

# **The Great Leveler Violence And The History Of Inequality From The Stone Age To The Twenty First Century The Princeton Economic History Of The Western World**

The first comprehensive study of China's economic development across 3,000 years of history to be published in English.

Challenges the idea that Plato is a secular thinker, exploring the interaction of philosophy and Greek religion in the dialogues.

It is common knowledge that, in rich societies, the poor have worse health and suffer more from almost every social problem. This book explains why inequality is the most serious problem societies face today.

Modern societies set limits, on everything from how fast motorists can drive to how much waste factory owners can dump in our rivers. But incomes in our deeply unequal world have no limits. Could capping top incomes tackle rising inequality more effectively than conventional approaches? In this engaging book, leading analyst Sam Pizzigati details how egalitarians worldwide are demonstrating that a "maximum wage" could be both economically viable and politically practical. He shows how, building on local initiatives, governments could use their tax systems to enforce fair income ratios across the board. The ultimate goal? That ought to be, Pizzigati argues, a world without a super rich. He explains why we

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need to create that world — and how we could speed its creation.

The Great Leveler Princeton University Press

This text explores four major features of human society in their ecological and historical context: the origins of priests and organised religion; the rise of military men in an agrarian society; economic expansion and growth; and civilising and decivilising trends over time.

Castles, Battles, and Bombs reconsiders key episodes of military history from the point of view of economics—with dramatically insightful results. For example, when looked at as a question of sheer cost, the building of castles in the High Middle Ages seems almost inevitable: though stunningly expensive, a strong castle was far cheaper to maintain than a standing army. The authors also reexamine the strategic bombing of Germany in World War II and provide new insights into France's decision to develop nuclear weapons. Drawing on these examples and more, Brauer and Van Tuyl suggest lessons for today's military, from counterterrorist strategy and military manpower planning to the use of private military companies in Afghanistan and Iraq. "In bringing economics into assessments of military history, [the authors] also bring illumination. . . . [The authors] turn their interdisciplinary lens on the mercenary arrangements of Renaissance Italy; the wars of Marlborough, Frederick the Great, and Napoleon; Grant's campaigns in the Civil War; and the strategic bombings of World War II. The results are invariably stimulating."—Martin Walker, *Wilson Quarterly* "This study is serious, creative, important. As an economist I am

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happy to see economics so professionally applied to illuminate major decisions in the history of warfare."—Thomas C. Schelling, Winner of the 2005 Nobel Prize in Economics

How the latest cutting-edge science offers a fuller picture of life in Rome and antiquity This groundbreaking book provides the first comprehensive look at how the latest advances in the sciences are transforming our understanding of ancient Roman history. Walter Scheidel brings together leading historians, anthropologists, and geneticists at the cutting edge of their fields, who explore novel types of evidence that enable us to reconstruct the realities of life in the Roman world. Contributors discuss climate change and its impact on Roman history, and then cover botanical and animal remains, which cast new light on agricultural and dietary practices. They exploit the rich record of human skeletal material--both bones and teeth—which forms a bio-archive that has preserved vital information about health, nutritional status, diet, disease, working conditions, and migration.

Complementing this discussion is an in-depth analysis of trends in human body height, a marker of general well-being. This book also assesses the contribution of genetics to our understanding of the past, demonstrating how ancient DNA is used to track infectious diseases, migration, and the spread of livestock and crops, while the DNA of modern populations helps us reconstruct ancient migrations, especially colonization. Opening a path toward a genuine biohistory of Rome and the wider ancient world, *The Science of Roman History* offers an accessible introduction to the scientific methods being

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used in this exciting new area of research, as well as an up-to-date survey of recent findings and a tantalizing glimpse of what the future holds.

The experts say that America's best days are behind us, that mediocre long-term economic growth is baked in the cake, and that politically, socially, and racially, the United States will continue to tear itself apart. But David Smick-hedge fund strategist and author of the 2008 bestseller *The World Is Curved*-argues that the experts are wrong. In recent decades, a Corporate Capitalism of top down mismanagement and backroom deal-making has smothered America's innovative spirit. Policy now favors the big, the corporate, and the status quo at the expense of the small, the inventive, and the entrepreneurial. The result is that working and middle class Americans have seen their incomes flat-lining and their American Dreams slipping away. In response, Smick calls for the great equalizer, a Main Street Capitalism of mass small-business startups and bottom-up innovation, all unfolding on a level playing field. Introducing a fourteen-point plan of bipartisan reforms for unleashing America's creativity and confidence, his forward-thinking book describes a new climate of dynamism where every man and woman is a potential entrepreneur-especially those at the bottom rungs of the economic ladder. Ultimately, Smick argues, economies are more than statistical measurements of supply and demand, economic output, and rates of return. Economies are people-their hopes, fears, dreams, and expectations. The Great Equalizer is a call for a set of new paradigms that inspire and empower average American people to reimagine and reboot their economy. It is a manifesto asserting that, with a new kind of economic policy, America's best days lie ahead.

Economic inequality is one of the most divisive issues of our

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time. Yet few would argue that inequality is a greater evil than poverty. The poor suffer because they don't have enough, not because others have more, and some have far too much. So why do many people appear to be more distressed by the rich than by the poor? In this provocative book, the #1 New York Times bestselling author of *On Bullshit* presents a compelling and unsettling response to those who believe that the goal of social justice should be economic equality or less inequality. Harry Frankfurt, one of the most influential moral philosophers in the world, argues that we are morally obligated to eliminate poverty—not achieve equality or reduce inequality. Our focus should be on making sure everyone has a sufficient amount to live a decent life. To focus instead on inequality is distracting and alienating. At the same time, Frankfurt argues that the conjunction of vast wealth and poverty is offensive. If we dedicate ourselves to making sure everyone has enough, we may reduce inequality as a side effect. But it's essential to see that the ultimate goal of justice is to end poverty, not inequality. A serious challenge to cherished beliefs on both the political left and right, *On Inequality* promises to have a profound impact on one of the great debates of our time. Transcending ethnic, linguistic, and religious boundaries, early empires shaped thousands of years of world history. Yet despite the global prominence of empire, individual cases are often studied in isolation. This series seeks to change the terms of the debate by promoting cross-cultural, comparative, and transdisciplinary perspectives on imperial state formation prior to the European colonial expansion. Two thousand years ago, up to one-half of the human species was contained within two political systems, the Roman empire in western Eurasia (centered on the Mediterranean Sea) and the Han empire in eastern Eurasia (centered on the great North China Plain). Both empires were broadly comparable in terms of size and population, and even largely coextensive in

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chronological terms (221 BCE to 220 CE for the Qin/Han empire, c. 200 BCE to 395 CE for the unified Roman empire). At the most basic level of resolution, the circumstances of their creation are not very different. In the East, the Shang and Western Zhou periods created a shared cultural framework for the Warring States, with the gradual consolidation of numerous small polities into a handful of large kingdoms which were finally united by the westernmost marcher state of Qin. In the Mediterranean, we can observe comparable political fragmentation and gradual expansion of a unifying civilization, Greek in this case, followed by the gradual formation of a handful of major warring states (the Hellenistic kingdoms in the east, Rome-Italy, Syracuse and Carthage in the west), and likewise eventual unification by the westernmost marcher state, the Roman-led Italian confederation. Subsequent destabilization occurred again in strikingly similar ways: both empires came to be divided into two halves, one that contained the original core but was more exposed to the main barbarian periphery (the west in the Roman case, the north in China), and a traditionalist half in the east (Rome) and south (China). These processes of initial convergence and subsequent divergence in Eurasian state formation have never been the object of systematic comparative analysis. This volume, which brings together experts in the history of the ancient Mediterranean and early China, makes a first step in this direction, by presenting a series of comparative case studies on clearly defined aspects of state formation in early eastern and western Eurasia, focusing on the process of initial developmental convergence. It includes a general introduction that makes the case for a comparative approach; a broad sketch of the character of state formation in western and eastern Eurasia during the final millennium of antiquity; and six thematically connected case studies of particularly salient aspects of this process.

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Cultural history is increasingly informed by the history of material culture—the ways in which individuals or entire societies create and relate to objects both mundane and extraordinary—rather than on textual evidence alone. Books such as *The Hare with Amber Eyes* and *A History of the World in 100 Objects* indicate the growing popularity of this way of understanding the past. In *History and Its Objects*, Peter N. Miller uncovers the forgotten origins of our fascination with exploring the past through its artifacts by highlighting the role of antiquarianism—a pursuit ignored and derided by modern academic history—in grasping the significance of material culture. From the efforts of Renaissance antiquarians, who reconstructed life in the ancient world from coins, inscriptions, seals, and other detritus, to amateur historians in the nineteenth century working within burgeoning national traditions, Miller connects collecting—whether by individuals or institutions—to the professionalization of the historical profession, one which came to regard its progenitors with skepticism and disdain. The struggle to articulate the value of objects as historical evidence, then, lies at the heart both of academic history-writing and of the popular engagement with things. Ultimately, this book demonstrates that our current preoccupation with objects is far from novel and reflects a human need to reexperience the past as a physical presence.

The Occupy Wall Street protests have captured America's political imagination. Polls show that two-thirds of the nation now believe that America's enormous wealth ought to be "distributed more evenly." However, almost as many Americans--well over half--feel the protests will ultimately have "little impact" on inequality in America. What explains this disconnect? Most Americans have resigned themselves to believing that the rich simply always get their way. Except they don't. A century ago, the United States hosted a super-

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rich even more domineering than ours today. Yet fifty years later, that super-rich had almost entirely disappeared. Their majestic mansions and estates had become museums and college campuses, and America had become a vibrant, mass middle class nation, the first and finest the world had ever seen. Americans today ought to be taking no small inspiration from this stunning change. After all, if our forbears successfully beat back grand fortune, why can't we? But this transformation is inspiring virtually no one. Why? Because the story behind it has remained almost totally unknown, until now. This lively popular history will speak directly to the political hopelessness so many Americans feel. By tracing how average Americans took down plutocracy over the first half of the 20th Century--and how plutocracy came back--*The Rich Don't Always Win* will outfit Occupy Wall Street America with a deeper understanding of what we need to do to get the United States back on track to the American dream. To many antebellum Americans, Appalachia was a frightening wilderness of lawlessness, peril, robbers, and hidden dangers. The extensive media coverage of horse stealing and scalping raids profiled the region's residents as intrinsically violent. After the Civil War, this characterization continued to permeate perceptions of the area and news of the conflict between the Hatfields and the McCoys, as well as the bloodshed associated with the coal labor strikes, cemented Appalachia's violent reputation. *Blood in the Hills: A History of Violence in Appalachia* provides an in-depth historical analysis of hostility in the region from the late eighteenth to the early twentieth century. Editor Bruce E. Stewart discusses aspects of the Appalachian violence culture, examining skirmishes with the native population, conflicts resulting from the region's rapid modernization, and violence as a function of social control. The contributors also address geographical isolation and ethnicity, kinship, gender, class, and race with



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the purpose of shedding light on an often-stereotyped regional past. *Blood in the Hills* does not attempt to apologize for the region but uses detailed research and analysis to explain it, delving into the social and political factors that have defined Appalachia throughout its violent history.

A major new history of classical Greece—how it rose, how it fell, and what we can learn from it Lord Byron described Greece as great, fallen, and immortal, a characterization more apt than he knew. Through most of its long history, Greece was poor. But in the classical era, Greece was densely populated and highly urbanized. Many surprisingly healthy Greeks lived in remarkably big houses and worked for high wages at specialized occupations. Middle-class spending drove sustained economic growth and classical wealth produced a stunning cultural efflorescence lasting hundreds of years. Why did Greece reach such heights in the classical period—and why only then? And how, after "the Greek miracle" had endured for centuries, did the Macedonians defeat the Greeks, seemingly bringing an end to their glory? Drawing on a massive body of newly available data and employing novel approaches to evidence, Josiah Ober offers a major new history of classical Greece and an unprecedented account of its rise and fall. Ober argues that Greece's rise was no miracle but rather the result of political breakthroughs and economic development. The extraordinary emergence of citizen-centered city-states transformed Greece into a society that defeated the mighty Persian Empire. Yet Philip and Alexander of Macedon were able to beat the Greeks in the Battle of Chaeronea in 338 BCE, a victory made possible by the Macedonians' appropriation of Greek innovations. After Alexander's death, battle-hardened warlords fought ruthlessly over the remnants of his empire. But Greek cities remained populous and wealthy, their economy and culture surviving to be passed on to the

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Romans—and to us. A compelling narrative filled with uncanny modern parallels, this is a book for anyone interested in how great civilizations are born and die. This book is based on evidence available on a new interactive website. To learn more, please visit: <http://polis.stanford.edu/>.

The gripping story of how the end of the Roman Empire was the beginning of the modern world The fall of the Roman Empire has long been considered one of the greatest disasters in history. But in this groundbreaking book, Walter Scheidel argues that Rome's dramatic collapse was actually the best thing that ever happened, clearing the path for Europe's economic rise and the creation of the modern age. Ranging across the entire premodern world, *Escape from Rome* offers new answers to some of the biggest questions in history: Why did the Roman Empire appear? Why did nothing like it ever return to Europe? And, above all, why did Europeans come to dominate the world? In an absorbing narrative that begins with ancient Rome but stretches far beyond it, from Byzantium to China and from Genghis Khan to Napoleon, Scheidel shows how the demise of Rome and the enduring failure of empire-building on European soil launched an economic transformation that changed the continent and ultimately the world.

A brilliantly reported, global look at universal basic income—a stipend given to every citizen—and why it might be the answer for our age of rising inequality, persistent poverty, and dazzling technology. Imagine if every month the government deposited \$1,000 into your checking account, with no strings attached and nothing expected in return. It sounds crazy. But it has become one of the most influential and discussed policy ideas of our time. The founder of Facebook, President Obama's chief economist, Canada and Finland's governments, the

conservative and labor movements' leading intellectual lights—all are seriously debating versions of a UBI. In this sparkling and provocative book, economics writer Annie Lowrey looks at the global UBI movement. She travels to Kenya to see how a UBI is lifting the poorest people on earth out of destitution, India to see how inefficient government programs are failing the poor, South Korea to interrogate UBI's intellectual pedigree, and Silicon Valley to meet the tech titans financing UBI pilots in expectation of a world with advanced artificial intelligence and little need for human labor. Lowrey also examines the challenges the movement faces: contradictory aims, uncomfortable costs, and most powerfully, the entrenched belief that no one should get something for nothing. The UBI movement calls into question our deepest intuitions about what we owe each other. Yet as Lowrey persuasively shows, a UBI—giving people money—is not just a solution to our problems, but a better foundation for our society in this age of marvels. Based on cutting-edge research from behavioral science and economics, this eye-opening examination of how scarcity affects our daily lives reveals how individuals and organizations can better manage scarcity for greater satisfaction and success.

"Billionaire Wilderness offers an unprecedented look inside the world of the ultra-wealthy and their relationship to the natural world, showing how the ultra-rich use nature to resolve key predicaments in their lives. Justin Farrell immerses himself in Teton County, Wyoming—both the richest county in the United States and the county with the nation's highest level of income inequality—to

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investigate interconnected questions about money, nature, and community in the twenty-first century. Farrell draws on three years of in-depth interviews with "ordinary" millionaires and the world's wealthiest billionaires, four years of in-person observation in the community, and original quantitative data to provide comprehensive and unique analytical insight on the ultra-wealthy. He also interviewed low-income workers who could speak to their experiences as employees for and members of the community with these wealthy people. He finds that the wealthy leverage nature to climb even higher on the socioeconomic ladder, and they use their engagement with nature and rural people as a way of creating more virtuous and deserving versions of themselves. Billionaire Wilderness demonstrates that our contemporary understanding of the relationship between the ultra-wealthy and the environment is empirically shallow, and our reliance on reports of national economic trends distances us from the real experiences of these people and their local communities"--

"Are mass violence and catastrophes the only forces that can seriously decrease economic inequality? To judge by thousands of years of history, the answer is yes. Tracing the global history of inequality from the Stone Age to today, Walter Scheidel shows that inequality never dies peacefully. Inequality declines when carnage and disaster strike and increases when peace and stability return. The Great Leveler is the first book to chart the crucial role of violent shocks in reducing inequality over the full sweep of human history around the world. Ever since humans began to farm, herd

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livestock, and pass on their assets to future generations, economic inequality has been a defining feature of civilization. Over thousands of years, only violent events have significantly lessened inequality. The "Four Horsemen" of leveling--mass-mobilization warfare, transformative revolutions, state collapse, and catastrophic plagues--have repeatedly destroyed the fortunes of the rich. Scheidel identifies and examines these processes, from the crises of the earliest civilizations to the cataclysmic world wars and communist revolutions of the twentieth century. Today, the violence that reduced inequality in the past seems to have diminished, and that is a good thing. But it casts serious doubt on the prospects for a more equal future. An essential contribution to the debate about inequality, *The Great Leveler* provides important new insights about why inequality is so persistent--and why it is unlikely to decline anytime soon."--

Between 1492 and 1914, Europeans conquered 84 percent of the globe. But why did Europe establish global dominance, when for centuries the Chinese, Japanese, Ottomans, and South Asians were far more advanced? In *Why Did Europe Conquer the World?*, Philip Hoffman demonstrates that conventional explanations—such as geography, epidemic disease, and the Industrial Revolution—fail to provide answers. Arguing instead for the pivotal role of economic and political history, Hoffman shows that if certain variables had been different, Europe would have been eclipsed, and another power could have become master of the world. Hoffman sheds light on the two millennia of economic, political, and historical

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changes that set European states on a distinctive path of development, military rivalry, and war. This resulted in astonishingly rapid growth in Europe's military sector, and produced an insurmountable lead in gunpowder technology. The consequences determined which states established colonial empires or ran the slave trade, and even which economies were the first to industrialize. Debunking traditional arguments, *Why Did Europe Conquer the World?* reveals the startling reasons behind Europe's historic global supremacy.

Winner of the Bruno Kreisky Prize, Karl Renner Institut A Financial Times Best Economics Book of the Year An Economist Best Book of the Year A Livemint Best Book of the Year One of the world's leading economists of inequality, Branko Milanovic presents a bold new account of the dynamics that drive inequality on a global scale. Drawing on vast data sets and cutting-edge research, he explains the benign and malign forces that make inequality rise and fall within and among nations. He also reveals who has been helped the most by globalization, who has been held back, and what policies might tilt the balance toward economic justice. "The data [Milanovic] provides offer a clearer picture of great economic puzzles, and his bold theorizing chips away at tired economic orthodoxies." —*The Economist* "Milanovic has written an outstanding book...Informative, wide-ranging, scholarly, imaginative and commendably brief. As you would expect from one of the world's leading experts on this topic, Milanovic has added significantly to important recent works by Thomas Piketty, Anthony Atkinson and François Bourguignon...Ever-rising

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inequality looks a highly unlikely combination with any genuine democracy. It is to the credit of Milanovic's book that it brings out these dangers so clearly, along with the important global successes of the past few decades. —Martin Wolf, Financial Times

Do you ever wonder what's stopping us from building a world in which there's less inequality and more nurturing of the individual's potential to lead a satisfying life?

A comparison of nine leaders who led their nations through the greatest wars the world has ever seen and whose unique strengths—and weaknesses—shaped the course of human history, from the bestselling, award-winning author of Churchill and Napoleon “Has the enjoyable feel of a lively dinner table conversation with an opinionated guest.” —The New York Times Book Review Taking us from the French Revolution to the Cold War, Andrew Roberts presents a bracingly honest and deeply insightful look at nine major figures in modern history: Napoleon Bonaparte, Horatio Nelson, Winston Churchill, Adolf Hitler, Joseph Stalin, George C.

Marshall, Charles de Gaulle, Dwight D. Eisenhower, and Margaret Thatcher. Each of these leaders fundamentally shaped the outcome of the war in which their nation was embroiled. Is war leadership unique, or did these leaders have something in common, traits and techniques that transcend time and place and can be applied to the essential nature of conflict? Meticulously researched and compellingly written, Leadership in War presents readers with fresh, complex portraits of leaders who approached war with different tactics and weapons, but with the common goal of success in the face of battle. Both

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inspiring and cautionary, these portraits offer important lessons on leadership in times of struggle, unease, and discord. With his trademark verve and incisive observation, Roberts reveals the qualities that doom even the most promising leaders to failure, as well as the traits that lead to victory.

Are mass violence and catastrophes the only forces that can seriously decrease economic inequality? To judge by thousands of years of history, the answer is yes. Tracing the global history of inequality from the Stone Age to today, Walter Scheidel shows that inequality never dies peacefully. Inequality declines when carnage and disaster strike and increases when peace and stability return. *The Great Leveler* is the first book to chart the crucial role of violent shocks in reducing inequality over the full sweep of human history around the world. Ever since humans began to farm, herd livestock, and pass on their assets to future generations, economic inequality has been a defining feature of civilization. Over thousands of years, only violent events have significantly lessened inequality. The "Four Horsemen" of leveling--mass-mobilization warfare, transformative revolutions, state collapse, and catastrophic plagues--have repeatedly destroyed the fortunes of the rich. Scheidel identifies and examines these processes, from the crises of the earliest civilizations to the cataclysmic world wars and communist revolutions of the twentieth century. Today, the violence that reduced inequality in the past seems to have diminished, and that is a good thing. But it casts serious doubt on the prospects for a more equal future. An essential contribution to the debate about inequality, *The Great Leveler* provides important new insights about why inequality is so persistent--and why it is unlikely to decline anytime soon. "Offers an overview of citizenship's complex evolution, from



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ancient Rome to the present. Political leaders and thinkers still debate, as they did in Republican Rome, whether the presumed equivalence of citizens is compatible with cultural diversity and economic inequality. The author presents citizenship as 'claim-making'--the assertion of rights in a political entity. What those rights should be and to whom they should apply have long been subjects for discussion and political mobilization, while the kind of political entity in which claims and counterclaims have been made has varied over time and space. Citizenship ideas were first shaped in the context of empires. The relationship of citizenship to 'nation' and 'empire' was hotly debated after the revolutions in France and the Americas, and claims to 'imperial citizenship' continued to be made in the mid-twentieth century. [The author] examines struggles over citizenship in the Spanish, French, British, Ottoman, Russian, Soviet, and American empires, and ... explains the reconfiguration of citizenship questions after the collapse of empires in Africa and India. The author explores the tension today between individualistic and social conceptions of citizenship, as well as between citizenship as an exclusionary notion and flexible and multinational conceptions of citizenship."--

Collected together for the first time, here are the three hard-hitting standalone novels set in the world of Joe Abercrombie's bestselling FIRST LAW trilogy. BEST SERVED COLD: War may be hell but for Monza Murcatto, the Snake of Talins, the most feared and famous mercenary in Duke Orso's employ, it's a damn good way of making money too. Her victories have made her popular - a shade too popular for her employer's taste. Betrayed, thrown down a mountain and left for dead, Murcatto's reward is a broken body and a burning hunger for vengeance. Whatever the cost, seven men must die. THE HEROES: Over three bloody days of battle, the fate of the North will be decided. But with

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both sides riddled by intrigues, follies, feuds and petty jealousies, it is unlikely to be the noblest hearts, or even the strongest arms that prevail. Three men. One battle. No Heroes. RED COUNTRY: Shy South hoped to bury her bloody past and ride away smiling, but she'll have to sharpen up some bad old ways to get her family back, and she's not a woman to flinch from what needs doing. She sets off in pursuit off her family's killers with only a pair of oxen and her cowardly old stepfather Lamb for company. But it turns out Lamb's buried a bloody past of his own, and out in the lawless Far Country, the past never stays buried.

Brett Christophers shows how laws help capitalism maintain a crucial balance between competition and monopoly. When monopolistic forces dominate, antitrust law discourages the growth of corporations and restores competitiveness. When competition becomes dominant, intellectual property law protects corporate assets and encourages investment.

In recent years, malaria has emerged as a cause célèbre for vogueish philanthropists. Bill Gates, Bono, and Laura Bush are only a few of the personalities who have lent their names—and opened their pocketbooks—in hopes of curing the disease. Still, in a time when every emergent disease inspires waves of panic, why aren't we doing more to eradicate one of our oldest foes? And how does a parasitic disease that we've known how to prevent for more than a century still infect 500 million people every year, killing nearly 1 million of them? In *The Fever*, the journalist Sonia Shah sets out to answer these questions, delivering a timely, inquisitive chronicle of the illness and its influence on human lives. Through the centuries, she finds, we've invested our hopes in a panoply of drugs and technologies, and invariably those hopes have been dashed. From the settling of the New World to the construction of the Panama Canal, through wars and the advances of the Industrial Revolution, Shah tracks malaria's

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jagged ascent and the tragedies in its wake, revealing a parasite every bit as persistent as the insects that carry it. With distinguished prose and original reporting from Panama, Malawi, Cameroon, India, and elsewhere, *The Fever* captures the curiously fascinating, devastating history of this long-standing thorn in the side of humanity.

"Why are banking systems unstable in so many countries--but not in others? The United States has had twelve systemic banking crises since 1840, while Canada has had none. The banking systems of Mexico and Brazil have not only been crisis prone but have provided miniscule amounts of credit to business enterprises and households. Analyzing the political and banking history of the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, Mexico, and Brazil through several centuries, *Fragile by Design* demonstrates that chronic banking crises and scarce credit are not accidents due to unforeseen circumstances. Rather, these fluctuations result from the complex bargains made between politicians, bankers, bank shareholders, depositors, debtors, and taxpayers. The well-being of banking systems depends on the abilities of political institutions to balance and limit how coalitions of these various groups influence government regulations. *Fragile by Design* is a revealing exploration of the ways that politics inevitably intrudes into bank regulation. Charles Calomiris and Stephen Haber combine political history and economics to examine how coalitions of politicians, bankers, and other interest groups form, why some endure while others are undermined, and how they generate policies that determine who gets to be a banker, who has access to credit, and who pays for bank bailouts and rescues."--Publisher's description.

A leading economist at the World Bank's research division traces the history of financial inequality as reflected in famous stories, analyzing such examples as the monetary disparities between Elizabeth Bennet and Mr. Darcy and the assets of

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wealthy ancient Romans compared to today's super-rich.

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“Nixy Bauer, Home in an Hour” Nixy Bauer is used to her classmates being very, very unhappy to see her. After all, she’s working with the enemy—she’s on their parents’ payrolls. Nixy is a bounty hunter in a virtual-reality gaming world. Kids in the MEEP, as they call it, play entirely with their minds, while their bodies languish in a sleeplike state on the couch. Irritated parents, looking to wrench their kids back to reality, hire Nixy to jump into the game and retrieve them. Luckily for Nixy and her wallet, she’s the best leveller out there. But when the game’s billionaire developer—and Nixy’s parents’ boss—loses track of his own son in the MEEP, Nixy is in for the biggest

challenge of her bounty-hunting career. Wyn Salvador isn't some lazy kid looking to escape his homework, and this is no ordinary levelling job: Wyn does not want to be found. And he's left behind a suicide note. Nixy takes the job but quickly discovers that Wyn's not hiding—he's being held inside the game against his will. But who is holding him captive, and why? Nixy and Wyn attempt to fight their way out of a mind game unlike any they've encountered. And the battle brings them closer than either could have imagined. But when the whole world is virtual, how can Nixy possibly know what's real?

Famine remains one of the worst calamities that can befall a society. Mass starvation--whether it is inflicted by drought or engineered by misguided or genocidal economic policies--devastates families, weakens the social fabric, and undermines political stability. Cormac Ó Gráda, the acclaimed author who chronicled the tragic Irish famine in books like *Black '47 and Beyond*, here traces the complete history of famine from the earliest records to today. Combining powerful storytelling with the latest evidence from economics and history, Ó Gráda explores the causes and profound consequences of famine over the past five millennia, from ancient Egypt to the killing fields of 1970s Cambodia, from the Great Famine of fourteenth-century Europe to the famine in Niger in 2005. He enriches our understanding of the

most crucial and far-reaching aspects of famine, including the roles that population pressure, public policy, and human agency play in causing famine; how food markets can mitigate famine or make it worse; famine's long-term demographic consequences; and the successes and failures of globalized disaster relief. Ó Gráda demonstrates the central role famine has played in the economic and political histories of places as different as Ukraine under Stalin, 1940s Bengal, and Mao's China. And he examines the prospects of a world free of famine. This is the most comprehensive history of famine available, and is required reading for anyone concerned with issues of economic development and world poverty.

A global history of human rights in a world of nations that grant rights to some while denying them to others Once dominated by vast empires, the world is now divided into some 200 independent countries that proclaim human rights—a transformation that suggests that nations and human rights inevitably develop together. But the reality is far more problematic, as Eric Weitz shows in this compelling global history of the fate of human rights in a world of nation-states. Through vivid histories from virtually every continent, *A World Divided* describes how, since the eighteenth century, nationalists have established states that grant human rights to some people while excluding others, setting the stage for

many of today's problems, from the refugee crisis to right-wing nationalism. Only the advance of international human rights will move us beyond a world divided between those who have rights and those who don't.

What accounts for the rise of the state, the creation of the first global system, and the dominance of the West? The conventional answer asserts that superior technology, tactics, and institutions forged by Darwinian military competition gave Europeans a decisive advantage in war over other civilizations from 1500 onward. In contrast, *Empires of the Weak* argues that Europeans actually had no general military superiority in the early modern era. J. C. Sharman shows instead that European expansion from the late fifteenth to the late eighteenth centuries is better explained by deference to strong Asian and African polities, disease in the Americas, and maritime supremacy earned by default because local land-oriented polities were largely indifferent to war and trade at sea. Europeans were overawed by the mighty Eastern empires of the day, which pioneered key military innovations and were the greatest early modern conquerors. Against the view that the Europeans won for all time, Sharman contends that the imperialism of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was a relatively transient and anomalous development in world politics that concluded with Western losses in various

insurgencies. If the twenty-first century is to be dominated by non-Western powers like China, this represents a return to the norm for the modern era. Bringing a revisionist perspective to the idea that Europe ruled the world due to military dominance, *Empires of the Weak* demonstrates that the rise of the West was an exception in the prevailing world order.

How America's high standard of living came to be and why future growth is under threat In the century after the Civil War, an economic revolution improved the American standard of living in ways previously unimaginable. Electric lighting, indoor plumbing, motor vehicles, air travel, and television transformed households and workplaces. But has that era of unprecedented growth come to an end? Weaving together a vivid narrative, historical anecdotes, and economic analysis, *The Rise and Fall of American Growth* challenges the view that economic growth will continue unabated, and demonstrates that the life-altering scale of innovations between 1870 and 1970 cannot be repeated. Robert Gordon contends that the nation's productivity growth will be further held back by the headwinds of rising inequality, stagnating education, an aging population, and the rising debt of college students and the federal government, and that we must find new solutions. A critical voice in the most pressing debates of our time, *The Rise and Fall of American Growth* is at



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once a tribute to a century of radical change and a harbinger of tougher times to come.

Nations carry out geopolitical combat through economic means. Yet America often reaches for the gun over the purse to advance its interests abroad. Robert Blackwill and Jennifer Harris show that if U.S. policies are left uncorrected, the price in blood and treasure will only grow. Geoeconomic warfare requires a new vision of U.S. statecraft.

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