

Book Review

What's Wrong with Economics? A Primer for the Perplexed

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An economics book “What’s Wrong with Economics? A Primer for the Perplexed” was written by Robert Skidelsky in 2020. The book comprises fourteen chapters.

Why Methodology? was the first chapter, Skidelsky has emphasized that “the study of the methodology of economics was the study of the methods which economists use to gain knowledge, rather than a study of the knowledge they claim to have acquired. ...the proliferation of economic doctrines testifies to the failure of the established methods to generate knowledge if by the knowledge we mean true belief. The methods which produce ‘laws’ in physics produce doctrines in economics. The hypotheses of economists are largely untestable. The charge is not one of false reasoning but of reasoning from over-simple premises”.

The market economy ...” “creates the demand it requires through advertising; while in many parts of the world, political control of allocation keeps supply artificially scarce. Then, economics has powerfully reinforced the ethical blindness which threatens the human species with extinction”. This statement was mentioned in the Basics: Wants and Means in the second chapter.

In chapter three, Skidelsky discusses economic growth, explored the population, investment, trade and the role of the state, development economics, Structuralism, Washington Consensus, and Who is right? Equilibrium and Models, and Laws were the fourth and fifth chapters. The author addressed “the central question facing the claim of economics to be scientific. Are the stories we have told just stories? Or can they be subject to scientific sifting?” Homo economicus, the behaviour of Homo economicus, Homo economicus in action, Is it rational? Behavioral economics, thinking fast and slow was the significant content explored in the sixth chapter, Economic Psychology.

Sociology and Economics were the seventh chapters. It raises the question- can sociology help economics? The social and the individual, the sociological perspective, *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*, the spirit of capitalism, market natural to man? Reconciliation was the central point of the book.

Likewise, chapter eight includes Institutional Economics, 'Old' institutionalism, and 'Neoclassical' institutionalism. Chapter nine, centralized on forms of power, the legitimacy of power, and how do economists treat power? The role of economics in the power system, The Marxist charge against bourgeois economics of Economics, and Power. Chapter ten, signified, the Methodological debates, Paradigms, and research programs to answer the question of, why Study the History of Economic Thought?

In chapter eleven, the author identifies Economic History, according to Skidelsky - "Economists should approach history in an enquiring, rather than a conquering, frame of mind." Chapter twelve focused on Ethics, and Economics, i.e. "Yet there is clearly a better ethical argument available, which is that to live in harmony with nature, and therefore within the bounds set by it, is part of the good life. This is irrespective of any measurably deleterious consequences to the nature of our bad habits." Epistemology: risk and uncertainty, Ontology: what exists, A better map was the major part of chapter thirteen Retreat from Omniscience. The Future of Economics was the last chapter in this book, including a significant part of the political purpose of economics.

The understanding of this book appears in what manner mainstream economics pursuits of methodical foregone conclusion has controlled to a reduction of idea and conjunction of a corrupt convention for the field, not to remark the humanities that improper policy conclusions on the information of imperfect economic models. Skidelsky explicates "the real world by making use of the insights of painting, music, and literature, and, in the narrower sphere of social science, by collaborating with other disciplines like psychology, sociology, politics, and history, such cooperation will broaden economics' view of what is important and true about human life, without losing the sharpness of its particular angle of vision".