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editors brought academics and employers together to debate these issues. As the editors point out, academic research into this topic has not been widely disseminated or discussed.

There is much in this book that will be of interest to social policy scholars. If health care investments contribute to the productivity of commercial firms and to the nation’s economic development efforts, a strong case for wider public investments in health and social programs can be made. However there is little in the book that addresses these wider issues directly and most of the chapters are focused on the needs of commercial firms and on measurement issues. Nevertheless, social policy scholars interested in measurement issues will find these chapters to be particularly useful. One interesting chapter examines the link between health investments and human capital development in the Global South. Hopefully, future research will focus attention on the benefits that will accrue to the wider society from decisive health and social investments.


Although historians have extensively documented the way European imperialists and colonialists invaded and subjugated people in many lands in Africa, Asia and Central and South America, stories of the oppression and resistance struggles of Indigenous people over the centuries are not given much prominence in the official histories. It is often assumed that most Indigenous people have been assimilated into the new nations that emerged from the nationalist independent struggles of the 19th and 20th centuries and that the interests of those who retain a distinctive identity are, in any case, best represented by their national governments.

These assumptions are vigorously challenged in this important book which shows that despite the oppression they have experienced, Indigenous people in many parts of the world not only retain their identity but are organizing and
resisting continued exploitation by local commercial interests, multinational firms and the efforts of international organizations such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the World Trade Organization to spread global capitalism. In many cases, national governments have signed international agreements that ignore the rights of Indigenous peoples, exploit their resources, and undermine their identity, cultural heritage and human rights. Although Indigenous people face enormous challenges, the book shows how they are organizing to challenge global capitalism.

The book consists of 27 chapters organized into five parts. These chapters deal with many different aspects of the effects of global capitalism on Indigenous peoples around the world. Others report on their efforts to assert their human, economic and cultural rights. Although many are brief, these chapters show how the cultures, economies and livelihoods of Indigenous people around the world have been undermined. While they make for depressing reading, it is important that these realities be more widely reported and that the public around the world be educated. On a more optimistic note, the book contains important information about the achievements of Indigenous people in their struggles against exploitation and oppression. Their successes in establishing international organizations, securing recognition from international organizations such as the United Nations and participating effectively in demonstrations against the activities of the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and World Trade Organization deserve to be more widely recognized. The election of sympathetic governments in Latin America with strong support from Indigenous communities is another positive sign of the growing effectiveness of their struggles.

This book should be read by anyone involved in social development today. Unfortunately, the social development literature has not paid adequate attention to the challenges facing Indigenous peoples or to their efforts to assert their identity and human rights. The book provides a wealth of information that will not only inform social development scholars and practitioners but will inspire them to join with Indigenous peoples and support their struggles for human rights and social justice.