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Incentivized Development in China

China's economy, as a whole, has developed rapidly over the past 35 years, and yet its richest county is over 100 times richer in per capita terms than its poorest county. To explain this vast variation in development, David J. Bulman investigates the political foundations of local economic growth in China, focusing on the institutional and economic roles of county-level leaders and the career incentives that shape their behavior. Through a close examination of six counties complemented by unique nationwide data, he presents and explores two related questions: *What is the role of county Party secretaries in determining local governance and growth outcomes?* and *Why do county Party secretaries emphasize particular developmental priorities?*

Suitable for scholars of political economy, development economics, and comparative politics, this original study analyzes the relationship between political institutions, local governance, and leadership roles within Chinese government to explain the growing divergence in economic development between counties.

David J. Bulman is an economist at the World Bank and an adjunct lecturer at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies. He is a core author of the *World Development Report 2017* and contributed to *China 2030* and *Urban China*. Bulman has been a visiting scholar at the Hopkins-Nanjing Center, a University of Chicago and Ford Foundation New Generation China Scholar, and an inaugural China Public Policy Postdoctoral Fellow at the Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation at Harvard Kennedy School.

Incentivized Development in China

*Leaders, Governance, and Growth in
China's Counties*

DAVID J. BULMAN



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