



The Value of Nothing: How to Reshape Market Society and Redefine Democracy

Raj Patel

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"A deeply thought-provoking book about the dramatic changes we must make to save the planet from financial madness."--Naomi Klein, author of *The Shock Doctrine*

Opening with Oscar Wilde's observation that "nowadays people know the price of everything and the value of nothing," Patel shows how our faith in prices as a way of valuing the world is misplaced. He reveals the hidden ecological and social costs of a hamburger (as much as \$200), and asks how we came to have markets in the first place. Both the corporate capture of government and our current financial crisis, Patel argues, are a result of our democratically bankrupt political system.

If part one asks how we can rebalance society and limit markets, part two answers by showing how social organizations, in America and around the globe, are finding new ways to describe the world's worth. If we don't want the market to price every aspect of our lives, we need to learn how such organizations have discovered democratic ways in which people, and not simply governments, can play a crucial role in deciding how we might share our world and its resources in common.

This short, timely and inspiring book reveals that our current crisis is not simply the result of too much of the wrong kind of economics. While we need to rethink our economic model, Patel argues that the larger failure beneath the food, climate and economic crises is a political one. If economics is about choices, Patel writes, it isn't often said who gets to make them. *The Value of Nothing* offers a fresh and accessible way to think about economics and the choices we will all need to make in order to create a sustainable economy and society.

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