



Economic Policy and Human Rights

Holding Governments to Account

Radhika Balakrishnan and Diane Elson

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Economic Policy and Human Rights presents a powerful critique of three decades of neoliberal economic policies, assessed from the perspective of human rights norms. In doing so, it brings together two areas of thought and action that have hitherto been separate: progressive economics concerned with promoting economic justice and human development; and human rights analysis and advocacy.

Focussing on in-depth comparative case studies of the USA and Mexico and looking at issues such as public expenditure, taxation and international trade, the book shows that heterodox economic analysis benefits greatly from a deeper understanding of a human rights framework. This is something progressive economists have often been skeptical of, regarding it as too deeply entrenched in 'Western' norms, discourses and agendas. Such a categorical rejection is unwarranted. Instead, human rights norms can provide an invaluable ethical and accountability framework, challenging a narrow focus on efficiency and growth.

A vital book for anyone interested in human rights and harnessing economics to create a better world.

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Diane Elson holds a Chair in Sociology at the University of Essex, UK and is a member of the Essex Human Rights Centre. She has acted as advisor to UNIFEM, UNDP, Oxfam, and other development agencies and is a past vice president of the International Association for Feminist Economics. She has published widely on gender and development. Her academic degrees include a B.A. in philosophy, politics, and economics from the University of Oxford; and a Ph.D. in economics from the University of Manchester.



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