



**[Ferraris For All](#) by [Daniel Ben-Ami](#)  
Reviewed by [Mark Iddon](#) November 2010**

'Ferraris For All', is a book of bold ambition setting out to defend the idea of economic progress, from those with the presently dominant view who the author refers to as growth sceptics. It is also published at a time when we appear to have been at low point of the worst recession since the 1930's, following the near collapse of the banking industry. The Labour Party has been recently voted out of office and the ConDem coalition attempts to reduce the national deficit with savage cuts to public spending and the Bank of England expresses deep uncertainty about the future.

Now, in complete contrast, Daniel Ben-Ami, a well established journalist specialising in writing on economics and finance for over 20 years, makes a very novel statement suggesting that everyone in the world should own a Ferrari. The title of the book is attributed to WORLDwrite, an education charity committed to global equality, whose slogan is 'Ferraris For All'. Ben-Ami

notes, however, that actually the Ferrari is symbolic, and it is not essential to be restricted to that particular brand, but it is about the aspiration and ambition for everyone to have much more than they actually need.

Daniel Ben-Ami, starts the book by asking the question of whether the present global downturn was caused by over consumption by greedy consumers and greedy bankers lending recklessly, as has been suggested by many commentators. He suggests that many economists have become sceptical of growth over recent years and 'Ferraris For All' is an investigation as to how that shift in thinking has come about? The first half of the book identifies the shifts in thinking from a time when growth was considered an unquestionable good, prior to the 1960's, to the present when the term economic growth is preceded by terms like sustainable, that is, cautious and restrained. The second part of the book is setting down his arguments of why we should be concerned about trends which, he deems to be 'Malthusian and misanthropic'. The trends identified by Ben-Ami are those associated with sustainability and climate change, the happiness movement, along with some initiatives on equality and poverty in developing countries.

On the face of it the above ideas seem self evidently progressive and, as Daniel Ben-Ami notes, they are often presented in humanistic terminology. After all the earth is finite, the population is growing and increasing carbon emissions do appear to effect global temperatures. People in Western countries are generally living longer, healthier lives, enjoying travel, good food and extravagant past times, but do not seem to be happier, less anxious and are often recommended counselling on encountering an alarming experience. Greater disparities in wealth do seem to increase with economic growth and with that the tensions which may be exhibited in power relations both within and between countries. Daniel suggests also that the trends of his concern are concepts which have been introduced by those of traditional left of the post war political spectrum or the radicals who have always campaigned for equality of opportunity and against the recklessness of capitalism.



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' at the International Anthony Burgess Foundation in Manchester on the 26th February 2013.