

<<微观经济学原理>>

图书基本信息

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内容概要

由主流经济学家来撰写标准经济学教科书，并且试图影响经济学界内外乃至整个社会，是经济学界由来已久的传统。

由哈佛大学经济学教授N·

格里高利·

曼昆编写的经济学教科书系列是当今世界上最畅销的经济学基础教材，目前已经被翻译成多种语言文字，成为许多国家的大学经济学通用教材，并且被数以百万计的经济学教师、学生和其他读者所使用。

它简洁明快、有趣的文字和层水分明的内在逻辑吸引了成千上万对经济学尚无任何了解的读者，成为最便捷和最实用的经济学入门教材。

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作者简介

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曼昆教授是一位多产作者，经常参与学术性与政策性的争论。

他的作品不但发表在

书籍目录

PART 1 INTRODUCTION CHAPTER 1 TEN PRINCIPLES OF ECONOMICS CHAPTER 2 THINKING LIKE AN ECONOMIST CHAPTER 3 INTERDEPENDENCE AND THE GAINS FROM TRADEPART 2 SUPPLY AND DEMAND I: HOW MARKETS WORK CHAPTER 4 THE MARKET FORCES OF SUPPLY AND DEMAND CHAPTER 5 ELASTICITY AND ITS APPLICATION CHAPTER 6 SUPPLY, DEMAND, AND GOVERNMENT POLICIESPART 3 SUPPLY AND DEMAND II: MARKETS AND WELFARE CHAPTER 7 CONSUMERS, PRODUCERS, AND THE EFFICIENCY OF MARKETS CHAPTER 8 APPLICATION: THE COSTS OF TAXATION CHAPTER 9 APPLICATION: INTERNATIONAL TRADEPART 4 THE ECONOMICS OF THE PUBLIC SECTOR CHAPTER 10 EXTERNALITIES CHAPTER 11 PUBLIC GOODS AND COMMON RESOURCES CHAPTER 12 THE DESIGN OF THE TAX SYSTEMPART 5 FIRM BEHAVIOR AND THE ORGANIZATION OF INDUSTRY CHAPTER 13 THE COSTS OF PRODUCTION CHAPTER 14 FIRMS IN COMPETITIVE MARKETS CHAPTER 17 MONOPOLISTIC COMPETITIONPART 6 THE ECONOMICS OF LABOR MARKETS CHAPTER 18 THE MARKETS FOR THE FACTORS OF PRODUCTION CHAPTER 19 EARNINGS AND DISCRIMINATION CHAPTER 20 INCOME INEQUALITY AND POVERTY CHAPTER 21 THE THEORY OF CONSUMER CHOICE CHAPTER 22 FRONTIERS OF MICROECONOMICS People Are Inconsistent over Time Conclusion Summary Key Concepts Questions for Review Problems and ApplicationsGlossary

章节摘录

版权页：插图：That is, people respond to incentives. When the price of an apple rises, for instance, people decide to eat more pears and fewer apples because the cost of buying an apple is higher. At the same time, apple orchards decide to hire more workers and harvest more apples, because the benefit of selling an apple is also higher. As we will see, the effect of price on the behavior of buyers and sellers in a market—in this case, the market for apples—is crucial for understanding how the economy works. Public policymakers should never forget about incentives, for many policies change the costs or benefits that people face and, therefore, alter behavior. A tax on gasoline, for instance, encourages people to drive smaller, more fuel-efficient cars. It also encourages people to take public transportation rather than drive and to live closer to where they work. If the tax were large enough, people would start driving electric cars. When policymakers fail to consider how their policies affect incentives, they often end up with results they did not intend. For example, consider public policy regarding auto safety. Today all cars have seat belts, but that was not true 50 years ago. In the 1960s, Ralph Nader's book *Unsafe at Any Speed* generated much public concern over auto safety. Congress responded with laws requiring seat belts as standard equipment on new cars. How does a seat belt law affect auto safety?

The direct effect is obvious: When a person wears a seat belt, the probability of surviving a major auto accident rises. But that's not the end of the story, for the law also affects behavior by altering incentives. The relevant behavior here is the speed and care with which drivers operate their cars. Driving slowly and carefully is costly because it uses the driver's time and energy. When deciding how safely to drive, rational people compare the marginal benefit from safer driving to the marginal cost. They drive more slowly and carefully when the benefit of increased safety is high. It is no surprise, for instance, that people drive more slowly and carefully when roads are icy than when roads are clear. Consider how a seat belt law alters a driver's cost-benefit calculation. Seat belts make accidents less costly because they reduce the likelihood of injury or death. In other words, seat belts reduce the benefits to slow and careful driving. People respond to seat belts as they would to an improvement in road conditions—by faster and less careful driving. The end result of a seat belt law, therefore, is a larger number of accidents. The decline in safe driving has a clear, adverse impact on pedestrians, who are more likely to find themselves in an accident but (unlike the drivers) don't have the benefit of added protection.

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