IS BUSINESS CO-OPTING THE BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS FIELD?

Recent years have seen the flourishing of a new field known as “Business and Human Rights”—a field that ostensibly seeks to better regulate and guide the conduct of corporations toward greater respect for human rights. But to what degree has the growth of this field resulted in meaningful changes for the communities affected by business operations? To what extent do changes thus far in corporate rhetoric and practice represent a genuine commitment to human rights and the start of real reform, or is ‘human rights’ part of a public relations campaign to mask or provide cover for continued abuse? We will examine these questions through the following events, with additional events to follow, as part of an in-depth reflection of the promises and pitfalls of work done in the field of business and human rights.

Business and Human Rights 101: An Introduction and Critical Reflections

Wednesday, October 12 | 12:10-1:10pm | JGH 107 - Lunch Provided

Gregory Tzeutschler Regaignon, Research Director of the Business & Human Rights Resource Centre, analyzes the birth and development of the business and human rights field, including its key predecessors, developments, actors, and areas of focus.

Worker-Driven Social Responsibility: A New Model for Protecting Human Rights in Supply Chains

Tuesday, October 18 | 12:10-1:10pm | JGH 102B - Lunch Provided

Cathy Albisa, co-founder and Executive Director of the National Economic & Social Rights Initiative (NESRI), discusses the models designed, monitored, and enforced by workers for protecting human rights in global supply chains, and how they have set themselves apart from related “multi-stakeholder initiatives.”

Assessing the Impact of Corporate-led Human Rights Initiatives

Thursday, November 3 | 12:10-1:10pm | JGH 107 - Lunch Provided

Komala Ramachandra, Senior Researcher for Business and Human Rights at Human Rights Watch, assesses the strategies used by corporations to prevent and remedy human rights violations, including due diligence processes, impact assessments, and grievance procedures.