Theorizing and Researching the Dark Side of Organization

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Abstract
The paper offers an introduction to research that concerns itself with the 'dark side' of organization and attempts to bring theoretical resources from a range of disciplines to bear upon the problem. This stream of research has emerged most visibly since the 1990s, although its concerns can be found in much earlier research. Frustrations with the tendencies of mainstream work to overlook, ignore or suppress difficult ethical, political and ideological issues, which may well mean life or death to some people, has in recent years led to a research that self-identifies its concerns as being with the dark side. We structure our review around key contributions on the dark side of organizational behaviour, mainly in psychology but also including the concept of organizational misbehaviour; the sociology of the dark side, with particular reference to mistakes, misconduct and disaster; and a wider range of critical approaches to the dark side including Marxist, post-Marxist and postcolonial perspectives. We also undertake a review of methodologies for investigating dark side phenomena, and finally introduce the five papers that comprise this special issue.

Keywords
critical management studies, dark side, organizational behaviour, ethics, research methods

... Until exposed became my darker side
Puckering up and down those avenues of sin
Too cheap to ride they’re worth a try
If only for the old times, cold times
Don’t go waving your pretentious love

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Email: g.marechal@liv.ac.uk
He’s soliciting on his tan brown brogues
Gyrating through some lonesome devil's row
Pinpointing well meaning upper class prey
Of walking money checks possessing holes
He often sleekly offers his services
Exploitation of his finer years
Work with loosely woven fabrics of lonely office clerks
Any lay suffices his dollar green eye...


**Introduction: Welcome to the Dark Side**

Darkness and light have historically served as metaphors for variations in the human condition, its states of consciousness, its deepest instinctual urges and the boundary between life and death. It is perhaps ironic that the field of organization and management studies broadly defined has only recently begun to deploy the dark side metaphor to signal a new concern with issues that have traditionally been overlooked, ignored, or suppressed. The organization’s external economic environment has been easily attributed with being the source of ills. This marginalization of negative elements as external or externally driven has been reproduced in what has been termed ‘mainstream’ organization theory and behaviour. This has placed emphasis on the functional and pro-social aspects of behaviour while regarding dysfunctional and antisocial actions as abnormal or extraneous and in need of correction. In the sociology of organizations too the behaviours comprising the dark side of organizations have not been claimed as central (Vaughan, 1999, p.72).

The past two decades have seen a dawning recognition that the dark side is not a dark out-side, a phenomenon ‘out there’ that impinges upon organizational action, but a dark interior to be found within organizational boundaries and practice. As Vaughan (1999, p.272) notes, scholars have been studying the dark side for some time, although they haven’t necessarily named it as such. In her seminal contribution, she identified and systematically categorized threads running through a range of historical and contemporary sociological research, to legitimate a theoretical framing of disparate studies of the dark side of organization. Griffin and O’Leary-Kelly (2004) similarly assembled a range of contemporary psychological contributions on the dark side of organizational behaviour. Around these landmarks, a number of studies have emerged that explicitly identify ‘the dark side’ from the extra-organizational socio-economic perspective on the dark sides of international business (Batra, 2007), social capital (Graeff, 2009; Manning, 2010) and transfer pricing (Sikka & Willmott, 2010). Others have furthered a concern with the dark side of management process and practice, looking at careers (Furnham, Hyde & Trickey, 2012a), consulting (Boussebaa, 2008), creative enterprise (Boon, Jones & Curnow, 2009), entrepreneurship (Beaver & Jennings, 2005; Kets de Vries, 1985; Khan, Munir & Willmott, 2007), excellence (Dunning, 1998), innovation (Zibarras, Port & Woods, 2008), management decisions (Boddy, 2006) and marketing (Carr & Schreuer, 2010). Some have taken a more individually centred psychological lens to the dark side of executive psychology (Bollaert & Petit, 2010; Judge & LePine, 2007; Stein, 2000), leadership (Clements & Washbrush, 1999; Conger, 1990; Harms, Spain & Hannah, 2011; Hogan & Hogan, 2001; Judge, Piccolo & Kosalka, 2009; Khoo & Burch, 2008; McIntosh & Rima, 1998; Tourish, 2013), sex differences at work (Furnham & Trickey, 2011) and teams (Cruz, 2011). There have also been methodological contributions for surfacing the dark side (Bella, King & Kailin, 2003).

Some writers seek to address both the bright and dark sides of organizational phenomena, following a trail set down by Robert Merton (Resick, Whitman, Weingarden & Hiller, 2009). This
includes the downside of the apparently benign, such as creativity and entrepreneurship (Baucus, Norton, Baucus & Human, 2008; Gino & Ariely, 2012; Kuratko & Goldsby, 2004), ethics (Drennan, 2004; Laufer & Robertson, 1997), self-management and team discipline (Barker, 1993; Langfred, 2007; Sewell, 1998), workplace spirituality (Lips-Wiersma, Dean & Fornaciari, 2009) and the paradoxical bright side of dark side traits (Furnham, Trickey & Hyde, 2012b). Other contributions address the area directly but don’t use the term as such (Ackroyd & Thompson, 1999; Burrell, 1997) or deal with related topics that could be regarded as falling within the scope of the conceit, such as Sims’ (2005) study of ‘corporate bastards’.

In our introduction to this emerging field of analysis we share this objective of shifting perceptions of the dark side by identifying resources for bringing new or neglected phenomena into the focus of existing organization theory. We also demonstrate the utility of bringing new analytical concepts into organization theory to deal with these phenomena. We summarize significant contributions to research from both ‘mainstream’ and alternative ‘critical’ perspectives, while observing the permeability of boundaries. Both approaches are genuinely concerned with understanding and addressing these issues and behaviours. We then consider current and future methodological challenges facing those who attempt to conduct research on what can be extremely sensitive issues, cutting across interests that are both intensely personal and contentiously political. These may involve both the highly vulnerable exploited as well as incredibly powerful corporations, and may expose both respondents and researchers to unpleasant and even dangerous consequences.

The Dark Side of Organizational Behaviour

Researchers in the field of organizational behaviour (OB) began to systematically look at dark side issues from the perspective of workplace violence and aggression, with most early studies displaying a concern with behaviour that can be considered abnormal or deviant. This initial focus quickly expanded to include a full and complete array of workplace behaviours that became subsumed under the dark side umbrella. Griffin and O’Leary-Kelly’s (2004) landmark dark side of organizational behaviour collection is representative of this tendency. Their work focuses on the ambiguous, motivated behaviours that contribute to human and organizational processes that can simultaneously become functional or dysfunctional depending on the nature of motivation, context and intended or unintended negative consequences. As they put it, the dark side consists of ‘situations in which people hurt other people, injustices are perpetuated and magnified, and the pursuits of wealth, power or revenge lead people to behaviours that others can only see as unethical, illegal, despicable, or reprehensible’ (Griffin & O’Leary-Kelly, 2004, p.xv; see also Griffin & Lopez, 2005). Griffin and O’Leary-Kelly (2004) gather a comprehensive set of contributions encompassing workplace violence, stress, aggression, domestic violence impacting the workplace, discrimination, sexual harassment, sexuality, politics, side deals, careerism and impression management, the psychological contract, drug abuse, retaliation, incivility and theft. Treating dark side behaviours as dependent variables, they addresses causal factors relating to a wider range of such variables than are customarily considered in OB research. They consider the costs that antecedent and consequent behaviours have for organizations and view the recognition of costs as a socially constructed ‘shifting perception that is influenced by societal thinking’ (Griffin & O’Leary-Kelly, 2004, p.469). Dark side research has a contribution to make in changing these perceptions and encouraging new interventions.

They organize Dark side behaviours into two broad categories, those that harm others and those that harm the organization, each of which is further subdivided into two subcategories. The first category includes behaviours that are injurious to human welfare such as verbal and psychological
abuse, physical violence, sexual harassment and generally unsafe work practices, as well as self-harming behaviours such as alcohol abuse, smoking and specific unsafe work practices. The second category consists of behaviours that are injurious to the organization, some of which have specific and measurable costs (inappropriate absenteeism and turnover, theft or destruction of organization assets or property, and violations of laws, codes and regulations) while others such as destructive political behaviours, inappropriate impression management behaviours, breach of confidentiality and sustained suboptimal performance, carry with them nonspecific financial costs. Griffin and O’Leary-Kelly (2004, p.2) are realistic and sceptical of early visions, citing Hugo Münsterberg (1913) who envisaged industrial psychology as contributing to ‘overflowing joy and perfect social harmony’. Without making any simplistic contrast between dark and light, they set themselves the task of illuminating the current predicaments of organizations and seek to make some positive contributions to the improvement of organizational functionality and the human experience of working within organizations. Dark side behaviour may be negative, abnormal and even deviant from an organizational perspective but they resist the tendency to stereotype or stigmatize behaviours, groups and actors, recognizing that when observed from different vantage points and with different tools these behaviours may appear normal, rational and purposeful. This can enable organizational action to be taken to eliminate the causes of undesirable behaviour, and ameliorate its consequences.

Dark side behaviours have become more integral to the field of organizational behaviour in recent years and a growing variety are now examined and theorized at the individual, group and organizational levels. As one sign of the increased maturity or mainstreaming of this topic in the field, Eby and Allen (2012) recently published a volume dealing with a wide variety of personal relationships at work in which negative perspectives are closely aligned with dark side frameworks without being specifically named as such. More individually oriented research has focused on dark side perspectives on leadership (Liu, Liao & Loi, 2012; Tourish, 2013). We would also include a substantial body of studies of problematic behaviours such as workplace deviance and counterproductive action (Bennett & Robinson, 2000; Bordia, Restubog & Tang, 2008; Lau, Au & Ho, 2003; Lawrence & Robinson, 2007; Marcus & Schuler, 2004; Robinson & Bennett, 1995; Warren, 2003), discrimination (King, Shapiro, Hebl, Singletary & Turner, 2006; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001), bullying and incivility (Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Björkelo, 2013; Branch, Ramsay & Barker, 2013; Hepburn & Enns, 2013; Nielsen, Glaus, Matthiessen, Eid & Einarsen, 2013; Duffy, Ganster & Pagon, 2002; Tepper, Moss, Lockhart & Carr, 2007; Samnani, 2013; Salin & Hoel, 2013; Treadway, Shaughnessy, Brelan, Yang & Reeves, 2013; Van Jaarsveld, Walker & Skarlicki, 2010), workplace violence and aggression (Glomb & Liao 2003), the causes, effects and consequences of stress and distress (Hardy, Woods & Wall, 2003; Kahn & Byosiere, 1992; Parker & Slaughter, 1988; Penney & Spector, 2005) and personal drug abuse and addiction (Acevedo, Warren & Wray-Bliss, 2009; Bachrach, Bamberger & Doveh, 2008; Frone, 2008; Warren & Wray-Bliss, 2009; Wray-Bliss, 2009).

Many of these behaviours are elusive and difficult to observe. This led Greenberg (2010) to introduce the term insidious workplace behaviour to theorize a form of ‘intentionally harmful workplace behaviour’ that is legal, subtle and low level (rather than severe), repeated over time, and directed at individuals or organizations’ (p.4; emphasis added). Examples include interpersonal mistreatment (King et al., 2006; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001), workplace incivility which can include forms of bullying (Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Aquino & Thau, 2009; Björkelo, 2013; Branch et al., 2013; Duffy et al., 2002; Nielsen et al., 2013; Samnani, 2013; Salin & Hoel, 2013; Tepper et al., 2007), sexist humor (Hemmasi, Graf & Russ, 1994) and lying to others in the organization (Anand, Ashforth & Joshi, 2005). Greenberg’s explicit focus on intentional behaviours is less ambiguous than Griffin and O’Leary-Kelly’s (2004) emphasis on motivated
behaviours, but comes in contradistinction to Vaughan (1999), who emphasizes unintended consequences.

Group- and organization-level studies have extended to the dark side of citizenship (Klotz & Bolino, 2013), and further examination has been given to the ‘bad apples’ vs ‘bad barrels’ debate in corporate ethics (Ashkanasy, Windsor & Treviño, 2006; Gilligan, 2011; Kish-Gephart, Harrison & Treviño, 2010; Treviño & Youngblood, 1990). This encompasses broader consideration of the collective dimensions of corporate social irresponsibility (Tench, Sun & Jones, 2012) that extends to corporate corruption (Anand et al., 2005; Ashforth, Gioia, Robinson & Treviño, 2008; Brown & Cloke, 2006, 2011; Daboub, Rasheed, Priem & Gray, 1995; De Maria, 2009; Doig, 2011; Karhunen & Kosonen, 2013; Pinto, Leana & Pil, 2008; Rocha, Brown & Cloke, 2011). This metaphor has now been extended to ‘bad cases’ and ‘bad orchards’ (Ashkanasy et al., 2006; Gilligan, 2011; Kish-Gephart et al., 2010; Treviño & Youngblood, 1990). In this tradition, Elias (2013) has compiled a set of interesting chapters investigating deviant and criminal behaviour in the workplace where the individualistic focus of ethical decision-making inter-penetrates with the social. Other significant research also draws attention to modern slavery as a management practice (Crane, 2013).

Sustaining this concern with individual intentionality, Ackroyd and Thompson (1999, p.19) combine sociological and psychological approaches to challenge mainstream OB assumptions but nevertheless stay close to behaviour in the workplace. They put forward the concept of organizational misbehaviour (see also Thompson & Ackroyd, 1995; Punch, 1996, p.1; Sprouse, 1992) that they define as ‘anything you do at work you are not supposed to do’ (Ackroyd & Thompson, 1999 p. 2), with the specific exclusion of ‘managerial misbehaviour, grey fringes of business, [and] whistle-blowing’ (Ackroyd & Thompson, 1999, p. 3). Ackroyd and Thompson’s (1999) broad definition takes a different route to more specific and restrictive definitions that view organizational misbehaviour as ‘any intentional action by members of organizations that violates core organizational and/or societal norms’ (Vardi & Wiener, 1996, p. 151). In making the intention underlying the motivation to misbehave a crucial element of their definition, Vardi and Wiener eschew mistakes, errors and accidents, and distinguish three types of organizational misbehavior: (a) type S misbehaviour that intends to benefit the self; (b) type O misbehaviour that intends to benefit the organization; and (c) type D misbehaviour that intends to inflict damage. These behaviours are then integrated within an understanding of motivation based on a further distinction between normative and instrumental sources of motivation. Unsurprisingly, they find that those actors who engage in type S misbehaviour are primarily motivated by self-interest, while those who perpetrate type O misbehaviour do so as a result of strong identification with their organization (i.e. normative processes) and type D misbehaviour may be triggered by either instrumental and/or normative forces.

In reclassifying and illuminating the relations between a range of behaviours viewed variously through traditional lenses of deviancy studies, Ackroyd and Thompson (1999, p. 25) seek to move beyond seeing misbehaviour either as correctable deviation from a norm, or simply as oppositional resistance to control. They classify misbehaviour in terms of its intentioned direction towards reappropriating time (time perks, time wasting, absenteeism, turnover), work itself (work activity, effort bargaining, soldiering, destructiveness and sabotage), the product (perks, pilferage, fiddling, theft) and identity (goal identification, joking rituals, subcultures, sex games, class or group solidarity), along a continuum ranging from denial and hostility to commitment and engagement. While there is much debate around this classification, two features are worth remarking: it captures a wide range of practices, most of which are still largely ignored though increasingly recognized in the study of organizational behaviour; and it
combines consideration of contested identities with contested resources, where organizational psychology and sociology have tended to treat them separately. Ackroyd and Thompson (1999, p. 19) are explicitly critical of mainstream organizational behaviour approaches that perpetuate an individualistic understanding of rationality and the OB illusion that ‘if something can be understood, it is manageable’, an emphasis that is tangible in Vardi and Wiener’s primarily psychological analysis but can also be found in sociological approaches. In their view, organizational politics results from the conflict of collectively shared and opposed interests that arise out of ‘structural sources of unequal power and resources’ (Ackroyd & Thompson, 1999, p. 20), a view that is not typical of most OB studies and may even be rejected as extremist or ‘Marxist’. Management processes and workplace rationalities are not only top-down, and resistance practices take many forms, making organizational misbehaviour that which is hidden. Their objective of bringing this to light, however, is to complexify understanding rather than simply to improve performance.

Accepting that the dark side may be deeply rooted in an inner darkness of the individual psyche can open up a different perspective at the individual level. It can be constructed as a problem of abjection – that part of ourselves full of uncomfortable desires, motivations and memories that is suppressed or hidden, a part that may drive us to lie, cheat, steal, bully or even kill if unrestrained, a part that we do not want to consciously acknowledge. This rejected part of our experience is phenomenologically ‘sticky’: it will not disappear, however much we may try to deny it, and this interior dark side has been connected to organizational violence, discrimination and victimization (Kristeva, 1982; Linstead, 1997). Without resolving this question, the issue of identifying and ascribing a capacity for pathological behaviour has received some attention at the personal and organizational levels from psychoanalytic and psychodynamic perspectives, and the psychology of ‘dark side’ dysfunctional personality traits (Furnham, 2007; Furnham et al., 2012b). The existence and impact of corporate psychopaths has absorbed a burgeoning number of researchers, especially since the ethical crisis of 2002–3 and the financial crisis of 2007–8 (Babiak & Hare, 2006; Bakan, 2005; Boddy, 2010; Boddy, Galvin & Ladyszewsky, 2010; Clarke, 2005; Hare, 1999; Pech & Slade, 2007).

Sims (2005) takes an alternative look at the work of organizational members’ narratives. Members expend considerable interpretive effort to construct pathological behaviour as reasonable and explicable before they eventually give up and consign the ‘psychopaths’ to the dark side – bitterly cursing them as ‘you bastard’. These positive follower constructions can sustain problematic leaders through the ambiguities of the early development of their (im)moral careers, and unwittingly shield the dark side temporarily from identification. Although we do not include any contributions from psychoanalytic studies on the dark side of organizational behaviour in this issue (see the recent special issue of this journal on the subject for an overview) this important area has been recently revitalized by reconsiderations of the work of Lacan. Interpretations of the Lacanian social and media analyses of Zizek (Böhml & De Cock, 2006; Stavrakakis, 2008) have complemented applications of Lacan’s dynamic symbolic understanding of the real and imaginary dimensions of consciousness to aspects of organizing (Driver, 2009) including the dark sides of entrepreneurship and resistance (Fleming & Spicer, 2007; Jones & Spicer, 2009). This latter approach, situating the entrepreneurial psychological subject within capitalism, opens up the possibility of greater interdisciplinary cross-fertilization with other studies. For example, Ho’s (2009) careful and well-researched empirical study of Wall Street, although primarily anthropological, sociological and socio-economic, does not negate the possibility of psychopathology at work on Wall Street. It offers rich and complementary evidence to demonstrate that discourse, history and culture play a significant part in determining what effects personality disorders may have in organized and institutionalized contexts.
**The sociology of the dark side**

Turning to the field of organizational sociology, Vaughan’s (1999) structured analysis captures and theorizes often disparate and dispersed contributions to understanding the dark side of organizations as a subfield of sociology. Vaughan mainstreams her concerns as sitting within traditional sociological preoccupations with order and disorder, posing the question of why things perpetually go wrong in socially organized settings. Displaying some common concerns with the OB literature as well as critical differences, her approach merits careful attention by dark side scholars with an interest in building theory from what is often considered marginal research. She notes that although some areas of sociology had examined mistakes and disasters, without organization theory ‘the full set of socially organized circumstances that produce these harmful outcomes remains obscure’ (Vaughan, 1999, p. 273). Her objective is to unmask causal structures and processes to improve policy and practice (Vaughan, 1999, p. 273). She argues that the dark side can be understood as ‘routine nonconformity’ and identifies its generic origins and social forms, and three cumulative adverse outcomes: mistake, misconduct and disaster. These are systematically produced by the interconnection between environment, organizations, cognition and choice, and include both motivated and unintended consequences. Vaughan’s (1999, p. 272) post-Weberian dark side is a social one, based on negative social consequences rather than purely individual ones – harmful outcomes and organizational pathologies that adversely affect the public. She follows Merton in defining routine nonconformity thus: any system of purposive action will inevitably generate secondary outcomes that run counter to its objectives.

Unexpected outcomes may be optimal (serendipity) or suboptimal (disaster) for individual actors or others: the dark side is suboptimal for the organization or society. She develops a working definition of organizational deviance, which encompasses conforming as well as deviant behaviour. Because ‘much organizational deviance is a routine by-product of characteristics of the system itself….. [routine nonconformity is] a predictable and recurring product of all social systems’ (Vaughan 1999, p. 274). She then concludes that ‘aspects of organization typically associated with the bright side are also implicated in the dark side’. She proceeds to review by case comparison a range of contingency characteristics that may affect the incidence of dark side phenomena. Environmental factors include newness, imitability, growth factors and the ability or power to compete for scarce resources whereas organizational ones broadly encompass structure, processes and tasks; she also considers socio-cognitive factors. The dark side is implicated in the bright side at the environmental level as ‘structural ties …. that generate trust and control malfeasance may provide the opportunities for deceit and misconduct’ (Vaughan 1999, p. 276). Mistake, misconduct, disaster and routine nonconformity appear in characteristic forms across the three levels of environment, organization and socio-cognition, with discernible common patterns and origins. Vaughan accordingly recommends the sharing of concepts across the areas of interest but also a reconsideration of empirical emphases between domains.

Her focus on the sociology of organizations inevitably neglects contributions to organizational understanding from related domains. The concept of legitimacy, important to Vaughan via neo-institutionalism, is also significant in the field of organizational communication, where it has often been viewed through the work of Jurgen Habermas on systematically distorted communication. Dark side activities are communicatively masked to make the illegitimate appear legitimate, dis-sensus appear to be consensus, and to facilitate exploitation (Deetz, 1996). Processes of institutionalization that go beyond neo-institutionalism are investigated in the work of Pierre Bourdieu in terms of the perpetuation of domination, Bourdieu being concerned with the ways in which institutionalized language and symbolic forms of representation do literal violence to individuality and identity and constrain social movement by organizing it in terms of class, education, skill and other
forms of non-monetary capital (Golsorkhi, Leca, Lounsbury & Ramirez, 2009). Even more familiar within organization studies is the work of Michel Foucault, where the dark side emerges in two forms: first, through the historical analysis of the genealogy of institutional forms, where hegemonic discourse – understood as a combination of language statements, structural forms and associated practices – emerges over time to naturalize particular social arrangements by determining acceptable forms of knowledge with reference to the interests of the powerful, and to suppress alternative discourses; second, in his examination of forms of control that shift from corporeal discipline to examination and surveillance to self-discipline – in professions, institutions, workplaces, public spaces and everyday life. In the first case, the exploration of the (suppressed) dark side consists of exposing that the way things are is not inevitably the way they must or should be, but the product of particular representations of history, ideas and circumstance – and of opening up different possible futures (Burrell, 1988). In the second, the dark side involves one-way public and private visibilities where subjects are disciplined by the concealed gaze of a powerful, and sometimes imagined, Other. This includes personal aesthetics and ethical self-scrutiny (deploying technologies of the self), the meso level of peer-surveillance on the production line, and the macro level of ICT-enabled security camera, satellite and internet surveillance, a darkness recently revealed by the leaks of National Security Agency practice by former security analyst Edward Snowden (Foucault, 1988; Munro, 2005; Sewell & Wilkinson, 1992).

Vaughan’s functional organizational emphasis is perhaps inevitably biased towards production factors, but the sociology of consumption has had a vigorous history since the 1960s. Baudrillard’s (1991, 1994) pioneering work introduced the concepts of simulation and seduction – two important processes that bedazzle social actors into enthusiastically colluding in their own disenfranchisement, consuming recycled imagery as identity as they perpetuate their own commodification. Baudrillard (1993, 1998; Ritzer, 2009) draws heavily on Bataille (1988) in linking processes of symbolic exchange to sacrifice and death in his analyses of these abrogations of authenticity, depicting a dark side that is all the darker for hiding in the light (O’Shea, 2002; Brewis & Linstead, 2000). For both Baudrillard and Ritzer, the paradigmatic exemplar of these processes is the city of Las Vegas.

Critical approaches to the dark side

Critical approaches to the dark side tend to focus on issues of power, domination, exploitation and resistance with an implicit or explicit concern towards emancipation. There has been considerable work done in developing Marxist and post-Marxist analysis within sociological industrial relations traditions, dealing extensively with the hidden agendas, suppressed conflicts and manufacture of consent in the workplace. Most significant has been the extensive work developing labour process theory after Braverman (1974) that centres its concerns around control and resistance in the workplace, especially under changing technologies and new forms of organizational structure (Fleetwood & Ackroyd, 2004; Thompson & O’Doherty, 2009). Research has also explored both the management of the labour process and the changing nature of the managerial labour process (McCann, Morris & Hassard, 2008). Here the dark side is revealed mostly in multiple facets of the dynamics of workplace control and resistance. Largely developing from this tradition and its realist ontology, critical realism has drawn on a broader range of influences and is continuing to produce informative studies of the workplace through eclectic though not radical methodologies (Ackroyd, 2009).

Two insights drawn from Marx are particularly useful: the first is that capitalism needs some form of ideology (religion, commodity fetishism, nationalism, kitsch, corporate culture) to obscure from the exploited the true nature of their oppression and impel them to collaborate, in a state of false consciousness, in a situation that is against their (class) interests; the second is that capitalism
constantly needs to creatively destroy itself, to test its own limits to destruction, at the extreme ends of entrepreneurship, but that there is no way of knowing whether specific events of destruction will prove creative and rejuvenating or not. The dark side may be an indelible feature of capitalism, its ultimate destination, or at least the risk it perpetually carries with it, but whose mechanisms are obscured, whether by conscious and conspiratorial actions of the dominant classes or simply its unfolding systemic logics, of which participants may be relatively unaware. It may be naturally hidden or deliberately concealed.

The inevitable secrecy and withholding of intellectual capital that is necessary for competition creates the conditions for corrupt and illegal activity at individual or corporate levels (Anand et al., 2005; Brown & Cloke, 2006, 2011; Murphy, 2011; Pinto et al., 2008) and corporate corruption has now begun to receive more widespread and explicit attention (see special issues on the topic in *Academy of Management Review* [33, 3, 2008] and *Critical Perspectives on International Business* [7, 2, 2011]). Examinations of systematic accounting malpractice, tax evasion and the collusion of accounting institutions in these practices are undertaken by Mitchell, Sikka and Willmott (1998), Sikka (2008), Sikka and Willmott (2010) and Christensen (2011). The nefarious collusion of state and corporate elites has been challenged by Tombs and Whyte (2003; Whyte, 2012), who also look at how corporate interests narrowly pursued can threaten the safety of workers and communities alike (Tombs & Whyte, 2006) and lead to the failure of regulatory bodies to be effective in meeting their objectives (Tombs & Whyte, 2008; Whyte, 2006). This wilful embrace of (borderline) illegality has also led to examination of organizations set up specifically for nefarious objectives, including organized crime (see Dupla, Very & Monnet, 2012; Durand & Vergne, 2012; Enderwick, 2009; Fiorentini & Peltzman, 1995; Gond, Palazzo & Basu, 2009; Hobbs, 1988, 1995, 2013; Monin & Croidieu, 2012; Punch, 1996; Parker, 2008, 2012; Very & Wilson, 2012; and the special issue on the topic in *M@n@gement* [15, 3, 2012]). Vaughan’s strict definition of the dark side in terms of unintended consequences and routine nonconformity rather than intentional and planned deviance de facto excludes work on corporate crime, which remains important for any attempt at a broader understanding of the dark side.

Alternatively, corporations that are not themselves purposefully evil still become entwined with heinous political regimes, and find themselves supporting and benefitting from their relations with genocidal ruling elites whether in Nazi Germany, the Balkans or Central Africa (Booth, Clark, Delahaye, Procter & Rowlinson, 2007). Burrell (1997) notes that despite extensive studies of these connections in other disciplines, there remains a profound silence in organization studies regarding the organization of the Holocaust, as does Clegg (2009), who perceives the silence to be scandalous. Funnell (1998) and Lippman and Wilson (2007) extend this to the accounting profession, while Long and Mills (2008), Long, Grant, Mills, Rudderham-Gaudet and Warren (2009), Stokes and Gabriel (2010) and Clegg, Pinha e Cunha and Rego (2012) include the wider organization of genocide in their consideration.

Burrell (1997) offers perhaps the most elaborate non-empirical exploration of the dark side of organization. Its structure materializes a challenge to the linearity of thinking he considers characteristic of modernist thought, and particularly organization theory. Taking from Nietzsche the ideas of eternal return, on the one hand, and the mask on the other, he undertakes a historical survey that ranges across cultures and cultural theory to demonstrate that the idea of linear progress central to modernism is frustrated by the return of a deeper level of human problems, and that the cleaned-up gloss of classical rational thought from which the Enlightenment took its inspiration only thinly masked a world of motivations grounded in the body and typically emerging in sex and violence (Burrell, 1997, pp. 47–50). For Burrell, the dark side is gothic, vivid, animal, embodied and situated in nature, growing and decaying, mired in its own waste, festive and carnal, crude yet arcane, with its roots visible even when complicated and elaborated. Where modernity prizes science, the
dark side pursues magic – not only the unmeasurable and intuitive but also the cabalistic uses of number and counter-science – and he demonstrates that this alternative form of knowledge, and crucially of creativity, was both familiar to and secretly practised by early modern scientific champions including Bacon, Newton and the Rosicrucian order (Burrell, 1997, pp. 107–11, 105–31). For Burrell, there is a long historical precedent for the suppression of the bodily, non-rational dimension of the human condition in social philosophy that emerges as though unproblematic in the kitsch of twentieth- (and twenty-first)-century organization theory.

He offers a case for what he calls retro-organization theory that would turn to pre-modern understandings to revitalize both lines and modes of inquiry in the present. Significant aspects of his thinking have been engaged by Hearn and Parkin (2001) on sexuality and violence; Linstead on violence (1997) and kitsch (2002); Brewis and Linstead (2000) on sexuality; Thanem’s (2006, 2011) inspired development of a historically and authoethnographically informed Deleuzo-Guattarian reading of the monstrous qualities of organizing, which Munro (2012) has labelled a ‘monstruction’ of an alternative theory of organization; and Linstead (2001) and O’Shea’s (2002) pursuit of Burrell’s Nietzschean-Sadean line of thought via Bataille. Banerjee and Linstead (2001) also take up Burrell’s argument that global capitalism’s need to urbanize the peasantry as cheap proletarian labour in order to drive down prices and maintain both competition and growth makes them the personification of the abject dark side, urging contemporary postcolonial socio-economic research to give this more attention. The global dark side is very much what is hidden by the light of capitalist expansionism.

Burrell’s argument that the human body is perpetually imbricated in, affected and transformed by organizational processes has been addressed by researchers who specifically record the negative effects on and dangers of work for human welfare. Goh, Love, Brown and Spickett (2012, p. 52) deal with the paradoxical phenomenon that ‘a strong production focus can trigger a vicious cycle of deteriorating risk perception and how increased protection effort can, ironically, lead to deterioration of protection’. Their findings on ‘risk blindness’ underscore those of previous research (Kletz, 1999, 2001; Matilal & Höpfl, 2009; Perrow, 1984; Turner & Pidgeon, 1997; Vaughan, 1996) that ‘the causes and contributory factors of organizational accidents are multidimensional and cumulative across time’ (Goh et al., 2012, pp. 59, 69). They found that organizational accidents are preceded by low cost incident(s) or other warning signs, i.e. the dark side can consist of a cumulative cultural blindness to contra-indicators (‘safety drift’). In a strongly production-led culture, dominant values can be enforced by the use of bullying to suppress these warning signs (Nielsen et al., 2013).

Goh and colleagues also noted the paradox that ‘better protection can encourage more production and ultimately leads to higher risk of organizational accidents’ (Goh et al., 2012, p. 69) which echoes Lawrence’s (1990, p. 224) discussion of Humphrey Davy’s invention of the miner’s safety lamp in 1815. This remains in global production and use after 200 years, having saved many lives by giving both light and early warning of the presence of dangerous gases. But its negative consequence was that it enabled mining to move into deeper and less well-understood geological formations that presented additional safety problems. It also encouraged increased production as new problems were not perceived and it ironically both reduced and increased mining mortality over time. Such inventions can induce greater implicit confidence in workers and managers in the safety of the system leading to complacency, higher risk tolerance and a distorted perception of safety margins.

The cumulative consequences of risk tolerance and blindness need not be dramatically articulated in a single memorable incident. Exposure to often invisible atmospheric pollution can lead to disease that takes years to emerge, often from poorly understood causes, and so far from the origin that causal links are difficult to establish beyond strong correlation. Physical ailments or conditions
engendered over time by working techniques or methods, or disease caused by pollution or radiation, can extend beyond the workplace and continue to affect people who inhabit the area long after the work activity has ceased. High-risk areas are ports, dockyards and former manufacturing sites where the landscape presents a long-term but invisible menace to its inhabitants.

Some of the most dangerous manufacturing and reprocessing activities formerly carried out in the developed world have been exported out of sight to the developing world. This includes the shipbreaking industry of Bangladesh, where decommissioned ships of various types, some of which contain considerable amounts of asbestos and also other hazardous substances, are beached and dismantled with no dry-dock facilities (Cairns, 2007; Crang, 2010). The export of other non-humanistic practices has been less visible than these spectacular coastal landscapes. As postcolonial thought has been incorporated into our understanding of both the history and contemporary practice of organizing, we have learned to question visible and ‘official’ connections along the supply chain, especially as modern flows of capital, information and technology have facilitated both greater complexity in these chains and more insidious global power dynamics (Dedeke & Calkins, 2009). Hardt and Negri (2000) call these simply ‘Empire’ to indicate the continuation of domination by colonial powers translating military and political factors into economic, financial and cultural forms (Banerjee & Linstead, 2001). While some of the dynamics of disaster that Vaughan outlines are germane to the many disasters occurring in manufacturing plants in developing economies, such as the recent Rana Plaza and Gazipur disasters in Bangladesh, other important factors also apply. It is impossible adequately to understand the dark side of global business without an appropriate theorization, not only of causality, but also of the dynamic relationality of established and emerging forms of political economy that form its context, substance and history.

Empirical Issues: Methods in the Dark

While some of the negative by-products of organizational activities, though not conspicuous, are discoverable through persistence in locating sources and empirical documentation, most dark side research focuses on that which is non-obvious, hidden or unrealized – even, in some cases, by those involved. Ordinary and taken-for-granted behaviour that is not necessarily negative per se may at different times and within different consequential chains become pernicious as a result of changes in context, therefore rendering the dark side of organizational behaviour complex, ambiguous and emergent (Bella et al., 2003). The complex interconnections between and consequences of behaviours need to be mapped systematically in order to reveal their immanent darker potentialities and possible outcomes, and they suggest a method of ‘disciplined sketching’ to do this.

An awareness of the complexities of causality within often ambiguous systems is also discussed by Vaughan (2009, pp. 703–5). Vaughan argues for a qualitative form of analytical sociology that she terms analytical ethnography, which looks for causal logics and mechanisms in theorizing analogically about its data. She argues that because all socially organized forms tend to have a high proportion of structures and processes in common, cross-case comparisons based on ethnographic data can generate theory development. Comparison of similar mechanisms against different problems can allow the development of more formal theory, while comparison of similar phenomena in different social settings allows the development of explanations that integrate micro, meso and macro domains. With relevance to the revelation of a hidden dark side, two pieces of her work that were not at the time related are instructive – a study of corporate malfeasance (Vaughan, 1983) and the tragic decision to launch the space shuttle Challenger (Vaughan, 1996). What links the cases for Vaughan is the role of signalling.

In the malfeasance case, a chain of drugstores had submitted and been reimbursed for 50,000 false Medicaid claims over 3 years as a result of systemic features in the way organizations
exchanged and interpreted information. The welfare department’s screening system looked for a variety of signals to discriminate between good and bad claims, but these were ambiguous and could be manipulated and made fraud possible. The fraud was not discovered because of ‘organizational secrecy’ – systemic structures of data exchange and division of labour that interfered with the transmission of organizational information.

The more complex Challenger investigation (Vaughan, 1996) demonstrated an incubation period where signals were ignored at micro, meso and macro levels. The pattern of negative launch data suggested that they were functioning normally and appeared mixed, weak or routine. Organizational structural secrecy also obscured the gravity of these signs. Macro-level pressures from external bodies including Congress and the White House encouraged emphasis on good signals contributing to a ‘normalization of deviance’ where clear danger signals were interpreted as being within an acceptable range for launch decision-making. Vaughan (2009, pp. 704–5) concludes that the dynamics of mechanisms and varieties of possible interpretations of signals can lead to falsification, mistakes and unintended consequences. She considers that analytic ethnography can capture these at all levels because talk and action are observable, traceable and frequently documented. Careful recursion and comparison of different types of sources enables identification of causal connections and mechanisms. Vaughan’s method demonstrates the importance and relevance of discipline and thoroughness, and openness to the possibilities of finding theoretical analogies in unexpected places. Her methodological emphases on causation, underlying generative mechanisms, qualitative orientation and interest in building theories through analytic induction or abduction have commonalities with critical realist methods if not its theory or its overtly critical stance (Ackroyd, 2009; Maréchal, 2009).

Revealing the non-obvious can also occur by exploring more explicit critical lines of inquiry without following the strict contours of a qualitative/quantitative divide. Kelemen and Rumens (2008, p. 123) observe that there is no inevitably preferred association between critical inquiry and qualitative inquiry, and emphasize how quantitative methods can have a place in critical methodologies. Despite expressing agreement on this, Alvesson and Ashcraft (2009, p. 67) believe that ‘there is not much to be said about critical quantitative methodology’ and Ackroyd (2009, p.542) offers qualified support for using quantitative methods within a critical realist methodological frame. Kelemen and Rumens (2008, pp. 133–6), however, discuss Gephart’s (1988, 2006) ethnostatistics at length as a useful model for critical quantitative studies, an approach that offers three levels of analysis: (a) studying the actual production of the statistics in use and the cultural worlds and procedures of producers and users; (b) studying technical choices and assumptions built into the actual measures and instruments used; (c) using literary and textual methodologies to explore how the statistics are used in documentation to warrant knowledge claims. Although Gephart’s work is not explicitly identified with dark side studies, the potential for exposing both unanticipated consequences and the deliberate masking of intentions of statistics with his method is clear. It has in common with Vaughan the attention to detail and scope of inquiry; it recognizes the importance of context in the interpretation and use of statistics as signals, but raises greater concerns about the origination of such statistics as data.

From an analytical mainstream perspective, Greenberg and Tomlinson (2004) offer a historical view of the methodological evolution of employee theft research and they suggest that the DATA model (descriptive studies; analytical studies; theoretical studies; applied research) is valid for other areas of research. Greenberg and Tomlinson discuss observational field studies and open-ended interviews, then move to more structured approaches, laboratory experiments and interventions. Given the problematic nature of dark side research phenomena, this account of the evolution of a field as it generates greater conceptual sophistication is instructive. However, it reproduces the paradigmatic priorities of a normal science model, with controlled trials and laboratory
experiments given greater significance than anthropological methods. Unfortunately, Greenberg and Tomlinson outline only one possible avenue of evolution, reading some of the research they cite selectively, and narrowly characterizing Ditton’s (1977) work as descriptive, when Ditton discusses at length the impossibility of ethnography producing anything other than ‘theorised description’.

Alternative and suppressed narratives can perhaps be better unearthed by qualitative methods and Boje (1995) offers one such example, influenced by both Foucauldian genealogy and Derridean deconstruction. Noting that the Disney organization is probably the world’s biggest story-telling organization, and tells a very vivid, cohesive and seductive story about itself, its place in modern life and its history, he critically analyses documents from the company archives, unofficial accounts, recordings, inscriptions and memorabilia to identify suppressed meanings and excluded storylines in the power play behind the legendary Disneyworld smile. Behind the glittering surface is a dark side that consists in a plurivocality of competing political discourses, rather than a simple negation. Boje’s eclectic approach is broad and thorough in the range of sources he amasses, but central to his research objectives of tracing a narrative tangle that underlies a surface simplicity.

Hidden, concealed, clandestine or sensitive work poses a range of challenges to researchers who need to avail themselves of various direct, indirect and even covert methods in order to pursue their inquiries effectively. A classic formulation of the issues is by Lee (1993, p.4), who defines research on sensitive topics as ‘research which potentially poses a substantial threat to those who are or have been involved in it’, raising issues of access, collection, holding, disclosure and dissemination of research data, and may also involve consideration of modes of analysis where data are incomplete or missing (which can often be the case with ‘dark side’ concerns). Williams and Ram (2009, p.654) consider these issues in researching ‘off-the-books’ work in the black economy. Here what is not visible from the perspective of research methods may be ‘very much in plain sight in everyday life’. They highlight that certain populations are marginalized in much mainstream research, their voices, roles and influence being silenced and overlooked, with different consequences. For example, because access to the highest levels of organizations can be problematic, organizational elites are under-studied (Ho, 2009, makes a similar point from her ethnography of Wall Street). Access to family members, part-time and casual employees, migrant labour and ethnic minorities may be equally difficult for different reasons, such as language and cultural norms, hence their resulting neglect in academic research. Williams and Ram nevertheless suggest that traces, both direct and indirect, can be followed up by researchers and that difficulties in obtaining information from marginal groups may have been exaggerated: developing trust and rapport are frequently mystified. Once access is gained, for example, trust may not be difficult or often even necessary to establish: what is concealed from the taxman or the government may be readily and even proudly disclosed in everyday interaction. The challenges of researching informal work are therefore of degree, not kind, and direct methods – whether quantitative surveys or qualitative in-depth inquiries – are more likely to achieve this than indirect methods. Becoming ‘attuned to the political context’ of socially or socially scientifically excluded groups and acting accordingly is essential to realise the potential for informing both theory and policy (see also Boje, 1995; Goodall 1991, pp.49–62).

Taking a more innovative approach to the issue of secrecy, Goodall (1989, 2006) argued that the organizational researcher is always to some extent a ‘detective’, ‘casing’ the context of action for ‘clues’ to meaning and significance: the presence of the non-obvious. As he puts it, ‘organizations are made up of smaller individual truths, most of which are disconnected’, but serendipity, accident and the casual remark can frequently lead to unexpected and valuable connections being made if we pay attention and learn to read them (Goodall, 1989, p.7, pp.147–68). Goodall (2006) undertakes a sophisticated forensic investigation of his family history, in search of resolutions to
mysteries relating to his father’s work as a government employee and the effect that this had on his and others’ behaviour. He interviewed family and non-family members, and burrowed in federal archives, local and international repositories. The book demonstrates how one clue – a tattered copy of *The Great Gatsby*, bequeathed to him by his father – led him through a range of organizational corridors that unveiled acts of espionage and assassination and culminated in an insightful contribution to how the organization of information, surveillance and secrecy, from personal to governmental levels, can dramatically affect ordinary everyday lives. Among the fragmented ‘truths’ he uncovered was the fact that the gifted copy of Gatsby was his father’s code-book as a Cold War CIA agent. Furthermore, much of the extensive public information on file about him was a mask that obscured his involvement in activities that may have involved the elimination of other subjects. Reading multiply coded clues can be more problematic than might at first appear, and of course there is more than one way to connect them into narratives, as Boje (1995) suggested. Other readings always open out. Goodall connects his father’s secret life and eventual suspected assassination to the dark side of the organization of information, and a dark side of democracy and capitalism more generally – a darkness of which even dark side research may be or may become part (Goodall, 2006, p.371).

There is therefore no specific method for studying the dark side, but sensitivity to context, including political context, is a prerequisite in research design. Accurate and nuanced description of the empirical field underpins both narrative and analytic paths of development. An openness to different data types also seems to be important, and this extends to all forms of investigation – dark side discoveries often occur as a serendipitous by-product of other more straightforward activities. Sometimes, when explored by more informal rather than self-consciously scientific methods, the dark side can be revealed to be far more obvious and accessible than was anticipated. Qualitative or quantitative traces are left by most activities and may form discernible clues to what lies outside the frame of intelligibility: narrative connections or even causal chains may be discernible. Even when the explicit objective is critical exposure rather than empathetic understanding of darker issues, it is often necessary to pursue more sensitive issues ethically and reflexively, alongside other more conservative and less controversial lines of inquiry.

**Conclusion and Introduction to the Contents of the Special Issue**

As we noted in our introduction, there is a dawning recognition in organization studies that the dark side is not only a dark out-side, but is to be found within organizational boundaries and logics. It can in some ways be addressed by existing organization theory. On the other hand, and at the same time, it may also require us to import theory from other disciplines to expand the capacity of organizational analysis to fully engage with the contradictions it instantiates. The contributions to this special issue illustrate both of these elements, with analyses that incorporate psychodynamics, political philosophy, institutional theory, history and organizational memory, critical leadership studies, brand strategy, advertising ethics and corporate identity building, discourse and narrative analysis, and critique and image analysis,

Russ Vince and Abdelmagid Mazen (2014) in ‘Violent innocence: A contradiction at the heart of leadership’ argue that acknowledging the dark side of leadership is a necessary corrective to dominant approaches that emphasize leaders’ virtues above their inevitable shortcomings. As they put it, the unwillingness or inability of leaders to see the dark side of their behaviours and actions can lead to disconnections between individuals, and the emotional and political context within which they work. They develop the concept of ‘violent innocence’ to capture the projective inter-personal dynamics that are neglected in current leadership studies. They then use it to examine how these dynamics result in contradictory, self-defeating and violent aspects of leadership roles and
relations and illustrate the ways in which they are reproduced in self-reinforcing social systems. Drawing on psychodynamics and the work of Bourdieu and Foucault among others, their objective is not to create better leaders but rather ‘to create a better appreciation of the emotional and political context of leadership in action’ stretching from the individual denial of violence to the organizational ‘structure of innocence’ that hides and condones such violence.

Sara Louise Muhr and Alf Rehn (2014) take an unusual contemporary line to the commodification of atrocity in ‘Branding atrocity: Narrating dark sides and managing organizational image’. They observe that in the discipline of marketing, the dark side of human behaviour has not been recognized as intrinsic to organizational practice but exploited as an external opportunity: organizations have identified atrocities that they had no part in occasioning and co-opted them, and actions undertaken for their relief, as a part of their brand identity strategies. After reviewing a range of examples, they undertake a focused narrative study of two campaigns by the Body Shop and the Congo Run for Women. They observe that the use of external atrocities is a risky process and involves careful staging; that different organizations will use different distancing strategies; and that the narration of atrocity and organizational image-work affect each other. In examining how these projects productively co-opt atrocities and the skills and problems involved in doing so, they argue that what is understood as dark or light is not pre-given but emergent. They identify a need for more process-oriented studies of how narratives are negotiated, manipulated, reframed and retold over and over again, and how preconceived notions regarding what constitutes a darkness or lightness can in fact both reduce and romanticize the study of the dark side.

Christopher Land, Scott Loren and Jörg Metelmann (2014) in ‘Rogue logics: Organization in the grey zone’ explore how the familiar figure of the ‘rogue’ manifests in business ethics in the person of the ‘rogue trader’. They find that the rogue trader is not as easy to identify as popular literature might suggest, which leads them to deconstruct the concept through readings of ‘institutional logics’ and Jacques Derrida’s book *Rogues*. From this they suggest that the rogue is not, as commonly cast, to be found on the dark side of organization but in a liminal and indeterminate grey zone, where the boundary between acceptable behaviour and misconduct is unclear. Because within capitalist trading systems it is in the nature of organization to push the boundaries of what is possible and acceptable to their limits, this boundary is necessarily unclear. They argue that the rogue ironically helps produce the boundaries of ethically acceptable organizational behaviour in the very act of transgressing them. ‘Rogue organization’ therefore may be constitutive of organization per se, a potential that needs to be addressed when considering the dark side of organizational ethics.

Darren McCabe (2014), in ‘Light in the darkness? Managers in the back office of a Kafkaesque bank’, takes a view of the ‘dark side’ that differs from Vaughan’s deviance perspective, drawing on the novels of Franz Kafka and empirical work in a UK bank call centre to argue that ‘the dark side… is not to be found in non-conformity but conformity’. McCabe make four main points form his analysis: (a) that the ‘dark side’ needs to be analysed in relation to conformity and functionality rather than simply non-conformity or dysfunctionality because it is an ingrained feature of contemporary ways of organizing; (b) that although managers exercise power over others so as to intensify control, it is equally important to identify the limits to this project and to explore how the seemingly powerless also exercise power and discipline vulnerable management; (c) although managers discipline others, in the process, managers discipline themselves, creating themselves as particular types of subject as they intensify control of working practices and the subjectivities of others; (d) whole layers of management are also victims of the ‘dark side’, enforcing what they perceive to be unjust demands within a flawed and contradictory work regime, and trying to make the system work, as failure threatens their job, income and career. As McCabe concludes, this arrangement is ‘absurd for both those who squirm beneath the rules and for those whose life it is to enforce them’,
but he concludes that the limitations of the system of regulation and its constant failures offer light in the darkness and cry out for ‘alternative ways in which to organize and govern ourselves’.

In ‘Changing the memory of suffering: An organizational aesthetics of the dark side’, Bent Meier Sørensen (2014) argues that organizational aesthetics reside at the heart of what is political, and offers a demonstration of how the dark side of organization has historically been subjected to dominant strategies of collective instruction that normalize how it is understood, or marginalized. Critiquing and complementing recent developments in organizational memory studies (OMS), he offers a method of aesthetic ‘juxtaposition’ of visual artefacts that enables critical researchers to challenge this kitsch organization of memory. The method is exemplified by juxtaposing an iconic World War II photo of a little Jewish boy during the Nazi clearances of the Warsaw Ghetto and Paul Klee’s painting of an angel in terror, Angelus Novus. The analysis critiques the process of ‘collective instruction’ and outlines counter-narrative, counter-memory and anti-memory as means of exposing and resisting this process.

We began with the objective of shifting perceptions of dark side phenomena more broadly by providing resources for bringing new or neglected phenomena into the focus of existing organization theory, and demonstrating the utility of bringing in new analytical concepts to deal with the emergence of these phenomena. The contributions to this issue have provided a rich resource for doing this, and for problematizing the drawing of boundaries too easily between ‘mainstream’ and alternative ‘critical’ perspectives, light and dark, while showing more richly the texture of the shadows of the ‘grey’ area of organization.

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**References**


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