

Who Governs The Globe?

Workshop Chair: Susan Sell, George Washington University

Location: San Francisco Hilton, Continental 9

Time: Tuesday, March 25, 2008; 10:00 am – 4:00 pm

Academics and policy makers speak frequently about global governance but do so in the passive voice. Global governance is something that happens; no one, apparently, actually does it. The literature generally treats governance as structure or process. In this project, we focus on agents. We identify them, explain what they do, and introduce a framework for theorizing about them. Our goal is to animate a new research trajectory focusing on global governors.

For purposes of this inquiry, we define global governors as actors who exercise power across borders with some degree of legitimacy and continuity, for purposes of affecting policy in an issue area. Governors thus: create issues, set agendas, establish and implement rules or programs, and evaluate and/or adjudicate outcomes. Focusing on the agents that govern global issues requires rethinking common assumptions in international relations theorizing – including statism, instrumentalism and functionalism.

To the extent that international relations (IR) scholars speak of “governors” they mean states and thus IR theory is designed to understand states. Little theoretical guidance exists about the powers, interests, and behavioral proclivities of the variety of other actors governing on the global stage: multinational corporations harmonizing markets, activist networks changing rules to promote their causes, professional associations codifying international standards, or international organizations implementing new programs to alleviate poverty. Without conceptual equipment, it is hard to anticipate the effects these various actors might create in the world and why.

Workshop Participants:

- Deborah Avant, UC Irvine
- Clifford Bob, Duquesne University
- Tim Buthe, Duke University
- R. Charli Carpenter, University Pittsburgh
- Alex Cooley, Barnard College/Columbia University
- Dan Drezner, Tufts University
- Henry Farrell, George Washington University
- Martha Finnemore, George Washington University
- Tamar Gutner, American University
- Virginia Haufler, University of Maryland
- Matt Hoffman, University of Toronto, Canada
- Margaret Keck, Johns Hopkins University
- Loren Landau, University of Witwatersrand, South Africa
- Duncan Matthews, University of London, UK
- Kathleen McNamara, Georgetown University
- Abraham Newman, Georgetown University
- Louis Pauly, University Toronto, Canada
- Aseem Prakash, University of Washington
- Anitha Ramanna, University of Pune, India
- Susan Sell, George Washington University
- J.P. Singh, Georgetown University
- Erik Voeten, Georgetown University USA
- Geoffrey Underhill, University of Amsterdam, Netherlands
- Paul Wapner, American University

This workshop is sold out. Thank you for your interest.