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Elinor Ostrom, Roy Gardner, and James Walker
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Elinor Ostrom, Roy Gardner,
and James Walker

with
Arun Agrawal,
William Blomquist,
Edella Schlager, and
Shui Yan Tang

Ann Arbor

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To our parents and families
for their love and inspiration

To our Workshop family
for their friendship and support

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Preface

In 1987, the three principal authors of this book received the first of two National Science Foundation grants to study an institutional theory of common-pool resource (CPR) dilemmas. This research is the foundation for this book. All of us involved in the writing of this volume are deeply appreciative of the continued support of the National Science Foundation (Grant Nos.: SES 8619498 and SES 8921884). Additional support from the Resources and Technology Division, Economic Research Service, United States Department of Agriculture (Cooperative Agreement No. 43-3AEM-1-80078), is also appreciated.

Many of the chapters in this volume draw on papers that have been previously published. Early in the process of writing, we decided against doing the book as an edited series of papers. We wanted to ensure that the book had an internal coherence that is not possible when one simply brings together previously published papers. Thus, the resemblance between the prior publications and chapters in the book has become rather faint in some instances.

Any research team that has written many previous papers accrues an enormous indebtedness to many colleagues at their home institution as well as at other universities. In Bloomington, we are particularly appreciative of the extraordinary talents of Patty Dalecki, who has somehow kept track of a very complex and evolving manuscript under the condition that changes may come from any and all directions. Her skill as a production manager, editor, and layout artist will be apparent to all who read this book. Her cheerfulness and willingness to go through revision after revision after revision is something only those of us who have worked with her can recognize. In addition, Stanra King provided many hours of very helpful editing on the penultimate version of this book.

Dean Dudley has also been a helpful partner in the experimental aspects of this project. Dean has read and commented on many of the chapters in this book, recruited subjects, run experiment "trainers," helped Walker and Ostrom cope with the complexities of recording communication, handed out fee and fine slips, and done anything and everything needed to keep an experimental research program on track. We appreciate his help very much.

We have also been blessed with colleagues at the Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis who have been willing to listen to our many colloquium presentations, work over conference papers, journal articles, and various drafts of this book. Arun Agrawal, Bill Blomquist, Edella Schlager, and Yan Tang all played a special role in the development of this research that goes beyond the chapters they have written for this book. All were willing to challenge us in many long discussions and to help us create some order out of the highly complex field materials we were studying. In addition, we have received very useful comments from other workshopers, including Elizabeth Anderson, Sue Crawford, Gina Davis, Steve Hackett, Bobbi Herzberg, Claudia Keser, Mike McGinnis, Shmuel Nitzan, Vincent Ostrom, Roger Parks, and George Varughese. We have also benefited from the comments given us by Peter Aranson, Rudolf Avenhaus, Peter Bernholz, Werner Güth, Jack Knight, Michael Maschler, Akim Okada, Charles Plott, Todd Sandler, Urs Schweitzer, Reinhard Selten, Kenneth Shepsle, and an anonymous reviewer. The opportunity to present our ideas at BoWo 1991 at Bonn University came at a particularly useful time for all three of us. Randy Calvert assigned the last draft to a seminar at the University of Rochester and gave us a very useful critique for which we are appreciative. Finally, we would like to express a special thanks to Rick Wilson and David Feeny, who spent a great deal of time pouring over the first "complete" version of this manuscript. Their thorough review and discussion were instrumental in helping us rethink the organization and synthesis of materials in the book.

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