When corporate ordering seems ubiquitous and central to the conduct of social, economic and political life across the globe, and local, national and international political institutions seem everywhere in struggle for resources, legitimacy, capacity and authority, we thought it important to revisit the theme of corporate power with a view to exploring challenges and limits we’ve encountered in our research and expanding our collective repertoire of strategies for (re)engagement and critique. We welcome proposals from scholars of the corporation and corporate power working in law, political economy, economics, anthropology, sociology, history, geography, management, organizational studies, cultural studies, sex and gender studies, (post) colonial studies, Africana studies, Queer Theory, or other disciplines. In a series of themed panels over the two days we hope to explore some of the following questions:

- What is corporate power and how does law figure in its production? Its limits? Does corporate power inhere in the corporate form or is the form an institutional means for the deployment of economic, political, social, and/or ideological power that originates elsewhere?
- Is there ‘corporate ideology’? From what source(s) does it derive? What constitutes or affects corporate power’s legitimacy or illegitimacy?
- Might we (re)theorize the relationship between corporate and state power or authority through time—hegemonic? hierarchical? complicit? cooperative? commercial? instrumental? rivalrous? What is the relationship between corporate power and democracy? between corporate power and sovereignty?
- If corporate/state power relations are/have been part of a “global system” how might we engage and theorize the systemic while retaining local specificity, complexity, diversity and nuance in our accounts?
- What is the relationship between corporate power and geographic space? How does a corporation’s physical situatedness affect its power? How does corporate power inhabit the urban, the rural, the oceanic, the atmospheric? How do corporations use geography to enhance, support, disperse, deploy their power?
- Does the disaggregation and denationalization of production through global supply chains impact how we think about corporate power or the relevant legal regimes for engaging it?
- How does/has corporate power travel(ed)? What is/was the role of law in shaping or limiting the geography, mobility or character of corporate power? How might the dispersion of corporate power in the past, for example through the colonial corporations, affect its contemporary manifestations? How might contemporary manifestations of corporate power shed new light on the workings of corporate power in the past?
• How might we better explicate the dynamic relationship between evolving notions of corporate power and corporate personality or personhood? How can we theorise connections between particular notions of corporate personhood and modalities of accountability and/or legitimacy of corporate power?
• How does/has corporate power shape(d) subjectivities, cultures and institutions in the social world, the way we form and understand community, identity, body and space and how these function and interrelate? Does corporate power gender, racialize, sexualize persons, workers, societies, cultures?
• How is corporate power being resisted, subverted, co-opted and/or deployed by social movements? How are social movements being resisted, subverted, co-opted and/or deployed by corporate actors?
• What role does/has/might corporate governance play in the expansion or containment of corporate power? How does the corporation ‘govern’?
• How should we theorize the relationship between corporate power and increasing financialization of the economy? Is the power exercised by banks and other financial institutions a manifestation of corporate power? Something else?
• What is the future of corporate power? Can blockchain and/or cryptocurrencies displace, disperse or reduce corporate power or will new forms and shapes of corporate power emerge through them? How, if at all, do the new organisational models of the ‘platform’ and ‘sharing’ economy corporations affect the aggregation and/or distribution of corporate power?

To submit a paper proposal, click here and complete the online submission form. The form will require you to include an abstract of no more than 250 words describing the paper you propose to present along with short description of how the paper fits into your broader research.

At present, we have no resources for travel. Meals will be provided for all participants and lodging will be available in Harvard University facilities at or below cost in accordance with IGLP policies for the conference.

The June 2018 mini-conference continues a multi-year investigation of corporate power in global society by scholars affiliated with the IGLP. In June 2014, the IGLP Corporation in Global Society research group, in collaboration with The Critical Corporation Project, City, University of London and the Program on the Corporation, Law and Global Society, Northeastern University School of Law, hosted a two-day interdisciplinary conference entitled “Corporate Power in Global Society: Explication, Critique, Engagement, Resistance” at which both panellists and participants interrogated the theme of “corporate power” through a wide array of substantive legal regimes and disciplinary perspectives. In June 2015 we followed this with a one-day Corporation in Global Society research conference. Since that time, the varieties and implications of corporate power have continued to morph and proliferate while scholars of the corporation have proliferated as well, employing ever more diverse, eclectic and inter-disciplinary approaches to engage the complexity and significance of the phenomena we study.

For more information on the IGLP conferences in June, see http://iglp.law.harvard.edu/iglp-the-conference/. For more information on the IGLP and its other activities, see http://iglp.law.harvard.edu/.

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