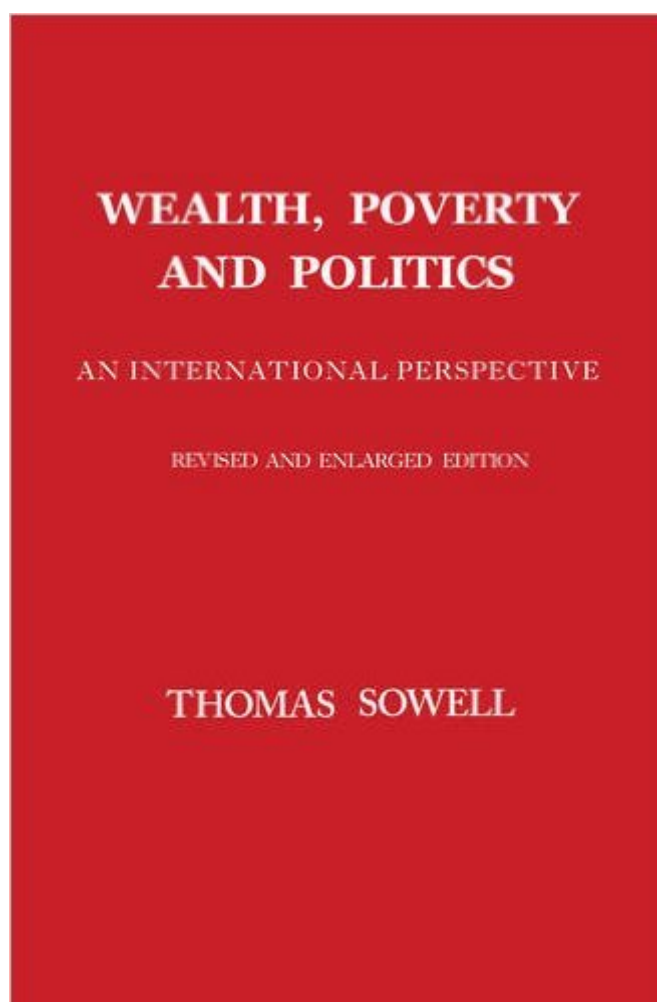


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Wealth, Poverty And Politics



Synopsis

In *Wealth, Poverty, and Politics*, Dr. Thomas Sowell of the Hoover Institution, Stanford University, examines the reasons for large differences in income and wealth between nations and among groups within nations. A wide range of geographic, demographic, cultural, and political factors are examined, not to find a single factor or a single combination of factors that will explain all economic differences, but to show how particular combinations of factors limit or expand the possibilities for specific nations and peoples at specific times and places. Dr. Sowell also examines some popular explanations of these differences and shows why they will not stand up under scrutiny. In doing so, he takes on some of the reigning titans of the redistributionist movement—including John Rawls, Thomas Piketty, Paul Krugman, and Joseph Stiglitz—and shows how a remarkable number of their claims cannot withstand plain common sense, expressed in plain English.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Thomas Sowell's latest book, published in 2015 and now revised a year later, is the usual tour-de-force. It's not so much that there's anything startlingly new (although there are some interesting new statistics and several new lines of thought), but that Sowell has a unique ability to clearly and concisely bring together an analysis. In this case, that analysis is of why are outcomes different for different people? Sowell writes in opposition to the current vogue for equating differential outcomes with differential justice resulting from malign actions by others, with negative nods to Thomas Piketty, John Rawls and a wide range of similar social justice

warriors. This is the second edition of this book, with the original subtitle "An International Perspective" replaced by "Revised And Enlarged Edition." I do not think the expansion is an improvement. Certainly the book is still excellent, but longer is not always better. The original was pithy; this edition is too often wordy without added benefit. I have read both editions and compared them; while I have not done a line-by-line comparison, it appears the additions come in two areas. First, a substantial addition of statistics and data points in every area, in particular related to the United States (whence, presumably, comes the dropping of the "International Perspective," although there is still plenty of that). Probably he does this because one of his re-emphasized points in this edition is the frequent failure of his opponents to address the empirical data (and, as he complains, frequently hide from view the raw data they claim support them). Second, he puts additional emphasis and discussion on the failures of genetic determinism.

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