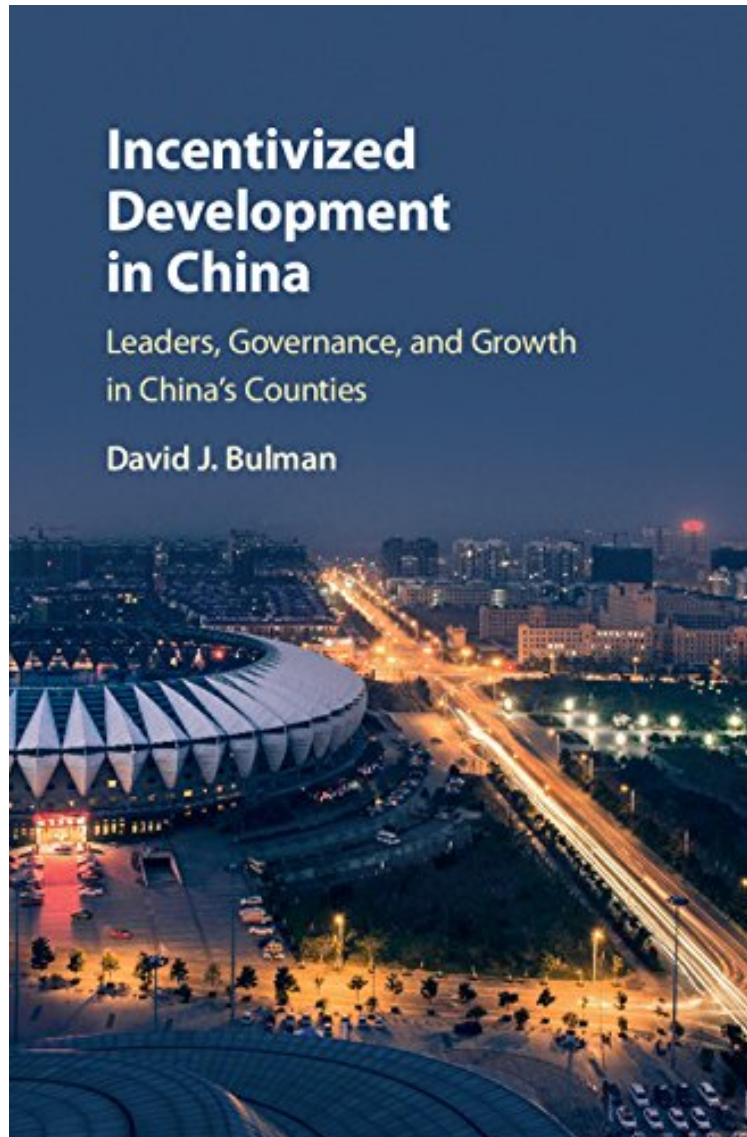


# Incentivized Development in China: Leaders, Governance, and Growth in China's Counties

David J. Bulman

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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 behaviour. Through a close examination of six counties complemented by unique nation-wide 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.

About the Author David J. Bulman is an economist at the World Bank and an adjunct lecturer at the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University. He is a core author of the World Development Report 2017 and contributed to China 2030 and Urban China. Professor 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 the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, Massachusetts.