Research Seminar: Dr. Sebastien Mena  
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Contested Diffusion as Path Creation: The Spread of Pension Funds’ Participation in Corporate Governance from the United States to Switzerland

Friday, September 2, 2016 from 12:00-1:30 PM in the David Strong Building, Room C113

ABSTRACT

Most research on contested diffusion explains success or failure of diffusion through stable features of the environment to which a contested idea is intended to spread. In this paper, we study the diffusion of the contested idea that minority shareholders ought to play an active role in the governance of corporations from the United States to Switzerland. Based on the findings from a detailed case study on this empirical context, we propose an alternative perspective to account for the diffusion of contested ideas. In this alternative perspective, the environment to which a contested idea spreads is endogenous to the diffusion process. The local environment is hence not stable, but changes over time and proponents of a contested idea can actively intervene in shaping and exploiting this changing environment so as to co-create a path along which the contested idea can ultimately diffuse.

Keywords: contested diffusion, path creation, corporate governance

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