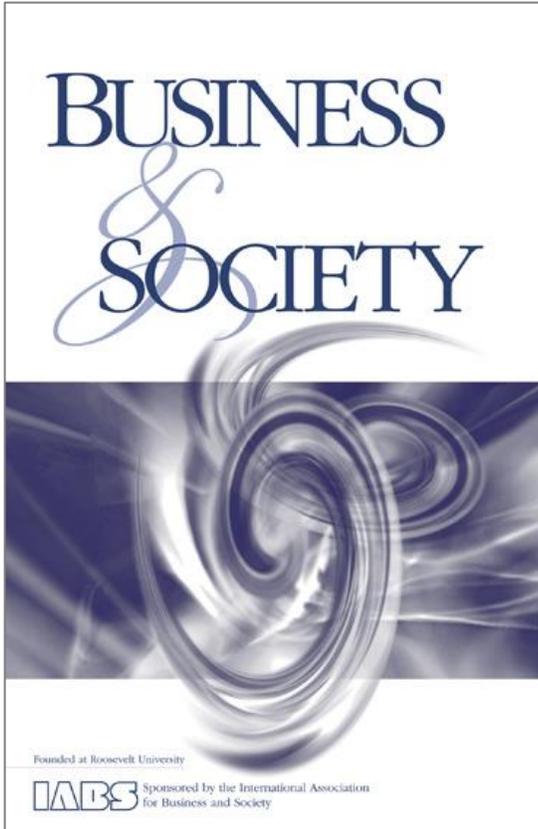


Call for Papers: Special Issue of *Business & Society*

Modern slavery in business: Interdisciplinary perspectives on the 'shadow economy'



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This Special Issue of *Business & Society* seeks to advance an emerging body of management literature examining modern slavery, by drawing upon high quality research from disciplines outside of management and relevant sub-disciplines of management. Specifically, it aims to explore the potential contribution of scholarly research into

'modern slavery' and other forms of extreme labour exploitation at the intersections of business, politics, economics and law. This may include consideration of the legal, political, technical, psychological, relational, organizational, and operational aspects of modern slavery as a business concept, along with the critical assessments of its deployment in and amelioration of business practice.

The extant body of literature on modern slavery is still rather scarce on the business and management side. In marketing and operations management, there have been attempts to investigate links between modern slavery and consumer products through global supply chains (Gold et al., 2015; McDonough, 2002; New, 2015). In so-called 'bottom of the pyramid' (BoP) research, the issue of extreme labour exploitation in developing countries has been sporadically addressed under the umbrella of ethical and sustainability issues (Kolk, Rivera-Santos, and Rufin, 2014). Moreover, the 'risk' of modern slavery appearing in corporate supply chains has sparked interest in the areas of supply chain management, social and sustainable auditing and accountability.

Notwithstanding, a coherent body of literature is at present lacking and remains somewhat desensitized to the challenges and opportunities surrounding modern slavery as a distinct research phenomenon in the business field. How, for instance, can we begin to research a phenomenon that secures its capacity to extort revenue from labour – through violence and deception – precisely by evading external scrutiny (Crane, 2013), and hiding behind ‘normal business’ practices (Bales and Trodd, 2013).

Given this early stage of investigating modern slavery in the business research arena, it is crucial to build up a stock of business-relevant knowledge that critically reflects the phenomenon of modern slavery and guides managerial actions and counter-measures. Business research can draw on existing knowledge from a variety of other disciplines such as law, sociology, geography, politics, philosophy, development studies and history (Gold et al., 2015). For example, a philosophical perspective may help in defining the nature and boundaries around modern slavery, whereas a Law perspective may help in categorizing elements of a crime for prosecution, whilst sociology, politics and geography may reveal connections between class structure (Le Baron, 2014), poverty and regional vulnerability (Phillips et al., 2014; Phillips, 2013). Economic perspectives may shed light on the relationship between local profits, labour costs and regional development (Datta and Bales, 2013). Environmental studies may illuminate connections between severe environmental degradation and rises in local forms of slavery (Bales, 2016).

It is hoped that these wider disciplinary perspectives can inform understandings of modern slavery in business and management research. Accounting research may investigate how financial, environmental and social management accounting schemes can integrate contemporary forms of slave labour. Supply chain and operations management may investigate facilitators for detecting and eradicating slavery from supply chains. In this respect, slavery may also be conceived from a risk management angle, influencing business decisions about off-shoring and re-shoring. Similarly, organizational studies and human resource management may benefit from an interdisciplinary understanding, by aiding consideration of modern slavery as a new organizational form and/or labour arrangement, and why, how, and to what extent it differs from existing models.

In this *Business & Society* special issue, we invite multi-disciplinary contributions of a conceptual and/or empirical nature that illuminate the nature, context, drivers and contingencies of modern slavery to the advancement of *business research*. While explicitly open to a wide range of disciplines and paradigms, submitted papers should aim to make a direct contribution to business and management research.

We welcome a broad range of questions and topic areas within the broad theme – some indicative questions include:

- How can we define the nature and boundaries around modern slavery in business settings?
- How do existing concepts of modern slavery tell us about the actors and practices that might be involved in a business setting?
- Does modern slavery pose any significant methodological barriers and/or opportunities for business researchers?
- Can other disciplinary conceptions be used to synthesize business and management models, processes, levels, systems, institutions and/or organizational forms related to modern slavery?
- What are the implications of different forms of modern slavery for the identification, auditing and reporting practices?
- Under what circumstances do business organizations experience a 'demand' for slave labour?
- Why is slave labour more commonly used in some industries, regions and tiers of supply chains rather than others?
- How is cost, revenue and profit distributed for organisations operating under a Slave-Based business model?
- How effective are existing public and private governance initiatives to combat slave labour and other forms of extreme labour exploitation?
- Which decision-making tools (for example supplier evaluation, accounting schemes, auditing) could guide business towards ensuring that their own operations as well as supply chains are slavery-free?
- Which role may non-business stakeholders play in pushing companies towards taking effective action against modern slavery and forms of extreme labour exploitation?
- How do business organizations respond to the emergence of new governmental regulations such as the Modern Slavery Act in the UK in 2015?

SUBMISSION PROCESS AND DEADLINES

Full papers should be submitted between November 17, 2017 and December 1, 2017. The submission window will close at **5pm EST, on December 1, 2017**. Authors should submit their manuscripts through ScholarOne Manuscripts at:

<http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/bas>.

Authors should be sure to specify in the submission system that the manuscript is for the special issue on “Modern Slavery in Business”.

Manuscripts should be prepared following the *Business & Society* author guidelines:

<https://uk.sagepub.com/business-society/journal200878#submission-guidelines>

All articles will be subjected to double-blind peer review and editorial process in accordance with the policies of *Business & Society*. If you have any queries about the submission to the journal, please contact one of the co-editors.

Manuscript Development Workshop:

The International Centre for Corporate Social Responsibility (ICCSR) at Nottingham University Business School (UK) will host a Special Issue Workshop in Nottingham on **22-23 June, 2017** which will be facilitated by the Special Issue editors for authors wishing to develop their manuscripts. Further details about this event will be posted at www.nottingham.ac.uk/business later in 2017. Authors are invited to present and discuss their papers during the workshop and to receive feedback for further improvement of their manuscripts. Acceptance for presentation at the workshop does not guarantee acceptance of the paper for publication in *Business & Society*.

To be considered for the workshop, authors will need to submit a short paper (max. 10 double-spaced pages, excluding references and exhibits) to iccsr@nottingham.ac.uk no later than **April 21, 2017**.

*Note that submission of a short paper to the workshop is not a precondition for submission of a full paper to the Special Issue.

ABOUT THE GUEST EDITORS

Robert Caruana [robert.caruana@nottingham.ac.uk] is an Associate Professor in Business Ethics at the International Centre for Corporate Social Responsibility (ICCSR) of Nottingham University Business School. His research interests include corporate and consumer responsibility, labor exploitation, power relations and critical discourse analysis, publishing in journals such as *Organization Studies*, *Journal of Business Ethics*, *Marketing Theory*, *European Journal of Marketing* and *Annals of Tourism Research*. His most recent work explores the emergence of modern slavery as a legal category and has been working on a research project specifically examining corporate-public discourse around the UK Modern Slavery Act 2015.

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ABOUT THE JOURNAL

Business & Society is one of the leading journals at the intersection of business and society, covering issues of social responsibility, ethics and governance. It is the official journal of the International Association of Business and Society and is published by Sage. Its current two- year Citation Impact Factor is 2.135 (2015). It is a 3-rated journal in the 2015 UK Association of Business Schools Journal Ranking Guide, a B-journal in the German Academic Association for Business Research, and an A-journal in the Australian Business School Dean's list. For further details see <http://journals.sagepub.com/home/bas>

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