

PREFACE

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I was a graduate student in Stanford's Operations Research Department in the late 1960s. I had lost interest in the primary subjects of that discipline and had become interested in doing my dissertation research in game theory, which was then a fringe area of OR. Resigned to working on my own, I was pleasantly surprised to learn that there was somebody at Stanford who actually knew something about the subject. This was Robert Wilson, and, to my delight, he not only knew quite a lot about the subject, but he agreed to take me on as a student.

Although Bob was then already beginning his path-breaking work applying noncooperative game methods to an array of problems in the social sciences, most of the rest of the (then very small) game theory world was still doing cooperative theory. But Bob was interested in that subject too then, and so he started (*i.e.*, carried) me down that path. Bob encouraged me to go beyond the confines of characteristic function theory in order to be able to deal with social possibilities that were not well captured by the rigid confines of the characteristic function form, such as beneficial externalities in economies. The paper reprinted in this volume was extracted from the resulting dissertation. It introduces the awkwardly named "effectiveness form," which is somewhat more flexible than the characteristic function form and which was subsequently studied in more depth by others with the adjective changed for some reason to the equally awkward "effectivity." (I should have known by then how important it is to invent the catchiest possible names for one's constructions. Probably Bob tried and failed to impress that lesson on me.)

While Bob and I have never collaborated in published work, we did (with Ken Boudwin, another student of that era) co-write a couple of working papers on algorithmic issues. The lessons learned from that and the dissertation production experience were instrumental in my development as a scholar and teacher. I have also sought Bob's advice from time to time in the intervening years on academic and nonacademic matters. He has never disappointed. Although our personal contacts are now infrequent, I know I can still rely on him for guidance, encouragement, and (best of all) friendship.

In my time at Stanford, as subsequently, Bob attracted a stimulating collection of students from a variety of Stanford departments. John Chamberlin, John Ferejon, and Stef Bloomfield are three who come to mind, but there were

probably others then as well, and the interactions among this group of students from diverse backgrounds led by Bob were a constant source of ideas for new applications of game theoretic ways of thinking about social problems.

Although game theory had had little influence on economics by the time I left Stanford in 1970, I had pretty much decided, no doubt influenced by Bob, that I wanted to work on economic applications of game theory. Of course, in the intervening years game theory has become not only important for economics but the very language within which much of economics is expressed. Bob has been responsible for a lot of this, as is widely acknowledged; and Bob got me in on the ground floor, for which I am forever grateful.