

Debt The First 5000 Years

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Debt

The First 5,000 Years,Updated and Expanded Melville House

The groundbreaking international best-seller that turns everything you think about money, debt, and society on its head—from the “brilliant, deeply original political thinker” David Graeber (Rebecca Solnit, author of Men Explain Things to Me) Before there was money, there was debt. For more than 5,000 years, since the beginnings of the first agrarian empires, humans have used elaborate credit systems to buy and sell goods—that is, long before the invention of coins or cash. It is in this era that we also first encounter a society divided into debtors and creditors—which lives on in full force to this day. So says anthropologist David Graeber in a stunning reversal of conventional wisdom. He shows that arguments about debt and debt forgiveness have been at the center of political debates from Renaissance Italy to Imperial China, as well as sparking innumerable insurrections. He also brilliantly demonstrates that the language of the ancient works of law and religion (words like “guilt,” “sin,” and “redemption”) derive in large part from ancient debates about debt, and shape even our most basic ideas of right and wrong. We are still fighting these battles today.

Debt

The First 5000 Years

Graeber radically challenges our understanding of debt. He illustrates how for more than 5000 years-long before the invention of coins or bills-there existed debtors and creditors who used elaborate credit systems to buy and sell goods.

Debt, Updated and Expanded

The First 5,000 Years Melville House

Now in paperback, the updated and expanded edition: David Graeber’s “fresh . . . fascinating . . . thought-provoking . . . and exceedingly timely” (Financial Times) history of debt Here anthropologist David Graeber presents a stunning reversal of conventional wisdom: he shows that before there was money, there was debt. For more than 5,000 years, since the beginnings of the first agrarian empires, humans have used elaborate credit

systems to buy and sell goods—that is, long before the invention of coins or cash. It is in this era, Graeber argues, that we also first encounter a society divided into debtors and creditors. Graeber shows that arguments about debt and debt forgiveness have been at the center of political debates from Italy to China, as well as sparking innumerable insurrections. He also brilliantly demonstrates that the language of the ancient works of law and religion (words like “guilt,” “sin,” and “redemption”) derive in large part from ancient debates about debt, and shape even our most basic ideas of right and wrong. We are still fighting these battles today without knowing it.

Debt

The First 5,000 Years Melville House Publishing

Economic history states that money replaced a bartering system, yet there isn't any evidence to support this axiom. Anthropologist Graeber presents a stunning reversal of this conventional wisdom. For more than 5000 years, humans have used elaborate credit systems to buy and sell goods. Since the beginning of the agrarian empires, humans have been divided into debtors and creditors. Through time, virtual credit money was replaced by gold and the system as a whole went into decline. This fascinating history is told for the first time.

Debt

The First 5,000 Years Melville House Publishing

Here anthropologist David Graeber presents a reversal of conventional wisdom. He shows that for more than 5,000 years, since the beginnings of the first agrarian empires, humans have used elaborate credit systems to buy and sell goods that is, long before the invention of coins or cash. It is in this era, Graeber argues, that we also first encounter a society divided into debtors and creditors. --

Debt

The First 5000 Years CRC Press

Debt is one of the great subjects of our day, and understanding the way that it not only fuels economic growth, but can also be used as a means of generating profit and exerting control, is central to grasping the way in which our society really works. David Graeber's contribution to this debate is to apply his anthropologists' training to the understanding of a phenomenon often considered purely from an economic point of view. In this respect, the book can be considered a fine example of the critical thinking skill of problem-solving. Graeber's main aim is to undermine the dominant narrative, which sees debt as the natural - and broadly healthy - outcome of the development of a modern economic system. He marshals evidence that supports alternative possibilities, and suggests that the phenomenon of debt emerged not as a result of the introduction of money, but at precisely the same time. This in turn allows Graeber to argue against the prevailing notion that economy and state are fundamentally separate entities. Rather, he says, "the two were born together and have always been intertwined" - with debt being a means of enforcing elite and state power. For Graeber, this evaluation of the evidence points to a strong potential solution: there should be more readiness to write off debt, and more public involvement in the debate over debt and its moral implications.

Debt

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The Dawn of Everything

A New History of Humanity Farrar, Straus and Giroux

INSTANT NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER A dramatically new understanding of human history, challenging our most fundamental assumptions about social evolution—from the development of agriculture and cities to the origins of the state, democracy, and inequality—and revealing new possibilities for human emancipation. For generations, our remote ancestors have been cast as primitive and childlike—either free and equal innocents, or thuggish and warlike. Civilization, we are told, could be achieved only by sacrificing those original freedoms or, alternatively, by taming our baser instincts. David Graeber and David Wengrow show how such theories first emerged in the eighteenth century as a conservative reaction to powerful critiques of European society posed by Indigenous observers and intellectuals. Revisiting this encounter has startling implications for how we make

sense of human history today, including the origins of farming, property, cities, democracy, slavery, and civilization itself. Drawing on pathbreaking research in archaeology and anthropology, the authors show how history becomes a far more interesting place once we learn to throw off our conceptual shackles and perceive what’s really there. If humans did not spend 95 percent of their evolutionary past in tiny bands of hunter-gatherers, what were they doing all that time? If agriculture, and cities, did not mean a plunge into hierarchy and domination, then what kinds of social and economic organization did they lead to? The answers are often unexpected, and suggest that the course of human history may be less set in stone, and more full of playful, hopeful possibilities, than we tend to assume. The Dawn of Everything fundamentally transforms our understanding of the human past and offers a path toward imagining new forms of freedom, new ways of organizing society. This is a monumental book of formidable intellectual range, animated by curiosity, moral vision, and a faith in the power of direct action. Includes Black-and-White Illustrations

The Utopia of Rules

On Technology, Stupidity, and the Secret Joys of Bureaucracy *Melville House*

From the author of the international bestseller Debt: The First 5,000 Years comes a revelatory account of the way bureaucracy rules our lives Where does the desire for endless rules, regulations, and bureaucracy come from? How did we come to spend so much of our time filling out forms? And is it really a cipher for state violence? To answer these questions, the anthropologist David Graeber—one of our most important and provocative thinkers—traces the peculiar and unexpected ways we relate to bureaucracy today, and reveals how it shapes our lives in ways we may not even notice...though he also suggests that there may be something perversely appealing—even romantic—about bureaucracy. Leaping from the ascendance of right-wing economics to the hidden meanings behind Sherlock Holmes and Batman, The Utopia of Rules is at once a powerful work of social theory in the tradition of Foucault and Marx, and an entertaining reckoning with popular culture that calls to mind Slavoj Zizek at his most accessible. An essential book for our times, The Utopia of Rules is sure to start a million conversations about the institutions that rule over us—and the better, freer world we should, perhaps, begin to imagine for ourselves.

Possibilities

Essays on Hierarchy, Rebellion and Desire *AK Press*

An anthropologist investigates the revolution of everyday life.

Debt

The First 5000 Years: Pivotal Points - The Pivotal Guide to David Graeber's Celebrated Book *CreateSpace*

Debt The First 5000 Years is your aide to rapid comprehension of the essential business principles delineated in David Graeber's acclaimed book Debt The First 5000 Years. The concept of debt is strangely powerful, and it is consumer debt that keeps our economy moving. At the center of international politics is the subject of debt. David Graeber, undertakes in Debt The First 5000 Years, the task to delve into the many misconceptions surrounding debt and Graeber uses the last five thousand years of history to argue, discuss, and demonstrate rights and freedoms, relating how all of this history has given present day a unique set of challenges. Use this helpful paper to understand the essence of Debt The First 5000, including: A concise synopsis summarizing the history of debt and it's definition In-depth analysis of the most useful concepts from Debt The First 5000 Years, such as the "Credit Versus Bullion, And the Cycles of History" and "The Myth of Barter." As with all books in the Pivotal Point Papers Series, this book is intended to be purchased alongside the reviewed title, Debt The First 5000 Years.

A Paradise Built in Hell

The Extraordinary Communities That Arise in Disaster *Penguin*

The author of Men Explain Things to Me explores the moments of altruism and generosity that arise in the aftermath of disaster Why is it that in the aftermath of a disaster? whether manmade or natural?people suddenly become altruistic, resourceful, and brave? What makes the newfound communities and purpose many find in the ruins and crises after disaster so joyous? And what does this joy reveal about ordinarily unmet social desires and possibilities? In A Paradise Built in Hell, award-winning author Rebecca Solnit explores these phenomena, looking at major calamities from the 1906 earthquake in San Francisco through the 1917 explosion that tore up Halifax, Nova Scotia, the 1985 Mexico City earthquake, 9/11, and Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans. She examines how disaster throws people into a temporary utopia of changed states of mind and social possibilities, as well as looking at the cost of the widespread myths and rarer real cases of social deterioration during crisis. This is a timely and important book from an acclaimed author whose work consistently locates unseen patterns and meanings in broad cultural histories.

Money

5,000 Years of Debt and Power *Verso Books*

The major French economist offers a new theory of money As the financial crisis reached its climax in September 2008, the most important figure on the planet was Federal Reserve chairman Ben Bernanke. The whole financial system was collapsing, with little to stop it. When a senator asked Bernanke what would happen if the central bank did not carry out its rescue package, he replied, “If we don't do this, we may not have an economy on Monday.” What saved finance, and the Western economy, was fiscal and monetary stimulus – an influx of money, created ad hoc. It was a strategy

that raised questions about the unexamined nature of money itself, an object suddenly revealed as something other than a neutral signifier of value. Through its grip on finance and the debt system, money confers sovereign power on the economy. If confidence in money is not maintained, crises follow. Looking over the last 5,000 years, Michel Aglietta explores the development of money and its close connection to sovereign power. This book employs the tools of anthropology, history and political economy in order to analyse how political structures and monetary systems have transformed one another. We can thus grasp the different eras of monetary regulation and the crises capitalism has endured throughout its history.

Debtor Nation

The History of America in Red Ink *Princeton University Press*

Before the twentieth century, personal debt resided on the fringes of the American economy, the province of small-time criminals and struggling merchants. By the end of the century, however, the most profitable corporations and banks in the country lent money to millions of American debtors. How did this happen? The first book to follow the history of personal debt in modern America, Debtor Nation traces the evolution of debt over the course of the twentieth century, following its transformation from fringe to mainstream--thanks to federal policy, financial innovation, and retail competition. How did banks begin making personal loans to consumers during the Great Depression? Why did the government invent mortgage-backed securities? Why was all consumer credit, not just mortgages, tax deductible until 1986? Who invented the credit card? Examining the intersection of government and business in everyday life, Louis Hyman takes the reader behind the scenes of the institutions that made modern lending possible: the halls of Congress, the boardrooms of multinationals, and the back rooms of loan sharks. America's newfound indebtedness resulted not from a culture in decline, but from changes in the larger structure of American capitalism that were created, in part, by the choices of the powerful--choices that made lending money to facilitate consumption more profitable than lending to invest in expanded production. From the origins of car financing to the creation of subprime lending, Debtor Nation presents a nuanced history of consumer credit practices in the United States and shows how little loans became big business.

Paper Promises

Debt, Money, and the New World Order *Public Affairs*

A columnist for the Economist describes the consequences of the enormous amounts of unrepayable debt racked up by the Unites States and discusses what it means for the financial future of the country and its citizens.

The Bonds of Debt

Borrowing Against the Common Good *Verso Books*

Indebtedness as the universal condition of modern life The credit crisis has pushed the whole world so far into the red that the gigantic sums involved defy understanding. On a human level, what does such an enormous degree of debt and insolvency mean? In this timely book, cultural critic Richard Dienst considers the financial crisis, global poverty, media politics and radical theory to parse the various implications of a world where man is born free but everywhere is in debt. Written with humor and verve, Bonds of Debt ranges across subjects—such as Obama’s national security strategy, the architecture of Prada stores, press photos of Bono, and a fairy tale told by Karl Marx—to capture a modern condition founded on fiscal imprudence. Moving beyond the dominant pieties and widespread anxieties surrounding the topic, Dienst re-conceives the world’s massive financial obligations as a social, economic, and political bond, where the crushing weight of objectified wealth comes face to face with new demands for equality and solidarity. For this inspired analysis, we are indebted to him.

The Gender of Debt

The Last 50,000 Years *Cambridge Scholars Publishing*

This book demonstrates, from a historical and an economic point of view, how the female contribution has been so determinant in the success of our species, and how it is linked to male dominance. Male hunting and female gathering were the two forces of production during 99% of the life of mankind on Earth. Ethnographic evidence shows that female gathering is more productive and less time-consuming than male hunting. Therefore, the prehistoric communities of Homo sapiens could manage their social labor-time in the most productive way, only if women lent their time to men through the supply of basic energy: a debt that men incurred since the dawn of history, but never acknowledged. It is time now to give the gender economic relations the crucial place they deserve in a theory of human cooperation and sociality, without forgetting that it is necessarily a theory of social inequality.

Can't Pay, Won't Pay

The Case for Economic Disobedience and Debt Abolition *Haymarket Books*

Debtors have been mocked, scolded and lied to for decades. We have been told that it is perfectly normal to go into debt to get medical care, to go to school, or even to pay for our own incarceration. We’ve been told there is no way to change an economy that pushes the majority of people into debt while a small minority hoard wealth and power. The coronavirus pandemic has revealed that mass indebtedness and extreme inequality are a political choice. In the early days of the crisis, elected officials drew up plans to spend trillions of dollars. The only question was: where would the money go

and who would benefit from the bailout? The truth is that there has never been a lack of money for things like housing, education and health care. Millions of people never needed to be forced into debt for those things in the first place. Armed with this knowledge, a militant debtors movement has the potential to rewrite the contract and assure that no one has to mortgage their future to survive. Debtors of the World Must Unite. As isolated individuals, debtors have little influence. But as a bloc, we can leverage our debts and devise new tactics to challenge the corporate creditor class and help win reparative, universal public goods. Individually, our debts overwhelm us. But together, our debts can make us powerful.

Bullshit Jobs

A Theory *Simon & Schuster*

From bestselling writer David Graeber—“a master of opening up thought and stimulating debate” (Slate)—a powerful argument against the rise of meaningless, unfulfilling jobs...and their consequences. Does your job make a meaningful contribution to the world? In the spring of 2013, David Graeber asked this question in a playful, provocative essay titled “On the Phenomenon of Bullshit Jobs.” It went viral. After one million online views in seventeen different languages, people all over the world are still debating the answer. There are hordes of people—HR consultants, communication coordinators, telemarketing researchers, corporate lawyers—whose jobs are useless, and, tragically, they know it. These people are caught in bullshit jobs. Graeber explores one of society’s most vexing and deeply felt concerns, indicting among other villains a particular strain of finance capitalism that betrays ideals shared by thinkers ranging from Keynes to Lincoln. “Clever and charismatic” (The New Yorker), Bullshit Jobs gives individuals, corporations, and societies permission to undergo a shift in values, placing creative and caring work at the center of our culture. This book is for everyone who wants to turn their vocation back into an avocation and “a thought-provoking examination of our working lives” (Financial Times).

The Democracy Project

A History, a Crisis, a Movement *Doubleday UK*

Explores the idea of democracy, its current state of crisis, and its potential as a tool for change, sharing historical perspectives on the effectiveness of democratic uprisings in various times and cultures.

The Darkening Dream *Mascherato*

An ominous vision and the discovery of a gruesome corpse lead Sarah Engelmänn into a terrifying encounter with the supernatural in 1913 Salem, Massachusetts. With help from Alex, an attractive Greek immigrant, Sarah sets out to track the evil to its source, never guessing that she will take on a conspiracy involving not only a 900-year vampire, but also a demon-loving Puritan warlock, disgruntled Egyptian gods, and an immortal sorcerer, all on a quest to recover the holy trumpet of the Archangel Gabriel. Relying on the wisdom of an elderly vampire hunter, Sarah's rabbi father, and her own disturbing visions, Sarah must fight a millennia-old battle between unspeakable forces, where the ultimate prize might be herself.

Fragments of an Anarchist Anthropology *Prickly Paradigm*

In this work, David Graeber explores the implications of linking anthropology to anarchism.

Lost People

Magic and the Legacy of Slavery in Madagascar *Indiana University Press*

An epic account of the power of memory in Madagascar

She's on the Money *Random House Australia*

Through her phenomenally popular and award-winning podcast, She's on the Money, Victoria Devine has built an empowered and supportive community of women finding their way to financial freedom. Honest, relatable, non-judgemental and motivating, Victoria is a financial adviser who knows what millennial life is really like and where we can get stuck with money stuff. (Did someone say 'Afterpay'...?) So, to help you hit your money goals without skimping on brunch, she's put all her expert advice into this accessible guide that will set you up for a healthy and happy future. Learn how to be more secure, independent and informed with your money - with clear steps on how to budget, clear debts, build savings, start investing, buy property and much more. And along with all the practical information, Victoria will guide you through the sometimes-tricky psychology surrounding money so you can establish the values, habits and confidence that will help you build your wealth long-term. Just like the podcast, the book is full of real-life money stories from members of the She's on the Money community who candidly share their experiences, wins and lessons learned to inspire others to turn their stories around, too. And with templates and activities throughout, plus a twelve-month plan to get you started, you can immediately put Victoria's recommendations into action in your own life. You are not alone on your financial journey, and with the money principles in this book you'll go further than you ever thought possible.

After the New Economy

Rarely a day went by in the dizzy 1990s without some will-paid pundit heralding the triumphant arrival of a New Economy. According to these financial mavens, an unprecedented technological and organisational revolution had extinguished the threat of recession forever. Though much of the rhetoric sounds ridiculous today, few analysts have explored how the New Economy moment emerged from deep within America's economic and ideological machinery - instead, they've preferred to treat it as an episode of mass delusion. Now, with customary irreverence and acuity, journalist

Doug Henwood dissects the New Economy, arguing that the delirious optimism was actually a manic set of variations on ancient themes, all promoted from the highest of places. Claims of New Eras have plenty of historical precedents; in this latest act, our modern mythmakers held that technology would overturn hierarchies, democratising information and finance and leading inexorably to a virtual social revolution. But, as Henwood vividly demonstrates, the gap between rich and poor has never been so wide, wealth never so concentrated. less-than-lustrous reality beneath the gloss of the 1990s boom.

Sense and Sensibility

Sacred Economics, Revised

Money, Gift & Society in the Age of Transition *North Atlantic Books*

Expanded and updated, Charles Eisenstein's classic treatise on capitalism, currency, and the gift economy. This revised version traces the history of money, from ancient gift economies to modern capitalism, and includes new material on cryptocurrencies and emerging research that has come out since the book's original publication. Charles Eisenstein shows how capitalism contributes to alienation, competition, and scarcity; destroys community; and necessitates endless growth at the cost of social and environmental devastation. Today, these trends have reached their extreme--and their collapse presents a golden opportunity to transition to a more connected, ecological, and sustainable way of being. Eisenstein describes the deeper narratives beneath our economic system, and how we can reimagine it to align with a new story. Applying a broadly integrated synthesis of theory, policy, and practice, he explores avant-garde concepts of the New Economics, including negative-interest currencies, local economies, gift economics, cryptocurrencies, and the restoration of the commons. Tapping into a rich lineage of conventional and unconventional economic thought, Eisenstein presents a vision that is original yet commonsense, radical yet gentle, and increasingly relevant as the crises of our civilization deepen.

Rebel Cities: From the Right to the City to the Urban Revolution *Verso Books*

Explores cities as the origin of revolutionary politics, where social and political issues are always at the surface, using examples from such cities as New York City and Mumbai to examine how they can be better ecologically reorganized.

The Capitalist Manifesto *Pickle Partners Publishing*

In 1956, a U.S. lawyer-economist, Louis O. Kelso, created the employee stock ownership plan (ESOP) to enable the employees of a closely held newspaper chain to buy out its retiring owners. Two years later, Kelso and his co-author, the philosopher Mortimer J. Adler, explained the macro-economic theory on which the ESOP is based in this best-selling book, The Capitalist Manifesto. “When you read this book, you must be prepared for a shock—particularly if you are among the millions of Americans who feel complacent about the material well-being that now prevails in this country. THE CAPITALIST MANIFESTO will compel you to examine, reconsider and question many dangerous economic factors and political tendencies you have accepted as inevitable—and will show you how you can do something about them. “THE CAPITALIST MANIFESTO sets the alarm for all American citizens—not simply one group or class. It is for stockholders, workers, labor leaders, corporation executives, investment bankers, taxpayers, small businessmen and industrialists, statesmen, legislators, judges and educators. Its purpose is to arouse us to the real and present dangers we now face, from inflation and from the progressive socialization of our economy. What is the difference between a well-heeled existence in a welfare state and the good life in a free society? THE CAPITALIST MANIFESTO will tell you what that difference is, and why you must be a man of property in order to be a free man. It will explain the meaning of your ever-expanding opportunities for leisure. It will tell you that the goal of an industrial society should not be full employment in the production of wealth, but full enjoyment of the wealth produced. It will tell you how you, as an individual, can best use wealth to further the happiness and well-being of yourself and your fellow men.” “A revolutionary force in human affairs offering still unplumbed promise for the future....”—Time Magazine

Economic Anthropology *John Wiley & Sons*

This book is a new introduction to the history and practice of economic anthropology by two leading authors in the field. They show that anthropologists have contributed to understanding the three great questions of modern economic history: development, socialism and one-world capitalism. In doing so, they connect economic anthropology to its roots in Western philosophy, social theory and world history. Up to the Second World War anthropologists tried and failed to interest economists in their exotic findings. They then launched a vigorous debate over whether an approach taken from economics was appropriate to the study of non-industrial economies. Since the 1970s, they have developed a critique of capitalism based on studying it at home as well as abroad. The authors aim to rejuvenate economic anthropology as a humanistic project at a time when the global financial crisis has undermined confidence in free market economics. They argue for the continued relevance of predecessors such as Marcel Mauss and Karl Polanyi, while offering an incisive review of recent work in this field. Economic Anthropology is an excellent introduction for social science students at all levels, and it presents general readers with a challenging perspective on the world economy today. Selected by Choice as a 2013 Outstanding Academic Title

...and Forgive Them Their Debts

Lending, Foreclosure and Redemption from Bronze Age Finance to the Jubilee Year

An epic journey through the economies of ancient civilizations, and how they managed debt versus social instability. Shocking historical truths about how debt played a central role in shaping (or destroying) ancient societies (viz: Rome), and that the Bible is preoccupied with debt, not sin, which has

been disturbingly inverted in modern times.

A Colossal Wreck

A Road Trip Through Political Scandal, Corruption and American Culture Verso Books

Alexander Cockburn was without question one of the most influential journalists of his generation, whose writing stems from the best tradition of Mark Twain, H.L. Menchken and Tom Paine. Colossal Wreck, his final work, finished shortly before his death in July 2012, exemplifies the prodigious literary brio that made Cockburn’s name. Whether ruthlessly exposing Beltway hypocrisy, pricking the pomposity of those in power, or tirelessly defending the rights of the oppressed, Cockburn never pulled his punches and always landed a blow where it mattered. In this panoramic work, covering nearly two decades of American culture and politics, he explores subjects as varied as the sex life of Bill Clinton and the best way to cook wild turkey. He stands up for the rights of prisoners on death row and exposes the chicanery of the media and the duplicity of the political elite. As he pursues a serpentine path through the nation, he charts the fortunes of friends, famous relatives, and sworn enemies alike to hilarious effect. This is a thrilling trip through the reefs and shoals of politics and everyday life. Combining a passion for the places, the food and the people he encountered on dozens of cross-country journeys, Cockburn reports back over seventeen years of tumultuous change among what he affectionately called the “thousand landscapes” of the United States.

Credit and State Theories of Money

The Contributions of A. Mitchell Innes Edward Elgar Publishing

In 1913 and 1914, A. Mitchell Innes published a pair of articles that stand as two of the best pieces written in the twentieth century on the nature of money. Only recently rediscovered, these articles are reprinted and analyzed here for the first time.

Revolutions in Reverse

Today's capitalist systems appear to be coming apart. But as financial instutions stagger and crumble, leaving chaos in their wake, their seems to be no obvious alternative. Yet there may be good reason to believe that, in generation or so, capitalism will no longer exist for the simple reason that it's impossible to maintain an engine of perpetual growth forever on a finite planet. In this collection of essays, anthropolgist David Graeber explores political strategy, global trade, debt,imagination, violence, alienation and creativity looking for a new common sense.

Lords of Finance

The Bankers Who Broke the World Penguin

Winner of the Pulitzer Prize “Erudite, entertaining macroeconomic history of the lead-up to the Great Depression as seen through the careers of the West’s principal bankers . . . Spellbinding, insightful and, perhaps most important, timely.” —Kirkus Reviews (starred) “There is terrific prescience to be found in [Lords of Finance’s] portrait of times past . . . [A] writer of great verve and erudition, [Ahamed] easily connects the dots between the economic crises that rocked the world during the years his book covers and the fiscal emergencies that beset us today.” —The New York Times It is commonly believed that the Great Depression that began in 1929 resulted from a confluence of events beyond any one person's or government's control. In fact, as Liaquat Ahamed reveals, it was the decisions made by a small number of central bankers that were the primary cause of that economic meltdown, the effects of which set the stage for World War II and reverberated for decades. As we continue to grapple with economic turmoil, Lords of Finance is a potent reminder of the enormous impact that the decisions of central bankers can have, their fallibility, and the terrible human consequences that can result when they are wrong.

The Ascent of Humanity

Civilization and the Human Sense of Self North Atlantic Books

Charles Eisenstein explores the history and potential future of civilization, tracing the converging crises of our age to the illusion of the separate self. In this limited hardcover edition of Eisenstein's landmark book, he argues that our disconnection from one another and the natural world has mislaid the foundations of science, religion, money, technology, economics, medicine, and education as we know them. It has fired our near-pathological pursuit of technological Utopias even as we push ourselves and our planet to the brink of collapse. Fortunately, an Age of Reunion is emerging out of

the birth pangs of an earth in crisis. Our journey of separation hasn't been a terrible mistake but an evolutionary process and an adventure in self-discovery. Even in our darkest hour, Eisenstein sees the possibility of a more beautiful world--not through the extension of millennia-old methods of management and control but by fundamentally reimagining ourselves and our systems. We must shift away from our Babelian efforts to build ever-higher towers to heaven and instead turn out attention to creating a new kind of civilization--one designed for beauty rather than height. Breathtaking in its scope and intelligence, The Ascent of Humanity is a landmark book showing what it truly means to be human. "A tour-de-force filled with astounding insight, wit, wisdom and heart." --Christopher Uhl, author of Developing Ecological Consciousness: Paths to a Sustainable Future "Quite marvelous, a hugely important work. This book is truly needed in this time of deepening crisis." --John Zerzan, author of Future Primitive and Elements of Refusal

Direct Action

An Ethnography AK Press

A radical anthropologist studies the global justice movement.

The Perpetual Guest

Art in the Unfinished Present Verso Books

Leading art critic explores the connections between art’s past and present Contemporary art sometimes pretends to have made a clean break with history. In The Perpetual Guest, poet and critic Barry Schwabsky demonstrates that any robust understanding of art’s present must also account for the ongoing life and changing fortunes of its past. Surveying the art world of recent decades, Schwabsky attends not only to its most significant newer faces—among them, Kara Walker, Thomas Hirschhorn, Ai Weiwei, Chris Ofili, and Lorna Simpson—but their forebears as well, both near (Jeff Wall, Nancy Spero, Dan Graham, Cindy Sherman) and more distant (Velázquez, Manet, Matisse, and the portraitists of the Renaissance). Schwabsky’s rich and subtle contributions illuminate art’s present moment in all its complexity: shot through with determinations produced by centuries of interwoven traditions, but no less open-ended for it.

Civilization and Capitalism, 15th-18th Century, Vol. II

The Wheels of Commerce Univ of California Press

By examining in detail the material life of pre-industrial peoples around the world, Fernand Braudel significantly changed the way historians view their subject. Originally published in the early 1980s, Civilization traces the social and economic history of the world from the Middle Ages to the Industrial Revolution, although his primary focus is Europe. Braudel skims over politics, wars, etc., in favor of examining life at the grass roots: food, drink, clothing, housing, town markets, money, credit, technology, the growth of towns and cities, and more. Volume I describes food and drink, dress and housing, demography and family structure, energy and technology, money and credit, and the growth of towns.

The Art of More

How Mathematics Created Civilization Pantheon

An illuminating, millennia-spanning history of the impact mathematics has had on the world, and the fascinating people who have mastered its inherent power, from Babylonian tax officials to the Apollo astronauts to the eccentric professor who invented the infrastructure of the online world Counting is not innate to our nature, and without education humans can rarely count past three—beyond that, it’s just “more.” But once harnessed by our ancestors, the power of numbers allowed humanity to flourish in ways that continue to lead to discoveries and enrich our lives today. Ancient tax collectors used basic numeracy to fuel the growth of early civilization, navigators used clever geometrical tricks to engage in trade and connect people across vast distances, astronomers used logarithms to unlock the secrets of the heavens, and their descendants put them to use to land us on the moon. In every case, mathematics has proved to be a greatly underappreciated engine of human progress. In this captivating, sweeping history, Michael Brooks acts as our guide through the ages. He makes the case that mathematics was one of the foundational innovations that catapulted humanity from a nomadic existence to civilization, and that it has since then been instrumental in every great leap of humankind. Here are ancient Egyptian priests, Babylonian bureaucrats, medieval architects, dueling Swiss brothers, and renaissance painters. Their stories clearly demonstrate that the invention of mathematics was every bit as important to the human species as was the discovery of fire. From first page to last, The Art of More brings mathematics back into the heart of what it means to be human.