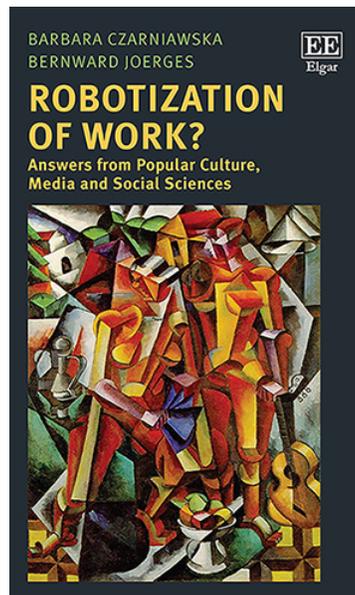


## Robotization of Work?

### Answers from Popular Culture, Media and Social Sciences

Barbara Czarniawska, Senior Professor of Management, GRI, School of Business, Economics and Law, University of Gothenburg, Sweden and Bernward Joerges, Professor Dr Emeritus, Institute of Sociology, Technical University Berlin and WZB, Berlin Social Science Center, Germany

In this timely book, Barbara Czarniawska and Bernward Joerges examine the hopes and fears around work and job security inspired by automation, from the original coining of the term 'robot' to the present day media fascination. Have these hopes and fears changed or do they remain the same? This discerning book investigates whether these changes in perception correlate to actual changes taking place in the field of robotics.



'Within the rapidly proliferating field of social studies of cybernetics this brilliant book stands out in several ways. It revisits the epistemology of autopoiesis by unearthing how popular culture, science fiction and cybernetics co-constitute each other since the 1920's. In doing so this book on imaginaries and technological developments ingeniously translates one of the key problems of knowing the world into a down-to-earth empirical investigation of the various literatures and films on the robotization of work. While most recent publications that similarly aim to address the core issues of cybernetics surrender to the urge of making prophecies, Czarniawska and Joerges consequentially remain astute, sober and razor-sharp and thereby provocatively interrupt a current trend. The elegant precision of the argument and the clarity of the language deployed makes this erudite and yet modest book come as a relief when one feels overwhelmed by the high-flown premonitions surrounding us.'

– Richard Rottenburg, University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa

'There has been a lot of speculation recently about the consequences of robotization. In particular, how artificial intelligence (AI) might automate and replace tasks thought uniquely human. It would be easy to be carried away with the hyperbole. However, to ignore their potential effects would also be remiss. In the Robotization of Work, Czarniawska and Joerges provide the perfect antidote by studying how robotization and automation have been characterised in literature, film, media and the social sciences, and compare predictions from the 'first wave' of AI to those made today. Written with intelligence – and some humour – this book will be required reading for scholars interested in how (and in what form) ideas of automation continue to inhabit our imagination and drive our actions.'

– Neil Pollock, University of Edinburgh, UK

'In the midst of a full moral panic about robots and artificial intelligence, this wise and engaging book manages to avoid both the hype and hysteria by examining how popular culture – mainly science fiction movies and books – have portrayed robots and their impact on society. Brimming with new insights, the authors show how fiction has addressed many of the themes taken up in later scholarship. We imagine the worst but in the end our societies and institutions shape the actual technology we end up with.'

– Trevor J. Pinch, Cornell University, US

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