

Crossborder Governance on the U.S.-Mexico Border

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The study of cross-border governance often focuses on national or binational institutions created by the nation-state to formalize and manage border activity. But crossborder governance is a much larger concept; one that pivots on the daily routines of multiple actors operating in formal and informal networks and alliances and negotiating spaces and resources among themselves and the quotidian interactions among formal state actors and citizens crossing the borderline. Using Fligstein and McAdam's theory of strategic action fields, this paper examines the state of crossborder governance on the U.S.-Mexico border. The theoretical framework guides the interpretation of over 70 semi-structured interviews with key actors on both sides of the border of the Paso del Norte region, all of whom spoke to how they, individually and collectively, contest and negotiate the borderline with state actors who insist in absolute control of the border while the region's interests would be better served by a more open and well managed border.