

**SMU McLane/Armentrout/Bridwell Scholars Reading Groups  
Spring 2021 Syllabus  
Economics, Evolution, and the Environment**

Mon./Tues./Wed.: Dean Stansel, Ph.D., Research Associate Professor  
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Bridwell Institute for Economic Freedom

<https://www.smu.edu/cox/Centers-and-Institutes/Bridwell-Institute>  
Cox School of Business, Crow 282

**Meeting Times.** Our meetings will be held on Mondays (Bridwell), Tuesdays (McLane), and Wednesdays (Armentrout) at 6-7 pm, and Fridays (Armentrout) at 11am-

**Come Prepared.** Your **active participation is required.** Those who do not do so will not receive the \$1,000 stipend. Planning ahead is the best way to make sure you are contributing to the group discussion. You should have 3 or 4 specific questions or comments prepared in advance for each session – preferably related directly to the texts. If there’s a lull in the conversation, use that opportunity to ask one of your prepared questions. It is important that everyone has an opportunity to participate, so please monitor your level of participation accordingly. (With 60 minutes and 12 students, that’s only an average of 5 minutes each.)

**Be Critical.** There is room for disagreement. Don’t agree unthinkingly with the readings or each other. Reasonable people disagree, so be reasonable, but do so **respectfully.**

**Be Humble.** The writers we read did not know everything and neither do you. Be willing to listen to the writers and each other, and be willing to say, “I don’t know.”

### **Tentative Bridwell Institute Event Schedule**

The most up-to-date list can always be found on our website:

<https://www.smu.edu/cox/Centers-and-Institutes/Bridwell-Institute/Events>

TBA

Workshop Series (designed for faculty but can also be used to make-up absences if necessary)

TBA

### **Meeting Schedule**

<u>Meeting #</u>	<u>Dates (Mon./Tues./Wed./Fri.*)</u>	<u>Notes</u>
1	Feb. 1/2/3/5	second week of class
2	Feb. 8/9/10/12	
3	Feb. 15/16/17/19	
NO MEETINGS	Feb. 22/23/24/26	
Sat. Feb. 27, 9am-12:30pm, <b>Mandatory</b> Reading Group Summit (on Zoom)		
4	Mar. 1/2/3/5	
5	Mar. 8/9/10/12	
6	Mar. 15/16/17/19	
7	Mar. 22/23/24/26	
8	Mar. 29/30/31/Apr. 2	
9	Apr. 5/6/7/9	
10	Apr. 12/13/14/16	

### **Zoom Links**

Mondays, 6-7pm (Central time): <https://smu.zoom.us/j/99555734156>

Tuesdays, 6-7pm (Central time): <https://smu.zoom.us/j/92155812947>

Wednesdays, 6-7pm (Central time): <https://smu.zoom.us/j/96538299180>

Fridays, 11am-noon (Central time): <https://smu.zoom.us/j/99567863593>

## Reading List

Books that will be provided:

Robert Frank, : (2012)  
Bjorn Lomborg,  
(2020)  
Matt Ridley, (2016)  
Paul Sabin, (2014)  
Gernot Wagner and Martin Weitzman,  
(2016)

\*Note: Readings marked with asterisks are available in the DropBox link below. All others are found in the books that you will be given or at the weblink listed with the reading.

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/b72fkzrf7zmtq0z/AACmnku6-HYOFo1YwhwYq8rYa?dl=0>

### Session 1 – The Evolution of Everything I (63 pages)

Ridley,

- Prologue: The General Theory of Evolution (5 pages)
- Ch. 2: The Evolution of Morality (15 pages)
- Selection from Ch. 3: The Evolution of Life, pp. 37-39 (3 pages)
- Ch. 5: The Evolution of Culture (19 pages)
- Ch. 6: The Evolution of the Economy (21 pages)

### Session 2 – The Evolution of Everything II & Introduction to Environmental Economics (58 pages)

Ch. (21) (The Evouthon o1.3 (er0 Td0)-0.6 oeoy

**Session 5 – Dealing with Climate Change II (72 pages)**

Lomborg,

- Ch. 11: Carbon Tax: The Market-Based Solution (15 pages)
- Ch. 12: Innovation: What Is Needed Most (15 pages)
- Ch. 13: Adaptation: Simple But Effective (12 pages)

\*William Nordhaus, “Climate Clubs: Overcoming Free Riding in International Climate Policy,”  
(30 pages)

**Session 6 – The Darwin Economy I (60 pages)**

Frank,

- Ch. 1: Paralysis (14 pages)
- Ch. 2: Darwin’s Wedge (14 pages)
- Ch. 3: No Cash on the Table (15 pages)
- Ch. 4: Starve the Beast—But Which One? (17 pages)

**Session 7 – The Darwin Economy II (57 pages)**

Frank,

- Ch. 5: Putting the Positional Consumption Beast on a Diet (20 pages)
- Ch. 6: Perpetrators and Victims (15 pages)
- Ch. 11: Taxing Harmful Activities (22 pages)

**Session 8 – The Bet I (83 pages)**

Sabin, (85 pages, but with pictures and an easier read)

- Ch. 3: Listening to Cassandra (34 pages)
- Ch. 4: The Triumph of Optimism (49 pages)

**Session 9 – The Bet II (63 pages)**

Sabin, (45 pages)

- Introduction (8 pages)
- Ch 5: Polarizing Politics (35 pages)

Ridley, (20 pages)

- Ch. 11: The Evolution of Population (21 pages)

Ridley, (20 pages) (Ci 11.002 Tw 1.174 0 Td E-5f lec4T078Ej/TB