

Cohen, Daniel. *Homo economicus: the (lost) prophet of modern times*, tr. by Susan Emanuel. Polity, 2014. 155p ISBN 9780745680125, \$25.00.

This short book by French economist Cohen offers a familiar, veritable refrain among French academics and politicians: Economic Man must be subjugated so that morality, ethics, empathy, and cooperation can again triumph over competition, markets, prices, and the false god of material possessions. More broadly, *Homo Economicus* enters a seemingly ubiquitous cottage industry at present among social scientists--anthropologists, sociologists, political scientists, psychologists, and economists--that purports to treat the relationship, if any, between happiness (or subjective well-being) and income or wealth; most take (cheap) shots at the rational economic (straw) man. To unravel the if-we're-so-rich-why-aren't-we-happy paradox, the author's journey includes a chapter titled "Gross Domestic Happiness," how capitalism has altered--and diminished--the nature and value of work, the decadence and decline of the West (and China), and the negative impacts of globalization and the 21st-century digital world. The book is richly endowed by the author's frequent inclusions of commentary and contributions of scholars, the breadth of his own knowledge, and solid endnotes. The soapbox characteristics and constant to-the-ramparts exhortations throughout nevertheless constrain its importance for scholars and relegate its interest to general audiences. Summing Up: Recommended. Lower-division undergraduates and general readers.