

Law & Society @ UBC

Presents

**Francesco Duina, Professor and Head,
Sociology, University of British Columbia**

“The Legal and Judicial Architectures of Regional Trade Agreements Worldwide: A Sociological-Institutionalist Perspective”

Monday, March 31, 2014

5:00 pm – 6:30 pm

Green College Coach House (6201 Cecil Green Park Road)

http://www.maps.ubc.ca/PROD/index_detail.php?locat1=412

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A major difference among regional trade agreements (RTAs) concerns their regulatory and judicial design. Some RTAs exhibit little harmonization and instead rely on the principles of mutual recognition or references to existing international standards; the same RTAs also rely on technical dispute resolution mechanisms. Other RTAs rely by contrast on extensive harmonization and permanent courts staffed with professional judges. Yet a third group exhibits a hybrid design. These differences matter for economic and everyday life in the member states, and the functioning of national parliaments and courts. It is therefore surprising that little scholarly attention has gone to documenting and explaining the observable variation. In this paper, I put forth a sociological-institutionalist account linking the architecture of RTAs to the predominance of common versus civil law in the member states. I turn to ten of the most important and established RTAs in the world to document the proposed variation and assess the validity of the sociological-institutionalist explanation.

Professor Duina's research and teaching focus is on the construction of capitalist markets, the nation state, and the politics and consequences of international trade. Using the insights of sociological and historical institutionalism, he is especially interested in understanding the design and social and political consequences of trading blocs (NAFTA, the EU, Mercosur, etc.). Professor Duina also has an interest in culture. In particular, he looks at various aspects of American popular culture – especially its competitive qualities, interpretations of the passing of time and transitions in life, and nationalism.



A tradition of interdisciplinary conversation



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