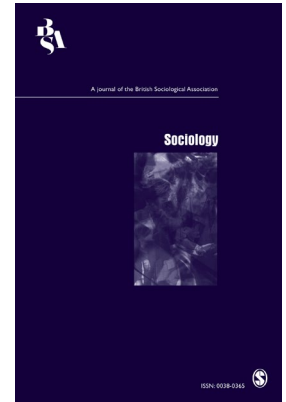




Call for Papers: *Sociology* Special Issue

Slavery and Freedom in the Contemporary World: A Sociological Lens



Guest Editors: Angelo Martins Junior (University of Birmingham), Samuel Okyere (University of Bristol), Pankhuri Agarwal (University of Bath), and Julia O'Connell Davidson (University of Bristol)

Deadline for submission of full papers: 12 December 2024

Over the past thirty years, two distinct conversations regarding slavery and freedom have emerged. One of these discourses holds that the racial inequality, violence, and oppression established by colonisation, imperialism, and the transatlantic slave trade continue to exist on a national and international scale. They produce the many forms of inequality, exploitation, and violence that exist in the contemporary world and must therefore be eradicated to ensure greater freedoms and equality for all (Andrews, 2021; Bhambra and Holmwood, 2021; Bhattacharyya, 2018; Hesse and Thompson, 2022; Kendi, 2016). The other, widely supported by politicians, mainstream media, antislavery NGOs, campaigners, and some academics, claims that instead of continuity of oppression and inequality, new or modern forms of slavery have emerged that have little to do with race, colonialism, or the legacies of Atlantic World slavery (Bales and Soodalter, 2009). In fact, many politicians who condemn this "scourge of modern slavery" decry school lessons and public discourse on colonialism, imperialism, the transatlantic slave trade, and their legacies as "controversial" or racially divisive. In the United Kingdom, the United States, and other countries, they have called for the banning of books, ideas, and organisations that draw attention to these issues, such as Black Lives Matter (BLM), certain elements of critical race theory, and calls to decolonize the academy and society. Until now, these two distinct narratives have rarely been discussed in tandem (O'Connell Davidson, 2022).

This special issue's focus is on whether and how sociological theory and research can bridge these contrasting worldviews to provide a better understanding of how freedom, unfreedom, and inequality are conceptualised, practiced and experienced in the modern world. It starts from the observation that while 'modern slavery' is said to disproportionately affect (predominantly formerly colonised) countries in the Global South, mainstream representations and discourses on human trafficking, worst forms of child labour, illegal markets, forced marriage, and other phenomena described as 'modern slavery' frequently rely on and reproduce concepts, epistemologies, and theoretical assumptions that do not reflect the lived realities of the Global South. Anibal Quijano's concept of the colonality of power (Quijano and Ennis, 2000) is highly pertinent to "modern slavery" knowledge production and discourse, and this special issue hopes to promote academic exchange and dialogue between scholars from different regions of the Global South, as well as between Global South and Global North scholars.

Themes may include:

We welcome papers that interrogate connections between issues framed as "modern slavery" in mainstream discourse and histories of slavery and colonialism; and/or that address the contemporary relevance of histories of slavery and colonialism for severe restrictions on



freedom that are *not* cast as “slavery” in dominant discourse (e.g., immigration detention, immigration sponsorship schemes, deportation, incarceration, and more). The authors may consider the following questions: What does a historicising lens add to sociological understandings of the current distribution of freedom and unfreedom globally and within nations? Why are some restraints on freedom currently constructed as morally intolerable and equivalent to slavery, whereas others are deemed tolerable or even necessary?

Format:

We welcome articles of 6000-8000 words in the usual house style. [Submission guidelines](#) are available on the journal website.

We also welcome alternative contributions. If you are considering this, please contact the Editors in advance to discuss. Such contributions might include:

1. Review articles concerning books, museums, films, and other creative mediums;
2. Interviews or dialogues between two or more authors;
3. Roundtable discussions.

These alternative contributions should be 1800-3000 words in length.

For further information and queries, please contact the guest editors: Angelo Martins Junior (a.martinsjunior@bham.ac.uk), Samuel Okyere (sam.okyere@bristol.ac.uk), Pankhuri Agarwal (pa591@bath.ac.uk), and Julia O’Connell Davidson (julia.oconnelldavidson@bristol.ac.uk)

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For queries about submission please contact the journal: sociology.journal@britsoc.org.uk

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