

CILIPS COVID-19 Book Reviews – Prosperity without Growth

Reviewer name: Scott Main

Book title: Prosperity without Growth

Author name: Tim Jackson

Genre: Economics

Overall Rating: Excellent

Brief summary: Perhaps at this very moment you are lusting after an iPhone 11? How about a new BMW Series 7 in Ruby Black Metallic finish? A new luxury fitted kitchen? Expensive holidays in exotic locations that take a huge amount of jet fuel to get to? The very latest designer label clothes, handbags, shoes? The 1001 gadgets that seem to have become an indispensable accompaniment to modern life? Is the lust and desire which drives you forward making you work harder over longer hours? Are you nailed to the deck with debt? Are you anxious that without all these trappings your friends and neighbours will think less of you? Worse still, are you anxious that you're children at school must have the latest, 'coolest' kit just to keep up? Console yourself. You're one of millions of victims caught in a web of turbo-capitalist consumerism. Those others, too, are worried what you think of them.

Sadly, all this consumerism comes at a very heavy price. Tim Jackson (<http://www.timjackson.org.uk/>, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tim_Jackson_\(economist\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tim_Jackson_(economist))), a top sustainability adviser to the UK government, here makes a compelling case against continued economic growth in developed nations. No one denies that development is essential for poorer nations. But Jackson argues that in advanced economies there is mounting evidence that ever-increasing consumption adds little to human happiness and may even impede it. More urgently, he says it is now clear that the ecosystems that sustain our economies are collapsing under the impacts of rising consumption. Unless we can radically lower the environmental impact of economic activity we will have to devise a path to prosperity that does not rely on continued growth.

Take time out from what Wordsworth called 'getting and spending' in an extraordinarily prescient sonnet of 1802. Don't lay waste your powers. Read Tim Jackson's book instead. Enquire at your local library.

What you liked: An insightful, challenging economic analysis for the general reader

Any additional comments?: 288 pages in Routledge

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