

Organizational Change in the FBI after 9/11: An Institutional Theoretical Analysis

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Abstract : This study will examine the impact of September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the organizational development of American federal law enforcement through focusing on the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Content analysis of discourse in a federal law enforcement practitioner publication along with official FBI statements will be used to gain a better understanding of FBI organizational changes that have taken place since the events of September 11, 2001. Analysis of content trends in the FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin and public discourse of FBI officials from 1999 to 2005 indicate that, in addition to structural changes, the bureau has also undergone a variety of cultural changes. The results offer some support for the institutional theoretical perspective, suggesting that post-9/11 organizational changes such as new mission priorities and the establishment of new branches were partially initiated due to a variety external pressures, which lends support for coercive isomorphism. Furthermore, structural changes are discussed in relation to the attainment and maintenance of organizational legitimacy.

Keywords : institutional theory, organizational theory, law enforcement, public administration

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