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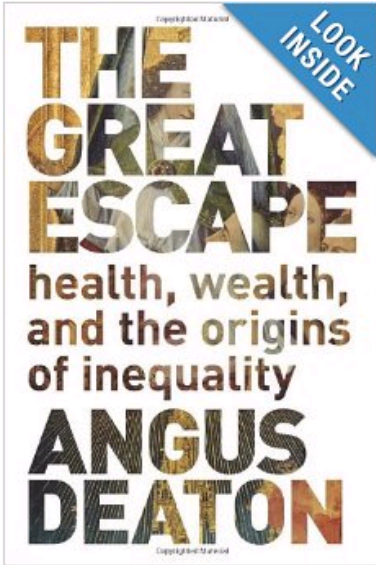
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of
Inequality**

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Deaton

(Author)

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The world is a better place than it used to be. People are wealthier and healthier, and live longer lives. Yet the escapes from destitution by so many have left gaping inequalities between people and between nations.

In
The
Great
Escape,
Angus
Deaton
--one
of the
foremost
experts
on
economic
development
and
on
poverty
--tells
the
remarkable
story
of
how,
starting
250
years
ago,
some
parts
of the
world
began
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opening
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has
prospered
but is
today
experiencing
slower
growth
and
increasing
inequality.
He
also
considers
how
economic
growth
in
India
and
China
has

has improved the lives of more than a billion people. Deaton argues that international aid has been ineffective and even harmful. He suggests alternative efforts-
- including reforming incentives to drug companies and lifting trade restrictions --that will allow the developing world to bring about its own Great Escape.

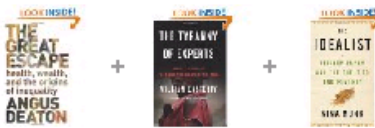
Demonstrating how changes in health and living standards have transformed our lives, *The Great Escape* is a powerful guide to

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the
well-
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of all
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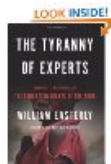


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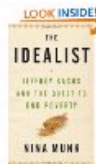
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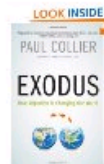
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Editorial Reviews

Review

One of *Bloomberg/Businessweek* Best Books of 2013, selected by Christopher L. Eisgruber (president of Princeton University)

One of *Forbes Magazine's* Best Books of 2013

Honorable Mention for the 2013 PROSE Award in Economics, Association of American Publishers

Longlisted for the 2013 Business Book of the Year Award, *Financial Times*/Goldman Sachs

A "Best Business Book of the Year for 2013" selected on LinkedIn by Matthew Bishop, Economics Editor of *The Economist*

Featured in *The Sunday Times* 2013 Holiday Roundup

"[O]ne of the most succinct guides to conditions in today's world. . . . The story Deaton tells--the most inspiring human story of all--should give all of us reason for optimism, so long as we are willing to listen to its moral."--**David Leonhardt, *New York Times Book Review***

"[A]n illuminating and inspiring history of how mankind's longevity and prosperity have soared to breathtaking heights in modern times. . . . [Deaton's] book gives a stirring overview of the economic progress and medical milestones that, starting with the Industrial Revolution and accelerating after World War II, have caused life expectancies to soar."--**Fred Andrews, *New York Times***

"A truly elegant exploration. . . . It offers an erudite sojourn through history, all the way to the domestic and international policy issues pressing in on us today. Unusual for scholarly works in economics, this book is rendered in easily accessible prose, supported by fascinating statistics presented graphically."--**Uwe E. Reinhardt, *NYTimes.com's Economix blog***

"As the title of his book suggests, Deaton sketches out the story of how many people have escaped from poverty and early death. It is a powerful tale. In Deaton's hands, the all too frequently forgotten accomplishments of the last century are given prominence that is both refreshing and welcome."--**Edward Hadas, *Reuters BreakingViews***

"*The Great Escape* combines, to a rare degree, technical sophistication, moral urgency, the wisdom of experience, and an engaging and accessible style. It will deepen both your appreciation of the miracle of modern economic growth and your conviction that the benefits can and should be much more widely enjoyed."--**Clive Crook, *Bloomberg News***

"This is a book that deserves to be read by as many people as possible, so that the poverty debates we have

... this is a book that deserves to be read by as many people as possible, so that the poverty debates we have in India go beyond ideological grandstanding and the usual television dramatics. . . . The recent years have seen several leading economic thinkers write excellent books for the ordinary reader, and the new Deaton book is firmly in that category."--**Niranjan Rajadhyaksha, *Mint***

"Is the world becoming a fairer as well as a richer place? Few economists are better equipped to answer this question than Angus Deaton of Princeton University, who has thought hard about measuring international well-being and is not afraid to roam through history. Refreshingly, Mr Deaton also reaches beyond a purely economic narrative to encompass often neglected dimensions of progress such as better health. . . . [T]he theme requires a big canvas and bold brushwork, and Mr Deaton capably offers both."--***Economist***

"Deaton's lucid book celebrates the riches brought by growth while judiciously explaining why some people are always 'left behind'. He draws a distinction between the inequalities that are opened up by advances in knowledge and those caused by flawed political systems. . . . The book's rich historical and geographical context adds to the power of this message."--**John McDermott, *Financial Times***

"In *The Great Escape*, he dons the hat of an economic historian to provide a fresh perspective on the march of human progress (and its pitfalls) that should inform our current debate about income inequality."--**Konrad Yakabuski, *Globe & Mail***

"It's a privilege to know the author of one of the most important books I've read, not least because it acts as entry point into other significant related books, research and debates. . . . Deaton's work reflects this combined pursuit of economics and ethics, manifested through research in to the wealth and health of nations."--**John Atherton, *Crucible***

"It would make for delightful reading for economists, donors and policy makers."--**Charan Singh, *Business Standard***

"[A] fantastic book about the origins of global poverty. Deaton's humanitarian credentials are unimpeachable, yet he thinks almost all non-health related foreign aid is making global poverty worse. He proposes a variety of alternatives, like massive investments in medical research and cracking down on the small arms trade, that might actually help."--**Zack Beauchamp, *Think Progress***

"[T]hese are wonderful essays, each combining the essential Deaton ingredients of theoretical insight, careful analysis of evidence and graceful writing. There are thought-provoking chapters on the history of health improvements and what has driven them; on material well-being in the US; and on the damage caused by aid to developing countries. Deaton has dedicated many years to thinking about each of these issues, with a long list of academic papers to show for it. Here, he seems to step back and reflect on what he has learned, offering us a sage's wisdom."--**Kitty Stewart, *Times Higher Education***

"*The Great Escape* is a thoughtful work, extensively illustrated with data, from a distinguished economist who tackles a central controversy of our time in a style refreshingly free of ideological baggage."--**John Kay, *Prospect***

"Angus Deaton has written a wonderful book, *The Great Escape: Health, Wealth, and the Origins of Inequality*. . . . Deaton's book is a magisterial overview of health, income, and wealth from the industrial revolution to the present, taking in countries poor and rich. Not just jargon-free but equation-free, the book is written with a beautifully lucid style. . . . [P]owerfully argued and convincing."--**Michael Marmot, *Lancet***

"Splendid."--**Judith Sloan, *Australian***

"In his new book, *The Great Escape: Health, Wealth, and the Origins of Inequality*, economist Angus Deaton questions the usefulness of all aid, and describes how the greater proportion of the world's poor are found not in Africa but in the booming, yet radically unequal, economies of China and India."--**Paul Theroux, *Barron's***

"The Princeton economist makes a compelling case against the naysayers of economic growth, marshalling a wealth of data and clear-eyed observations to explain how growth allows people to live more freely. . . . Mr. Deaton's seemingly inexhaustible knowledge of all things historical is bound to edify even the most erudite of readers."--**Andrew Lewis, *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette***

"[C]areful and magisterial. . . ."--**Pooja Bhatia, *Ozy Media***

"[A] genuine contribution to the emerging literature on rethinking development."--**Andrew Hilton, *Financial World***

"[E]loquently written and deeply researched. . . . For those interested in world poverty, it is unquestionably the most important book on development assistance to appear in a long time."--**Kenneth Rogoff, *Project Syndicate***

"Deaton . . . is perhaps the single most level-headed student of economic development in the world today. . . . *The Great Escape* is an extended meditation on the sources and consequences of inequality."--**David Warsh, *EconomicPrincipals.com***

"Tops my list of must-read books for 2013. Deaton tackles big topics--global improvements to health and well-being, worrisome levels of inequality within nations and between them, and the challenges to curing poverty through foreign aid. His powerful, provocative argument combines careful analysis, humane insight, lucid prose, and a fearless willingness to challenge conventional wisdom. Whether you agree or disagree with its conclusions, this book will force you to rethink your positions about some of the world's most urgent problems."--**Christopher L. Eisgruber, president of Princeton University, *Bloomberg Businessweek***

"[A] masterful account . . ."--**Anne-Marie Slaughter, *CNN.com***

"The book deserves to be read by all, especially by the students of economic development."--**Tirthankar Roy, *Economic & Political Weekly***

"Professor Deaton hits the psychological nail on the head when he suggests that aid is 'more about satisfying our own need to help.' He identifies the related issue of 'aid illusion'--the belief that poverty in poor countries can be solved by rich people transferring money."--**Peter Foster, *Financial Post***

"This is a fascinating book on health, wealth and inequality."--**Bibek Debroy, *Businessworld***

"Development economist Deaton draws on his lifelong interest in and considerable knowledge of economic development to tell the story of modernization and the rise from worldwide poverty. Chapters illustrating demographic and economic trends utilize well-crafted charts and graphs to depict the rising paths that countries, first the US and western Europe and more recently China and India, have taken as their populations improve their health, education, and income-making abilities."--**Choice**

"If you want to learn about why human welfare overall has gone up so much over time, you should read *The Great Escape: Health, Wealth, and the Origins of Inequality* . . ."--**Bill Gates**

From the Inside Flap

"There is nobody better than Angus Deaton to explain why our lives are longer, healthier, and more prosperous than those of our great-grandparents. The story he tells is much more than an inexorable march of progress--it has also been unequal, uneven, and incomplete, and at each step, politics has played a defining role. This is a must-read for anybody interested in the wealth and health of nations."--**Daron Acemoglu, coauthor of *Why Nations Fail***

"At once engaging and compassionate, this is an uplifting story by a major scholar."--**Paul Collier, author of *The Bottom Billion***

"Magisterial and superb."--**William Easterly, author of *The White Man's Burden***

"*The Great Escape* tells the two biggest stories in history: how humanity got healthy and wealthy, and why some people got so much healthier and wealthier than others. Angus Deaton, one of the world's leading development economists, takes us on an extraordinary journey--from an age when almost everyone was poor and sick to one where most people have escaped these evils--and he tells us how the billion still trapped in extreme poverty can join in this great escape. Everyone who wants to understand the twenty-first century should read this book."--**Ian Morris, author of *Why the West Rules--for Now***

"Deaton's account of global advances in health is magisterial. It is especially convincing in disentangling economic progress from technological growth as sources of health improvements. A very big story, this book should affect the way we think about human development and the role of science and science-based government programs. The language is modest and graceful, the use of evidence compelling, and the illustrations highly attractive."--**Samuel Preston, University of Pennsylvania**

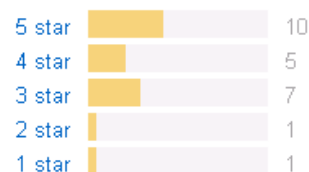
"This factual, sober, and very timely book deals with issues surrounding the higher incomes and longer lives enjoyed by an increasing proportion of the world's population. It assesses improvements in conditions that would have seemed almost a fantasy for people living only a few generations ago. Deaton's arguments, written in an elegant and accessible style, are powerful and challenge conventional opinions."--**Branko Milanovic, author of *The Haves and the Have-Nots***

"This splendid book discusses how, in the last two hundred fifty years, large numbers of people have achieved levels of well-being that were previously available only to a few individuals, and how this achievement has given rise to equally unprecedented inequalities. Unique in its focus and scope, exceptional knowledge and coherence, and careful argumentation, *The Great Escape* is highly illuminating and a delight to read."--**Thomas Pogge, Yale University**

Customer Reviews

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Very insightful information, extremely well documented.

Jim Carroll

In recent decades a good share of the world, most notably China and India have made great progress in raising both Health standards and Wealth.

Shalom
Freedman

I agree, but by the same token doesn't that perspective conflict undermine the nation-to nation comparisons that make up the prior chapters?

MT57

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Essentially a survey course

By [MT57](#) on October 28, 2013

Format: Hardcover

I was underwhelmed. Professor Deaton is highly regarded in his field of development economics, and there is one chapter, the penultimate, that focuses on that sector and it was hard-hitting, pithy, and insightful. Professor Deaton is a proponent of the theme that external aid does not make much difference in the least developed countries, due in large measure to corruption within the recipient nation. He lays out his case forcefully. For those who have encountered the philosophical, non-empirical argument of Peter Singer in favor of such aid, this chapter is a very effective rejoinder.

But otherwise, the book is basically a survey course -- at a 50,000 foot, totally macro level -- of the developments, mostly positive, in material wellbeing and health over the last couple of centuries -- the "Great Escape" of the title -- with some very high-level consideration of the reasons why they have not been uniform and the implications

of the lack of uniformity. Pretty much everything is studied at the level of comparing statistics collected at the national level, which I find to be maddeningly frustrating as there are so many differences one can find between any pair of nations. And then one gets to the chapter on cross-border aid, and the author completely switches his vantage point and says that you can't limit your scrutiny of cross-border aid to the nation-to-nation level, you have to look at what is going on inside the recipient nation. I agree, but by the same token doesn't that perspective conflict undermine the nation-to-nation comparisons that make up the prior chapters? [Read more >](#)

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A once-in-a-decade book about economic and social development

By [Guy P. Pfeffermann](#) on October 16, 2013

Format: Hardcover | [Amazon Verified Purchase](#)

This is an important book by one of the foremost development economists in the world. It is highly readable, indeed written in an entertaining manner. Deaton paints on a vast canvas in time and space, embracing both developed and developing worlds. His theme is how in the course of history, and especially during the past three decades, hundreds of millions of people managed to escape abject poverty. He brings new insights into the sequencing and the many interwoven and often counter-intuitive linkages between growth and quality of life, especially health and longevity. His story begins when we were all hunters/gatherers and ends in 2013 in the unresolved aftermath of the financial crisis.

One of Deaton's main themes is that economic growth does not necessarily produce improved quality of life, especially when income is distributed very unequally - as is the case in today's United States. So for example, in spite of lower economic growth in France than in the United States, because of a less unequal distribution of income, "all but the top 1 percent of the French population did better than all but the top 1 percent of the American population". (p. 260)

In discussing the relationships between rich and poor countries, I very much like Deaton's implicit framework, which distinguishes "us" (the people of the North), "we" (the Northern governments), aid recipients ("their governments"), and "they" (the people of the South). This helps to cut through a lot of semantic and conceptual confusion, especially when discussing "development assistance".

The book concludes with a chapter about how to help those left behind the "Great Escape" from poverty. While I tend to agree with his main thrust: that foreign aid works best where it is least needed, i.e. [Read more >](#)

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Inequality, Infant Mortality, and Foreign Aid

By [Mal Warwick](#) on December 17, 2013

Format: Kindle Edition | [Amazon Verified Purchase](#)

Has the human race made progress since the days when all our lives were nasty, brutish, and short?

Some might think this question patently silly, since it would appear to answer itself. But Angus Deaton finds in it a point of entry into his inquiry on "health, wealth, and the origins of inequality," the subtitle of his ambitious new book. He is in no doubt that humanity has progressed, not steadily but by fits and starts — and continues to do so to this day. "Today," he writes, "children in sub-Saharan Africa are

more likely to survive to age 5 than were English children born in 1918 . . . [and] India today has higher life expectancy than Scotland in 1945."

In *The Great Escape*, Deaton, a veteran professor of economics and international affairs at Princeton, explores inequality — between classes and between countries — with a detailed statistical analysis of trends in infant mortality, life expectancy, and income levels over the past 250 years. He concludes that the large-scale inequality that plagues policymakers and reformers alike in the present day is the result of the progress humanity has made since *The Great Divergence* (between "the West and the rest") since the advent of the Industrial Revolution. "Economic growth," Deaton asserts, "has been the engine of international income inequality."

No argument there: Deaton is far from alone in this belief. Other scholars have written extensively about this topic in recent years. *A Farewell to Alms: A Brief Economic History of the World*, by Gregory Clark, is just one example. [Read more >](#)

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Careful. This book will make you think.

This was an absorbing read from start to finish. Professor Deaton tells a compelling story that will make you think and rethink and rethink again what you "know" about the world.

Published 24 days ago by B. Critical

font of information

while much of what is written here is not new, the effort to make a thorough going case for those concepts is praise worthy. [Read more](#)

Published 27 days ago by SUSAN SEYFARTH

The limits of Aid

Angus Deaton argues that the aid illusion is also damaging to sustainable development. He is mostly successful but seems to have the most difficulty with medical aid. [Read more](#)

Published 1 month ago by Marvin Hage

Nice connection of past and present, and discussion of inequality in...

A good overview book that walks you through the history of health and wealth inequality, and talks with firm knowledge and sincerity about the positive and negative aspects of... [Read more](#)

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