

Susan Ariel Aaronson and Jamie M. Zimmerman. ***Trade Imbalance: The Struggle to Weigh Human Rights Concerns in Trade Policymaking***. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008. Pp. 337. \$85.00. ISBN 9780521694209.

Scholars and policymakers have only recently begun to develop a rigorous understanding of the relationship between trade and human rights. The authors of the present book seek to provide readers with greater insight into this relationship, with the ultimate aim of helping policymakers to better govern globalization.

This book is not a study of potential conflicts between legal norms at the intersection of the trade and human rights regimes, nor is it an examination of the impacts of trade on the enjoyment of specific human rights. The book rather focuses on how policymakers make trade policy and how they address human

rights concerns when doing so, and is thus primarily addressed to policymakers working on these issues. The authors themselves, Susan Ariel Aaronson and Jamie M. Zimmerman, hail from the field of political science and are actively engaged in public policy endeavours.

Chapter 1 provides readers with background on some of the existing scholarship on trade and human rights issues in public policy, globalization studies, international relations, and international law. It also introduces readers to the methodology employed by the authors: the bulk of the original research for this book derives from detailed interviews with policymakers, negotiators, scholars, and stakeholders at the forefront of these issues.

Chapter 2 discusses the various avenues through which governments may address human rights concerns in the WTO, including accession negotiations, waivers, general exceptions, dispute settlement, trade policy reviews, amendments, and clarifications. In particular, the authors discuss debates bearing on labour rights and standards as well as on agricultural liberalization and the right to food. The authors conclude that while states are open to discussing human rights issues in the WTO, they continue to disagree on the manner in which these issues should be addressed in the trade regime.

Chapters 3 to 6 are composed of four case studies focusing on how South Africa, Brazil, the European Union, and the United States resolve conflicts between their trade and human rights objectives at the national and international levels, how they link human rights concerns to trade in trade agreements, and use, or fail to use, trade for the promotion of human rights abroad. Each case study focuses on specific areas of tension: labour rights, black economic empowerment programmes, TRIPS and the right to health, and trade in certified diamonds in South Africa; TRIPS and the right to health, intellectual property rights and access to biodiversity, and labour rights in Brazil; transparency in the trade policymaking process, and the common agricultural policy and agricultural liberalization in the EU; and labour rights, and the protection of intellectual property rights

in the USA. Of particular interest is the way in which the case studies as a whole reveal the inconsistencies in how actors address human rights issues in trade policy.

The authors conclude the book by formulating a number of policy recommendations on how best to balance trade and human rights objectives, including improving the coordination of trade and human rights policymaking, developing human rights assessment and advisory processes, drawing on corporate social responsibility initiatives, and fostering greater international cooperation on key areas of tension.

Ultimately, the authors' diagnosis is more interesting than the prescriptions that they propose. Their analysis of how trade policy addresses and can address human rights issues is salient and does not suffer from the imprecision which often afflicts works and discourses which employ human rights language in the trade context. On the other hand, although the authors have the virtue of not proposing a narrow reform agenda merely focused on changing specific rules, some of their policy recommendations may strike some readers as not particularly developed or original.

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