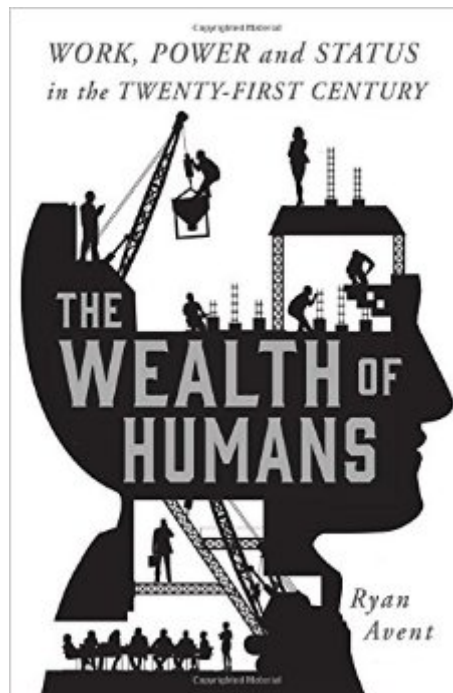


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The Wealth Of Humans: Work, Power, And Status In The Twenty-first Century



Synopsis

None of us has ever lived through a genuine industrial revolution. Until now. Digital technology is transforming every corner of the economy, fundamentally altering the way things are done, who does them, and what they earn for their efforts. In *The Wealth of Humans*, Economist editor Ryan Avent brings up-to-the-minute research and reporting to bear on the major economic question of our time: can the modern world manage technological changes every bit as disruptive as those that shook the socioeconomic landscape of the 19th century? Traveling from Shenzhen, to Gothenburg, to Mumbai, to Silicon Valley, Avent investigates the meaning of work in the twenty-first century: how technology is upending time-tested business models and thrusting workers of all kinds into a world wholly unlike that of a generation ago. It's a world in which the relationships between capital and labor and between rich and poor have been overturned. Past revolutions required rewriting the social contract: this one is unlikely to demand anything less. Avent looks to the history of the Industrial Revolution and the work of numerous experts for lessons in reordering society. The future needn't be bleak, but as *The Wealth of Humans* explains, we can't expect to restructure the world without a wrenching rethinking of what an economy should be.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Philosophers tend to reduce the human animal to an idealization. It doesn't work. It results in simplistic solutions â "Communism and Keynesianism" â which fail in practice. Ryan Avent has been a columnist for *The Economist* magazine for seven years. After taking his MBA, he worked briefly at the Bureau of Labor Statistics. His description of the corporate culture of *The Economist* is

one of the high points of the book. His description from the inside jibes very well with what one experiences from the outside, as a reader. The book puts both Mr. Avent's strengths and weaknesses on display. He is a bright man and a hard worker. On the other hand, one senses that his worldview conforms very much to that of the establishment publication for which he works and the establishment institutions where he studied. While the book adheres pretty much to liberal orthodoxy, Avent is candid enough to recognize several internal inconsistencies. Avent scatters clues throughout the book that he knows some of the truth about humanity, but he relentlessly omits it from his analysis and his projections. Let me cite some of the truths that he observes. 1) People support their own. "It is no wonder that experimental, generous welfare policy has tended to emerge in Nordic countries, where ethnic and communal ties are strong (but where openness to immigration has begun to tear at the social consensus)." Also: "The ethno-nationalist diversity of the American population, however, has long been an obstacle to the construction of an exceptionally generous welfare state. White voters in the South are skeptical of a welfare state that promises to deliver generous support to black Americans in northern cities, or to Latin Americans in California.

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