

ECON 2380: Historical Economic Growth
Harvard University
Spring 2022

Time: Mondays: noon - 2:45.

Location: Littauer M 17

Instructor: David N. Weil (David_Weil@Brown.edu) (David_Weil@fas.harvard.edu)

Office Hours: Zoom or in person, by appointment -- email professor directly

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Course Description

This course examines the historical process of economic growth with an eye toward understanding both the massive rise in the standard of living that occurred in much of the world over the last 250 years and the large differences in average income levels that are observed among countries. Topics addressed include technological change, technology transfer, and appropriate technology; accumulation of human capital in the forms of education and health; institutional persistence and change; demographic transition; changing gender roles; spatial agglomeration and variation in both income and population density; and the link between geographic characteristics and economic outcomes. The approach taken will be mostly empirical and quantitative, with theoretical models introduced as appropriate.

The course is targeted to second- and third-year Ph.D. students in economics. It is not open to Undergraduate or Masters students.

This course counts toward the macro and history field requirements and counts for the distribution requirement.

Assignments

Please note that depending on the size of the class some of these assignments may be revised.

Reading / Lecture Response [20% of grade]

These are due weekly, except for the first week of classes, at 1:00 AM Monday. They should be uploaded on Canvas. Your response can be

- Your own summary/synthesis and critique of one or two of the papers from the syllabus that we have not yet covered in class (or that we won't cover at all). What is important

about the paper and what are its flaws? How is it connected to the rest of the course? How could it be improved upon or extended?

- An analysis along the above lines of papers or models that we have already covered in class, with your starting point being what was discussed in lecture (so you are not just repeating).

These documents should be in the range of 2-3 pages (one document per week; not one for the A lecture and one for the B lecture.) The idea is to give you practice in extracting the important points from academic papers, forming your own critiques, and expressing your ideas. Whenever possible I will draw on this material to guide class discussion.

Paper Presentation / Discussion [15% of grade]

Each student will give one short (15 minute absolute maximum) presentation of a paper that interests them, from the syllabus or otherwise, selected in coordination with the professor. The goal is not to repeat everything that is in the paper (which would not be possible anyway, given the time constraint). Rather it is to focus on the main points, and mix in your own extensions and critiques.

Book Report [15% of grade]

Each student will do one of these, which will be similar to the paper presentation, but for a whole book, chosen in conjunction with the professor. There is a list of potential books at the bottom of the course outline. *You may not do your book report on a book that you read before this semester!*

Book reports and paper presentations will ideally be spread through the semester, with approximately one presentation per week.

Research Proposal / Fragmentary Paper [40% of grade]

One semester is too little time to write a real research paper, but the goal of this assignment is to take you as far along the process as possible -- and all the better if you can finish one! You could potentially write down the framework or theory section of a paper, and then discuss what data you would use to finish it and how you would analyze that data. Or you could process and analyze data, and then outline the theory you would use to interpret it. Your fragmentary paper should also include an introduction (indicating which part of what you discuss you have actually done so far) and a literature review. However, it should not consist of *only* an introduction and literature review!

The paper should be approximately 10-15 pages, with appropriate tables and references. This assignment is due May 14 (potentially subject to small adjustments). It is **not** meant to drag into June or the summer.

Class Participation [10% of grade]

Students are free to do readings before or after the lectures, and to focus on the topics that most interest them. However, you should be reading 3-5 papers per week, with varying levels of intensity depending on what you are trying to get out of them. Moreover, you should be actively participating in class: raising questions or critiques of the material, proposing extensions, drawing links to other literature, and so on.

Course Outline and Readings

** indicates a reading that will be a major focus of lecture

* indicates a reading that will be touched on in lecture

Schedule subject to revision as we go along. In the outline below, “A” indicates the first half of the lecture and “B” the second. We will have a **short** break in between.

1. Introduction and Big Think [Jan 24 A]

(**) Lucas, Robert, [“Some Macroeconomics for the 21st Century,”](#) *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 14:1, Winter, 2000.

(*) Nunn, Nathan. 2020. [“The Historical Roots of Economic Development,”](#) *Science*, 367 (6485).

(*) Goldin, Claudia. [“Human Capital,”](#) Handbook of Cliometrics, C. Diebolt and M. Hauptert, eds. Springer-Verlag (2014).

Weil, David N., *Economic Growth*. This is an undergraduate textbook that gives a broad, easily accessible introduction to the topic. I recommend that students read it all during the first couple of weeks of class. Many of the topics will be pursued in greater depth during this course while others are just good things to know. I will make electronic copies of the book (a combination of the third edition, from 2012, and the fourth edition, which is currently being written) available on the website.

[Weil, David N. “Pep Talk on Research”](#)

2. Human Capital from Education, Growth, and Development Accounting

2.1 Growth Regressions [Jan 24 B]

(**) Mankiw, N.G., D. Romer, and D. Weil, [“A Contribution to the Empirics of Economic Growth,”](#) *QJE* 1992

Acemoglu, Daron, *Economic Growth*, Chapter 3 (note: ch 1. is a general introduction to the issues, and ch 2. is a theoretical treatment of the Solow model)

(*) Gallup, John Luke, and Jeffrey D. Sachs. ["The economic burden of malaria."](#) *The American journal of tropical medicine and hygiene* 64.1 suppl (2001): 85- 96.

(*) Rodrik, Dani, ["Unconditional Convergence in Manufacturing"](#) *QJE* 2013

(**) Gennaioli, Nicola, Rafael LaPorta, Florencio Lopez-de-Silanes, and Andrei Shleifer. 2013. ["Human Capital and Regional Development."](#) *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 128 (1): 105-164.

2.2 *The Mincer Approach to Human Capital and Development Accounting* [Jan 31 A]

(**) Caselli, Francesco, ["Accounting for Cross-Country Income Differences"](#) *Handbook of Economic Growth* 2006

Hall, Robert, and Charles Jones, ["Why Do Some Countries Produce So Much More Output per Capita than Others?"](#) *QJE*, Feb 1999

Klenow, Peter J., and Andres Rodriguez-Clare. ["The neoclassical revival in growth economics: Has it gone too far?"](#) *NBER macroeconomics annual* 12 (1997): 73-103.

Hsieh, Chang-Tai and Peter Klenow, ["Development Accounting,"](#) *AEJ Macro* 2010,

Banerjee, Abhijit and Esther Duflo , ["Growth Theory through the Lens of Development Economics"](#) *Handbook of Economic Growth*.

Hsieh, Chang-Tai, and Peter J. Klenow. ["Misallocation and manufacturing TFP in China and India."](#) *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 124.4 (2009): 1403-1448.

2.3 *Some Related Human Capital Issues* [Jan 31 B - Feb 7 A]

Determinants of Human Capital Investment

(*) Jones, Benjamin F. ["The Knowledge Trap: Human Capital and Development Reconsidered"](#) Working Paper, 2014.

(*) Bills, Mark, and Peter J. Klenow. ["Does schooling cause growth?"](#) *American Economic Review* (2000).

(*) Jayachandran, Seema, and Adriana Lleras-Muney, "[Life Expectancy and Human Capital Investments: Evidence from Maternal Mortality Declines](#)," *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, Volume 124, Issue 1, February 2009, Pages 349–397.

(*) Oster, Emily, Ira Shoulson, and E. Ray Dorsey "[Limited Life Expectancy, Human Capital and Health Investments](#)" *American Economic Review*, 103 (5): p. 1977-2002 (August 2013).

(*) Hazan, Moshe. "[Longevity and lifetime labor supply: Evidence and implications](#)." *Econometrica* 77.6 (2009).

Returns to Experience

(**) Lagakos, David, Benjamin Moll, Tommaso Porzio, Nancy Qian and Todd Schoellman, "[Life-Cycle Wage Growth Across Countries](#)," *Journal of Political Economy*, 2018

(*) Lagakos, David, Benjamin Moll, Tommaso Porzio, Nancy Qian and Todd Schoellman, "[Life-Cycle Human Capital Accumulation Across Countries: Lessons from U.S. Immigrants](#)," *Journal of Human Capital*, 2018

(**) Rodolfo E. Manuelli and Ananth Seshadri, "[Human Capital and the Wealth of Nations](#)," *American Economic Review* 2014, 104(9): 2736–2762

Human Capital Externalities

(*) Acemoglu, Daron, and Joshua Angrist, "[How Large Are Human-Capital Externalities? Evidence from Compulsory Schooling Laws](#)," *NBER Macroeconomics Annual*, Vol. 15 (2000), pp. 9-59

(*) Edward L. Glaeser & Ming Lu, 2018. "[Human-Capital Externalities in China](#)," NBER Working Papers 24925, National Bureau of Economic Research, Inc.

School Quality

Hanushek, Eric A., and Ludger Woessmann, "[Do better schools lead to more growth? Cognitive skills, economic outcomes, and causation](#)," *J Econ Growth* (2012) 17:267–321

Schoellman, Todd, 2012, "[Education Quality and Development Accounting](#)," *The Review of Economic Studies*, 79(1): 388–417

(*) Hanushek, Eric, Guido Schwerdt, Simon Wiederhold, and Ludger Woessmann, 2015, "[Returns to Skills around the World: Evidence from PIAAC](#)," *European Economic Review*, 73, January pp. 103-130.

Filmer, Deon, et al. [Learning Adjusted Years of Schooling: Defining a new Macro Measure of Education](#). *Economics of Education Review*, forthcoming.

(*) Angrist, Noam, Simeon Djankov, Pinelopi Goldberg, and Harry Patrinos, "[Measuring Global Learning](#)" mimeo, 2020.

Pritchett, Lant, "[Does Learning to Add up Add up? The Returns to Schooling in Aggregate Data](#)" *Handbook of the Economics of Education*, 2006.

(*) Kraay, Aart, [The World Bank Human Capital Index: A Guide](#), *World Bank Research Observer*, 2019.

2.4 *Skill-Biased Technological Change, Inequality, and the Elasticity of Substitution Between Worker Types* [Feb 7 B - Feb 14 A]

(**) Caselli, Francesco, *Technology Differences Over Space and Time*, Princeton University Press, 2017. (chs 1, 2, and 4)

(*) Katz, Lawrence F., and Kevin M. Murphy. "[Changes in relative wages, 1963–1987: supply and demand factors](#)." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 107.1 (1992): 35-78.

(**) Goldin, Claudia D., and Lawrence F. Katz. *The race between education and technology*. Harvard University Press, 2009. (Introduction and Chapter 3.)

Hendricks, Lutz, and Todd Schoellman, 2018, "[Human Capital and Development Accounting: New Evidence from Immigrant Earnings](#)," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 133(2): 665-700 |

Hendricks, Lutz, and Todd Schoellman, 2020 "[Skilled Labor Productivity and Cross-country Income Differences](#)" Working Paper

Jones, Benjamin F. "[The human capital stock: a generalized approach](#)." *American Economic Review* 104.11 (2014): 3752-77.

Caselli, Francesco, and Antonio Ciccone. "[The human capital stock: a generalized approach: comment](#)." *American Economic Review* 109.3 (2019): 1155-74.

Jones, Ben "[Human Capital Stock, a Generalized Approach -- reply](#)"

2.5 *Historical Human Capital from Education* [Feb 14 B]

(*) Squicciarini, Mara P. and Nico Voigtlaender. 2015. "[Human Capital and Industrialization: Evidence from the Age of Enlightenment](#)," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 130 (4): 1825–1883.

(*) Becker, Sascha O. and Ludger Woessmann. 2009. "[Was Weber wrong? A Human Capital Theory of Protestant Economic History](#)," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 124(2): 531–596.

Caicedo, Felipe Valencia. 2019. "[The Mission: Economic Persistence, Human Capital Transmission and Culture in South America](#)," *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 134 (1): 507–556.

Dittmar, Jeremiah E. 2011. "[Information Technology and Economics Change: The Impact of the Printing Press](#)," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 126: 1133–1172.

3. Health [Feb 28 A - Mar 7 A]

3.1 Determinants and Effects of Health Improvement

(*) Weil, David, "[Review of Angus Deaton's *The Great Escape: Health, Wealth, and the Origins of Inequality*](#)" for the *Journal of Economic Literature* 2015, 53(1), 102–114

Weil, David, "[Health and Economic Growth](#)," *Handbook of Economic Growth*, Volume 2.

Cutler, David, Angus Deaton, and Adriana Lleras-Muney "[The Determinants of Mortality](#)" *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 2006.

Costa, D. "[Health and the Economy in the United States from 1750 to the Present](#)," JEL (2015), 53(3), pp. 503-70.

(**) Acemoglu, Daron, and Simon Johnson, "[Disease and Development](#)" *Journal of Political Economy* 2007.

(*) Ashraf, Quamrul, Ashley Lester, and David N. Weil, "[When Does Improving Health Raise GDP?](#)" *NBER Macro Annual*, 2009.

Ashraf, Quamrul, David Weil, and Joshua Wilde, "[The Effect of Fertility Reduction on Economic Growth](#)," *Population and Development Review* 39(1) : 97–130 (March, 2013)

3.2 Human Capital in the Form of Health

(*) Behrman, Jere, and Mark Rosenzweig, "[The Returns to Birthweight](#)," *RESTAT*, 2004

(**) Weil, David, "[Accounting for the Effect of Health on Economic Growth](#)" *QJE* 2007

Fogel, Robert, "New Findings on Secular Trends in Nutrition and Mortality: Some Implications for Population Theory" in Rosenzweig and Stark, eds. *The Handbook of Population and Family Economics* 1997.

(*) Fogel, R. "[Economic Growth, Population Theory, and Physiology: The Bearing of Long Term Processes on the Making of Economic Policy](#)," AER 84 (June 1994), pp. 369-95.

(*) Bleakley, H. "[Disease and Development: Evidence from Hookworm Eradication in the American South](#)," QJE 122 (Feb. 2007), pp. 73-117

Feyrer, J., D. Politi, and D. Weil. "[The Cognitive Effects of Micronutrient Deficiency: Evidence from Salt Iodization in the United States](#)," JEEA, 15 (2017), pp. 355-87.

Cutler, Fung, Kremer, Singhal, and Vogl, "[Early-life Malaria Exposure and Adult Outcomes: Evidence from Malaria Eradication in India](#)," *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*. Apr 2010, Vol. 2, No. 2: Pages 72-94

Lucas, Adrienne M., "[Malaria eradication and educational attainment: evidence from Paraguay and Sri Lanka](#)," *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, 2010

3.3 Welfare Aspects of Health and Longevity

(**) Jones, Charles, and Peter Klenow, "[Beyond GDP? Welfare across Countries and Time](#)," *American Economic Review*, 2016.

Hall, Robert E., and Charles I Jones. "[The Value of Life and the Rise in Health Spending](#)," *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 122(1): 3972, February 2007

4. Technology [Mar 7 B - Mar 21 B]

Weil, *Economic Growth*, Chapter 8.

Lucas, Robert E. "[On the mechanics of economic development](#)," *Journal of Monetary Economics* 22.1 (1988): 3-42.

Lucas, Robert E., "[Human Capital and Growth](#)" *American Economic Review: Papers & Proceedings* 2015, 105(5): 85-88

(**) Jones, Charles I. "[Sources of US economic growth in a world of ideas](#)," *The American Economic Review* 92.1 (2002): 220-239.

(**) Bloom, Nicholas, Charles I. Jones, John Van Reenen, and Michael Webb, "[Are Ideas Getting Harder to Find?](#)" *American Economic Review* 2020, 110(4): 1104-1144

Basu, Susanto, and David N. Weil. "[Appropriate technology and growth.](#)" *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 113.4 (1998): 1025-1054.

(*) Acemoglu and Zilibotti, "[Productivity Differences](#)" QJE, 2001

Technology and Human Capital

Maloney, William, and Felipe Valencia Caicedo, "[Engineering Growth: Innovative Capacity and Development in the Americas.](#)" *JEEA*, forthcoming.

5. Geographic Persistence [Mar 28 A - Apr 4 A]

(**) Davis, Donald and David Weinstein, "[Bones, Bombs, and Break Points: The Geography of Economic Activity](#)" *AER*, Dec. 2002.

(**) Bleakley, Hoyt, and Jeffrey Lin, [Portage and Path Dependence.](#) *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, May 2012, volume 127, pp. 587-644.

Michaels, Guy, and Ferdinand Rauch. "[Resetting the urban network: 117–2012.](#)" *The Economic Journal* 128.608 (2018): 378-412. (*Connect to Harvard Campus Network or VPN or sign in via [HOLLIS](#) to view this article).

Jedwab, Remi and Alexander Moradi. 2016. "[The Permanent Effects of Transportation Revolutions in Poor Countries: Evidence from Africa.](#)" *Review of Economics and Statistics* 98 (2): 268–284.

Caicedo, Felipe Valencia. 2019. "[The Mission: Economic Persistence, Human Capital Transmission and Culture in South America.](#)" *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 134 (1): 507–556.

(*) Henderson, Squires, Storeygard, and Weil, "[The Global Distribution of Economic Activity: Nature, History, and the Role of Trade.](#)" *QJE* 2018

(*) Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson, "[Reversal of Fortunes: Geography and Institutions in the making of the modern world income distribution](#)" *QJE* November, 2002.

(*) Comin, Easterly, and Gong, "[Was the Wealth of Nations Determined in 1000 BC?](#)" *AEJ Macro* (2010)

(**) Putterman, Louis, and David N. Weil "[Post-1500 Population Flows and the Long-Run Determinants of Economic Growth and Inequality](#)" *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 125:4, November 2010

(*) Enrico Spolaore and Romain Wacziarg, "[The Diffusion of Development](#)," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 124 (2), pp. 469-530, May 2009.

Fernández-Villaverde, Jesús, Mark Koyama, Youhong Lin, Tuan-Hwee Sng, "[The Fractured Land Hypothesis](#)," mimeo, 2020.

Pritchett, Lant, Clifford G. Gaddy and Simon Johnson, "[Boom Towns and Ghost Countries: Geography, Agglomeration, and Population Mobility](#)", Brookings Trade Forum (2006), pp. 1-56

6. Institutions [Apr 4 B - Apr 11 B]

Persistent Institutions

Engerman, Stanley, and Kenneth Sokoloff "[Factor Endowments, Inequality, and Paths of Development Among New World Economies](#)" *Economía*, Volume 3, Number 1, Fall 2002, pp. 41-88.

(*) Sokoloff, K. and S. Engerman. "[History Lessons: Institutions, Factor Endowments, and Paths of Development in the New World](#)," JEP 14 (Sum. 2000), pp. 217-32.

(**) Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson, "[The Colonial Origins of Comparative Development: An Empirical Investigation](#)," *AER* 91, 2001, pp. 1369-1401.

(*) Iyer, Lakshmi. "[Direct versus Indirect Colonial Rule in India: Long-term Consequences](#)," *The Review of Economics and Statistics* 92, no. 4 (2010).

(*) Feyrer and Sacerdote, "[Colonialism and Modern Income: Islands as Natural Experiments](#)" *RESTAT*, 2009

Pascali, Luigi. 2017. "[The Wind of Change: Maritime Technology, Trade, and Economic Development](#)," *American Economic Review*, 107(9), 2821–2854.

(*) Nunn, Nathan, "[The Long-Term Effects of Africa's Slave Trades](#)," *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 123 (1), 139-176.

(*) Nunn and Puga, "[Ruggedness: The Blessing of Bad Geography in Africa](#)" *RESTAT* 2012

(*) Nunn, N. and L. Wantchekon, "[The Slave Trade and the Origins of Mistrust in Africa](#)," *American Economic Review* 101 (7), 3221-3252

(*) Dell, Melissa, "[The Persistent Effects of Peru's Mining Mita](#)" *Econometrica*, 2010.

(*) Dell, Melissa, "[Path Dependence in Development: Evidence from the Mexican Revolution](#)," Working Paper, 2012

Dell, Melissa, and Benjamin A Olken, "[The Development Effects of the Extractive Colonial Economy: The Dutch Cultivation System in Java](#)," *The Review of Economic Studies*, Volume 87, Issue 1, January 2020, Pages 164–203

Deep Roots of Institutions

(*) Haber, Steve [The Ecological Origins of Economic and Political Systems](#) , mimeo 2021 .

(*) Mayshar *et al.*, "[The Origin of the State: Land Productivity or Appropriability?](#)," *Journal of Political Economy*, forthcoming.

(*) Nunn, Nathan and Nancy Qian. 2011. "[The Potato's Contribution to Population and Urbanization: Evidence from a Historical Experiment](#)," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 126 (2), 593–650.

Easterly, William, "[Inequality Does Cause Underdevelopment: Insights from a New Instrument](#)," *Journal of Development Economics*, Volume 84, Issue 2, November 2007, Pages 755-776.

7. Culture [Apr 18 A&B]

Gorodnichenko, Yuriy and Gerard Roland. 2017. "[Culture, Institutions, and the Wealth of Nations](#)," *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 99(3): 402–416.

Gorodnichenko, Yuriy and Gerard Roland. 2013. "[Individualism, Innovation, and Long-Run Growth](#)," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 108, 21316–21319.

Henrich, Joseph, *The Secret of Our Success: How Culture Is Driving Human Evolution, Domesticating Our Species, and Making Us Smarter* (2015). Chapters 2-4

(*) Enke, Benjamin, "[Kinship, Cooperation, and the Evolution of Moral Systems](#)," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 2019, vol. 134(2), pp. 953-1019.

Falk, Armin, *et al.*, "[Global evidence on economic preferences](#)," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 2018, 133 (4), 1645–1692.

(**) Sunde, Uwe, *et al.*, "[Patience and Comparative Development](#)," *REStud* forthcoming.

(*) Alesina, A., P. Giuliano, and N. Nunn. "[On the Origins of Gender Roles: Women and the Plough](#)," *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 128 (2), 863-896

(*) Michalopoulos, Stelios, Louis Putterman, and David N. Weil, "[The Influence of Ancestral Lifeways on Individual Economic Outcomes in Sub-Saharan Africa](#)" *Journal of the European Economic Association*, 17:4, August 2019.

Cantoni, Davide. 2015. "[The Economic Effects of the Protestant Reformation: Testing the Weber Hypothesis in the German Lands.](#)" *Journal of the European Economic Association*, 13(4): 561–598.

Andersen, Thomas Barnebeck et al. 2017. "[Pre-Reformation Roots of the Protestant Ethic.](#)" *Economic Journal*, 127(604): 1756–1793

8. Population / Fertility / Gender / Natural Resources [Apr 25 A&B]

Malthus as a Starting Point

(*) Galor, Oded, and David N. Weil, "[Population, Technology, and Growth: From Malthusian Stagnation to the Demographic Transition and Beyond](#)," *American Economic Review*, 90:4, 2000

(*) Acemoglu, Daron, Leopoldo Fergusson, Simon Johnson, "[Population and Conflict.](#)" *The Review of Economic Studies*, Volume 87, Issue 4, July 2020, Pages 1565–1604, <https://doi.org/10.1093/restud/rdz042>

Young, Alwyn, "[The African Growth Miracle.](#)" *Journal of Political Economy* 2012 120 (4). pp. 696-739.

Peter Lorentzen, John McMillan & Romain Wacziarg , [Death and development](#), *Journal of Economic Growth* volume 13, 81–124(2008)

(*) Nico Voigtländer, Hans-Joachim Voth, "[The Three Horsemen of Riches: Plague, War, and Urbanization in Early Modern Europe.](#)" *The Review of Economic Studies*, Volume 80, Issue 2, April 2013, Pages 774–811

Fertility Decline and Gender

(*) Galor, Oded & Weil, David N, 1996. "[The Gender Gap, Fertility, and Growth.](#)" *American Economic Review*, vol. 86(3), pages 374-387, June.

Feyrer, F., B. Sacerdote and A. Stern. "[Will the Stork Return to Europe and Japan? Understanding Fertility within Developed Countries](#)," *JEP* 22 (Sum. 2008), pp. 3-22.

(**) Goldin, C. and L. Katz. "[The Power of the Pill: Oral Contraceptives and Women's Career and Marriage Decisions.](#)" *JPE* 110 (Aug. 2002), pp. 730-70

Demographic Transition and Overpopulation in Developing Countries

(*) Lee, R. "[The Demographic Transition: Three Centuries of Fundamental Change](#)," JEP 17 (Fall 2003), pp. 167-90.

Guinnane, T. "[The Historical Fertility Transition: A Guide for Economists](#)," JEL 49 (2011), pp. 589-614.

(**) Henderson, Vernon, Adam Storeygard, and David N. Weil, "Land Quality," mimeo, 2022.

Books to Read

These books will mostly not be discussed in class lectures. However, if you are planning to pursue research in growth or related fields, many of them will be good to have read for background knowledge. They are mostly written for a broad audience and so they should not overly tax your brain, but could be very useful in suggesting research ideas. They make good bedtime reading, not to mention reading for airplane trips and such. It is good to get into the habit of reading these sorts of books.

You should select the book for your "book report" from this list or in consultation with me.

Acemoglu, Daron, and James Robinson, *Why Nations Fail* 2012

Banerjee, Abhijit, and Esther Duflo, *Poor Economics* 2011

Collier, Paul, *The Bottom Billion* 2007

Deaton, Angus, *The Great Escape* 2013

Dyson, Tim, *Population and Development: The Demographic Transition*, 2010

Easterly, William, *The Tyranny of Experts*, 2013

Ehrlich, Paul, *The Population Bomb*, 1968

Fogel, *The Escape from Hunger and Premature Death, 1700–2100: Europe, America, and the Third World*, 2004

Gordon, Robert, *The Rise and Fall of American Growth*, 2017

Hardin, Garrett, *Living Within Limits: Ecology, Economics, and Population Taboos*, 1995

Jones, Eric, *The European Miracle: Environments, Economies and Geopolitics in the History of Europe and Asia* 3rd edition, 2010.

Landes, David, *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations: Why Some are So Rich and Some So Poor*, 1999 Livi-Bacci, Massimo, *A Concise History of World Population* (6th edition, 2017).

McNeill, William, *Plagues and Peoples* (1977, second edition 1998).

Mokyr, Joel, *The Lever of Riches* (1992) or *The Gifts of Athena* (2004)

Simon, Julian, *The Ultimate Resource II*, 1996.