



Alternatives to Lean Production: Work Organization in the Swedish Auto Industry (Cornell International Industrial and Labor Relations Reports)

Christian Berggren

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Christian Berggren asks whether the mass production of manufactured goods can be adjusted to meet human needs and fit human capacities. In the heyday of classical "Fordism, " workers were subjected to intense time pressure to perform highly repetitive, physically demanding work, and Berggren challenges the contention that the character of the work is substantially improved by "Toyotism." The Swedish auto industry has developed a distinctly different production design and work organization, exploring alternatives to the assembly line and to the traditional shop-floor hierarchy. The Swedish model of teamwork increased independent decision making and elicited strong union commitment. But how successful has this model been? Berggren provides a detailed evaluation of the reorganization of work within the Swedish auto industry during the period from 1970 to 1990. His book offers significant insights for anyone interested in industrial democracy, work reorganization, and international competition.

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