

# Governing the Transatlantic Conflict over Agricultural Biotechnology:

## Contending Coalitions, Trade Liberalisation and Standard Setting

**Joseph Murphy**, University of Leeds, UK and  
**Les Levidow**, The Open University, UK

Delays in approving genetically modified crops and foods in the European Union have led to a high-profile trade conflict with the United States. This book analyses the EU-US conflict as a case study to explore the governance of new technologies.

The transatlantic conflict over GM crops and food has been widely attributed to regulatory differences that divide the EU and the US. Going beyond common stereotypes of these differences and their origins, this book analyses the conflict through contending coalitions of policy actors operating across the Atlantic. *Governing the Transatlantic Conflict over Agricultural Biotechnology* focuses on interactions between the EU and the US, rather than on EU-US comparisons. Drawing on original research and interviews with key policy actors, the book shows how EU-US efforts to harmonise regulations for agricultural biotechnology created the context in which activists could generate a backlash against the technology. In this new context, regulations were shaped along different lines. Joseph Murphy and Les Levidow provide new insights by elaborating critical perspectives on global governance, issue-framing, standard-setting and regulatory science.

This accessible book will appeal to undergraduate and post-graduate students, academics and policy-makers working on a wide range of issues covered by political science, policy studies, international relations, economics, geography, business management, environmental and development studies, science and technology studies.

### **Praise for the book:**

*"Anyone who has tried to grasp the politics of biotechnology and GM food knows that the problem is complex and not easily sorted out. For this reason, this new book by Joseph Murphy and Les Levidow is an important addition to the literature. They provide an wealth of information and a rigorous analysis that helps us better understand the tensions between the United States and Europe, including the conflicts between their respective citizens, experts, politicians and corporations."*

**Frank Fischer**, Professor of Political Science, Rutgers University

*"This book adds an important chapter to the world community's efforts to manage technological advances in harmony with demands for democracy and social justice. In discussing the transatlantic dispute over agricultural biotechnology, Murphy and Levidow show that trade liberalization is not a thing apart from national politics but rather involves making difficult choices among competing state-by-state political settlements. Their thoroughly researched and carefully argued account puts the governance of new technologies squarely on the agenda of globalization studies. It should be recommended reading for all concerned with the legitimacy of the emerging global order."*

**Sheila Jasanoff**, Professor of Science and Technology Studies, Harvard University

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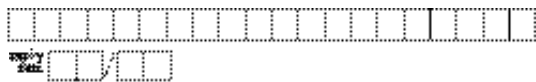
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