

Economics Holiday Reading List.

We asked the faculty to recommend books for each other and for the student body either for reading themselves or for giving as presents. This is what we got. As you can see, they are either books by economists or books that contain themes or issues that are relevant to economics. Please read and enjoy!

Dr Amanda Gosling

Women and Economics by Charlotte Perkins Gilman (1898)

This was one of the first pieces of economic thinking to link power dynamics within the household to the terms of trade in the labour market. It is very well written and you will enjoy reading it. I think it has its problems basically because it takes as given and as general the set of constraints facing the position of middle class women in developed industrialised economies but this only makes it more fun to read!

Social Mobility and its Enemies by Lee Elliot Major and Stephen Machin (2018)

This is a real polemic – “evidence driven rage” is probably the best way to describe it. It can be read on two levels. The first is as a journalistic description of the empirical evidence that exists on mobility. The second is as an introduction to the economics of education and social mobility.

The Gendered Brain: The new neuroscience that shatters the myth of the female brain by Gina Rippon

A thought-provoking discussion which is relevant not only for differences between the sexes but also for how we as researchers think about differences in preferences and endowments across groups

What Do We Know and What Should We Do About Inequality? by Mike Brewer

An easy and informative read about one of the most important issues that our discipline deals with

Dr Anthony Savagar

The Global Economy as You've Never Seen It

Nothing beats a good picture book...

The Invisible Heart: Economics and Family Values by Nancy Folbre

Not a new book, but interesting, and a good example of the breadth of economics

The Myth of Capitalism: Monopolies and the Death of Competition by Jonathan Tepper et al

A gimmicky title, but they're pursuing an interesting topic and have an admirable list of endorsements... I can't vouch for the contents

The Curse of Bigness: Antitrust in the New Gilded Age by Tim Wu

A short monograph from a law Prof (who writes very well), particularly of interest to anyone

interested in law & economics or pursuing a law conversion after their studies. Implicitly, it shows how economics training can be put to excellent use in the field of law.

Dr Zaki Wahhaj

Things Fall Apart by Chinua Achebe.

I felt it was appropriate because it illustrates how a sophisticated social and economic system can collapse suddenly and unexpectedly under the pressure of external forces.

Dr Bansi Malde

Poor Economics by Abhijit Banerjee and Esther Duflo

Demonstrates how economics and causal econometric methods can be applied to advance our understanding of the drivers of poverty in developing countries, and what can be done about it.

The Great Escape by Angus Deaton is also very good.

Dr Mehdi Hamidi Sahneh

How not to be wrong, the power of mathematical thinking by Jordan Ellenberg.

The book provides an intuitive mathematical explanation to many economics and econometrics topics. I enjoyed reading it, and I think students will get a lot of intuition from it. Simple read, very little math!!!

Dr Christian Siegel

The Race between Education and Technology by Claudia Goldin and Lawrence Katz

A book that emphasizes the drives of rising income and income inequality.

Dr Adelina Gschwandtner

The Economic Naturalist: Why Economics Explains Almost Everything by Robert Frank.

Why? Because it develops thinking like an economist, it is exciting and easy to discuss also with non-economists.

Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything by Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner.

Why? Because this book really convinces you that Economics is at the core of everything.

Dr Alfred Duncan

Germinal by Émile Zola (1895)

Set in a recession in a coal mining town in France. Focuses on a miner family, but also follows a local entrepreneur and a local rentier. The miner family is employed under what would now be considered quite unusual labour contracts, with interesting risk sharing characteristics. At the end there is some discussion of different models of the allocation of property rights over productive capital, some of which are similar to recent proposals here in the UK. Perhaps pair with George Orwell's *The Road to Wigan Pier* (1937).

Behind the Beautiful Forevers: Life, Death, and Hope in a Mumbai Slum by Katherine Boo
Bad Blood: Secrets and Lies in a Silicon Valley Startup, by John Carreyrou
Both books are non-fiction but they read like novels.

Dr Ilhan Guner

The Gift of Global Talent: How Migration Shapes Business, Economy & Society by William R. Kerr.

Capitalism without Capital: The Rise of the Intangible Economy by Jonathan Haskel and Stian Westlake.

Dr Maria Garcia-Alonso

The People Vs Tech: How the internet is killing democracy (and how we save it) by Jamie Barlett
From identity to advertising, from political economy to information warfare, thought provoking and full of economics ideas.

Dr Fernanda Leite Lopez de Leon

The Immortalists by Chloe Benjamin
This is my elected 'page-turner' book of the year. The premise is "If you knew the date of your death, how would you live your life?" – think about what this means for game theory!

Homegoing by Yaa Gyasi
I loved it, beautiful book and I learned lots of history.

Seven Habits of Highly Effective People by Stephen Covey.
The self-help bible from 1989, that sold more than 25 million copies. I wish I had read that when I was an undergraduate student.

Small Island by Andrea Levy
A beautiful book focused on the Jamaican immigration to the UK in the 40s, and the complex relationship between black and whites in the UK back then. (The novel was adapted for television in the BBC in 2009. A stage adaptation opened at the National Theatre in 2019)

Dr Katsuyuki Shibayama

Flash boys: cracking the money code by Michael Lewis
This is an excellent entertainment, but at the same time gives a lot of insights.

The Big Short by Michael Lewis
... about the Financial Crisis in 2007/8. Focusing on those who do not do what majorities do.

Professor Miguel Leon-Ledesma

Economics Rules by Dani Rodrik
A defence of economics by a critic.

Dr Alex Klein

The Big Short by Michael Lewis

This is a good read since we 'celebrate' 10 years of 2008 financial crisis, and a short write-up can be taken from the back-cover of the book:

From the jungles of the trading floor to the casinos of Las Vegas, *The Big Short*, tells the story of the misfits, renegades and visionaries who saw that the biggest credit bubble of all time was about to burst, bet against the banking system - and made a killing.

Dr Wei Jiang

Naked Economics: Undressing the Dismal Science by Charles Wheelan, Burton G. Malkiel

A book about economics that won't put you to sleep.

Dr Luke Buchanan-Hodgman

The Curse of Cash by Rogoff

It explores the role of cash in the modern economy and details the impact a less-cash (and that is intended to read less-cash) economy would have on monetary policy. Superb read.

House of Debt by Mian and Sufi

It details the importance of household debt when attempting to explain economic downturns. Their work ties together evidence on credit cycles, financial assets and consumer spending on durable and non-durable goods.

Dr Mathan Satchi

The Grapes of Wrath by John Steinbeck

Professor Tony Thirlwall

Good Economics for Hard Times by A. Banerjee and E. Duflo

A reminder that economics is a moral science and should be evidence-based.

John Maynard Keynes by Mark Hayes

For those who want to understand Keynes's General Theory without reading it..

Dr Sylvain Barde

The Signal and the Noise: Why Most Predictions Fail – but Some Don't by Nate Silver.

Professor Iain Fraser

Wilding: The Return of Nature to a British Farm by Isabella Tree

I've found this book to be a real insight into how economics and ecology can work together to help support necessary changes to land use management for the benefit of biodiversity.

For something a little different

This Boy. A Memoir of a Childhood by Alan Johnson

I loved this book. It gives a real insight into what it means to grow up in a post war world, why people strive to make a difference and most of all a great tribute to his close family (mother and sister).

Dr Amrit Amirapu

Between the Assassinations by Aravind Adiga

This was Adiga's first book (written before but published after "The White Tiger"). It is a collection of short stories that take place in a fictional town in Southwest India in the late 80's (i.e. between the assassinations). All the stories have economics at their core, as the various colo(u)rful characters (small business owners, corrupt politicians, manual labo(u)rers, sweatshop workers, etc) do their best to maximize utility subject to (considerable) constraints.

The Tusk That Did the Damage by Tania James

Another story set in Southwest India, this one told - alternatingly - from the perspective of 1) an American documentary film-maker, 2) a poacher (actually the poacher's younger brother), and 3) an elephant.