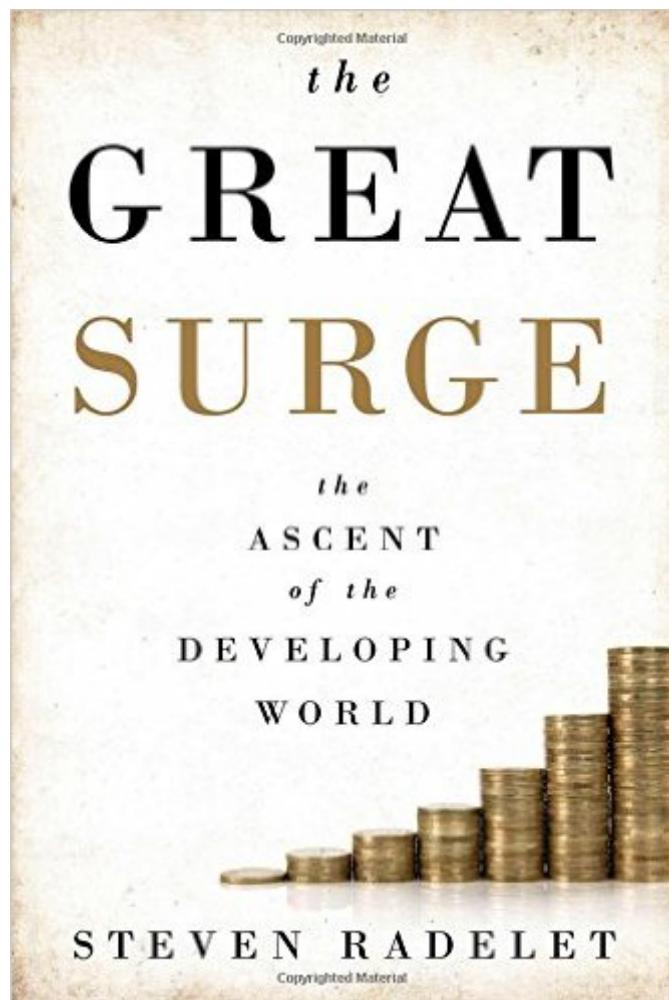


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The Great Surge: The Ascent Of The Developing World



Synopsis

The untold story of the global poor today: A distinguished expert and advisor to developing nations reveals how we've reduced poverty, increased incomes, improved health, curbed violence, and spread democracy and how to ensure the improvements continue. We live today at a time of great progress for the global poor. Never before have so many people, in so many developing countries, made so much progress. Most people believe the opposite: that with a few exceptions like China and India, the majority of developing countries are hopelessly mired in deep poverty, led by inept dictators, and living with pervasive famine, widespread disease, constant violence, and little hope for change. But a major transformation is underway and has been for two decades now. Since the early 1990s more than 700 million people have been lifted out of extreme poverty, six million fewer children die every year from disease, tens of millions more girls are in school, millions more people have access to clean water, and democracy often fragile and imperfect has become the norm in developing countries around the world. The Great Surge tells the remarkable story of this unprecedented economic, social, and political transformation. It shows how the end of the Cold War, the development of new technologies, globalization, courageous local leadership, and in some cases, good fortune, have combined to dramatically improve the fate of hundreds of millions of people in poor countries around the world. Most importantly, The Great Surge reveals how we can fight the changing tides of climate change, resource demand, economic and political mismanagement, and demographic pressures to accelerate the political, economic, and social development that has been helping the poorest of the poor around the world.

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Customer Reviews

Every once in a while a book comes along that can change how you see the world. This is one such book. If you pay attention to world news, and even more so if you don't, it is easy to get the impression that the world is going rapidly downhill, especially in the developing countries. The author of this book takes a step back and looks at the big picture of trends over the past several decades, and shows how much better it has gotten in terms of income, health care, education, and government. For a good review see Nicholas Kristof's article (Google "nicholas kristof the most important thing"). As he states, 95% of Americans believe the level of developing world poverty has remained the same or gotten worse over the last 20 years. That 95% are wrong. The book can be a bit dry, since he is showing lots of data, but it is well written and easy to get through. And you may come out of it seeing the world differently. Highly recommended.

Hugely important work. Needs to be read by policy makers and ALL economists. Has profound implications for historians and political scientist's view of the links of contemporary political systems to social and economic well being. David Shear

In a world full of cynics, it is great to read a knowledgeable, insightful and optimistic view of global development. It is convenient to lump developing countries into one group, and even more convenient to criticize efforts without providing clear alternatives to tackling the difficult challenges facing much of our world. Radelet succeeds in breaking the mold by providing a much needed evidence-based and optimistic view of the progress being achieved in the developing world.

Author Radelet's core argument is that the developing world is getting more prosperous than most people think, and that he hopes this trend continues. I'm reasonably convinced that he's right (and share his hope). The first caveat is that most of the improvement is in China. Which is great, and long-overdue, but once you get past China, you're citing countries like Botswana, Mali, Chad and Mozambique. Well, India too, and even Pakistan to some degree....OK, Indonesia & the Philippines are substantial countries making some (halting) progress... Hey, 3 bucks a day looks pretty good if you've been getting a buck-fifty. China, with its 1.4 billion people (almost 20% of the world), is a *special case*! And China's politics rather argues against his hopeful assertion that democracy is on the rise, as countries emerge from extreme poverty. Still, I'm hopeful too, and it's good to see the

positive stuff for a change. Doom & gloom gets old, especially D&G with an agenda....My real problem with the book is that he doesn't have enough material for a *book*. He could present the core of his arguments and data in a long magazine article, which would serve his purposes better, and be a lot easier on the poor reader. It's a sin to waste the reader's time!So: I recommend you check the book out from the library, and read part 1, "The Surge", about 130 pages. You will have noticed, even by then, the repetition and inflation of stuff that could be covered, better, in half the words. Then stop. I'd started skipping ahead by then, put it aside, then came back to read the conclusion. My recommendation: don't bother.Peter D. Tillman

A fantastic read about the oft-ignored positive trends of the past two decades. Definitely an important contribution to the world of international development literature.

Again, I haven't finished reading it entirely, so cannot comment on it as a whole. However, it has certainly given me a contrasting view to the usual media's take on the "third world."

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