work.” [[readhere](#)-5 pages]
- Mahdawi, Arwa (26 June 2017). “What jobs will still be around in 20 years?” *The Guardian*. [[read here](#)]
- Morgernstern, Michael (25 June 2016). “Automation and Anxiety,” *The Economist*. [[readhere](#)]
- Miller, Claire Cain (March 7, 2017). How to beat the robots, *New York Times* [[read here](#)]

Videos

- Ted Talk: Anthony Goldbloom – “The jobs we’ll lose to machines – and the ones we won’t.” [[watch here](#) - 4:32]