



After Capitalism: From Managerialism to Workplace Democracy

Seymour Melman

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After Capitalism is the apex of the life's work of one of the most respected scholars of the American workplace. For nearly half a century, Seymour Melman has been an influential commentator on capitalism, militarism and their discontents. In **After Capitalism** he explores a growing trend in capitalist systems worldwide: workplace democracy.

The end of the Cold War in 1991 inspired an unprecedented outburst of triumphalist rhetoric among proponents of unfettered capitalism. Free-marketeers believed that we were witnessing “the end of history,” and proclaimed that the market economy was here to stay, that all alternatives had been proven inferior. Melman, in dissent, tracks the increasing social and economic inequities and the resulting cries for workplace reform.

He points out the ominous parallels between the Soviet Union's planned economy and the relentless onward march of American capitalism. Just as the Soviet planned economy venerated “the State” above all else, American capitalism views the health and eternal expansion of the free market as the ultimate goal: both propagate vast and harmful income gaps, both rely on and promote militarism—and neither leaves much room for consideration of workers' well-being. Melman analyzes the adverse economic impact of these flaws and oversights, which have led to “grave production weaknesses in the U.S. economy,” and he suggests an alternative to current economic organization that holds out the promise of both greater fairness and equity and more soundly balanced production.

“Workplace democracy,” in which workers actively participate in the management of their workplace, is gaining ground in venues as diverse as Israeli kibbutzim and Basque factories. Melman explains how workplace democracy can, and why it should, be implemented in America. **After Capitalism** is the new century's first essential book about labor: thoughtful, humane, at once commonsensical and revolutionary, Melman's prescriptions can inspire changes in the way the world works.

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