DARK SIDE XXI: AOM CMS Division's CASE WRITING COMPETITION

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Deadline for Case Submissions is Tuesday, January 11, 2022, via the AOM submission system (the system opens in December 2021)

The **Critical Management Studies (CMS) Division of the Academy of Management** (AOM) is pleased to sponsor the Dark Side XXI Case-Writing Competition. Now in its 21st year, the Dark Side Case Competition is designed to encourage and acknowledge the development of cases that provoke reflection and debate on creating a better world together in times of uncertainty and new normal. Unlike mainstream cases, critical cases constitute a fundamental challenge and radical alternative to mainstream corporate and management conceptual frames, mental models, values, paradigms, practices, processes and systems. The competition is sponsored by Routledge. The award to the best case is a recognition certificate and a credit of US $250 on Routledge books.

RATIONALE:

Business and management school case libraries are almost exclusively devoted to "best-practice" cases profiling business decisions faced by what are generally considered to be well-managed firms. The cupboard is relatively bare when instructors look for cases on the more typical, merely average firm, or on really scandalously bad practices, or on the sometimes bad consequences of much-praised practices. We challenge this "bright side" bias for several reasons:

- "Dark side" cases can tell us a great deal about weaknesses of the broader system of business and of our society;
- There are a large number of organizations that do very well for one set of stakeholders (e.g., owners) at great expense to other stakeholders (e.g., workers or local communities); and

- Our students deserve materials that prompt them to think through the scope of feasible and appropriate action if they happen to find themselves confronted with such practices.

Contrary to dominant pedagogical and case writing imperatives, critical management scholars believe that teaching cases should provide a dimension of critical evaluation of business practices through the exploration of a wide range of perspectives that extend beyond the views and interest of management and ownership, and beyond the isolated goal of profit generation. Critical cases are an opportunity for students to challenge, and imagine alternatives to mainstream objectives of contemporary capitalism rather than just reproduce them.

TOPICS & CRITERIA:

Submissions to the Dark Side Case Competition are invited from *within and outside academia:* faculty, students, those working in industry, activists, or anyone else who has experience or research to write up. We are looking for **teaching cases** – not research papers about case studies or otherwise. Our goal is to encourage the development of first-rate classroom materials that generate discussion around "dark side" issues in the context of contemporary capitalism and management theorization. Our goal is also to force the case method to be more than a narrow, instrumental managerial perspective, nourishing the exposure of students to critical reflections on management and organizations theories and practices.

We encourage submissions **examining a range of organizational and social issues** including, but not limited to:

- *Cases focused on labor relations* – instructors in this area are especially eager to see cases that raise issues about the difficulties workers encounter in organizing unions and otherwise expressing voice at work.
- *Cases focused on environmentally harmful practices* – we need to understand better the factors that entice firms to pollute, and how these conditions might be changed.

- *Cases that explore experiences of gender, race, religion, sexuality, class, and the deep structures of power* that marginalize, oppress and silence individuals and groups
- *Cases that deal with more systemic issues that are affected directly and indirectly by organizations,* including rising social, economic and development inequalities inside and between countries, unfolding of colonialist interventions, tax evasion strategies, increasing corruption, and refugees crises
- *Cases that articulate real-world effects* of the assumptions, values, and theoretical and organizational systems of our current capitalist paradigm and offer alternative ways of seeing and being (for example, based on indigenous, spiritual, human rights, or other perspectives),
- *Cases that examine "other" forms of organizations and organizing,* motivated by diverse values and ways of knowing and thinking
- *Cases that examine the paradox of technology* as an element of our environment that enables and constrains individuals
- *Cases that address aspects of the current year's AOM overall theme are particularly welcome.* In 2022, the AOM's theme of "Creating a Better World Together" can be particularly relevant for those with a critical perspective. For more on the theme see: https://aom.org/events/annual-meeting/annual-meeting-theme

We would like also *to encourage participants to use innovative formats* in their teaching cases, such as **DRAMA, MUSIC, ROLE PLAY**, **VIDEOS, VISUAL ARTS** etc.

If cases have previously been presented in a public forum such as online case collections, submissions should list these fora and provide a link to any online resource. While we believe that cases are different from scholarly papers and benefit from development through iteration, we are looking for innovation in both content and approach.

The award selection criteria include:

- The relevance of the issues raised from a critical standpoint
- The use of a strong critical theoretical background which provides an alternative to mainstream management analyses
- The quality of the underlying research – we encourage solid background research consistent with the nature and purpose of the case
- The quality of the presentation (including clarity of the writing; organization, appropriate use of exhibits, tables, appendices etc.)
- The originality of the pedagogical supports (videos, visual arts, or poetry for example)
- The quality and utility of the accompanying teaching notes (guidelines follow)

All submissions should include **a teaching note**, which should include:

- A synopsis of the case
- A statement describing how/why the case is a critical case
- A brief description of the research behind the case
- Suggested courses including course level (undergrad/grad) and course type [Policy, OB (Organisational Behaviour), OT (Organisation Theory), MIS (Management Information Systems), Labor Relations, etc.]
- A clear connection to a critical theoretical framework and strong academic literature to analyze the case
- A guide of questions that make explicit the issues raised by the case and the importance of these issues from a critical perspective. Suggested answers should be included, and the answers to the guide questions should draw out managerial and organizational implications of the situation and of the recommended plan(s) of action, as well as generating some discussion on how the case relates to relevant theories
- A suggested teaching plan (including practical issues like organizing the size of class and time allocation)
- Reference list of related readings and data sources
- A case update, if available.

Please note that the "Best Case award" will go <u>to the Best Case Study – not to the worst offender!</u> The results of the previous years of the competition are posted at the CMS website (https://cms.aom.org/awards/new-item3) and are also available at the Dark Side Case Book Series published by Greenleaf (2009; 2013) and Routledge (2018).

<u>PRACTICALITIES OF SUBMISSION</u>:

The Dark Side Competition forms part of the CMS Division's Scholarly Program. Participants must:

- **submit** their case **as a 'PAPER'** via the **AOM submission system,** following the main program deadline.
- **<u>The first three words of the PAPER TITLE must be 'DARK SIDE CASE:' – followed by the title of the teaching case.</u>**
- **DO NOT** include any **IDENTIFYING INFORMATION** and contact details on the case pdf file to be submitted in the system.

Entries to the competition will be reviewed by an international panel of reviewers and, based on the reviews, the competition organizers will select <u>up to 5 finalist cases</u> to be presented at the AOM Virtual Meeting. Entries to the competition will be judged entirely on the *written* material provided by authors. The presentations at the paper session will not form part of the competition process but will allow the case writers the opportunity to discuss, refine and develop their cases for future publishing outlets.

Authors of the finalist cases will **present** them at the **Dark Side Case Session** in the 2022 CMS Division's main scholarly program and also at the **CMS Business Meeting**. From the finalists, one entry will be selected for the "Best Case Award."

Please be aware that **SUBMITTING a case to the competition constitutes a COMMITMENT to ATTEND AOM 2022 Conference to PRESENT** at the Dark Side Session **AND** that such participation will **not break the rule of 3+3 from the conference**

requirements (see here for details: https://aom.org/events/annual-meeting/submitting/submission-process/submission-guidelines**)**

The award to the best case is a recognition certificate to authors and a credit of US$250 on Routledge books. All finalist cases will receive recognition certificates. Winners and finalists may even have the opportunity to publish the case in a potential new edition of the Dark Side book series in the coming years.

Inquiries should be addressed to the 2022's competition organizer, Dr. Elina Riivari at elina.riivari@jyu.fi.