The reification and strengthening of intellectual property rights (IPRs) has led to an emergent and interesting counter-movement. Central research questions: (1) how IPRs manifest hegemony in a neo-Gramscian framework, (2) creating a conceptual framework to study counter-hegemonic potential of new social movements or organizations, and finally (3) using the conceptual criterion created to study the Pirate Party (PP) of Sweden.

Incorporating new social movement theory with a neo-Gramscian framework explains movement of organic intellectuals from political parties to new social movements. Further, it explains the emergence of a counter-movement to IPRs. Combining the neo-Gramscian theories of Cox and Gill with new social movement theory, allows for a pertinent analysis of hegemony and the movement of IPRs towards core hegemony and their subsequent reification during the last few decades. We find that IPRs manifest hegemony. The conceptual framework created contains five central criteria for analysing a movement: (1) Aims of the movement, (2) Participation, (3) Resources and Financing, (4) Intellectual base of the movement, and (5) Compatibility with a global progressive political party. The case study of the PP shows it has (1) counter-hegemonic aims, through the linkage of IPRs to hegemony. The party has successfully politicized and reopened the contestation of IPRs within Sweden. (2) Participation within previously apathetic social groups has increased. The party is now the second largest party in Sweden by membership. (4) The intellectual base of the Piracy movement is evident, both inside and outside the party. However, no evidence of alliance building was found. (3) Resources and financing are precarious, the party is financed through contributions and personal loans of key personnel and there have been internal strife related to finances. Core activists of the party are unlikely to defect, rather without success, a return to apathy is likely. (5) No signs of alignment with a progressive global movement are evident within the PP. Therefore, this study is inconclusive, the party does not expressly aim for counter-hegemony but realization of its main goals would lead to a weakening of hegemony. The party has had modest success, gaining two seats in the EU Parliament. The parliamentary elections in Sweden 2010 may give a clearer indication of the long-term potential of the party. The hegemony of knowledge goods is evident today, thus a counter-movement has emerged to contest it.