

How to answer the questions?

1) 1 Paragraph not more, rather than start with X thinks a,b,c or X says a,b,c. Start with I think a,b,c and why.

2) If you have a better question, problem, comment; go for it! (you might even want to email it to me so that I can put it on the schedule, but that is not critical)

Questions for Fogel and Summerhill (09-01-13)

1) General question

What are social savings, is the concept useful relative to private profits. Why? When?

2) Fogel

He argues that social savings from railroads were small, so why did the U.S. have more railroads than any other country?

Are the elements of what makes railroads valuable that Fogel has overlooked? Would these be economically large?

3) Summerhill

He argues that social savings were large from adopting railroads, yet in 1914 Brazil was still quite poor. Does that matter?

In Brazil railroads are largely used to link the agricultural sector with the world economy. Does that have consequences for the growth process that are different from a country where they link agriculture to a region with a lot of manufacturing?

Questions for Olmstead-Rhode and Fogel-Engerman (09-01-15).

1) General question

Is agriculture different from manufacturing? Why? Note this is a question that has many correct answers so some specificity is important

2) Olmstead-Rhode (2-4-5 required, 3, 6,7, 8 optional)

What is induced innovation? Is the evidence in O-R sufficient to say that Induced innovation is wrong? Or is it saying that its not the only channel of change? why

Why did us farmers move the center of wheat manufacturing in ever more hostile climates (west and north)? Should you not be moving into ever more favorable climates?

Is the U.S. experience of the 19th century unique or the same kind of biological evolution takes places everywhere? Why?

3) Fogel and Engerman

Olmstead and Rhode argue that agriculture is different from manufacturing, Fogel and Engerman argue that slave plantation were more productive than free farms. Why? Is there an input whose costs has not been properly counted?

Do slave plantations derive their productivity advantages from organizational innovations that lead to changes in the division of labor, from the way labor is managed, or from something else?

How different is the contrast between a slave plantation and a set of farms from that between a factory and the same workers organized as artisans.

Questions for Olmstead-Rhode and Libcap (09-01-20).

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1) General Question

Should there be a role for government in the management of biological technologies or can the market handle it?

2) Olmstead-Rhode (ch 9-10 req, 11-12 optional)

What makes animals different from plants as a technology?

As markets get specialized, farmers tend to specialize their stock, what are the implications for the genetic stock and possibilities for further biological change.

Is genetic diversity something we value, is it a public good?

3) Libecap

Is the rise of the market independent from the rise of market regulation?

Is there anything different between meat packing and the financial market?

Questions for Landes and Harley (09-01-22)

1) General Question

Is the process of technical progress (Landes), or adoption (Harley) different from what we saw with Olmstead-Rhode?

2) Landes

What are the direct consequences of innovation in watchmaking, what are the indirect consequences?

Hint, would the decline in the cost of a watch be a good measure of social savings from innovation in watchmaking?

3) Harley

North has put a lot of emphasis on organizational change in explaining productivity growth, Harley argues that those were not so important. Might it be that the adoption of the mechanical devices Harley emphasizes required organizational changes, why

Questions for Sandberg, Clark, Saxonhouse-Wright (09-01-27)

1) General Question

How does the reading help you think through issues of induced innovation, factor biased technical change, and the role of labor in technology?

2) Sandberg

Mules and rings were two different technologies, was the US choice different because of institutional obstacles or factor prices. Or is there an additional element to be considered.

Are the arguments Sandberg deploys specific to textile or are the same factors likely to recur across a wide variety of industries

3) Clark

To what extent is the issue Clark investigates related to the success or failure of outsourcing?

Could it be that UK factories were more successful at training their workers?

If Clark is correct, then why did England's cotton textile industry disappear after 1930

4) Saxonhouse-Wright

Was the diffusion of machines using the Casablanca system good for England and the US. Should British policy have intervened? If so how? What about the U.S.? (though it was not using the Casablanca system, its workers also felt the impact of the 'globalization of the textile industry'.

Questions for Thomson and Sokoloff (09-01-09)

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1) General question

Both Thomson and Sokoloff argue for the importance of markets, and downplay the role of large scale mechanized firms in moving the economy forward before the 1870s. Why?

2) Thomson

a. Is the skilled worker's and in particular the machinist something that has faded, or are such workers still very important to technical change or innovation. If not then who has replaced them.

b. Are the problems that Thomson emphasizes consistent with the location of productivity growth as discussed by Harley or Landes? Why?

3) Sokoloff

a. How are factories making gains before the 1840s according to Sokoloff? Are there still processes of growth that look like this today, or have we become a machine based economy. (does growth always require capital deepening?)

b. How might economies be arranged to take advantage of markets. Is agriculture a problem in this respect.

Questions for Goldin and Whatley

1) General questions

In thinking of productivity how important is it to take into account general versus specific skills? How might employers acquire information about the best mix of workers? Does that matter?

2) Goldin

a. Why did the US take the lead in providing high school education. Is it because of early advances in economic output, because of demand for manufacturing, or some other factor. Be sure to detail Goldin's answer as well as yours.

3) Whatley

a. Is the experience of black workers in manufacturing evidence that markets correct inefficient practices or is it evidence that government intervention is either required or important in remedying discrimination. Why?

Questions for patenting 1 (Sokoloff and Khan, Lamoreaux et al)

1) General Question

Why should we restrict the diffusion of knowledge. Is knowledge something for which a market can be sustained?

2) Sokoloff and Khan

Why should we care about great inventors? Is this consistent with a democratic approach to invention? Why

How important is the market for patents in explaining the rise and fall of great inventors?

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3) Lamoreaux et al

Is the kind of change from individual inventors to firms as sources of technical change inevitable? Is this path of change a sign of economic complexity or of some other process?

Questions for Patenting 2 (Lo et al, Khan)

1) Lo et al

Are general purpose inventions more likely to diffuse in a world where firms are large or where firms are small? If there is no difference make sure to explain why?

2) Khan

Do you believe the differences between England and the US are important? Why? Why not?

How would you measure that importance?

Questions for International capital markets

Rajan and Zingales

The question you should ponder: How important is institutional change in explaining the growth of capital markets. (be clear on the institutions that you discuss)

Why do great reversals happen? Are changes in international trade the only source of major change?

Questions for Banks

General questions What are the benefits of competitive capital markets?

Lamoreaux: why does insider lending work in New England to promote growth. Are there other economic processes that rely heavily on closed groups?

Haber: what are the consequences for the textile industry, is it likely that the problems Haber documents are worse in other parts of the economy? Or less severe?

Questions for Mortgages

General questions What causes crises in Mortgages?

Snowden: Why were these crises more severe on the frontier and with inter-regional lenders; have we learned something since the 1880s

Kimbrough Snowden: is the spatial character of the housing depression different from what it is today?

Check at <http://www.newyorkfed.org/regional/subprime.html>

Questions for Watching over the capitalists

General Question: what are managers not likely to maximize shareholder value if left to their own devices?

De Long: Does J-P Morgan add value? Or is it just that he picks the right firms (like Warren Buffet); or is it that he cartelizes industries? What do you think?

Lamoreaux Rosenthal: is minority oppression a bad thing? If so why did neither the judicial nor legislative system try to solve this problem.

Questions for The political Economy of Financial market Regulation--Banks

Sylla, Richard, 1969. [Federal Policy, Banking Market Structure, and Capital Mobilization in the United States, 1863-1913.](#) *The Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 29, No. 4 (Dec., 1969), pp. 657-686.

Rajan, Raghuram G., and Rodney Ramcharan 2008, Landed Interests And Financial Underdevelopment In The United States. NBER working paper.

General questions: what limits entry in banking? Can government policy provide some help when economic conditions are not favorable

Question for Sylla: are there information reasons that might explain why national banks chose not to compete to intensely with state chartered banks?

Question for Rajan and Ramcharan: if areas with more concentrated wealth ownership have fewer banks, does that have long term consequences, or does it simply reflect differences in which markets allocate resources?

Questions for the political Economy of Financial market Regulation—Firms

Hilt, Eric, 2007, [When did Ownership Separate from Control? Corporate Governance in the Early Nineteenth Century:](#). *Journal of Economic History* 68, no. 3 (September 2008): 645-685. (GOT TO JOURNAL THROUGH LIBRARY)

Becht, Marco and J. Bradford DeLong ♦ Why Has There Been So Little Blockholding in America? [Text: Figures,](#)

General question: why is dispersed ownership a good thing? Why does it arise?

Question for Hilt: do market forces or changes in regulation explain the pattern of change in how firms get finance from outsiders?

Question for Bech and DeLong: How important have widely held corporations been in the US economy? Why?

Questions for the political Economy of Financial market Regulation--The capital market

Mary O'Sullivan, [Living With the US Financial System: The Experiences Of General Electric And Westinghouse Electric In The Last Century](#). Business history review 2006.

Musacchio, Aldo, 2008. Can Civil Law Countries Get Good Institutions? Lessons from the History of Credit and Bond Markets in Brazil *The Journal of Economic History* , Volume 68, Issue 01, March 2008, pp 80-108. (GOT TO JOURNAL THROUGH LIBRARY)

General question: do market forces or changes in regulation explain how firms deal with their financial structure and outside investors?

Question for O'Sullivan: how does her evidence change the way you think about why firm managers might want to limit minority oppression. Is access to capital markets important to them?

Question for Musacchio: How does Brazil help you evaluate the argument that good property rights are caused by growth more than cause growth?

The American Economy at 400:

Pope, Clayne, "Measuring the Distribution of Well-Being" 2003

Piketty, Thomas and Saez Emmanuel, "[Income Inequality in the United States, 1913-1998](#)" *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 118(1), 2003, 1-39

Frydman, Carola and Raven Saks, 2008. [Executive Compensation: A New View from a Long-Run Perspective, 1936-2005](#). mimeo

General question: Should economists worry about efficiency (how the economy works), Distribution (who gets the economic output) or both? Why?