



# Behind the Development Banks: Washington Politics, World Poverty, and the Wealth of Nations

*Sarah Babb*

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The World Bank and other multilateral development banks (MDBs) carry out their mission to alleviate poverty and promote economic growth based on the advice of professional economists. But as Sarah Babb argues in *Behind the Development Banks*, these organizations have also been indelibly shaped by Washington politics—particularly by the legislative branch and its power of the purse.

Tracing American influence on MDBs over three decades, this volume assesses increased congressional activism and the perpetual “selling” of banks to Congress by the executive branch. Babb contends that congressional reluctance to fund the MDBs has enhanced the influence of the United States on them by making credible America’s threat to abandon the banks if its policy preferences are not followed. At a time when the United States’ role in world affairs is being closely scrutinized, *Behind the Development Banks* will be necessary reading for anyone interested in how American politics helps determine the fate of developing countries.



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