

Marc F. Bellemare

Agricultural and Applied Economics—Without Apology

The Books that Have Shaped My Thinking

The books in this list are organized around six themes, in the following order: (i) Development, (ii) Econometrics, (iii) Economic Theory, (iv) Food and Agriculture, (v) Writing, and (vi) Recent Additions. Some books are listed under more than one category. So it goes.

Development

Pranab Bardhan, [*The Economic Theory of Agrarian Institutions*](#). There was a time when development took theory seriously, and this book came out of that time. This book is a bit uneven (it's an edited volume), but the introductory chapter by Joseph Stiglitz is probably the single, most important statement peasants in developing countries as rational human beings. In short: Whenever you find yourself thinking that some behavior you observe in a developing country is stupid, think again. People behave the way they do because they are rational. and If you think they are stupid, it's because you have failed to recognize a fundamental feature of their economic environment.

Pranab Bardhan and Chris Udry, [*Development Microeconomics*](#). This book is getting on in age (it was published in 1999), and it should be supplemented with more recent papers, but as far as concise statements of theory that underlies the study economic underdevelopment at a micro level, it does not get better. In the PhD-level course we co-teach on development microeconomics, Paul Glewwe and I still use this book as the core text. If you are a development student, I encourage you to read and digest the contents of this book. The field of development has been largely a-theoretical for the past 10 years. Something tells me this is changing and we will see the return of theory, because people are starting to care a lot more about the mechanisms through which stuff works or not. Another such book is Kaushik Basu's [*Analytical Development Economics*](#), which I enjoyed but is a bit more narrow.

Chris Barrett, [*Overseas Research*](#). That being said, the field of development has become very much an applied field, which means that if you want to make a meaningful contribution, you will have to use data. And if you want to make a really interesting contribution, you are most likely going to want to collect your own data. This book is the fieldwork bible, as it covers all of the practical aspects of collecting your own data in developing countries, from how to get funding to how to get permission from local authorities, and from how to compensate subjects to how to readjust to life back home after fieldwork. This has been the single most important book I brought to Madagascar with me when I did my dissertation fieldwork there in 2004... along with the [*Guide du Routard Madagascar*](#), of course. There is a second, updated edition of this book, which you can find [here](#).

Bob Bates, [*Markets and States in Tropical Africa*](#). Why are poor food producers taxed and relatively wealthier food consumers subsidized in Africa? Why isn't it the other way around? How is agricultural and food policy determined in most African countries? Bates had the answers as far back as 1980, and his book has become a classic for those of us interested in food policy in developing countries. And don't let the title fool you: though his evidence is African, Bates' analytical framework applies almost universally to all developing countries.

Angus Deaton, [*The Analysis of Household Surveys*](#). Seen by many as the bible of empirical development economics, this book is getting on in age, but it remains a classic. If you know how to design an experiment but are looking for information on how to collect observational control variables (e.g., income measures, demographic information, etc.), this is where you will learn how. A good companion text is the three-volume

World Bank book by my colleague Paul Glewwe and Margaret Grosh on [*Designing Household Survey Questionnaires*](#).

Robert Ellickson, [*Order without Law*](#). Life in developing countries is often dictated by social norms which we are not familiar with. How do social norms emerge and evolve? Ellickson makes the case that social norms arise to maximize welfare and minimize transaction costs, and that they evolve for the same reasons. He builds his case masterfully and illustrates it with a case study of the cattle ranchers of Shasta County, California. Because Ellickson is a legal scholar, he writes wonderfully, and this practically reads like a novel.

Marcel Fafchamps, [*Market Institutions in sub-Saharan Africa*](#). What enables agents to trade with each other in a setting where legal enforcement is often not an option? What institutions develop to sustain transactions in those settings? What is the role of traders? Marcel Fafchamps develops a simple theoretical framework to answer those questions, and he then discusses the evidence. Again, don't let the title fool you: This is about much more than Africa, as the model and conclusions apply to most if not all developing countries.

TJ Byres, [*Sharecropping and Sharecroppers*](#). Two thirds of my dissertation were on sharecropping. When I began reviewing the literature for my dissertation in the summer of 2002, I decided to read as broadly as I could, which meant going as far back in time as Adam Smith (who did have a few things to say about sharecropping, it turns out) and going as far as reading what other social sciences had to say. This book is a very nice collection of essays on sharecropping throughout history and all over the world, from which I learned a great deal. It's often in books like this that you can find new ideas for your own research.

Peter Little and Michael Watts, [*Living under Contract*](#). The remaining third of my dissertation was about the institution of contract farming, or grower-processor contracts, i.e., production contracts between a processing firm and (usually) a (smallholder) farmer. Most economists love contract farming, many think it can do no wrong. Little and Watts present several case studies of contract farming, many of which discuss situations where contract farming went wrong.

James Scott, [*The Moral Economy of the Peasant*](#). While most people are quicker to mention Scott's [*Seeing Like a State*](#), which I also hold in high esteem, the former provides a different view of economic life in rural areas of developing countries, one that is a far cry from the Walrasian model where market clear cleanly. Though the theoretical framework is pretty outdated here (if you've ever heard of "safety-first" models, you know why I say it's outdated), there is a lot to learn from the [*moral economy*](#) concept, and from the evidence Scott cites in making his case. Indirectly, this might have influenced my work on food riots.

Eugen Weber, [*Peasants into Frenchmen*](#). For me, this is *the* classic among classics. Weber explores how France went from a loose collection of villages that had little in common with one another culturally in the mid-1800s to the strong, centralized, and culturally unified state we now know in the 1920s. This is the best social science text I have ever read, and it is development with a capital D. A French exchange doctoral student I was hosting this year read it on my recommendation, and when she returned to France last week, she said she could not believe she had to come to Minnesota to learn so much about her own country.

Econometrics

Josh Angrist and Steve Pischke, [*Mastering 'Metrics*](#). Perhaps the single, most concise statement of how empirical work is currently being done in applied microeconomics (i.e., labor, development, health, urban, environmental, law economics, etc.) This book is so well written it can be read by economists and noneconomists alike, and any smart undergrad can read it and learn something about how we learn from real-world data in economics.

Josh Angrist and Steve Pischke, [*Mostly Harmless Econometrics*](#). This is Angrist and Pischke's earlier, more technical book, which essentially presents the same concepts as their more recent book, but with the necessary technical details. Even then, the book is easy to read (for an econometrics text, that is), and highly informative.

Angust Deaton, [*The Analysis of Household Surveys*](#). Though this book isn't strictly about econometrics, Deaton presents a good review of the core concepts in econometrics. Perhaps more importantly, this book is about how to collect data from household surveys and construct the variables you need. Survey data is messy and is a far cry from the perfect data sets econometrics students are presented with in their classes, and this is the best source to learn how to collect, construct, and analyze survey data.

James Hamilton, [*Time Series Analysis*](#). I'm not really a time series guy. The closest I've ever been to one was in [my 2015 article on food prices and food riots](#). Before that, it was when I was doing my Masters in Montreal and took a PhD-level course in time series analysis, for which this book served as the reference text. This thick, heavy book pretty much has all you need to know about time series. If you ever wanted to learn the ins and outs of forecasting time series data, this is the Bible.

Cheng Hsiao, [*Analysis of Panel Data*](#). When I was doing my Masters, I was fortunate enough to take a course on microeconometrics, where we learned about discrete-choice models, hazard models and duration data, and panel data. This was the recommended text for the panel-data part of the course. It contains much more than most applied economists need to know, but it is a valuable reference nevertheless.

Peter Kennedy, [*A Guide to Econometrics*](#). This is hands down my favorite econometrics book. Kennedy splits each chapter in three: First, a big-picture view without any technique. Second, a technical appendix with all the nitty gritty. Third, an appendix with historical details and anecdotes for those who want to know more. This book is what taught me that econometrics was as much art as it was science, and that it could be taught in an intuitive way. I refer to it very often.

Tony Lancaster, [*The Econometric Analysis of Transition Data*](#). This was the reference text for the hazard models and duration data part of the microeconometrics class I took during my Masters. It's getting a bit old, but no matter—it's still a good introduction to the topic, which can be supplemented with [Nick Keefer's 1988 JEL article](#) on the topic.

G.S. Maddala, [*Limited-Dependent and Qualitative Variables in Econometrics*](#). This was the reference text for the discrete-choice models part of the microeconometrics class I took during my Masters, and it remains one of my favorite econometrics books. I remember the sense of wonderment I felt when I learned that you could analyze qualitative data using econometrics, and how powerful the tools in this book were. Probit, logit, all kinds of tobit, etc.—this book covers those topics in a nice way.

Stephen L. Morgan and Christopher Winship, [*Counterfactuals and Causal Inference: Methods and Principles for Social Research*](#). This was what I read to get the technical know-how and details related to the potential outcomes framework. Morgan and Winship also have a very nice discussion of regression methods vs. matching methods, which few people seem to understand.

Judea Pearl, [*Causality*](#). I wish I could say I read the whole thing, which is fairly heavy on the technical details. But the appendix, which includes the slides of a talk Pearl gave for the entirety of the UCLA community as an introduction to his research, taught me a lot about causality, and it seriously changed my thinking.

Jeff Wooldridge, [*Econometric Analysis of Cross Section and Panel Data*](#). Perhaps the ultimate reference text for the methods used in applied microeconomics (and more). I remember when I bought my copy in 2002, and how I thought that this book was going to be a game changer after looking at the table of contents and leafing through it. Wooldridge writes very clearly and explains everything very well—more concise than [Griffiths et al.](#) (the first econometrics textbook I ever used), a bit more user-friendly than [Greene](#) (seen by the older generation as *the* classic).

Economic Theory

Pranab Bardhan, [*The Economic Theory of Agrarian Institutions*](#). There was a time when development economists took theory seriously, and this book came out of that time. This book is a bit uneven (it's an edited volume), but the introductory chapter by Joe Stiglitz is probably the single, most important statement ever made

about peasants in developing countries being rational. In short: Whenever you find yourself thinking that some behavior you observe in a developing country is stupid, think again. People behave the way they do because they are rational. and If you think they are stupid, it's because you have failed to recognize a fundamental feature of their economic environment as crucial in how you model their behavior.

Pranab Bardhan and Chris Udry, [*Development Microeconomics*](#). This book is getting on in age (it was published in 1999), and it should be supplemented with more recent papers, but as far as concise statements of theory that underlies the study economic underdevelopment at a micro level, it does not get better. In the PhD-level course we co-teach on development microeconomics, Paul Glewwe and I still use this book as the core text. If you are a development student, I encourage you to read and digest the contents of this book. The field of development has been largely a-theoretical for the past 10 years. Something tells me this is changing and we will see the return of theory, because people are starting to care a lot more about the mechanisms through which stuff works or not. Another such book is Kaushik Basu's [*Analytical Development Economics*](#), which I enjoyed going through when I took Kaushik's course in grad school, but which is a bit narrower.

Gerard Debreu, [*A Theory of Value*](#). I never liked general equilibrium theory. I think the whole thing is too contrived and unrealistic, and when I learned about it in grad school, I knew I was never going to actually use that knowledge—especially in the form taught to us via Mas-Colell et al.'s textbook (see below). But Debreu's book is the most concise and elegant statement of the fundamentals of general equilibrium modeling I have seen. It seems weird to write the following, but here goes: This book, which borders on applied math, practically reads like a novel.

Patrick Bolton and Mathias Dewatripont, [*Contract Theory*](#). I became an agricultural and applied economist because I wanted to study the economics of agrarian contracts, and I developed an interest in contract theory as an undergrad at the Université de Montréal. The years while I was writing my dissertation (finally!) saw textbooks on contract theory come out—prior to that, you had to read the foundational papers, which I did when doing fieldwork for my dissertation in Madagascar. I am not a fan of [*Salanié's textbook*](#) on contract theory, and I don't like the notation in [*Laffont and Martimort \(2004\)*](#). Bolton and Dewatripont hit just the right balance for me. (And yes, there seems to be a distinct appeal to contract theory for francophones; Salanié, Laffont, and Martimort are all French; Bolton and Dewatripont are Walloon–French-speaking Belgians).

Robert Ellickson, [*Order without Law*](#). Life in developing countries is often dictated by social norms which we are not familiar with. How do social norms emerge and evolve? Ellickson makes the case that social norms arise to maximize welfare and minimize transaction costs, and that they evolve for the same reasons. He builds his case masterfully and illustrates it with a case study of the cattle ranchers of Shasta County, California. Because Ellickson is a legal scholar, he writes wonderfully, and this practically reads like a novel.

Marcel Fafchamps, [*Market Institutions in sub-Saharan Africa*](#). What enables agents to trade with each other in a setting where legal enforcement is often not an option? What institutions develop to sustain transactions in those settings? What is the role of traders? Marcel Fafchamps develops a simple theoretical framework to answer those questions, and he then discusses the evidence. Again, don't let the title fool you: This is about much more than Africa, as the model and conclusions apply to most if not all developing countries.

Drew Fudenberg and Jean Tirole, [*Game Theory*](#). The book we used to learn game theory in grad school was horrendous. This is really the Bible of game theory, and it is where I gained 95% of my understanding of game theory.

Jack Hirshleifer and John G. Riley, [*The Analytics of Uncertainty and Information*](#). This book is not as well-known as Fudenberg and Tirole for game theory, but it accomplishes the same purpose for risk and uncertainty, which Mas-Colell et al. don't cover very well. A lot of what I have learned about risk and uncertainty modeling comes from reading this book. There are more modern treatments, including Gollier's [*The Economics of Risk and Time*](#) as well as Gilboa's [*The Theory of Decision under Uncertainty*](#). Unfortunately, both Gollier and Gilboa's books have been sitting on my bookshelf for a long time, entirely unread.

Andreu Mas-Colell, Michael D. Whinston, and Jerry R. Green, [*Microeconomic Theory*](#). The–THE–Bible of microeconomic theory. I understand there might be better books out there now, but this is where I learned it all. The exposition is as elegant as can be. My copy has been highlighted, annotated, and beat up, but in a bad case of Stockholm syndrome, I went from hating micro theory to absolutely loving the beauty and elegance of it once I was done going through this book. (And go through this book we did during my first year of grad school; and then we had to take a four-hour exam on all its contents at the end of the year to merely qualify as doctoral students!)

Nancy Stokey and Robert Lucas, [*Recursive Methods in Economic Dynamics*](#). In my dissertation, I needed to develop a dynamic principal-agent model to account for reverse share tenancy in Madagascar. So I took a half-semester of dynamic programming as part of Cornell's macro sequence and learned just about enough about dynamic programming to be dangerous. Unfortunately, the model I developed in my dissertation was relegated to an appendix in my [*2012 Land Economics article*](#)—one of those cases where I wish I'd had the courage to stand up to the reviewer who said “get rid of this” by insisting on having the model in the paper instead of in an appendix.

Knut Sydsaeter and Peter Hammond, [*Essential Mathematics for Economic Analysis*](#). I can't find the actual text we used when I was an undergraduate, but it was by those two. A lot of people swear by Chiang's text, which is really getting on in age. At Cornell, people swore by Simon and Blume, for obvious reason. But the book by Sydsaeter and Hammond is where I learned how to do math like an economist should.

Hal Varian, [*Microeconomic Analysis*](#). The production chapters of Mas-Colell et al. are okay at best, so much so that when I took the micro sequence in 2001-2002, we actually learned production theory from Varian's text, which offers a much better treatment. This book is not as good as Mas-Colell et al.'s, but I list it given that that's where I learned the theory of the firm, which has guided a good amount of my thinking over the years.

Food and Agriculture

Doug Allen and Dean Lueck, [*The Nature of the Farm*](#). There are two dominant approaches to modeling contracts: the principal-agent model, and the transaction costs approach. Though I'm a fan of the former, Allen and Lueck offer a concise statement of the latter when it comes to agriculture, and this is a nice complement to Steve Cheung's [*The Theory of Share Tenancy*](#), who studied sharecropping from a Chicago perspective.

Chris Barrett and Dan Maxwell, [*Food Aid after Fifty Years*](#). Most people know that the US sends food abroad during food crises, and most people that this is a good thing. Few people, however, know just how messed up and inefficient the US food aid delivery system is, or at least used to be until a few years ago. This book has taught me a lot about the self-interestedness of foreign aid and the political economy of development policy.

Bob Bates, [*Markets and States in Tropical Africa*](#). Why are poor food producers taxed and relatively wealthier food consumers subsidized in Africa? Why isn't it the other way around? How is agricultural and food policy determined in most African countries? Bates had the answers as far back as 1980, and his book has become a classic for those of us interested in food policy in developing countries. And don't let the title fool you: though his evidence is African, Bates' analytical framework applies almost universally to all developing countries.

Warren Belasco, [*Food: The Key Concepts*](#). This was one of the required books in the food policy class I taught in spring 2013. Belasco approaches food from a cultural and anthropological perspective. Why are some people's ego so invested in their diet? Why do we eat three meals a day? Has it always been this way? What is a food culture? Is there such a thing as American food? For an economist interested in food policy, this is probably one of the most thought-provoking and mind-expanding reads out there.

TJ Byres, [*Sharecropping and Sharecroppers*](#). Two thirds of my dissertation were on sharecropping. When I began reviewing the literature for my dissertation in the summer of 2002, I decided to read as broadly as I could, which meant going as far back in time as Adam Smith (who did have a few things to say about sharecropping, it turns out) and going as far as reading what other social sciences had to say. This book is a very nice collection of

essays on sharecropping throughout history and all over the world, from which I learned a great deal. It's often in books like this that you can find new ideas for your own research.

Giovanni Federico, [*Feeding the World*](#). How has the world managed to feed itself in the face of an ever-increasing number of mouths to feed? Federico has the answers, and he will likely cause you to become very skeptical of all the shrill neo-Malthusian “omg the world will run out of food!!!11” claims out there, as [Ester Boserup](#) did for me before I found Federico's book.

Bruce Gardner, [*American Agriculture in the 20th Century: How It Flourished and What It Cost*](#). If you are interested in agricultural and food policy in the US, how it came to be that we spend a great deal of money on subsidizing a sector of the economy that has dwindled in importance since the 1930s, and why is it that farm subsidies are lumped together with nutritional assistance in an omnibus bill, look no further. As a foreigner, this is where I got most of my understanding of US agricultural policy when I wrote [this paper](#).

Jane Jacobs, [*The Economy of Cities*](#). Many people believe that the development of the agricultural sector comes first. New technology is adopted, which frees up workers who can then go work in the manufacturing sector, which develops cities, and so on. Jane Jacobs claimed the contrary: It is cities that drive the development of the agricultural sector, and she made a compelling case for it. I can't say I am convinced either way, but Jacobs' point of view struck me as heretical enough for agricultural and applied economists, and thus change the way I saw the agricultural development process. Ultimately, this remains an empirical question, but it is interesting to follow Jacobs' argument.

Peter Little and Michael Watts, [*Living under Contract*](#). The remaining third of my dissertation was about the institution of contract farming, or grower-processor contracts, i.e., production contracts between a processing firm and (usually) a (smallholder) farmer. Most economists love contract farming and agricultural value chains, thinking they can do no wrong. Little and Watts present several case studies of contract farming, many of which discuss situations where contract farming went wrong.

David Newbery and Joe Stiglitz, [*The Theory of Commodity Price Stabilization*](#). This book, which I read when developing an explanation for why people entered reverse share tenancy agreements in my dissertation, set the foundations of my thinking and interest in food price volatility. This book has to be supplemented with reading the actual papers surrounding the issues (both the older ones, but also the newer ones such as the two or three I have on this topic), but it offers a pretty good overview of price volatility at the time it was written.

Rob Paarlberg, [*Food Politics*](#). This was the other required book in the food policy class I taught in spring 2013, and it is the most policy-relevant of the two. Paarlberg, who teaches political science at Wellesley, offers a survey of the food policy landscape and explains what are the big issues, and what are the politics surrounding those issues. Oftentimes, the politics are heavily dependent on the economics, and so this is really a political economy book, but “Food Politics” is a much better titled than “The Political Economy of Food.” This can be read in a few hours, and it really will give you a quick overview of food policy that steer clears from NGO talking points and bogus advocacy claims.

Rob Paarlberg, [*Starved for Science*](#). Rob Paarlberg's stuff is so good that he figures twice in this list. This book is about how biotechnology is being kept out of Africa because European markets—Africa's former colonial masters—have a dislike of biotech that borders on the irrational thanks to Europe's extreme version of the precautionary principle, and about how this really keeps agricultural yields low in Africa.

George Rudé, [*The Crowd in History*](#). A history of food riots in Europe since the 1500s. This was essential to my understanding of food-related social unrest (and social unrest in general) when writing my paper on [food prices and food riots](#), and this is really what clued me in that it was price levels, not uncertainty, which drove food riots.

James Scott, [*The Moral Economy of the Peasant*](#). A repeat from the development list, this book provides a different view of economic life in rural areas of developing countries, one that is a far cry from the Walrasian model where market clear cleanly. Though the theoretical framework is pretty outdated here (if you've ever heard of “safety-first” models, you know why I say it's outdated), there is a lot to learn from the [moral](#)

[economy](#) concept, and from the evidence Scott cites in making his case. Indirectly, this might have influenced my work on food riots.

Adam Sheingate, [The Rise of the Agricultural Welfare State](#). Contrary to the conventional wisdom surrounding the political economy of agricultural policy, according to which “it’s all the result of lobbying.” For Sheingate, lobbies oppose other lobbies, and the lobbying story is surfeit. The really cool thing about this book is its comparative angle: Sheingate contrasts the US experience with the experience of France and Japan.

Gary Taubes, [Why We Get Fat](#) and [Good Calories, Bad Calories](#) as well as Nina Teichholz, [The Big Fat Surprise](#). These three books are what convinced me that the diet research-advocacy-industrial complex had misled people into believing that fat was the enemy, and it convinced me that sugar—not fat—is what makes us sick, and to change the way I eat. And it made me realize never to take my work too seriously, because some researchers eventually become so ego-invested in their findings that they start behaving like intellectual bullies, who try to deliberately quash and censor other people’s contradictory findings.

John K. Walton and David Seddon, [Free Markets and Food Riots](#). What George Rudé did for the period from the 16th to the early 20th century, Walton and Seddon do for the latter half of the 20th century by looking at the “IMF riots” of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s—which erupted as a consequence of the austerity measures imposed by governments who wanted to get IMF loans—primarily in Latin America, but also elsewhere in the developing world. This also crafted my thinking on [food prices and food riots](#).

Writing

[Common Errors in English Language](#), by Paul Brians. Before I got Brians’ book, I consulted his website about a million times. If you think there is only one selection *criteria* to get admitted into a PhD program, if you think prices *effect* quantity, and if you are the kind of person who orders an *expresso*, Brians’ gentle sarcasm will correct you and leave you smiling.

[The Dictionary of Modern Proverbs](#), by Charles Doyle. I don’t use proverbs very often when writing academic articles. But when writing for nonacademic audiences, or when giving talks, I sometimes like to use proverbs to illustrate a point or to add color to my writing. What I like about this book is that you can search the index by the name of the person an anecdote refers to.

[The Little, Brown Book of Anecdotes](#), by Clifton Fadiman. As with proverbs, I mostly use anecdotes when writing for nonacademic audiences or when giving talks, as I find that anecdotes can be great to make a point or for a bit of comic relief. Sometimes, I’ll even leaf through this book to read anecdotes about famous people. What I like about this book is that you can search the index by topic (e.g., money, patience, food, etc.)

[Ernest Hemingway on Writing](#), by Larry W. Phillips. Hemingway thought it was bad luck to talk about writing, so Phillips has assembled a collection of those rare instances where Hemingway did make an offhand remark about writing, and it makes for a very enjoyable read. Whether you suffered through *The Old Man and the Sea* or absolutely loved *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, you cannot deny that Hemingway could write, and the reasons why are distilled as best as possible in this book.

[The Elements of Style](#), by William Strunk, Jr. and E.B. White. This a book everyone loves to hate, but it is perhaps the most useful book in ~~a writer’s~~ the arsenal of anyone who has to write for a living. I like this book not so much because it can teach you “style,” but because it teaches you how to write without making mistakes (e.g., how to use “e.g.” and “i.e.” properly), and as someone who went to school in English for the first time at the age of 25, this book has had a high return on investment.

[A Guide for the Young Economist](#), by William Thomson. If you plan on becoming an academic economist, Thomson’s book is great. He tells you how to effectively write papers and referee reports, as well as how to prepare talks. Though the advice here is mostly for economic theorists, all of us will have to write or speak about theory at some point, so the advice is very useful for everyone. Note that this is the only econ-specific book in

my list—I have read McCloskey’s [Economical Writing](#), a few times, but I don’t know that it has changed my thinking the way the books in this list did.

[On Writing Well](#), by William Zinsser. When it comes to writing nonfiction well, and not just writing without making mistakes, Zinsser is the man. He covers how to write for different kinds of audiences, how to write different kinds of articles (e.g., interviews, business writing, travelogues, etc.), and what to expect. It while reading Zinsser that I realized that academic writing did not have to be boring, and that it was possible to have your own voice even when writing for an academic audience: If E.B. White could turn an article about hens into a page-turner (cue joke about agricultural economics), then I could certainly turn an article on food riots into something people actually enjoyed reading, and I could certainly write in a way that would make the people who know me say “That sounds exactly the way Marc would say it!”

• Pages

- [About](#)
- [Curriculum Vitae](#)
- [Fieldwork](#)
- [Metrics Mondays](#)
- [Research](#)
- [Resources for Students](#)
- [Teaching](#)
- [The Books that Have Shaped My Thinking](#)

• Subscribe via Email

Enter your email address to subscribe and receive notifications of new posts by email.

• Search this Site

Search for:

• Top Posts

- [Metrics Monday: What to Do Instead of \$\log\(x+1\)\$](#)
- [Rookie Mistakes in Empirical Analysis](#)
- [Metrics Monday: Statistical vs. Economic Significance](#)
- [22 Tips for Conference and Seminar Presentations](#)
- [Between the Introduction and the Conclusion: The "Middle Bits" Formula for Applied Papers](#)
- [Learning Supply and Demand Through a Simple In-Class Experiment](#)
- [Development Economics Defined?](#)

• Blogs I Read

- [Jayson Lusk](#)
- [David Zilberman’s Blog](#)

- [Jason Kerwin's Ceteris Non Paribus](#)
- [Jeff Bloem's Blog](#)
- [Econometrics Beat](#)
- [Mark Thoma's Economist's View](#)
- [FARE Talk Podcast](#)
- ["Eat This" Podcast](#)
- [Development Impact](#)
- [AAEA Blog](#)
- [Development Horizons](#)
- [G-FEED](#)
- [Greg Mankiw](#)
- [The Blog of Diminishing Returns](#)
- [Worthwhile Canadian Initiative](#)
- [EconTalk Podcast](#)

Marc F. Bellemare powered by [WordPress](#) | [minimalism](#) by www.genaehr.com
[Entries \(RSS\)](#), and [Comments \(RSS\)](#).