



Globalization & the future of occupational health

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Outline of talk

- Globalization and neoliberalization
- Trade law and health
- Global supply chains and health
- Opportunities for action

From the naturalization of Globalization



"I feel about globalization a lot like I feel about the dawn. Generally speaking, I think it's a good thing that the sun comes up every morning. It does more good than harm. But even if I didn't care that much, there isn't much I could do about it. I didn't start globalization, I can't stop it except at huge cost to human development, and I'm not going to waste time trying."

Thomas Friedman

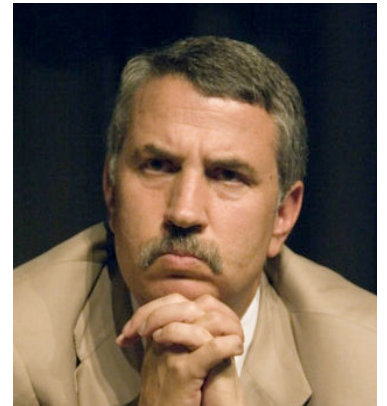
"Globalization is not something we can hold off or turn off it is the economic equivalent of a force of nature - like wind or water."

Bill Clinton

To the naturalization of Neoliberalization

Thomas Friedman's **Golden Straitjacket**

“To fit into the Golden Straitjacket a country must either adopt, or be seen as moving toward, the following golden rules: making the private sector the primary engine of its economic growth, maintaining a low rate of inflation and price stability, shrinking the size of its state bureaucracy, maintaining as close to a balanced budget as possible, if not a surplus, eliminating and lowering tariffs on imported goods, removing restrictions on foreign investment, deregulating its economy to promote as much domestic competition as possible, eliminating government corruption, subsidies and kickbacks as much as possible, opening its banking and telecommunications systems to private ownership and competition, and allowing its citizens to choose from an array of competing pension options and foreign run pension and mutual funds. When you stitch these pieces together you have the Golden Straitjacket.”





So what is neoliberalization?

There are 10 main neoliberal 'rules' or 'commandments'

1. expand free trade - 'adopt free trade'
2. privatize public services - 'use business efficiency'
3. deregulate business - 'cut red tape'
4. cut public spending - 'shrink government'
5. reduce and flatten taxes - 'be business friendly'
6. encourage foreign investment - 'reduce capital controls'
7. de-unionize - 'respect right to work' & 'flexibility'
8. develop using markets - 'trade not aid'
9. reduce inflation - 'maintain price stability'
10. expand property rights - 'honor patents and land titling'



How have neoliberal rules gone global?

Multiple mechanisms: from military coups to SAPs to think-tanks

But 2 double-acting factors are trade deals & globalized competition

1. Trade agreements directly liberalize trade
2. Trade agreements expand and entrench privatization
3. Trade agreements expand and entrench deregulation
4. Globalized competition advances case for deregulation
5. Globalized competition advances case for biz tax cuts
6. Globalized competition advances case for capital freedoms
7. Globalized competition advances case for labor flexibility
8. Trade agreement lobbying links trade with development
9. Globalized competition advance case for price stability
10. Trade agreements expand and entrench IP

Trade deals & health

- Types of trade agreement:
WTO, NAFTA, CAFTA-DR, EU, Bilaterals (see USTR), TPP, TAFTA
- 3 main mechanisms:
 - Harmonization – direct effects
 - reductions of non-tariff barriers translate into direct reworking of national laws protecting health: *e.g.* undermining limits on dangerous pesticides & restricting labeling
 - empowerment of corporate investor-vs-state litigation for so-called ‘expropriation’ & investor claims on lost future profits: *e.g.* Ethyl, Methanex, and gasoline additives; and La Oroya, Peru and Ian Rennert.
 - Monopolization – direct and indirect effects
 - expansion of patent regimes globally directly limits government provision of free or low cost medicines and health devices
 - IP expansion also shrinks public sector space for shared science and health systems planning
 - Competition – indirect effects
 - reductions on tariff and non-tariff barriers allow for global ‘race to the bottom’
 - but also allow for ‘upgrading’ and the search for new ‘spatial fixes’



Globalized competition & occupational health

- Global supply chains lead to:
 - Constantly shifting sites of inspection
 - Reduced transparency & accountability
 - Hyper-competition and hyper-exploitation
 - Diminished significance of national agencies and rules





Opportunities for global action

- Corporate social responsibility codes
 - Writing them; Enforcing them; and Discerning the differences:
 - *e.g. Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh vs Alliance for Bangladesh Worker Safety*
- Fair trade and anti-sweatshop campaigns
 - Creating global accountability by informing consumers & really listening to workers
 - *e.g. Workers' Rights Consortium vs Fair Labor Association*
 - FLA's Auret van Heerden & Foxconn
- Representing labor, environmental and health in trade deal deliberations and other forums



Opportunities for global action

Health and safety

	Practices in compliance			
	2012	2011	2010	2009
<i>Occupational injury protection</i>	70%	65%	57%	61%
<i>Prevention of chemical exposure</i>	81%	86%	85%	83%
<i>Emergency prevention, preparedness, and response</i>	75%	75%	66%	73%
<i>Occupational safety procedures and systems</i>	79%	77%	77%	89%
<i>Ergonomics</i>	59%	66%	64%	64%
<i>Dormitory and dining</i>	80%	78%	75%	76%
<i>Health and safety communication</i>	81%	84%	73%	69%
<i>Overall compliance</i>	76%	76%	72%	76%

Source: Apple Supplier Reports, 2010–2013