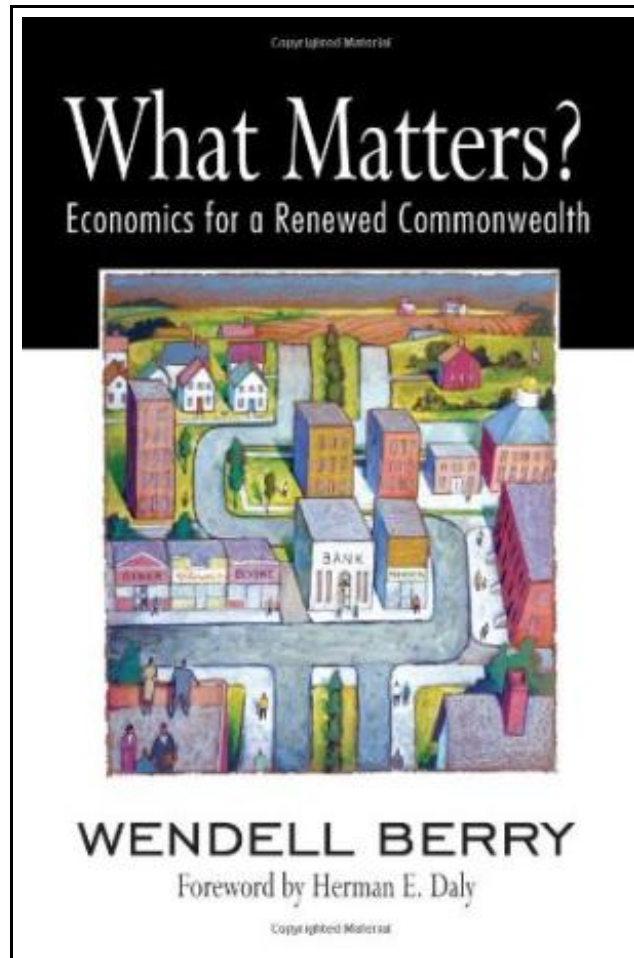


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WHAT MATTERS?: ECONOMICS FOR A RENEWED COMMONWEALTH



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Counterpoint May 2010, 2010. Paper Back. Book Condition: New. Wendell Berry is not a formally trained economist, though he is a great many other things: poet, essayist, social critic and novelist. In our estimation, Mr. Berry habitually 'sheds light on ultimate questions in an excellent way' (that's from the About Us page on our website) not only in his writing but through his way of living--as a farmer, philosopher, teacher, activist, devoted family man and steadfast community member. And lest you think this blurb is little more than a paean to a man seeking no such thing, we hold that what makes the man makes him particularly suited to propose a sensible, though not uncomplicated, solution. 'My economic point of view,' writes Berry in the first essay, 'Money Versus Goods,' 'is from ground-level. It is a point of view sometimes described as 'agrarian.' That means that in ordering the economy of a household or community or nation, I would put nature first, the economies of land use second, the manufacturing economy third, and the consumer economy fourth.' He goes on to say that America, on the whole, has replaced economy with finance to a catastrophic degree by confusing wants with needs. 'Spending is not an economic virtue. Saving is. Not-wasting is.' Berry decries usury and its destabilization of the relationship between money and goods. He goes on to criticize America's overemphasis on education (it's been 'oversold, overbuilt, over-electrified, and overpriced'), laying out a sixteen point agenda to promote a long-term, sustainable agricultural policy for both ecological health and true stimulation of our human economy, for 'there is no good reason to wish for the 'recovery' and continuation of the economy we have had.' And that's just the first essay. The remaining fourteen include 'Faustian Economics' (a recognition of limitation amidst the myth...



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