
Abstract: The dissertation offers a re-interpretation of “embedded liberalism” for a globalized era, and provides an explanation for how it may come about. The grand compromise of post-WWII embedded liberalism began unraveling in the late 1970s, as economic globalization started to erode states' capacity to protect their societies from the undesirable effects of a liberalized global market economy. The global intellectual property (IP) regime provides a rich example of how nationally-embedded compromises became undone through new configurations of globally-networked economic power in the 1980s-90s; IP-dependent industries including pharmaceuticals and software, partnered with Northern states to construct a new World Trade Organization IP treaty that transformed the pre-existing regime to provide multiple new private rights but few social protections for the developing countries that stood to lose the most. In response, a globally-networked coalition of civil society actors and developing country governments emerged to challenge the IP regime, particularly (but not only) in the area of access to medicines for HIV/AIDS. This challenge has reformed the regime by broadening the policy space for national governments to protect health and human rights, and has effectively ‘re-embedded’ the IP regime into the global public domain.

Identification of the problem you address:
For a number of important issues with direct relevance to sustainability, the global economic regimes of the past two decades have been disproportionately influenced by concentrated commercial interests rather than by broadbased societal input or sustainability concerns. This “disembedding” of economic rules from nationally-negotiated social contracts threatens to undermine prospects for sustainable human development.

Key question asked about the problem:
How can global economic regimes become “embedded” in an era of globalization so that they are more equitable, inclusive and responsive to social needs?

The methods by which you answered that question:
Academic literature and case study of the evolution of the global intellectual property regime.

Principle literature upon which the research drew:
International relations (regimes/international institutions), international political economy (trade), global governance (norm-setting, civil society networks), intellectual property (legal and trade), public health (pharmaceutical policy)
Empirical data acquisition description:
Literature review, government documents, press coverage, interviews with key informants, and participant observation

Geographical region studied:
N/A

Recommendations that might be relevant for your problem:
Neoliberal global economic regimes may become embedded in the global public domain through a combination of globally-networked civil society actors who catalyze normative shifts, the strategic use of expertise, government-civil society alliances, and socially-responsive national institutions that translate new international norms into re-negotiated social contracts. Traditionally ‘weak’ actors in the global system can shape global rules by combining various types of power (institutional, normative, material, and expert-based). In an increasingly unified global public domain, information about events in one country can spread immediately and strengthen the power of precedent to influence events elsewhere. Focusing limited resources to influence events in one or several countries can yield considerable impact on global regimes.

A description of the final product(s) you have/are aiming to produce:
Completion of the doctoral dissertation in 2010.

Description of major other intellectual or professional advancement activities over the past academic year, including working title(s):

Completed policy studies for two intergovernmental organizations:

Presented at several conferences:

Guest lectured in several graduate-level university courses:
- “Development & the Global Intellectual Property Regime.” Guest Lecture in Development Economics (Fall 2009), Professor Sakiko Fukuda-Parr, New School for Social Research, New York. 17 November. Made presentations in several policy fora:
  - “Trends and Initiatives in Technology Transfer for Local Production of Drugs and Vaccines.” African Dialogue on Technology Transfer for Local Manufacturing Capacity on Drugs and Vaccines (Organized by the International Center for Trade and Sustainable Development and the UN Conference on Trade and Development). Cape Town, South Africa. 10 December.

Please list citations for reports, papers, publications and presentations that built on your fellowship research:

Reports, Papers and Publications:

Presentations:

Principal collaborators outside Harvard:
Brenda Waning, Assistant Professor, Boston University School of Medicine; Ellen ‘t Hoen, Senior Adviser for Intellectual Property, UNITAID

List any awards or grants that you have received this year for the current or coming year:
GSAS Dissertation Completion Grant