

La specificità del *whistleblowing*

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The Distinctiveness of Whistleblowing

Abstract: A whistleblower is a member of a legitimate organization – a private company or a public institution – who reports a possible wrongdoing – an illegal behavior, a violation of organizational procedures or, more generally, a morally problematic action performed by an individual – either to a higher direct (through internal channels) or, if this proves ineffective, to the media or to a government agency, with the intent to prevent harm and injustices for the society. Notwithstanding the media have recently contributed to improve the public image of whistleblowing, emphasizing its role in promoting corporate social responsibility, whistleblowers are often subject to retaliation and discrimination. For this reason, whistleblowing is often seen as the heroic act – thus representing a supererogation rather than a duty. In this article I try to show that whistleblowing could be interpreted as a specific duty, i.e. conceptually and normatively independent of other fundamental moral or legal obligations.

Keywords: Whistleblowing, Corporate social responsibility, Whistleblowing as a duty.

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