Gillian Tett

Award-winning Journalist
Provost, King’s College Cambridge
Columnist, Financial Times

Must-read financial journalist who combines her knowledge of markets with original insight on the behaviors that drive them.

Biography

Gillian Tett is an award-winning financial journalist and anthropologist with an unparalleled track record at predicting important trends that impact the world. She called the credit crunch crisis three years ahead of anyone else and is one of the first to recognize and chronicle the developing importance of ESG in business. In both her talks and her columns at the Financial Times, she covers a wide range of subjects, speaking frequently on the intersection of politics, populism, and financial marke.

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Thouth the majority of business leaders look to economic models and algorithmic data for solutions to the ills that plague their industry, Gillian offers uniquely astute insights through an anthropological lens. By understanding the cultures of a business and an industry, analyzing the human biases of consumers at large, and applying it all to financial markets and the economy, she presents a holistic and multidimensional view of what’s really going on to those unknowingly enfeebled by tunnel vision. She also highlights the golden data found in a culture or organization’s “social silences,” also known as the issues that aren’t being given much thought or attention. She explores these concepts in depth in her bestselling book, Anthro-Vision: A New Way to See in Business and Life. Tett’s background as an anthropologist also opens the door to unique perspectives on artificial intelligence and tech at large, born from her passion for blending social and computer sciences.

Gillian Tett is a pioneer in the coverage of the continued expansion of sustainable and ethically responsible business practices. In 2019, she founded Moral Money, a journalism vertical at the Financial Times documenting and analyzing the new world of socially responsible business, sustainable finance, impact investing, environmental, social and governance (ESG) trends, and the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals. Rich in varied and valuable content, Moral Money is a trusted destination for comprehensive assessments of developments in ESG and holds the distinction of winning a SABEW Best in Business award twice in a row.

Tett has held many positions throughout her tenure at the Financial Times, including Chairman of the US Editorial Board and America Editor-at-Large. Her twice-weekly column earned her recognition as Columnist of the Year, Journalist of the Year, and Business Journalist of the Year by the British Press Awards. In 2004, Gillian began building a team at the Financial Times to cover capital markets, correctly anticipating the need to watch an industry growing uncommonly fast. By 2007, a year ahead of the curve, she began issuing her news breaking warnings of a looming financial crisis. For this prescient work, she received the President’s Medal from The British Academy.

Tett is the author of The Silo Effect: The Peril of Expertise and the Promise of Breaking Down Barriers and the New York Times bestseller Fool’s Gold, the gripping tale of how a team of Wall Street bankers led by J.P. Morgan’s CEO Jamie Dimon created the world of ‘shadow banking,’ and then lost control of their creation. Fool’s Gold is a vital contribution to our understanding of the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. She also wrote Saving the Sun, about Japan’s financial collapse in the 1990s, following her stint as the FT’s Japan bureau chief during the country’s “lost decade.” Gillian’s next book will be about why every CEO (and investor) needs their “inner anthropologist” to make informed decisions.

In October 2023, Gillian assumed the role of Provost at King’s College Cambridge with a mission to promote an interdisciplinary view of life while championing British intellectual capital.

In recognition of her work, Gillian has won several awards, including the 2021 Presidents’ Award from the American Anthropological Association, the 2014 Royal Anthropological Institute Marsh Award, the UK Speechwriters’ Guild Business Communicator of the Year in 2012, and the Wincott Prize in 2007. Gillian has a PhD in Social Anthropology from Cambridge University, based on research conducted in the former Soviet Union in the early 1990s. She speaks French and Russian and has studied Japanese and Tajik.