



Stephen D. Cohen

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# Multinational Corporations and Foreign Direct Investment

AVDIDING SIMPLICITY, EMBRACING COMPLEXITY



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#### Review

"Professor Cohen has written a masterly and exceptionally well balanced review of recent scholarly thinking on the role of multinational corporations in our contemporary global economy. I particularly liked his eschewing of any easy generalizations about their merits and demerits; and his recognition that these are likely to vary according to the motives for and types of MNC activity, and to the policies pursued by both national governments and supranational agencies. Altogether this is an eminently readable, yet intellectually satisfying volume. I warmly commend it both to students and teachers of international political economy and international business, and to all those interested in the economic and social challenges of globalization, and one of its chief architects viz. the MNC."--John H.Dunning, University of Reading (UK) and Rutgers University

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advanced practitioners through the spectrum of controversial issues about the most powerful international companies in the world."--Theodore H. Moran, Marcus Wallenberg Professor of International Business and Finance, Georgetown University

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Foreign direct investment (FDI) and multinational corporations (MNCs)--for better and worse--play a large and growing role in shaping our world. The integrating thesis of this book is the inevitability of heterogeneity in FDI and MNCs and, accordingly, the imperative of disaggregation. Large companies doing business on a global basis increasingly dominate the production and marketing of the world's goods and services. The importance of these companies continues to grow while the debate about their nature and effects remains mired in a long-standing stalemate couched in strong black and white terms. Stephen D. Cohen seeks to reconcile this impasse by analyzing multinational corporations and foreign direct investment in an eclectic, nuanced manner. The core thesis is that an accurate understanding of the nature and impact of these phenomena comes from acknowledging the dominance of heterogeneity, perceptions, and ambiguity and the paucity of universal truths. This approach should contribute significantly to both a better academic understanding and a more productive policy debate of an increasingly important element of the world economy.

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