



Capitalism and Democracy in Conflict?

Governing Work in the Global Economy
Lecture Series

Can Mediation Institutions Save Coordinated Collective Bargaining in Scandinavia?

Tuesday, October 8, 2013 • 12:00—1:30 pm

Rm 130/131 · Labor Education Center · 50 Labor Center Way · Douglass Campus

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How do Scandinavian countries maintain more egalitarian forms of capitalism than other wealthy democracies even after the demise of centralized collective bargaining between peak-level employer and labor confederations? As the comparative literature on Scandinavian industrial relations has documented, sector bargaining has emerged in both Sweden and Denmark. Nevertheless, even without vertical compulsion, inequalities in working conditions across sectors have been contained, and most sectors tend to follow the pattern set in bargaining between manufacturing employers and their unions. Conventional accounts have had little to say about how the new institutional arrangement has been able to sustain this high-road, economy-wide bargaining coordination. Analyzing an innovative form of government intervention, the speaker discusses the crucial importance of publicly-sponsored mediation institutions in helping the two societies solve cross-sectoral collective action problems.

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