

# AROUND THE TANKS

## **THE MOST IMPORTANT WORKS OF ART OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY**

**David W. Galenson**

<http://papers.nber.org/papers/w12058>

Bypassing the usual debate of art historians and philosophers, this study rigorously determines the eight most important works of the twentieth century using a statistical methodology. The most important painting of the century was *Les Femmes d'Alger*, executed by Picasso at the age of 26, which began the development of Cubism. Among the other seven works, a collage, an earthwork, and a ready-made all represent new genres that had not existed at the start of the century. All eight works were made by conceptual artists, at a median age of just 32.

## **THE WORLD DISTRIBUTION OF INCOME: FALLING POVERTY AND ... CONVERGENCE, PERIOD**

**Xavier Sala-I-Martin**

<http://www.mitpressjournals.org>

This paper estimates the World Distribution of Income by integrating individual income distributions for 138 countries between 1970 and 2000. There were between 250 and 500 million fewer poor in 2000 than in 1970. The authors estimate eight indexes of income inequality implied by our world distribution of income. All of them show reductions in global inequality during the 1980s and 1990s.

## **EVEN FOR TEENAGERS, MONEY DOES NOT GROW ON TREES: TEENAGE SUBSTANCE USE AND BUDGET CONSTRAINTS**

**Sara Markowitz and John Tauras**

<http://papers.nber.org/papers/w12300>

This working paper is about the spending choices of youth, with a particular focus on how the demand for cigarettes, alcohol and marijuana are influenced by changes in the prices of other products. Young people tend to have small incomes and limited wants, with the result that many students spend the bulk

of their income on only a few items. Fast food, clothing and entertainment make up the majority of products purchased by teenagers. The authors estimate own- and cross-price effects using the prices of cigarettes, alcohol, marijuana and other consumer products including gasoline, clothing, entertainment and fast food. The paper concludes, unsurprisingly, that teens with higher incomes and allowances are more likely to use substances, and draws some policy implications from this.

## **WHO CONTROLS THE INTERNET?: ILLUSIONS OF A BORDERLESS WORLD**

**Jack Landman Goldsmith and Tim Wu**

<http://www.aei.org/>

Is the Internet erasing national borders? Will the future of the Internet be set by Internet engineers, rogue programmers, the United Nations, or powerful countries? Who's really in control of what's happening on the Internet? In this provocative new book, Jack Goldsmith and Tim Wu tell the fascinating story of the Internet's challenge to governmental rule in the 1990s, and the ensuing battles with governments around the world. It's a book about the fate of one idea—that the Internet might liberate us forever from government, borders, and even our physical selves. The destiny of the Internet over the next decades, argue Goldsmith and Wu, will reflect the interests of powerful nations and the conflicts within and between them.

## **IN OUR HANDS: A PLAN TO REPLACE THE WELFARE STATE**

**Charles Murray**

<http://www.aei.org/>

America's population is wealthier than any in history. Every year, the American government redistributes more than a trillion dollars of wealth to provide for retirement, health care, and the alleviation of poverty. The US still has millions of people without comfortable

retirements, without adequate health care, and living in poverty. Only a government can spend so much money so ineffectually. The solution is to give the money to the people.

This is the Plan, a radical new approach to social policy that defies any partisan label. Murray suggests eliminating all welfare transfer programmes at the federal, state, and local levels and substituting an annual \$10,000 cash grant to everyone aged twenty-one or older.

## **IDENTITY CRISIS: HOW IDENTIFICATION IS OVERUSED AND MISUNDERSTOOD**

**Jim Harper**

<http://www.catostore.org>

The advance of identification technology—biometrics, identity cards, surveillance, databases, dossiers—threatens privacy, civil liberties and related human interests. Since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, demands for identification in the name of security have increased. In this insightful book, Jim Harper takes readers inside identification—a process everyone uses every day but few people have ever thought about. Using stories and examples from movies, television and classic literature, Harper dissects identification processes and technologies, showing how identification works, when it works, and how it fails when it fails. Harper explodes the myth that identification can protect against future terrorist attacks.

Instead of a uniform, government-controlled identification system, Harper calls for a competitive, responsive identification and credentialing industry that meets the mix of consumer demands for privacy, security, anonymity and accountability. Identification should be a risk-reducing strategy in a social system, Harper concludes, not a rivet to pin humans to governmental or economic machinery.