

2005

Frederic Bastiat: What is Seen, What is Not Seen Study Guide

Steven Alan Samson

Liberty University, ssamson@liberty.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/gov_fac_pubs



Part of the [Other Social and Behavioral Sciences Commons](#), [Political Science Commons](#), and the [Public Affairs, Public Policy and Public Administration Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Samson, Steven Alan, "Frederic Bastiat: What is Seen, What is Not Seen Study Guide" (2005). *Faculty Publications and Presentations*. 358.

https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/gov_fac_pubs/358

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Helms School of Government at Scholars Crossing. It has been accepted for inclusion in Faculty Publications and Presentations by an authorized administrator of Scholars Crossing. For more information, please contact scholarlycommunications@liberty.edu.

FREDERIC BASTIAT: WHAT IS SEEN, WHAT IS NOT SEEN STUDY GUIDE, 2005 Steven Alan Samson

<http://www.thefreemanonline.org/featured/what-is-seen-and-what-is-not-seen-2/>

Study Questions

1. Bastiat introduces a methodological individualism from the very first sentence. How many effects of a human action should be considered? How does he distinguish a bad economist from a good one? How does this lesson apply to other areas of life? [Walter Williams's "The Misspent Lunch Money" below illustrates how]. What explains the fatally grievance condition of mankind? Who are our two chief schoolmasters in life?
2. "The Broken Window" (later popularized in Henry Hazlitt's Economics in One Lesson) anticipates another classic of methodological individualism: William Graham Sumner's "The Forgotten Man." Bastiat, who campaigned against "legal plunder," also anticipates game theory in his discussion of a "negative fact" and a "positive fact," which add up to zero. What is Bastiat's maxim and why would it "make the hair of protectionists stand on end?" A recent illustration of the broken window fallacy is the continued plight of New Orleans in the wake of Katrina. Bastiat concludes by noting that the broken window is not just the concern of the shopkeeper and the glazier. Who is the "forgotten man" in this instance?

Review

true economist

experience and foresight

destruction is not profit