

# Review of: "[Commentary] The Paradox of Wealth: A Satirical Exploration of Intelligence and Financial Success"

Alessandro Fedele<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Free University of Bozen

**Potential competing interests:** No potential competing interests to declare.

This satirical commentary provides a provoking explanation of the determinants of ultra wealth. I enjoyed reading it, and I strongly agree that measuring personal qualities by wealth is inappropriate. I have a few comments that the author might consider to potentially improve the commentary.

- At the very beginning, the author writes: *"It is hard today, with all the information floating freely around the internet, not to observe the extent of stupidity said or written by rich people."* I am not a great internet reader; accordingly, I would urge the author to insert a couple of anecdotes supporting his claim.
- In Section 2, the author provides the following definition of getting rich: either applying financial and/or human resources to invest and ending up with much larger wealth. In my opinion, the two paths, (financial) investor or entrepreneur, should be considered separately. While I totally buy the silliness argument when it comes to investors, I believe that the same argument does not fully extend to entrepreneurs. This is for two intertwined reasons.

(i) A good chunk of startupper rely on family-friends-fools' capital; doing so, they do not incur any direct risk, though they are highly likely to fail.

(ii) Most current ultra-rich individuals are from the digital economy: their fortune originated with ideas rather than money, sometimes even "simple" ideas (think of Vinted, a Lithuanian tech unicorn). Rational, savvy individuals might consider the success probability of initiatives such as Vinted very unlikely, say 1/million using your example. Instead, other individuals might envision a much higher probability: this is not necessarily because they are silly; quite the contrary, it is because they can better see the future.