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## Readings

Sunday, April 16, 2006; F03

World Bank staffers, whose ranks once included William Easterly, have long winced at the derision he heaps on their efforts to help poor countries. They come in for their worst drubbing yet in Easterly's newest book, *The White Man's Burden* (Penguin Press). They may legitimately complain that Easterly's clever phrases sometimes go over the top. But this book offers any number of brilliantly reasoned insights into why traditional aid initiatives often go awry, and it is just as scathing in its treatment of right-wing approaches to aid that are aimed at inducing poor countries to embrace free markets, democracy and clean government. As beneficial as markets and democracy may be, Easterly writes, "the official aid agencies simply don't know how to change bad governments into good governments. "

--Paul Blustein

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