

# Paradigm Wars:

## Indigenous Peoples' Resistance to Globalization



wethepeople Eugene.org  
wethepeople Eugene@gmail.com  
541-255-2946

Excerpts from  
***Paradigm Wars :  
Indigenous Peoples'  
Resistance to  
Globalization***

Edited by Victoria Tauli-  
Corpuz and Jerry Mander

Published 2006 by Sierra Club  
Books

Distributed at Harris Hall  
July 27, 2011 by **We The  
People-Eugene**

Stan Taylor, Lawyer and  
Professor of Political Science  
at Lane Community College,  
and Gordon Lafer,  
Associate Professor at the  
University of Oregon, present

### **"Global Economics and the Threat to Democracy"**

Stan Taylor will speak  
about the global economic  
structures established at  
Bretton Woods in 1944, the  
transformation of these  
structures into instruments of  
finance capital in the 1970's,  
and the attack on the ability of  
government to legislate on  
behalf of their citizens.

Gordon Lafer will speak  
about Free Trade Agreements  
and will focus particularly on  
investor-state dispute  
resolution rights.

The **World Trade Organization** was  
created in 1995 by national govern-ments to  
establish a legally binding frame-work of rules  
for global commerce that all 148 Member  
Nations were obliged to follow. Local and  
national governments could still pass their own  
laws, but now were required to conform their  
laws to the WTO or else they could suffer  
major trade penalties...

The WTO essentially functions as if it  
were a world government, which was clearly  
among the intentions of its first Director  
General, Renato Ruggero, who termed it  
"global government for the new millennium."  
It passes laws that all of its members are  
obliged to follow, it settles disputes in its own  
courts that Member Nations cannot override,  
and it has major enforcement powers,  
primarily financial...

Under WTO rules (which comprise  
some thirty separate agreements), *sub-federal*  
governments such as local, state, provincial,  
and tribal governments are also subordinated,  
i.e., restricted from exercising full autonomy  
over their own jurisdictions, including on tax  
policy, food safety measures, and natural  
resource management.

These are several agreements :

### ***The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT)***

Established in 1947 after the Bretton  
Woods meetings (which created the World  
Bank and International Monetary Fund),  
GATT sets out the core principles of free trade.  
For almost fifty years these rules were  
voluntary until the creation of the WTO, with  
enforcement powers over Member Nations.

The following are some of the GATT's  
core principles:

*Article 1 - "Most Favored Nation"* and *Article  
III - "National Treatment"* :

both these articles have similar intentions.

The first requires that all member  
governments treat goods imported from one  
WTO Member Nation "no less favorably" than  
goods imported from any other Member  
Nation. This effectively makes it impossible  
for governments to restrict imports from  
countries on moral or ethical grounds such as  
horrendous human rights or labor standards, or  
environmental records, or environmental  
records, or that are dealing in illicit trade....

Article III requires governments to  
treat all imported goods "no less favorably"  
than locally produced goods. Free trade  
advocates claim this article prevents  
"discrimination," which is a lofty-sounding  
ideal, but that is definitely not the point. The  
real purpose of Article III is to prevent any  
government from favoring or protecting its  
own local industries, or farmers or cultures  
that might be otherwise overwhelmed by  
globe-spanning corporations bringing vast  
amounts of cheap imports that make local or  
indigenous economies non-viable.

Foreign businesses and banks may  
buy-up local producers or local banks and  
literally take-over the economy of smaller,  
weaker nations. These rules also prevent  
countries from protecting jobs or local natural  
resources from accelerated exploita-tion, or  
local communities from being absorbed in the  
global economic juggernaut as many  
agricultural communities already have been.

*Article XX - General Exceptions:*  
makes governments meet certain conditions  
and proofs if they are going to protect plant,  
animal, or human health. While free trade  
advocates says this provides "flexibility" for  
governments to exercise their sovereignty, it  
puts an onus on countries seeking to protect  
resources to "prove" that laws protecting clean  
air, endangered species, local culture, food

# Paradigm Wars:

## Indigenous Peoples' Resistance to Globalization



wethepeopleeugene.org

*This book originally was published to demonstrate the violent clash between indigenous peoples and the neoliberal global economy.*

"...With the advent of the modern version of global economics, characterized by new technologies and, most importantly, new globalized rules of trade and investment - created and powerfully enforced by the WTO, the World Bank, and the IMF among other institutions - resource lands are being opened to assault by giant global investors and developers at far greater speed, and with far fewer legal obstacles than ever before. This has left poor countries & indigenous peoples ever-more vulnerable, though they are strongly resisting."

excerpts from:

*Paradigm Wars:  
Indigenous Peoples'  
Resistance to Globalization*

\*\*A Special Report of the  
International Forum on  
Globalization Committee on  
Indigenous Peoples\*\*

edited by Jerry Mander and  
Victoria Tauli-Corpuz  
©2006 Sierra Club Books  
Pages 3-4, 48-49, 52-53.

Where the WTO grants multinationals these powers in the global economy, corporate personhood allows big business to claim strikingly similar powers over US residents.

To find out more about a local movement to end corporate personhood, call us (541) 255-2946 or visit us at [wethepeopleeugene.org](http://wethepeopleeugene.org)

safety, and other public goods should not be overturned by the WTO.

Together, these principles break down the barriers separating the global, national, and local economies, effectively forcing all producers large and small large and small and wherever on earth they are located, into the same hyper-competitive market. It also sets off a final frenzy to control and develop the last remnants of the earth's natural resources, suddenly opened up for global corporate access. The net result is that nearly all goods...are forced into a new commodification process, and a global market controlled by a few transnational corporations global bureaucracies.

### *The Agreement on Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary Measures (SPS)*

"SPS" restricts what governments can do to protect food safety and to prevent the entry of harmful and invasive species or diseases inside their borders-"bioinvasion."

The U.S. and other big food exporters use the SPS rules to prevent other nations from regulating (even by simply requesting consumer information labels) the import of genetically engineered organisms, which may threaten native biodiversity and ecosystem balance with genetic pollution.

### *The Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures (SCM)*

"SCM" outlines what kind of subsidies governments are allowed to give to companies. WTO rules are supposed to be based on the *theory* of free trade, which includes the principle that governments may not subsidize private corporations. While the WTO has detailed rules banning subsidies, they are filled with loopholes that actually

allow big subsidies for global corporations, but not for local or small producers.

### *The Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS)*

"TRIPS" lays down explicit requirements for the kind of patent regiments nations must use to protect intellectual property, such as inventions and technological innovations. It also explicitly allows the patenting-illegal claim of ownership- of plants, animals, and microorganisms but does not require that patent applications declare the source of the genetic resources, which increasingly come from indigenous lands.

Under TRIPs rules, biotechnology companies, particularly seed and drug companies, can privatize genetic resources by obtaining patents which allow them to legally exercise exclusive control over marketing the claim to material; this has been a major blow to local *usufruct* rights - where communities, notably in India, have traditionally been recognized as collective owners of local resources and innovations-and of rights to the global commons.

Peoples' movements that have become increasingly effective at using local and national governments to regulate corporate behavior now must face the fact that corporations have created a powerful new global arena for rule making. Indigenous rights organizations and trade activist groups must now unite to change these rules and to subordinate trade considerations to the inherent rights of native peoples to sovereignty and self-determination.

For more info, visit [IFG.org](http://IFG.org) or pick up a copy of *Paradigm Wars*!!

