

[David Fogelson](#)

March 1 Readings

Posted: Feb 27, 2005 9:34 PM

Wapner, "Politics Beyond the State"

Typically, scholars have only considered transnational NGOs are effectual insofar as they are able to exert influence on the state. Wapner's theory is that there is more to the organizations. He states this in his first section through the "unit of analysis" method of discerning influence of actors on a given issue. Scholars typically use an either/or method thinking. For example, the state or the NGOs affect global issues and since the state has more of an influence, it is chosen. Second, he rejects that hypothesis by demonstrating how TEAGs practice world civic politics: through direct action they convince state, corporations, private organizations, and ordinary citizens. He outlines a fluid approach in that they change societal behaviors, attitudes, and the outlook on a certain issue (i.e. recycling, conscious consumerism, etc.). Third, describes how TEAGs have pressured corporations most notably through CERES. Fourth, he illustrates how TEAGs have worked to empower local communities through sustainable development in order to address the overlapping environmental and human needs. This has resulted in first world state donors turning more often to NGOs than the state to fund. Fifth, he evaluates TEAGs as transnational interest groups whose power rests on persuasion, unlike the state, and concedes that the state is still much more powerful in the realm of global affairs.

Tamiotti and Finger, "Environmental Organizations"

This article works to break down the evolution of environmental organizations and assess their role in global governance with respect to their interaction with state and institutional organizations. They first look at environmental organizations from a historical perspective, describing how the first conservationist / nature protectionist group functioned from the late 19th century, giving away their central role to political ecology activist groups in 1968. These groups worked at a national level to combat society's attitudes towards science and technology over nature, oppression of "the system," and was characterized by using small scale and local solutions. In the early 1980s the global ecology 'conference jockeys' are more "concerned with planetary and long-term trends and phenomena, such as ozone depletion, deforestation, and climate change" (59). This trend has brought about global environmental governance which has a new set of stakeholders including businesses and lobbyists. There are three main roles of an environmental group: pressuring groups and decision making, implementation, and monitoring compliance. The article asserts that environmental organizations have the most potential of affecting the monitoring compliance role. To become effective in global governance, the groups strategize to gain international visibility, gain significant networks, demonstrate their capability, manage the expensive nature of global governance while maintaining their independence from TNCs or governments that may be the source of those funds. Governments use "corridor diplomacy" and allow NGO participation, working with environmental groups because have expertise, legitimacy on global issues, and global networks. In conclusion, global governance works because political actors work with a diffusion of power and responsibility, environmental groups actually get to participate in the power (as opposed to working through local political groups), and there is a mutual dependency. However, it is a "strategic relationship of interested actors, rather than as a harmonious governance mechanism" (73).

Wapner, "Horizontal Politics"

Wapner works to describe how NGOs are the "new thing" in I.R. He takes a look at the cultural aspect of how NGOs work stating that scholars tend to ignore this movement because it lacks political significance and is difficult to gauge an impact. He works to show that specifically environmental NGOs are politically significant in demonstrating how they work to protect the nonhuman world, using

among a few examples, whale conservation and Shell oil. He outlines the “cash register” traditional approach that the state typically uses to assess importance, but they ignore the social mores making social change in the long run. In assessing NGO performance one must use a fluid method of measurement. One can look at incorporation of environmental movements as a “benchmark” (i.e. sustainable development’s incorporation into our lexicon) and seeing environmental NGOs as interest mediators. He ends with the hope that scholars will give this field the study it deserves.