

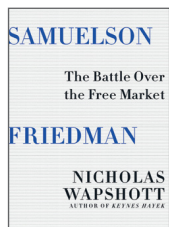
Home for the Holidays, and not always by Choice

New releases by or about those economic monsters of the Midway

BY ALLEN R. SANDERSON

As we wait to greet the holidays and 2022, our third year of disruptions to our lifestyles and livelihoods, and try to conquer covid-19, here is a short list of engaging, upbeat new volumes about, or by, some practitioners of the dismal science, all with Chicago DNA, to help get us through the winter and to perhaps serve as stocking stuffers for friends this month and beyond. The titles are all likely to appeal to a broad segment of intelligent lay readers.

The pandemic was certainly not anything we would have wished on anyone, but the era has produced some excellent scholarship and very worthwhile, appealing literature by those who have been “sheltered in place” with the rest of us.



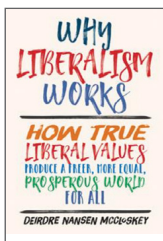
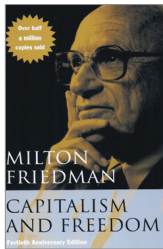
In *Samuelson Friedman: The Battle over the Free Market*, journalist Nicholas Wapshott and 2011 author of the well-received *Keynes Hayek: The Clash that Defined Modern Economics*, returns to the economics stage to provide a thoughtful, insightful look at the friendships and feuds of two towering figures, Paul Samuelson and Milton Friedman, both with University of Chicago ties and Nobel prizes, in the 20th (and early 21st) century dismal science. Known to many audiences principally for their dueling *Newsweek* columns, Samuelson and Friedman come alive in Wapshott’s engaging chronological narrative of these two giants, individually and collectively, as well as a valuable account of the evolution of the field of economics over this fifty-

year period. (Milton Friedman’s classical political tract, the University of Chicago Press *Capitalism and Freedom*, remains the standard scripture for understanding portions of the 60637 zip code.)

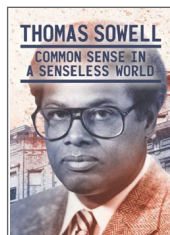


Early on, a well-known, respected scholar of Britain during the cliometrics revolution in economic history, Deirdre McCloskey headed west from the University of Chicago to Iowa and then back to the University of Illinois at Chicago and shifted her energies and talents to rhetoric, English, philosophy, culture and the economic contributions of the Bourgeois Era in her three-volume *The Bourgeois Virtues*. In *Leave Me Alone and I'll Make You Rich*, she is joined with economist Art Carden to

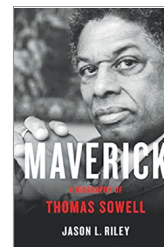
distill down the key ideas and arguments of the much longer trilogy. Few can compete in terms of knowledge, writing skills, and communication skills with an audience as this libertarian economist turned historian turned economist. Her 2019 book, *Why Liberalism Works*, in which she argues for a return to Enlightenment ideals would produce a better, more prosperous world.



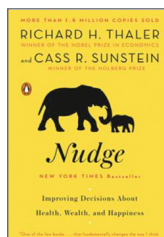
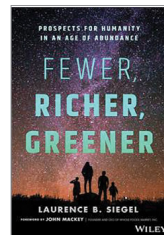
The *Wall Street Journal* columnist Jason Riley captures superbly the prowess and far-reaching scholarship of Thomas Sowell in *Maverick*. Armed with a University of Chicago PhD in economics, for decades, this 91-year-old Black economist, social theorist, and fearless public intellectual with humble North Carolina and Harlem roots, continues to



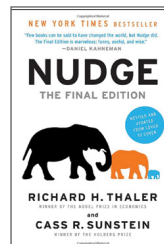
challenge conventional thinking on a host of contemporary topics from inequality to education, race, discrimination, and basic economics. An hour-long 2021 PBS program, “Thomas Sowell: Common Sense in a Senseless World,” narrated by Riley, offers a complementary look inside the mind of this author of more than thirty books.



Fewer, Richer, Greener: Prospects for Humanity in an Age of Abundance offers its readers an uplifting alternative to the constant doomsday narratives about the future prospects for today’s youth. Laurence B. Siegel, UChicago BA and MBA, is a consultant, popular speaker and author. In the delightful *Fewer* he chronicles humanity’s past and prospects for its future attributable to economic growth and development. From subsistence existence to prosperity over the last 250 years, Siegel makes his case via wit and scholarship for why population pressures will decline; technology will continue to provide health, longevity, and reduced poverty around the globe; and the environmentalists’ ecological desiderata will be achieved along with continued economic progress.



Nudge: Improving Decisions about Health, Wealth, and Happiness burst upon the scene more than a decade ago and became an immediate bestseller and classic for students and scholars of new important subfield of behavioral economics. Its shortened one-word title – *Nudge* – became instantly recognizable and part of our everyday working vocabulary in business, government, casual discourse, and at home. (Like “Madonna” or “Starbucks”?) Its authors, Harvard legal scholar (who was formerly at Chicago) Cass Sunstein and University of Chicago business school professor and 2017 Nobel laureate Richard Thaler, have again combined their talents to produce a revised and updated 2021 paperback, *Nudge: The Final Edition*. This is one of those volumes that will appeal to a broad segment of readers. Thaler’s *Misbehaving* offers a chronological journey on the making of the field of behavioral economics.



Enjoy. ☐