

GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

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Abstracts

The World's Bank and the Bank's World



Catherine Weaver

Who or what shapes and drives the policy and operational behavior of the World Bank? The objective of this essay is to lay the conceptual and empirical framework for this special issue. I begin by constructing a synthetic theoretical model—drawing from principal-agent models and sociological institutionalism—to delineate the set of external and internal factors shaping Bank behavior. I then lay the empirical groundwork by exploring the most salient characteristics of the “world’s Bank,” taking special note of the Bank’s relationship with the United States, borrowing states, and nongovernmental organizations. In the second half, I focus on the “Bank’s world,” investigating the internal bureaucratic politics and culture of the Bank. Specifically, I examine the sources and nature of the Bank’s “intellectual culture” (characterized by its economic, apolitical, and technical rationality), its “operational culture” (portrayed as driven by approval and disbursement imperatives), and the dynamics of bureaucratic politics that pervade the hierarchy of the Bank. **KEYWORDS:** World Bank, organizational culture, organizational theory, principal-agent, nongovernmental organizations.

Economic Growth, Poverty Reduction, and the Role of Social Policies: The Evolution of the World Bank's Social Development Approach



Antje Vetterlein

The World Bank has undergone tremendous change recently. One crucial innovation is its initiative to raise social development to the level of core issue within its development strategy. While the Bank has always been concerned with social issues, the meaning and operational significance of *social* has changed over time. Using a content analysis of relevant World Bank documents, I distinguish three periods where the meaning of social has changed. The article's main objective is to explain this change in the Bank, allowing us to answer questions about the conditions for policy change in international organizations. Is the World Bank merely adapting to the outside world, or is it engaging in innovative behavior? The case study reveals an alternative explanation for policy change in IOs other than either external pressure or internal advocacy. It shows that external and internal triggers are related and reinforce each other. **KEYWORDS:** World Bank, development strategy, internal advocates, international organizations, discursive change.

The World Bank Group: Championing Sustainable Development Norms?



Susan Park

It is well documented that international organizations diffuse norms, but how and why do they do so? I compare how the World Bank and the International Finance Corporation attempt to spread sustainable development norms through their compliance, mainstreaming, and diffusion efforts. I propose that international organizations spread norms in different ways as a result of their roles within their respective social environments. The International Finance Corporation champions sustainable development by spreading core practices throughout the project finance industry, while the Bank attempts to do so through core and noncore activities. The different approaches raise questions about the capacity of each organization to champion environmental norms: the Bank's multiple activities mixes its environmental message as opposed to the International Finance Corporation's single (recently lessened) environmental voice. **KEYWORDS:** World Bank, environment, norms, international organizations, International Finance Corporation.

Multilateral Lending Institutions and Transnational Policy Networks in Mexico and Chile



Judith Teichman

The impact of economic globalization for the countries of Latin America was profoundly shaped by the impact of the debt crisis of the early 1980s. For these countries, the emergence of transnational policy networks involving multilateral and domestic technocrats was instrumental in ushering in market reforms. By 2007, a variety of factors would seem to place middle-income countries such as Mexico and Chile beyond the policy reach of multilateral lending institutions. I argue, however, that the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank have, in fact, become closely entangled in the development of conditional cash transfer programs through closed transnational policy networks. The nature and extent of that involvement has been shaped by the different institutional legacies and cultures of the two institutions. While both multilaterals tended to bolster the objectives of domestic policymakers and the exclusion of civil society organizations from the policy process, the greater rhetorical commitment of the World Bank to civil society participation did allow civil society organizations to pry open a small space for policy inclusion in the Chilean case. **KEYWORDS:** Mexico, Chile, World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, poverty.