

Writing Prompt
Assignment #1: Product Supply Chain Paper
Spring 2017

Introduction

The economics of human trafficking are straightforward: cheap labor lowers the cost of production, increases profit margins for producers, and lowers prices for consumers. The challenge for consumers who are concerned about whether the products they buy were made with forced, trafficked, or slave labor is to understand the supply chains of the goods they buy.

Product supply chain analysis is used to describe a number of processes and interactions that go into the creation of a product. It describes how people in a particular industry gather resources, transform those resources into products, and distribute those products to consumers. This nearly always involves not just one business or group of people, but a series of steps along which the product is developed. The “chain” follows the product from “mine to market”: it is the connected path by which a good travels from producers to consumers.

An example of a product supply chain would be tomatoes grown in South Florida. Why are most of the tomatoes available in the U.S. during the winter months grown in South Florida, where the soils are not well suited for growing tomatoes? How are the tomatoes harvested, and by whom? What companies are marketing them? Who is buying them in the winter?

Assignment Goals

Choose **one** product made and consumed in any region of the world, and analyze its supply chain. There are many products that have been associated with human trafficking. Some ways of starting: Use any search engine to identify a product that has been associated with human trafficking. Visiting a local supermarket (like Fiesta) or other store can help you to identify an interesting or unknown product. You might also find ideas looking around your bedroom or kitchen.

Paper Organization

Your paper should contain the following sections:

- I. Introduction: Briefly lay out entire continuum of how the product is produced, marketed & sold.
- II. Production: For your product, what are the incentives for producers to consider using trafficked labor during production? How is it possible for producers to keep modern-day slave labor quiescent and hidden from the view of regulators and consumers?
- III. Supply Chain: What are the local, national, and international links in the supply chain of your product?
- IV. Consumers: Who buys and consumes this product, and from what retail venue (big-box chain, small retail, internet)? Can consumers reasonably be expected to know that this product has been made with trafficked labor?
- V. Advocacy: And what, if any, organizations are combating the use of trafficked labor in the production of your product? What tools are these organizations using to publicize the use of trafficked labor?

- VI. **Conclusion:** Speculate about how future changes of any kind (environmental, economic, and/or political) might affect the commodity chain and the people involved. What do you think are the **major impacts** of the product supply chain you analyzed: what are the impacts on the producers, on the trafficked labor used to produce it, and on the consumers who buy it?
- VII. **Bibliography:** Use APA style to cite all sources referenced. Visit apastyle.org or Purdue Owl at <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>.

PROJECT GUIDELINES

1. **Formatting and Length:** 1000-1500 words, not including the bibliography. Your paper should thus be 4-6 pages long, and should use at least three bibliographic sources (see below). Papers should be double-spaced with one-inch margins, 12 point Times New Roman font.
2. **Assignment Deadlines & Details**
3. February 3: Product choices due for approval by instructors
TBD: Optional Draft returned to students with comments
March 10: Final Paper due
4. **How to Submit Papers**
 - Submit by Canvas
 - **Name your file by: “YOUR LAST NAME, INITIAL FIRST NAME, “PAPER 1” [DRAFT or FINAL]”**
5. **Organization:** After identifying your product, your paper should proceed logically from the product’s production source, to its manufacture, to the middle-men who might wholesale it, and finally to some description of how it is marketed and purchased by consumers.
6. **Bibliographic sources:** The bibliography should include at LEAST three sources, and may include websites, books, and articles from which you have collected information. At least one source must come from the UT Library system: books, journal articles, or other articles from online databases.

You must use the APA parenthetical citation style and bibliography format – there is a program available through UT Libraries that will guide and format your bibliography: <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/noodlebib> and a handout provided on Canvas.

Journal articles are the gold standard for sources, but books and news organizations will also be accepted. Good online major news organizations are the New York Times, BBC, and The Economist. Use careful judgment when selecting online sources. If you have questions about using and citing scholarly journal articles or books, contact your TA. Since this is an academic writing project, Wikipedia is not an acceptable source of final information.

The following websites are good sources to start looking for products that have been known to be associated with trafficked labor:

US Department of Labor's "List of Goods Produced by Child or Forced Labor":

<http://www.dol.gov/ilab/reports/child-labor/list-of-goods/>

Workers Defense Project: <http://www.workersdefense.org/>

State Department's Trafficking in Persons Annual Report

Slavery Footprint: <http://www.slaveryfootprint.org/>

7. How do I do well on this project?

1. Make sure you pick something that interests you! There is nothing worse than working on a project that you really do not care about. Think about your own interests and products that may be associated with them.

2. Start early! Start thinking about potential products today – it may be time consuming to identify the different stages of a supply chain.

3. We strongly encourage you to use the Undergraduate Writing Center, FAC 211, 471-6222 (www.uwc.utexas.edu/). The Undergraduate Writing Center offers free, individualized, expert help with writing for any UT undergraduate, by appointment or on a drop-in basis. Any undergraduate enrolled in a course at UT can visit the UWC for assistance with any writing project. The consultants there work with students from every department on campus, for both academic and non-academic writing. Their services are not just for writing assignments that have "problems." Getting feedback from an informed audience is a normal part of successful writing. Consultants help students develop strategies to improve their writing. The assistance they provide is intended to foster independence. Each student determines how to use the consultant's advice. The consultants are trained to help you work on your writing in ways that preserve the integrity of your work.

4. Websites with writing tips:

<http://www.wsu.edu/~brians/errors/errors.html>

<http://www.westminster.edu/staff/brennie/writerro.htm>

<http://www.ilstu.edu/~jhkahn/writing.html>

8. Grading & Evaluation

Your paper will be graded on the basis of thoroughness, organization, factual correctness, writing style, and grammar. Most of all, it will be graded on how well you describe your product's supply chain and the use of trafficked labor to produce the product.

1. Completeness and thoroughness

Consistent throughout (Yes)	Consistent throughout most of paper (Mostly)	Not consistent throughout- needs work (Not Enough)	
			Issue fully addressed
			Sufficiently researched
			Empirical literature incorporated
			Major questions have been addressed
			Carefully proofread

2. Organization and Clarity

Consistent throughout (Yes)	Consistent throughout most of paper (Mostly)	Not consistent throughout- needs work (Not Enough)	
			Well written & organized
			Appropriate transitions
			Sentence structure, syntax, grammar
			Headings and subheadings
			Understandable to unfamiliar reader
			Understandable to familiar reader

3. Referencing

Consistent throughout (Yes)	Consistent throughout most of paper (Mostly)	Not consistent throughout- needs work (Not Enough)	
			Sufficient Number of References
			APA style utilized
			References well integrated
			References from various sources
			Correct use of quotations
			Indirect quotes paraphrased sufficiently

4. Originality and Creativity

Consistent throughout (Yes)	Consistent throughout most of paper (Mostly)	Not consistent throughout- needs work (Not Enough)	
			Viewpoints compared/ contrasted
			Use of analytical skills not just restatement
			Views not addressed by others

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