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*Interview with Deirdre McCloskey, May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2017. Slightly edited for clarity.*

*Arjun Jayadev:* Thanks very much for joining us today. I thought I'd start with your work. You've always been interested in economic history from your time studying with Alexander Gerschenkron. Can you tell us a little bit about your early work in the area, in economic history and the divergence of Britain and Europe from the Rest of the World?

*Deirdre McCloskey:* I was always interested in economic history. That's the field in economics at Harvard College and then especially in graduate school in the mid-60s that was most exciting. Although I went up to MIT to get a course from Peter Temin the first time he gave his American economic history course. Bob Hall and Ann Richard were some of the people in that course. But my model was Alexander Gerschenkron, the great Harvard economic historian. And what I got from Gerschenkron (and to some degree from Peter) is to find an important question, ask the question and then answer it. There is a problem of doing too much background and wasting time studying heteroskedasticity and so on when what you should be doing is answering the scientific question. The scientific question I came up with is really in opposition to David Landes who was in the History Department there. It was against the common claim and David made it that entrepreneurship in Britain, managerial skills, to not use such a fancy word, declined in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century. It's a very implausible hypothesis on its face but a lot of people believed it. So I took the worst example I could think of where it was supposed to have been really bad, (the iron and steel industry) and I argued with other people that they were confusing the growth in the United States and Germany in iron and steel and things with a falling behind in cleverness and energy in the British industry. So I did calculations that showed that wasn't so. That was kind of the first ten years of my career was focused on this question of the performance of the British economy in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

Comparison, comparison, comparison. That I also learned from Alex Gerschenkron.

*Arjun Jayadev:* In some sense, you work on *Bourgeois Virtues* is a return to these same broad themes. Can you tell us a little bit of why you've chosen to frame this work in this particular, provocative way?

*Deirdre McCloskey:* After studying English iron and steel and entrepreneurial failure and all that, I studied trade a bit. Then went back in pursuit of property rights economics which I got into actually before Doug

North did. I went back to enclosures and then to open fields and did work in the 1970s work on that, Medieval agricultural history in England.

But then in the 1980s I got fascinated by rhetoric by which I mean how you persuade in science. And in the 1990s, I started to think of a defense of capitalism, a full-scale defense, one that people who were not already enthusiastic about it would find persuasive maybe; certainly something to think about. That's where my project on the *Bourgeois Virtues* and the matter of how we got so rich (through the bourgeois virtues) came. So it was a long haul. My last book on the subject was in 2016 but I started thinking of it early in the 90s.

So you can see it's been obsessing me, this question of what's the connection between virtue and capitalism. Contrary to the standard opinion, I was just reading a book this morning on the plane making this same case. The standard opinion is trade, manufacturing, invention is corrupting. Certainly being rich is corrupting according to these people. I didn't think it was true.

I mean, the trick in a scientific life is to say something that's true and surprising. It's easy to say something that's true. The sun will come up tomorrow. It's also easy to say something that's surprising. Up is down. But to combine the two is what we all try to do.

*Arjun Jayadev:*

I'm very curious about this particular thing. Do you think that the notion of bourgeois virtue is lacking from the broader solution in political conversation? For example, the number of popular TV shows about business and they show a different picture than the one you paint in your book. Do you think –

*Deirdre McCloskey:*

Yeah. Part of the problem with our attitudes toward capitalism. I don't much like the word capitalism, by the way, I think it's a misleading word, but that's another point. Part of the problem is that the clerisies as I call it, the intellectuals, the journalists and so on, the sons, especially the men, the sons of bourgeois fathers as Marx and Engels both were, have developed since 1848 especially a line of incessant, tiresome, unbounded and unfounded criticism of the system that's made them so well off.

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And the core of it, as I just said, is that they think that there's a corrupting character to trade, commerce, manufacturing. And this shows all over the culture. One part of our culture that has some pro-capitalist ideas is country music. But often it's a complaint from the worker about the boss. Not always, but sometimes. Often. And movies. The two Wall Street movies are just an example. There are a few movies. *Joy*, a movie about the inventor of the self-squeezing mop, is a pro-capitalist film. And there are a few others, but not very many. Mainly what's so absurd about it is that it's capitalist producers in Hollywood who are obsessed with the bottom line underwriting these movies. And I think actually it's a false picture of people in business. They have to be concerned with the bottom line or they're not going to be in business long. But it's just not correct that the boss is this person with the blood of the workers dripping from his teeth and so on. It's just not right.

*Arjun Jayadev:* To follow up on this. You use of the word virtue is very strong and, as you say, surprising. What do you think the word virtue captures that's missing in our economics?

*Deirdre McCloskey:* I use in the word virtue because that's the old one. In South Asia, East Asia, the coyote tales of the first nations in North America in the classical, intellectual traditions of the West, the named virtues: courage, temperance, justice, prudence (economics is the science of prudence). But then also faith, hope and love, and the greatest of these is love. The way people have talked about being good mostly in history is named virtue and there are libraries about each of the virtues. Love or justice or prudence. And it seems to me that the 18<sup>th</sup> Century can be summarized as philosophical tricks about virtue, Kant making justice into the only virtue; Bentham making prudence into the only virtue. These are inadequate for our lives. If you insist that the business person is just a monster of prudence, 'Argh, I'm going to be rational and, argh,' then you're going to miss the role of temperance in the life of a business person. Or even love. And you're going to get it wrong. You're going to get the economics wrong. You're going to get the economic history wrong.

*Arjun Jayadev:* I want to ask what the first part of the formulation, *Bourgeois Virtue*, it seems to me some of the things you speak about could equally be said, say for example, of a public sector employee. So is there something particularly Bourgeois about Bourgeois virtue?

*Deirdre McCloskey:* Absolutely. I'm trying to revise the word bourgeois which was, by the way, in the early 18<sup>th</sup> Century, was the normal English word

for the Middle Class taken over from French. (Then this phrase Middle Class, which is much vaguer, came to be the dominant). All I mean by it is the Middle Class. What's bourgeois about the bourgeois virtues? There's nothing special about them except they're exercised in a commercial society. My book in 2006 called the *Bourgeois Virtues* had, as a subtitle "Ethics for a commercial Society".

So I take this long tradition of virtue ethics, which by the way was revised in the 1950s and 60s by very surprisingly women English analytic philosophers, a whole series of them. (Alasdair MacIntyre in this case is an honorary woman). Everyone wants to be good. Hitler thought he was good. He didn't say evil be thy my good. He thought what he was doing was good. So detailing what we mean by good instead of trying to get a snappy formula that you maximize utility, say, is much more satisfactory I think philosophically.

*Arjun Jayadev:*

In the 70s and 80s you turned more towards a humanist with an explicit focus on rhetoric. Was there any reason you decided not to just 'do economics' but to think about it and think about how economics is taught and how to write about it.

*Deirdre McCloskey:*

I came to discuss heavily in three books, maybe three and a half books, the notion of rhetoric in science, in the 1980s especially when I was teaching at the University of Iowa. But in the 1970s, I had been a professor at the University of Chicago, the famous University of Chicago. Milton Friedman was down the hall. And before that I had been a Harvard student, undergraduate and graduate. And in the 60s and 70s, there was still this tremendous tension between the Chicago school on the one hand and almost everyone else. There were a few other Chicago school type programs at UCLA and Virginia and Washington, but very few. Mainly it was the Keynesians; and so that's how I was trained originally.

At Harvard if you were a professor and you wanted to liven up your class, you just had to mention the name of Milton Friedman, the Chicago economist. You didn't have to say anything about him; you just had to mention his name and everyone would say, 'Oh, tee, hee, hee, hee, hee.' And then I got to Chicago, my first job, I was there for 12 years and I found that similarly in Chicago, if you mentioned John Kenneth Galbraith, everyone went, 'Tee, hee, hee.' And this I regarded as a lousy way of carrying on scientific

discussion. You ought to face up to the arguments of these people, not just laugh at them. Not sneer.

In both places, there was this kind of phony methodology, not the same but slightly different methodologies, but they were all fake. I realized they were fake. At Chicago especially they said we're doing positive economics and there's no politics here. Pay no attention to that man behind the curtain. I mean, it was crazy. We all knew that Chicago was conservative and free market and Harvard, Yale and so on were not. They were government oriented. But yet people wouldn't admit that there was any politics or ethics or anything else involved.

So I got Wayne Booth, a professor in the English Department at Chicago, got me into thinking about how we persuade each other. Aristotle's definition of rhetoric is the study of the available means of unforced persuasion. Not putting a gun to someone's head, but changing their mind as we say in English and probably in other languages.

*Arjun Jayadev:* For most economists, economics still just means formal mathematical modeling and statistical testing using econometrics. You've argued against this. Do you think most economists or other people for that matter reach their views based on logical proof in econometric tests?

*Deirdre McCloskey:* To some degree, of course, econometric tests and logic and theory does govern economic science to some degree. But people come to their scientific convictions in all kinds of ways, arguments from authority. Milton Friedman told me so, therefore I believe it, say. Or arguments from analogy which is a very powerful scientific tool. From metaphors. Stories. The story of economic development as a tale in which the expert economist comes from the World Bank and helps the poor people become rich. And tales our mothers told us. Diagrams. Films. Fiction. Most people think they understand what was happening in the early Industrial Revolution to poor people. How do they know this? Because they've read *Hard Times* by Charles Dickens so they think this guy who knew nothing about industrialization is a good guide to economic history. It's not that these are just fallacies. It's how humans honestly and seriously persuade. This is the case in physics, even in mathematics itself and philosophy and so forth.

So in order to understand science, and this is a point that sociologists of science understand very well, you've got to get beyond the official cover story. I also doubt very much the sensibleness, the rationality of the existing cover story which is that theories are just existence theorems; there exists a competitive equilibrium (or there doesn't because there are all these imperfections). On the one hand, econometrics focuses on existence, too. It talks about whether or not an effect exists and that's supposed to be tested by statistical significance. The American Statistical Association, incidentally in the spring of 2016 issued an official report denying that tests of statistical significance are a sensible guide to the importance of a variable.

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I'm not against economic theory, I'm not against mathematics. I'm not against econometrics or quantification. I'm a quantitative person. But these little tools existence theorems in the style of the mathematics department (not engineering or physics but mathematics) and statistical significance in the style of formal statistical theory without acknowledging the common sense of how big something is, oomph I call it, is a blind alley in our field. But it's dominant and everyone is crowded into this alley and they're all bumping against the wall at the end of the alley.

*Arjun Jayadev:* That's a great metaphor!

*Deirdre McCloskey:* I just got it from you!

*Arjun Jayadev:* Talking about quantitative methods, you've often been credited with bringing quantitative approaches to economic history and it's been very influential. More recently there's been a pile of papers that use economics mainly as the analysis of the past, we call it the new, new institutional economics. Other people call it Wikipedia with regressions. Can you tell us what you think about this work and whether this is a useful way forward?

*Deirdre McCloskey:* I was an early Cleometrician-, a kind of a joke term for economic history where you're supposed to know something about economics and statistics and so forth.

As the great Schumpeter said, that you needed theory, you needed statistics and you needed history. Those three were the triangle of a proper economic education, said he. And I believed that was true. So I was influential in bringing what developed as an American movement to Britain, for example. So I'm a quantifier. In my

books, my trilogy the *Bourgeois Era*, people say I don't see any tables, any metric results and graphs and so on. I said look, almost every assertion in the book is implicitly quantitative and sometimes explicitly so. So asking how big something is is worth doing.

I realized though, and this turned to the humanities in the 1980s and 90s in my own life, that you also need qualitative decisions before you measure. You've got to know what you're talking about, and that's analytic and it's humanistic. It's a categorizing move. And my worry about the newest turn in quantitative economic history is that it's just Wikipedia with a regression and worse. People find a data set, they do a regression and it goes along with another movement in economic history that I've been bothered by, which is the new institutionalism of Doug North.

Doug was a friend of mine. Had an amazing life. Like a lot of us including me, he started on the left in politics and drifted. But there's a kind of mindless quality to it that. "Well, we're going to study institutions" they say and then they've got some number for 'I' institutions and they stick it in.

I think a more productive sort of quantification is the kind that engineers do, which is simulation. Or architects. I have lots of architect friends. I belong to a eating club in Chicago with a bunch of them and they tell me you don't need to draw anymore as an architect because you just simulate the building. And then you can walk inside it, so to speak, and look around. Whoops, there's a hole there. We forgot to make the wall long enough. And then you just lengthen the wall. So simulation, as the price of computation keeps falling and falling and falling, is the way forward, not, I'm afraid, econometrics.

Yet that's what economists are trained in and over-trained in, I'd say. Three terms of econometrics is a bad idea, that's what I had when I was a graduate student, because it gives you the idea that that's the only empirical method. So experiments you can't do, surveys, oh no. You wouldn't want to *talk* to anyone. History, no, don't do that. Graphing. We've got tremendous capacities for drawing graphs. We don't use them in economics very much. We're the molecules we're studying, you and I, and so we know things about our economic behavior that you can't get if you just

adopt behaviorism and pretend you don't know what a human being is.

*Arjun Jayadev:* There was maybe one approach that you didn't mention and it comes from your work with Arjo Klamer: "Accounting as a master for economics." In some sense, this offers an alternative starting point for economics. Why do you think economists ignore accounting?

*Deirdre McCloskey:* The quantitative method of accounting, assets and liabilities, balance sheets, income statements and the national income accounting which has fallen out of the education of young economists has to be the framework for the study of an enterprise economy, a business economy. And by analogy, the consumer viewed as a business. Now that's not the only way to look at a family, thank God, but it's one way. And so far as the economy is concerned, a quite important way. So a long time ago, Arjo Klamer and I wrote in the inaugural issue of an accounting journal in Europe. This I called *Accounting the Master Metaphor of Economics*. And it's a point that lots of economists have made, Paul Samuelson made it even. And it's that if you don't get the accounting right, as Paul said, you're liable to think there's some outside Santa Claus, as he put it, that's bringing stuff into this economy you're thinking about mysteriously. Manna falls from heaven and then we can distribute it; whereas if you get the accounting right, you know that consumption depends on production, and it's not that production depends on consumption; that's the Keynesian argument. It's the other way around. I was an early supply side economist, I guess, certainly in my economic history. And if you know about the wheel of wealth, as we call it, firms and households and factor markets and product markets, then you're not going to make these mistakes. I could name, in fact in my micro book of long ago called *The Applied Theory of Price*, I have a lot of examples of getting the accounting wrong to start out with so you end up with nonsense.

*Arjun Jayadev:* Wonderful. I want to go back to rhetoric and writing. You have a gift for saying exactly what you mean but in unexpected ways. Can you tell us a bit about what has shaped you as a writer? Any models you've tried to follow? Can you tell us a little bit about your writing?

*Deirdre McCloskey:* I've always felt that one tool that a young economist should be working on as well as her econometrics or theory or history is



writing. We've got to say what we mean. And it turns out that if you write carefully and thoughtfully ( I have a book called *Economical Writing* on all this) it's a tool for thinking. You get new thoughts on economics if you use the sentence as a tool. End of the sentence comes and then what's the next sentence. It's as though, someone made this point, that the end of the sentence is kind of like a miner's pick exploring the mineral load.

And I find that most of what I do when I revise is follow certain tricks of graceful and clear expression (such as express parallel ideas in parallel form-that's from Strunk and White). But then I also ask look, does this idea make sense? And I'm constantly discovering that I've been imprecise or wrong through looking closely at my own prose.

Revise, revise, revise. Hemingway revised – rewrote – from the beginning the last paragraph of *Farewell to Arms* by his own account 40 times. And the last sentence is, 'And then he walked home in the rain.'

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Arjun Jayadev:

I'd like to maybe move a little bit to trying to talk about the profession in general. You've worked a lot with people from other traditions. What is your view of a self-conscious heterodoxy in economics of people who either define themselves as dissidents? Do you think it's important to be on the fringes of the profession maybe in producing interesting work?

Deirdre McCloskey:

I've had the advantage in my career that I pretty much agreed with the orthodoxy I was being presented with. When I was a Keynesian at Harvard College, a little bit at the graduate school, I thought that ought to do it. Keynes was my hero; who wouldn't have Keynes as her hero? Then I got more interested in quantification and history. And then I was a fierce positivist. You must measure everything and shut up if it's just letters you're looking at.

I gradually got over that. But each time, it worked career-wise. I got tenure at the University of Chicago and that was very nice. But then in 1980, I more or less self-consciously broke from Chicago. I left Chicago. I still was a Chicago school economist, but I was seeing the phoniness in their methodology just as the phoniness at Harvard. There's a lot of phoniness going around. And I became gradually more and more, what can I say, unusual in the economics

profession because there are not many economists, I can think of very few, who use the humanities in a serious way.

I've done a book on epistemology. I purposely chose a dull title, *Knowledge and Persuasion in Economics*, because I was tired of people being angry at me. And I've done work – I was a professor of English at the University of Illinois at Chicago on the basis of my work on rhetoric. So I gradually was looking around at intellectual life. In fact, I can remember in my early 30s – more like my mid-30s, I had learned how to be an economist. I learned how to do their tricks, and I said to myself I've got to get broader. So when I got to University of Iowa, I started to study Latin which I learned in high school but not very well. Then I took a course in Greek as well.

Then I started an interdisciplinary group with a lot of people in English and Engineering at the University of Iowa. I was gradually forced out of my narrowness as an economist, and this is not something that the narrow economists like. They get quite angry. What's astonishing about American economics especially is how narrow it is methodologically. I once joked that it's got the methodological range of M to N. Not from A to Z but M to N.

So I had got more and more interested in encouraging the people at the margins, the Marxists and the Austrians, and I talked to them. You learn more through your ears than through your mouth.

So I learned from Jack Amaraglio and Don Lavoie and Arjo Klamer and I'm a heterodox economist by now. (That means I'm right and they're wrong!). Actually, that's what that means. I'd gone my own way. I still want to talk to the Orthodox people. But they get quite angry when you try to talk to them about philosophy or literature. In economics, this surprises outsiders, the word philosophy is a swear word. People say, 'That's rather philosophical' as though that was an exceptionally stupid thing to say.

*Arjun Jayadev:* So coming from the reaction from the orthodox, you've written recent to George DeMartino about professional ethics. Could you tell us a little bit about that work?

*Deirdre McCloskey:* George DeMartino and I last year in 2016 published an Oxford handbook on the professional ethics of economists. George did most of the work, I must say. I did very little. But we included a lot of non-orthodox economists in this which is completely

unsurprising. If you're going to do a book on the ethics of economists, if you get a bunch of orthodox economists, all they're going to say in their little essays they produce for this book is everything is fine. So surprise, surprise, there were a lot of criticisms of orthodox economics and Anne Kruger wrote a vicious, thankfully long review of the book in the *Journal of Economic Literature*.

She was outraged that you would complain about orthodoxy. Well, I'm a Protestant. I'm an Anglican. We try to take the middle way. but I'm a Protestant; I don't believe in orthodoxy. I believe that you shouldn't burn heretics; you should listen to them and see if you can learn anything. As Harry Truman said, an expert orthodox economist is someone who doesn't want to learn anything new because then he wouldn't be an expert.

*Arjun Jayadev:* That's a great line I want to go back maybe to the pre-economics, your earlier life. I understand you grew up in a very New England way. In one of your notes you call it Yankeedom. Can you tell us a little bit about your early life and how it may be shaped all the later tendencies, if you could?

*Deirdre McCloskey:* As I think back on my life, I'm very old now, I had two parents who were ideal for what my life has been. It's kind of an over determined situation, but still. My father was a distinguished professor at Harvard. He was in the government department as they call it at Harvard. My mother was an opera singer and actress, but she was born in 1922. Her career was stymied by my father when he got tenure at Harvard. It was a very unpleasant – this was 1952 we're talking about and this was really a crisis in my mother's life. She's always resented my father for it.

But in any case, I was a boy for one thing so I didn't have those antennae that people with XX genes have for noticing the tensions of love. And so I didn't notice much. But my father was scholarly and read poetry to me all the time, from his head. He memorized all of Keats' odes. He knew Shlock poetry, too, *like The Cremation of Sam McGee* and he was an eminent scholar. So in our household, scholarship was the best thing you could do. Because my mom, although she resented my father had stopped her very promising career as a singer and actress, nonetheless admired him for his scholarship.

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And then my mom was where I got my creativity. She was this very unusual escapee from St. Joseph, Michigan, southwestern Michigan, a very conventional town. You know, she had black and gay friends in the 40s and 50s when that was not usual. So it was a good situation. I went to a private school in Cambridge called, at the time, Browne & Nichols, a boy's school, and then to Harvard and so on. So I had all the advantages.

I had one big disadvantage, and it was very important for me. I stuttered. I still do, although every year it gets less. I stuttered rather badly. And I've thought about this a good deal, as you can understand. I've come to understand that it was a good thing that I stuttered because if I hadn't I would have been perfect. Sort of. Golden boy. And that's a terrible background because it makes you arrogant. I'm arrogant enough, come on! But it makes you think that you know everything. (We have a president now who believes that). And it's very dangerous to your mental health. I'm sympathetic to people with not perfect equipment for the struggle of life.

*Arjun Jayadev:*

Just to move ahead chronologically a little, you were coming of age right at the central pivot of the 1960s, not just generationally. I think you mentioned being a Joan Baez socialist at some point. How did that period affect your work either positively or negatively?

*Deirdre McCloskey:*

After having this excellent household that had some tensions in it but was a good background for someone who is probably doomed from the time she was six years old to be a professor, the 1960s happened. I was born in 1942 so I was 18 in 1960. I led riots at Harvard against the Vietnam War.

I don't want to give the impression that I was a big force in the antiwar movement at Harvard; I wasn't but in an odd way, I had the right opinions. I hated the war and I was in favor of civil rights to mention the kind of engine in the United States of all this.

And I was in favor of women's rights, gay rights at each time, and then in 1995, God tapped me on the shoulder and said, 'Dear, you had the right opinions but you didn't really do very much about any of it. Now you've got trans rights to consider.' So I became a sort of public figure in the gender change. I wouldn't call it a

movement, that would be a silly way of talking. But in that further development of freedom I had a part.

I think you can tell the difference between a real conservative and a real liberal or free-thinking person by their attitudes towards the 1960s. The conservatives view the 1960s – I heard this on the radio just the other day, some conservative saying things have gone downhill since the 1960s. Conservatives view that decade of liberation, of colonial people, of people of color, women and eventually of gays a little bit afterwards, as a terrible thing. Get back in the closet. Shut up. Go back to the kitchen. Go be imperialized. Shut up. Etc. Whereas a liberal person views the 1960s as the great era of liberation. And I certainly do. I wholly approve of the freedoms that people developed in the 60s.

By the way, I was in Paris in May of 1968, just as one example of how exciting that era was. In fact, I was away for a year in England doing my dissertation in 67/68 and came back to a United States that I didn't recognize, it had changed so fast.

*Arjun Jayadev:*

That's amazing. Just coming back to the 60s and going through the scholarship question, many people have come into academic life with strong political commitments as obviously in the 60s and even today. Do you think on balance, these commitments contribute to scholarship or detract from it?

*Deirdre McCloskey:*

One can ask the question how early acquired political ideologies contribute to economic science. In one way, they contribute positively however you come out. You can be an Ayn Rand reader at 18 and get to be a free market person that way and then you have a fixed view. Or you can read, as I did, I was a Joan Baez Marxist. I had read half of the Communist Manifesto and reckoned I had it. That took care of it because all you need to know is the history of all hitherto existing societies is the history of class struggle, which is a lot simpler than having to read a lot of books. So I was a very unscholarly Marxiod, of a sort. I think a lot of people are socialists because they come from families and a family is a socialist community. Mother is the central planner. Income from the daddy in the traditional family falls down like manna from heaven. When a sensitive teenager, 15 or 16, discovers there are poor people in the world coming from a comfortable, middle class situation, she's very likely to say let's solve it by redistributing Daddy's money.

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So I was that kind of socialist. And only after I started to study economics did I start to drift away from a kind of folk singing type of socialism. I still know more left-wing songs than any of my left-wing friends. I know all the verses to *The People's Flag*. They don't.

Arjun Jayadev:

There's this sort of parallel between the 60s and I would say now in terms of young people really getting into things. I want to ask two separate questions about that. The first one, how do you feel about the state of economics teaching at the undergraduate and the graduate level? There's a lot of ferment about that.

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I'm very disturbed by the way economics is taught. My ideal graduate program would go back to what Schumpeter said. That is theory, which is to say economic ideas, not proofs with real analysis of existence but economic ideas. The idea of compensating differentials which is Adam Smith's main analytic contribution to economics. The idea of aggregates which is Ricardo and Marx and the idea of classes in that. The idea of what happens with massive unemployment, Keynes' contribution. Applying economic ideas to things like crime and religion (that's Gary Becker). These are theoretical contributions. They're economic ideas. And I'm all in favor of them. In fact, one of the big problems is we gave up the history of economic thought in most graduate programs. I've heard Chicago PhDs who had study macro economics speaking of a man called John Maynard Keenz. They don't even know how to pronounce his last name.

So I would have in a graduate program, I'd have history of thought, economic history that is history of past economies with papers in all of these so people learn to do research that way. I would have one course in econometrics and then two other courses in other quantitative methods like archival research, national income accounting we spoke of, experimental economics, drawing diagrams, graphs. Well. There's a wonderful book called *The Visual Display of Quantitative Information*, one of the great books of the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Everyone should read that. so there would be three courses – not just three because so would the history course be. but there would be three courses of official method on how to do quantitative stuff. And then you'd have substantive fields like labor economics and trade theory and so forth. Then you'd have a really rich economics where people of a free market sort knew their Marx. Where people of a Marxian sort understood supply and demand curves.

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I was very shocked at Thomas Piketty's book *Capital in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* by the way. It made a stir. The bottom of page six of the English translation has a grotesque exposition that he doesn't understand supply and demand curves. He doesn't really understand this system he's criticizing. He doesn't get that there is a supply response to scarcity. It doesn't occur to him that there is.

It would be an education in which people listen to each other instead of just becoming little, narrow specialists on Max u, or in German Max U, and statistical significance.

*Arjun Jayadev:*

Great. To round it off, I enjoy very much your Aunt Deirdre persona you have in your writing. For a young person who wants to follow a more, if you want, iconoclastic path like you have, is there any useful advice? What would you say to graduate students who want to have a vision outside the current bounds?

*Deirdre McCloskey:*

So to a graduate student who wants to be original and wants to therefore make the scientific contribution not in normal science in Tom Kuhn's phrase, but in revolutionary science so to speak or any way new ideas, there's a problem. I agreed with the orthodoxy for a long time. For I don't know, 25 years I may have agreed with the orthodoxy. So I had a smooth ascent, a smooth career. Whereas I've had students, I had one that went to sociology at the University of Chicago from UIC. And he had a terrible time because he didn't agree with the left wing slant of the Department of Sociology at the University of Chicago. So he was being tortured in his account, maybe it's not entirely true, but in his account he was constantly being tortured for not agreeing with standard issue, moderate, left wing academic ways of approaching sociology.

So I don't know. Here's one way which URPE, the Union of Radical Political Economists did and as the Austrians do. Get friends who are sympathetic with your way of looking at it. and it doesn't take very many. You can start an intellectual movement with three pals and that will insulate you from loneliness.

I think that was the problem with my student in sociology in graduate school at Chicago. He didn't have friends to talk to about this. He had his mentor, mentress, me. But that wasn't good enough.

So yeah, make friends. Have a loving group of people who agree with you that the history of all hitherto existing societies is the history of class struggle, or that all human behavior is maximize you subject to constraints. In the modern mode, get a support group.

*Arjun Jayadev:* So in other words, find people to love.

*Deirdre McCloskey:* So to put it another way, and I've been saying this for 30 or 40 years to academic administrators without much success, love is crucial for scientific advance. If you're to take a chance, you've got to have the support of a loving group. It's not enough that your husband loves you. It has to be people that are in your field. Not everyone. Not everyone is going to love Deirdre. I wish they would. But that's not so. But enough. And as I said, it doesn't take very many.

*Arjun Jayadev:* Thank you very much, Deirdre. That was so much fun.

*Deirdre McCloskey:* Thank you. I've enjoyed it. It's been good. Thank you.