

Development, Poverty of Culture, and Social Policy

Brij Mohan

Foreword by David G. Gil

The "cycle of poverty," a myth manufactured and sustained by the Parsonian pundits of social theory and welfare, has blamed the victims of oppression with impunity. Brij Mohan deconstructs Oscar Lewis' Culture of Poverty theory and its applications in the fields of social welfare, policy, and development. Poverty, a global scourge, is defined as a political rather than an economic issue. The implications of this formulation paradigmatically shift the focus of discourse in the social sciences. *Development, Poverty of Culture, and Social Policy* offers an interdisciplinary analysis of complex issues, constructs, and interventions that deal with human-social problems with global implications. "Poverty of Culture" posits social development theory and practice in a critically important context challenging the scientific orthodoxy of our times.

"The practice of international development has long been waiting for a clear-eyed critique of its missteps and failures. Wait no more. Brij Mohan has provided an antidote to the embedded romanticism of patronizing efforts to save the poor from themselves. Remarkably, the *Development, Poverty of Culture, and Social Policy* is argued with a credible, erudite humanism and a pervasive decency."--William M. Epstein, Professor, University of Nevada-Las Vegas

"Long overdue is a book that squarely skewers the international development paradigm that has dominated the last three decades of development practice. Mohan provides a powerful critique of the status quo and a cautious proposal for a more humane alternative."--Mark Lusk, Professor and Chair, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, College of Health Sciences, The University of Texas at El Paso

"At last! A detailed and informed critique of Oscar Lewis' concept of the Culture of Poverty. From Schools of Social Work and Public Administration to the highest levels of policy-making, Lewis' work has guided our thinking about the notion of poverty. By reframing this concept as a political issue not an economic one, Mohan challenges us to re-think our guiding principles on this fundamental problem."--Kenneth I. Millar, Dean, College of Health and Human Services, California State University, Long Beach

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