



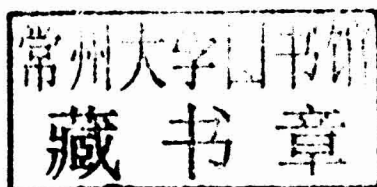
# The Routledge Companion to Ethics, Politics and Organizations

Edited by Alison Pullen and Carl Rhodes

---

# The Routledge Companion to Ethics, Politics and Organizations

*Edited by  
Alison Pullen  
and Carl Rhodes*



First published 2015  
by Routledge  
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

And by Routledge  
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

*Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business*

© 2015 selection and editorial material, Alison Pullen and Carl Rhodes;  
individual chapters, the contributors.

The right of the editors to be identified as the author of the editorial material,  
and of the authors for their individual chapters, has been asserted in accordance  
with sections 77 and 78 of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or  
reproduced or utilized in any form or by any electronic, mechanical,  
or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying  
and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system,  
without permission in writing from the publishers.

Every effort has been made to contact copyright holders for their permission  
to reprint material in this book. The publishers would be grateful to hear from  
any copyright holder who is not here acknowledged and will undertake to  
rectify any errors or omissions in future editions of this book.

*Trademark notice:* Product or corporate names may be trademarks or registered  
trademarks, and are used only for identification and explanation without  
intent to infringe.

*British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data*

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

*Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data*

The Routledge companion to ethics, politics and organizations/  
edited by Alison Pullen and Carl Rhodes. – First Edition.

pages cm. – (Routledge companions in business, management and accounting)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

I. Business ethics. 2. Organizational sociology. I. Linstead, Alison, editor.

II. Rhodes, Carl, editor.

HF5387.R6768 2015

174'.4 – dc23

2014040628

ISBN: 978-0-415-82126-1 (hbk)

ISBN: 978-0-203-56684-8 (ebk)

Typeset in Bembo and Stone Sans  
by Florence Production Ltd, Stoodleigh, Devon, UK

Printed and bound in Great Britain by  
TJ International Ltd, Padstow, Cornwall



# The Routledge Companion to Ethics, Politics and Organizations

*The Routledge Companion to Ethics, Politics and Organizations* synthesizes and extends existing research on ethics in organizations by explicitly focusing on 'ethico-politics' – where ethics informs political action. It draws connections between ethics and politics in and around organizations and the workplace, examines cutting-edge areas and sets the scene for future research.

Through a wealth of international and multidisciplinary contributions this volume considers the broad range of ways in which ethics and politics can be conceived and understood. The chapters look at various ethical traditions, as well as the discursive deployment of ethical terminology in organizational settings, and they also examine large-scale political structures and processes and how they relate to different forms of politics which affect behaviour in organizations. These many possibilities are united by a focus on how ethics can be used to inform and justify the exercise of power in organizations.

This collection will be a valuable reference source for students and researchers across the disciplines of organizational studies, ethics and politics.

**Alison Pullen** is Professor of Management and Organization at Macquarie University, Australia.

**Carl Rhodes** is Professor of Management and Organization at Macquarie University, Australia.

## **Routledge Companions in Business, Management and Accounting**

*Routledge Companions in Business, Management and Accounting* are prestige reference works providing an overview of a whole subject area or subdiscipline. These books survey the state of the discipline including emerging and cutting-edge areas. Providing a comprehensive, up-to-date, definitive work of reference, *Routledge Companions* can be cited as an authoritative source on the subject.

A key aspect of these *Routledge Companions* is their international scope and relevance. Edited by an array of highly regarded scholars, these volumes also benefit from teams of contributors which reflect an international range of perspectives.

Individually, *Routledge Companions in Business, Management and Accounting* provide an impactful one-stop-shop resource for each theme covered. Collectively, they represent a comprehensive learning and research resource for researchers, postgraduate students and practitioners.

Published titles in this series include:

### **The Routledge Companion to Fair Value and Financial Reporting**

*Edited by Peter Walton*

### **The Routledge Companion to Nonprofit Marketing**

*Edited by Adrian Sargeant and Walter Wymer Jr*

### **The Routledge Companion to Accounting History**

*Edited by John Richard Edwards and Stephen P. Walker*

### **The Routledge Companion to Creativity**

*Edited by Tudor Rickards, Mark A. Runco and Susan Moger*

### **The Routledge Companion to Strategic Human Resource Management**

*Edited by John Storey, Patrick M. Wright and David Ulrich*

### **The Routledge Companion to International Business Coaching**

*Edited by Michel Moral and Geoffrey Abbott*

### **The Routledge Companion to Organizational Change**

*Edited by David M. Boje, Bernard Burnes and John Hassard*

### **The Routledge Companion to Cost Management**

*Edited by Falconer Mitchell, Hanne Nørreklit and Morten Jakobsen*

### **The Routledge Companion to Digital Consumption**

*Edited by Russell W. Belk and Rosa Llamas*

### **The Routledge Companion to Identity and Consumption**

*Edited by Ayalla A. Ruvin and Russell W. Belk*

### **The Routledge Companion to Public-Private Partnerships**

*Edited by Piet de Vries and Etienne B. Yehoue*

**The Routledge Companion to Accounting, Reporting and Regulation**

*Edited by Carien van Mourik and Peter Walton*

**The Routledge Companion to International Management Education**

*Edited by Denise Tsang, Hamid H. Kazeroony and Guy Ellis*

**The Routledge Companion to Accounting Communication**

*Edited by Lisa Jack, Jane Davison and Russell Craig*

**The Routledge Companion to Visual Organization**

*Edited by Emma Bell, Jonathan Schroeder and Samantha Warren*

**The Routledge Companion to Arts Marketing**

*Edited by Daragh O'Reilly, Ruth Rentschler and Theresa Kirchner*

**The Routledge Companion to Alternative Organization**

*Edited by Martin Parker, George Cheney, Valerie Fournier and Chris Land*

**The Routledge Companion to the Future of Marketing**

*Edited by Luiz Moutinho, Enrique Bigne and Ajay K. Manrai*

**The Routledge Companion to Accounting Education**

*Edited by Richard M. S. Wilson*

**The Routledge Companion to Business in Africa**

*Edited by Sonny Nwankwo and Kevin Ibeh*

**The Routledge Companion to Human Resource Development**

*Edited by Rob F. Poell, Tonette S. Rocco and Gene L. Roth*

**The Routledge Companion to Auditing**

*Edited by David Hay, W. Robert Knechel and Marleen Willekens*

**The Routledge Companion to Entrepreneurship**

*Edited by Ted Baker and Friederike Welter*

**The Routledge Companion to International Human Resource Management**

*Edited by David G. Collings, Geoffrey T. Wood and Paula Caligiuri*

**The Routledge Companion to Financial Services Marketing**

*Edited by Tina Harrison and Hooman Estelami*

**The Routledge Companion to International Entrepreneurship**

*Edited by Stephanie A. Fernhaber and Shameen Prashantham*

**The Routledge Companion to Non-Market Strategy**

*Edited by Thomas C. Lawton and Tazeeb S. Rajwani*

**The Routledge Companion to Cross-Cultural Management**

*Edited by Nigel Holden, Snejina Michailova and Susanne Tietze*

**The Routledge Companion to Financial Accounting Theory**

*Edited by Stewart Jones*

**The Routledge Companion to Ethics, Politics and Organizations**

*Edited by Alison Pullen and Carl Rhodes*

# Illustrations

---

## Figures

8.1	Black international business: a taxonomy of legitimacy and ethics	125
21.1	Phases and elements of a typical 'ethics management' programme	337
28.1	Toilet-roll holder graffiti	458

## Tables

29.1	Macroeconomists and their schemes of capitalism	467
29.2	Eight ways William James's post-positivist pragmatic goes beyond today's open system thinking	470

# Contributors

---

**Pasi Ahonen** is Lecturer in Management at Essex Business School, University of Essex, England.

**Sharif As-Saber** is Associate Professor of International Business, at the School of Management, RMIT University, Australia.

**Peter Bloom** is Lecturer in Organizational Studies at the The Open University Business School, The Open University, England.

**Steffen Böhm** is Professor in Management and Sustainability at Essex Business School, University of Essex, England.

**David M. Boje** is Professor of Business Administration at The Management Department, New Mexico State University, USA.

**Tim Butcher** is Senior Lecturer at the School of Management, RMIT University, Australia.

**George Cairns** is Adjunct Professor at QUT Business School, Australia.

**Pascal Dey** is Senior Research Fellow at the Institute for Business Ethics, University of St Gallen, Switzerland.

**Amanda Earley** is Lecturer in Marketing, Politics and Culture at the School of Management, University of Leicester, England.

**Peter Edward** is Lecturer in International Business Management at Newcastle University Business School, England.

**Nick Ellis** is Professor of Marketing Management at Durham University Business School, England.

**Peter Fleming** is Professor of Business and Society, Cass Business School, City University London, England.

**Marianna Fotaki** is Professor of Business Ethics at Warwick Business School, University of Warwick, England.

**Gerard Hanlon** is Professor of Organizational Sociology at the School of Business and Management, Queen Mary University of London, England.

**Matthew Higgins** is Senior Lecturer in Marketing and Consumption, at the School of Management, University of Leicester, England.

**Michael Humphreys** is Professor of Organization Studies at Durham University Business School, England.

**Maddy Janssens** is Professor of Organization Studies at the Faculty of Economics and Business, KU Leuven, Belgium.

**Dhammika Jayawardena** is Senior Lecturer in Management and Organizational Behaviour at the Department of Business Administration, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Sri Lanka.

**Barry Judd** is Professor at the School of Global, Urban and Social Studies, RMIT University, Australia.

**Kate Kenny** is a Reader in Management at Queen's University Belfast Management School, Northern Ireland.

**David Knights** is Professor of Organization Studies at Lancaster University Business School and The Open University Business School, England.

**Robert McMurray** is Senior Lecturer in Management at Durham University Business School, England.

**Ken McPhail** is Professor of Accounting at Manchester Business School, University of Manchester, England.

**Matteo Mandarinì** is Lecturer in Strategy at the School of Business and Management, Queen Mary University of London, England.

**Maria Ceci Misoczky** is Professor in Organization Studies at School of Administration, Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil.

**Hilary Monk** is a PhD candidate at The Open University Business School, The Open University, England.

**Mona Moufahim** is Lecturer in Marketing at Durham University Business School, England.

**Margaret Page** is Senior Lecturer at Bristol Business School, The University of the West of England.

**Mollie Painter-Morland** is Professor of Business Ethics at Nottingham Business School, Nottingham Trent University, England.

## Contributors

**Martin Parker** is Professor of Organization and Culture at the School of Management, University of Leicester, England.

**Mary Phillips** is Reader in Organization Studies at the School of Economics, Finance and Management, University of Bristol.

**Alison Pullen** is Professor of Management and Organization at The Department of Marketing and Management, Macquarie University, Australia.

**Carl Rhodes** is Professor of Management and Organization at The Department of Marketing and Management, Macquarie University, Australia.

**Nick Rumens** is Professor of Organization Behaviour at Middlesex University Business School, England.

**Michael Saren** is Professor of Marketing at the School of Management, University of Leicester, England.

**Rohny Saylors** is a PhD student at The Management Department, New Mexico State University, USA.

**Bent Meier Sørensen** is Professor at the Department of Management, Politics and Philosophy at Copenhagen Business School, Denmark.

**Sverre Spoelstra** is Associate Professor at the Department of Business Administration, Lund University, Sweden.

**Chris Steyaert** is Professor of Organizational Psychology at the Research Institute for Organizational Psychology, University of St Gallen, Switzerland.

**Torkild Thanem** is Professor of Management and Organization Studies at Stockholm Business School, Stockholm University, Sweden.

**Janne Tienari** is Professor of Management and Organization at Aalto University School of Economics, Finland.

**Melissa Tyler** is Professor in Work and Organization Studies at Essex Business School, University of Essex, England.

**Sheena Vachhani** is Senior Lecturer in Management at the School of Economics, Finance and Management, University of Bristol, England.

**Steen Vallentin** is Associate Professor in Corporate Social Responsibility at Copenhagen Business School, Denmark.

**Louise Wallenberg** is Associate Professor of Fashion Studies at the Centre for Fashion Studies, Stockholm University, Sweden.

**Robert Westwood** is Professor of Management at The Newcastle Business School, University of Newcastle, Australia.

**Hugh Willmott** is Professor of Management at Cass Business School, City University, London and Research Professor in Organization Studies, Cardiff Business School, Cardiff University, Wales.

**Edward Wray-Bliss** is Associate Professor of Management and Organization Studies, at The Department of Marketing and Management, Macquarie University, Australia.

# Contents

---

<i>List of illustrations</i>	<i>xi</i>
<i>Notes on contributors</i>	<i>xii</i>

1 Introduction: the inseparability of ethics and politics in organizations <i>Alison Pullen and Carl Rhodes</i>	1
--	---

<b>PART 1</b>	
<b>Ethics and corporate power</b>	<b>11</b>

2 Instrumental and political currents in the CSR debate: on the demise and (possible) resurgence of 'ethics' <i>Steen Vallentin</i>	13
---	----

3 'Between coercion and brainwashing': theorizing the politics and ethics of marketing <i>Amanda Earley and Michael Saren</i>	32
---	----

4 Re-ethicizing corporate greening? Ecofeminism, activism and the ethics of care <i>Mary Phillips</i>	51
---	----

5 The oppressed organize against mega-mining in Famatina, Argentina: Enrique Dussel's ethics of liberation <i>Maria Ceci Misoczky and Steffen Böhm</i>	67
--	----

6 Marketing an extremist ideology: the Vlaams Belang's nationalist discourse <i>Mona Moufahim and Michael Humphreys</i>	85
---	----

<b>PART 2</b>	
<b>Postcolonial, globalized and cosmopolitan ethics</b>	<b>101</b>

7 Positioning the plural ethos of cosmopolitanism in global organizations <i>Maddy Janssens and Chris Steyaert</i>	103
---	-----

8	'Black international business' – critical issues and ethical dilemmas <i>Sharif As-Saber and George Cairns</i>	119
9	The politics and ethics of difference in organizations: pathways to the same that is impossible <i>Robert Westwood</i>	132
10	On the burden of being-qua-non-being: in-between the lines of (working-class) writings <i>Dhammika Jayawardena</i>	150
11	Cultural encounters with sporting organization: ethico-politics at the interface of Indigenous culture and organization <i>Tim Butcher and Barry Judd</i>	162
<b>PART 3</b>		
<b>Ethics, politics and the functioning of business</b>		<b>179</b>
12	Accounting, ethics and organization: accounting for human rights in a post-sovereign world? <i>Ken McPhail</i>	181
13	Decision making: between reason and the ethico-political moment <i>Peter Edward and Hugh Willmott</i>	198
14	Leadership, ethical sovereignty and the politics of property <i>Edward Wray-Bliss</i>	216
15	Tracing and theorizing ethics in entrepreneurship: toward a critical hermeneutics of imagination <i>Pascal Dey and Chris Steyaert</i>	231
16	'Who said we're flogging a dead horse?': reframing ethics and the supply chain <i>Matthew Higgins and Nick Ellis</i>	249
<b>PART 4</b>		
<b>Ethico-political practice in organizations</b>		<b>269</b>
17	Ethico-politics of diversity and its production <i>Pasi Ahonen and Janne Tienari</i>	271
18	Work as God's playtime? The theology of organizational play <i>Bent Meier Sørensen and Sverre Spoelstra</i>	288

19	Whistleblowing paradoxes: legislative protection and corporate counter-resistance <i>Hilary Monk, David Knights and Margaret Page</i>	300
20	Care as politics: ethics as violence <i>Robert McMurray</i>	318
21	A critical analysis of ethics management practices <i>Mollie Painter-Morland</i>	335
<b>PART 5</b>		
	<b>Ethics, resistance and struggle</b>	<b>353</b>
22	Is becoming-woman possible in organizations? <i>Alison Pullen and Carl Rhodes</i>	355
23	Resisting the power of organizational resistance <i>Peter Bloom</i>	368
24	Work and illness under neoliberal capitalism: how to use your virus as a weapon of refusal <i>Peter Fleming</i>	384
25	A cultural politics of work: resistance and escape in the culture of organizing <i>Martin Parker</i>	399
26	On the impossibility of business ethics: leadership, heterogeneity and politics <i>Gerard Hanlon and Matteo Mandarin</i>	413
<b>PART 6</b>		
	<b>Difference, ethics and organizations</b>	<b>431</b>
27	Monstrous ethics <i>Torkild Thanem and Louise Wallenberg</i>	433
28	Towards a queer politics and ethics within organization studies <i>Nick Rumens and Melissa Tyler</i>	447
29	Pragmatic storytelling, ethics and politics of late modern capitalist enterprises <i>David M. Boje and Rohny Saylor</i>	462
30	Working the grey zones: feminist ethics, organizational politics <i>Sheena Vachhani</i>	479

## Contents

31	An ethics of difference: the contribution of Bracha Ettinger to management and organization studies <i>Kate Kenny and Marianna Fotaki</i>	494
	<i>Index</i>	506

# Introduction

## The inseparability of ethics and politics in organizations

*Alison Pullen and Carl Rhodes*

---

In recent years ethics has become of increasing interest to those who study organizations (e.g. Parker, 2003; Kornberger and Brown, 2007; Wray-Bliss, 2009; Helin and Sandstrom, 2010; Pullen and Rhodes, 2014). Both preceded and informed by a so-called ‘ethical turn’ in theory and philosophy more generally (Davis and Womack, 2001; Garber et al., 2000) ethical matters are no longer sequestered as the subject of the specialized discipline of business ethics, and more an issue for management and organization theory in general. This attention to ethics is perhaps a sign of the times; times of escalating corporate power (Barley, 2007) ushered in by the liberalization of global markets ruled by networks of giant corporations (Carroll, 2010) which have been freed from the old burdens of state regulation (Veldman, 2013). Indeed, when corporate power is ideologically justified and legally enabled, what might be beholden to keep it in check and hold it to account?

The situation is one where the growth of corporate freedom and power has led to a new interest in ethics and organizations. Symptomatic of the call to ethics in organizations is the phenomenon of the ‘corporate scandal’: a public shaming of an organization for alleged ethical wrongdoing. We might even say that the twenty-first century has seen the heyday of the corporate scandal with corporations regularly being trawled through the press for accounting fraud, corruption, rogue trading, tax avoidance, market manipulation, executive sex scandals and corporate espionage. These scandals highlight public concern over the morality of the exercise of corporate power, as well as highlighting the idea that ‘ethics’ is somehow the remedy for the problem. This remedy is often perceived as a form of ‘managerial voluntarism’ that would serve as a replacement for state regulation (Marens, 2013) in ensuring that business organizations ‘do the right thing’.

In light of the questioning of corporate power and morality, there have been various calls for a new and different type of ethics that might better serve organizations in contemporary global capitalism (Jones et al., 2005). One view is that the issues and contexts that characterize organizations are unique from those of other institutions and as such this requires a specialized set of ethical theories. This is so, it has been argued, because organizations contain “dynamic social processes that defy attempts to apply traditional moral theory and detached philosophical wisdom” (Barker, 2002: 1099). It has been proposed that “organizations need an ethics of their

own” (Phillips and Margolis, 1999: 619) and that this is to be developed by professional ethicists who would busy themselves by “specifying and justifying substantive aims for organizations, their owners, and their managers to pursue” (p. 630). In both practice and theory the most common way that such an ethics is conceived is that it is the responsibility of a managerial elite to control and ensure the ethicality of their organizations.

It is in response to both the acknowledgement of the problematic of corporate power, and the presupposition that ethics in organizations lies within the domain of managerial responsibility and agency, that we conceived of the idea for this book. It seemed to us so limited and privileged to reduce ethics to the justification of organizational action as beholden to an organization's rights to exercise power in accordance with the values and desires of a managerial class (e.g. Phillips and Margolis, 1999; Verkerk et al., 2001). The prevalence of the idea that there might be an ‘ethics of organization’ (Phillips and Margolis, 1999; Hancock, 2008) or ‘organizational ethics’ (Sims, 1991; Barker, 2002) that can be developed and enforced seemed to us to be more about entrenched forms of managerial power and authority than it did about ethical deliberation or questioning. Indeed, ethics appears, at least in this formulation, as an expansion of managerial domination into newer and more subversive domains of life. There is room for cynicism here. In one sense this is because most generally corporations have “failed to responsibly use whatever autonomy and discretion they possessed to produce fair and generous outcomes for their various stakeholder groups” (Marens, 2010: 761) and in another sense that ethics can be used as a smokescreen to fend off demands for corporate regulation (Fleming et al., 2013). In both senses expanding the scope of corporate liberties that are central to neoliberalism comes through as the (not so) hidden purpose of managerially oriented business ethics.

At stake is a distinct relationship between ethics and the exercise of power in organizations; in particular the deployment of ethics for the purposes of securing and enhancing corporate power. Acknowledging the veracity of this deployment of ethics in organizations, our intention in editing this book was to contribute to the development of a very different approach to ethics in organizations; one where organizations are brought into question by ethics rather than bolstered by it. This approach is one that has been referred to as ‘ethico-politics’ (see Parker, 2003, McMurray et al., 2011; Pullen and Rhodes, 2014); a relationship where ethics is both questioned and mobilized, and where politics are directed by ethics. In adopting and referring to the term ethico-politics we were influenced by its use within feminist theory to render problematic the traditional hierarchies of thought that have served to reproduce inequality and domination (Bar On and Ferguson, 1998). Such work attests to the long-standing yet false separation of the domains of ethics and politics in western thinking, as well as seeking to unite them through forms of resistance that oppose and/or destabilize normalized social and institutional actions and arrangements (cf. Diprose, 2002; Pullen and Rhodes, 2014). In feminist theory much focus has been on ethico-politics as it relates to gender identity, women's agency and political dissent (see Parkins, 2000; Ferguson, 1998). This has clear relevance for organizations, given the dominance of rational and control-based managerial approaches to ethics that can be seen to embody an ‘ethics of manliness’ that prizes mastery, legitimacy and achievement (Bologh, 1990). It is this powerful and manly notion of ethics that is brought into question such that alternative ethics can emerge.

The ethico-politics of organization that forms the theme of this book seeks to contest an ethics of organization that promises a means by which managers can effectively manage ethics. Further, an ethico-political approach concerns itself with the way such forms of management might actually inhibit ethical behaviour. It has been suggested, for example, that dominant cultural norms in organizations diminish “the capacity for organizations to scrutinize the ethics of their actions” (Rhodes et al., 2010: 535). Such an approach proffers a mistrust of organizational ethics