

Leading Issues in Economic Development

SEVENTH EDITION

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PREFACE

The economics of development is one of the most exciting subjects in social science. Why, two centuries after the Industrial Revolution, are poverty and its attendant ills so prevalent in most of the world? And what can be done about it? Nobel Prize–winning economist Robert Lucas wrote of the questions addressed by development economics, “Once one starts to think about them, it is hard to think about anything else” [“On the Mechanics of Economic Development,” *Journal of Monetary Economics* 22 (July 1988), p. 5].

Development economics is also a very frustrating subject. Unlike most areas within economics, there exists no consensus on what the student should know. Two scholars can with equal justification write two completely different textbooks.

The aim of this book is to convey as much of the excitement of development economics and as little of the frustration as possible. To this end we have avoided writing the ordinary type of textbook, instead culling the most insightful readings from the diffuse field of development and bringing them into conceptual order. By using this distinctive approach we allow for a variety of perspectives while keeping in sight the most important overarching themes. The section “Using This Book” (p. xix) describes our strategy of combining excerpted readings (“Selections”) with our own “Overviews,” “Notes,” “Comments,” and “Exhibits.”

After being responsible for the previous six editions of *Leading Issues in Economic Development* over the past 35 years, Professor Meier has now selected Professor Rauch to upgrade and modernize this seventh edition and to perpetuate subsequent editions. This edition is mainly Professor Rauch’s effort. It reflects his desire to strengthen the analytical and quantitative dimensions of development economics and to illuminate contemporary—and future—problems of development policymaking. In all, it provides fresh and serious attention to the interplay between development experience, changing views of economists, and policy.

While this seventh edition maintains the format of previous editions, the inclusion of a new author has brought many changes relative to the sixth edition:

- New chapters on income distribution and on development and the environment have been added while other chapters have been consolidated.
- Most of the Selections and Notes are new.
- The representation in the Selections of articles from leading professional journals has increased.
- The Selections make greater use of statistical analysis, and an Appendix, “How to Read a Regression Table,” has been added to ensure that these Selections are easily accessible to all readers.

We wish to express our appreciation to the authors and publishers who have granted permission to use excerpts from publications for which copyrights exist. Specific acknowledgment is given with each Selection. Some parts of the original versions of the excerpted materials have been omitted out of consideration for relevance and to avoid repetition. In some instances, tables and diagrams have been renumbered and the footnotes have been deleted or renumbered.

We would like to thank a number of extremely busy people who generously took time out to provide advice or to comment on portions of the manuscript: Richard Carson, Graham Elliott, Peter Evans, and Dani Rodrik. We would also like to acknowledge the valuable research assistance of Neville Francis, Timothy Kane, Paula Lindsay, and Donald McCubbin. James Rauch wishes to thank his wife, Doris

Bittar, for making room in her life for this book during its final months of preparation. Kenneth MacLeod has been a very helpful and patient editor. Finally, we are grateful to the entire profession of social scientists whose writings on development provide the foundation for this volume.

USING THIS BOOK

Instructors and students can use this book more like a main text or more like a supplementary reader. To facilitate the latter approach the contents have been designed to allow individual freedom of choice in deciding what chapters and Selections to read and in what sequence. If the former approach is taken, the organizational and thematic guidance of the chapter Overviews can be followed and the chapters can be read in numerical order.

The chapters include the following materials:

Overviews: These are introductory essays that show how the subsequent chapter materials fit together and elucidate one or more overarching themes. They sometimes contain ideas that are not explicitly presented by the other chapter materials.

Selections: These are the core of the book. They present a broad sample of the major contributions by scholars and practitioners on the central issues in economic development. Each Selection has been edited for the sake of brevity and to highlight the points of greatest relevance for the chapter in which it appears.

Notes: These serve two purposes. One is to expound important ideas that are extant in the literature but are not presented as clearly or simply as we would like. The other is to present more original material that complements the Selections.

Comments: Like the Notes, these serve two purposes. One is to clarify or expand upon the immediately preceding Selection. The other is to suggest additional readings on the subject of the immediately preceding Selection.

Exhibits: These are tables and charts that provide empirical illustrations and data on topics under discussion.

Starting with Selection III.1, some Selections include regression tables. Readers without econometric training are urged to refer to the Appendix to get the most insight from these Selections.

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