This dissertation examines reputation as a regulating force in online and offline relationships and transactions, arguing that reputation requires protection through the promulgation of new laws. Using John Locke's "under-labourer" approach as its central method, this dissertation ultimately sets out a series of conclusions, which form a preliminary framework upon which appropriate reputation regulation might be built. Part I of this dissertation studies offers an interdisciplinary study of reputation. Chapter 1 examines the ways that reputation is created and maintained, the purposes for which it is used, and its role in risk management and trust. These understandings are then applied to reputation in process. Chapter 2 explores formal reputation systems and the ways in which user investments and desires become written into reputation such that multiple levels of "dominant" norms may be simultaneously operant. Chapter 3 shows this normative force also operating on social network sites, shaping identity performances. Finally, having established these intersections and the regulating power of norms upon reputation, the effect of such performances is examined in chapter 4, which identifies reputation's gatekeeper role in offline and online spaces.
Reputation is distinct from the actual character or behavior of the company and may be better or worse. When the reputation of a company is more positive than its underlying reality, this gap poses a substantial risk. Eventually, the failure of a firm to live up to its billing will be revealed, and its reputation will decline until it more closely matches the reality. BP appears to be learning this the hard way. The energy giant has strived to portray itself as a responsible corporation that cares about the environment. But the fact of the matter is, the CEO does not have the time to manage the ongoing process of coordinating all the activities that affect reputational risk.

Managing Reputational Risk. Iago treats reputation contemptuously, this can be proven by his words to Cassio: "Reputation' is an idle and most false imposition, oft got without merit. Iago says nothing for his situation; he does not restore his reputation. However, he uses the power of reputation to create destruction and tragedy.


Some who study political risk prefer the term political uncertainty, because of the view that each situation and the risks this can create when information is accessed or employed without an understanding of the norms which have shaped that information. Thus reputation is shown as a socially negotiated and co-created process which exerts an unseen hegemonic force, with dominant political, economic and ideological interests embedded in seemingly social norms. These norms are enforced via reputation, which takes on a gatekeeper role, regulating access to a variety of spaces, information, and economic opportunities. Part II begins with an examination of the current forms of legal and quasi-legal regulation of reputation that exist, ultimately finding that none of them is fully applicable to the complexity of reputation. Having established this complexity and shown that current approaches are inadequate, chapter 6 moves on to examine and then reject the neoliberal approach currently applied to these issues, finding its focus on individual responsibility to be inadequate and inappropriate, calling instead for a mode of regulation that understands reputation within its social context.