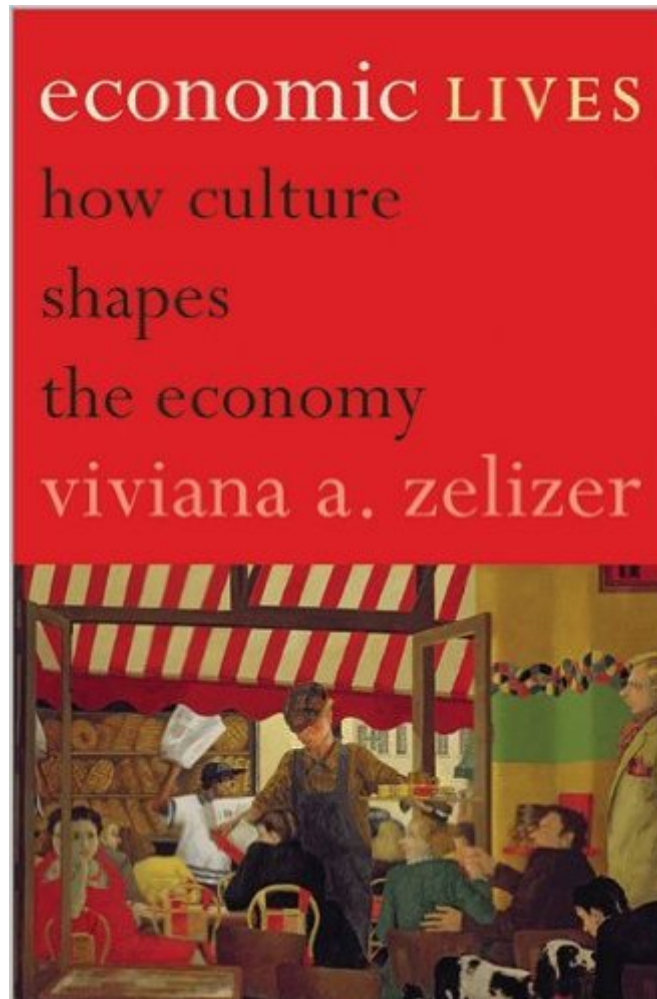


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# Economic Lives: How Culture Shapes The Economy



## Synopsis

Over the past three decades, economic sociology has been revealing how culture shapes economic life even while economic facts affect social relationships. This work has transformed the field into a flourishing and increasingly influential discipline. No one has played a greater role in this development than Viviana Zelizer, one of the world's leading sociologists. *Economic Lives* synthesizes and extends her most important work to date, demonstrating the full breadth and range of her field-defining contributions in a single volume for the first time. *Economic Lives* shows how shared cultural understandings and interpersonal relations shape everyday economic activities. Far from being simple responses to narrow individual incentives and preferences, economic actions emerge, persist, and are transformed by our relations to others. Distilling three decades of research, the book offers a distinctive vision of economic activity that brings out the hidden meanings and social actions behind the supposedly impersonal worlds of production, consumption, and asset transfer. *Economic Lives* ranges broadly from life insurance marketing, corporate ethics, household budgets, and migrant remittances to caring labor, workplace romance, baby markets, and payments for sex. These examples demonstrate an alternative approach to explaining how we manage economic activity--as well as a different way of understanding why conventional economic theory has proved incapable of predicting or responding to recent economic crises. Providing an important perspective on the recent past and possible futures of a growing field, *Economic Lives* promises to be widely read and discussed.

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 3.7 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (3 customer reviews)

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## Customer Reviews

This is an academic book, so at times, it's a little weighty. Also, some of the articles are old, so data about such things as family income are sometimes dated. But overall, this is fascinating! I was hooked on the discussion of the economic value of children and how children create their own economies (trading items in the lunch room, for example). I learned a lot and found a lot to think about and discuss with other people.

This is a great collection of Zelizer's important contributions to the sociological study of the relationship between culture and the economy. It is comprised mostly of her previous work, including the central arguments from *Pricing a Priceless Child* and *The Purchase of Intimacy*. A very handy reference indeed. But I do wish there were more in terms of tying things together into a larger vision or agenda though, or even some account of things she has changed her mind about etc.

I know the author is very smart and capable but at times it gets very boring. I would rate it as a roller coaster, parts of it are very good and some others it's very boring.

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