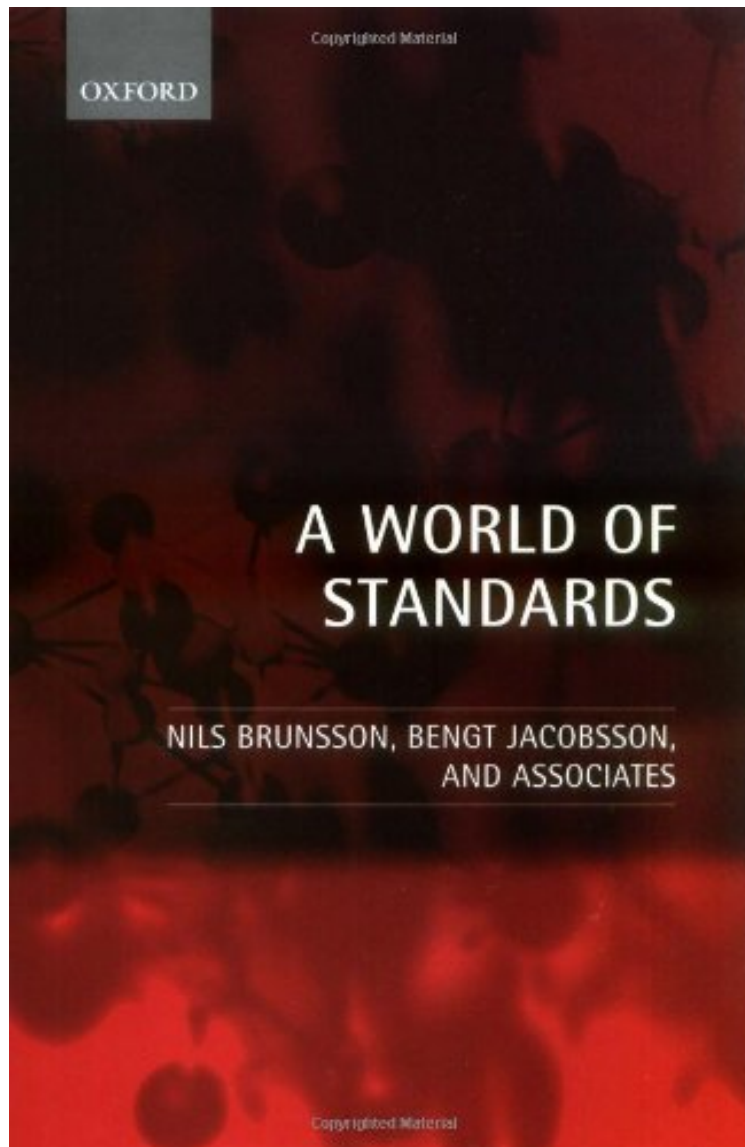


A World of Standards

Nils Brunsson, Bengt Jacobsson
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Nils Brunsson, Bengt Jacobsson : A World of Standards before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A World of Standards:

In the modern world there is no shortage of people who know what is best for others. Self-appointed experts, consultants, and organizations try to convince states, corporations, and individuals that they would be better off if they only followed some specific rules about what to do. There are 'experts' in almost every field of human activity, from

the management of companies to the management of our own health. Even organizations as powerful as states and large corporations follow rules provided by others on how to organize, which policies to pursue, what kinds of services to provide, or how their products should be designed. These rules are presented as being voluntary and advisory. They are standards, not mandatory directives, and in modern life standards abound. They may concern what characteristics a telephone should have, how a company should report its financial transactions, how contracts should be worded, what structure an organization should have, how children should be brought up and educated, how to play tennis, and so forth. This book discusses standards and standardization as a form of regulation. The authors argue that standards enable a higher degree of global order in the modern world than would exist without them. They facilitate coordination and cooperation on a global scale, creating similarities and homogeneity even among peoples and organizations that are quite different. The author believe that standardization is a much neglected area of social science - an area that has by no means received the attention it deserves in view of its importance to society. This book seeks to redress the balance by providing an in-depth examination of a number of aspects of standardization, how it is formed, and what effects it has on the world in which we live.

"For anyone interested in standardization or more generally institutional dynamics, is a valuable book that will guide many future empirical studies. In addition, by drawing attention to the microprocesses that underlie rationalization, the research agenda proposed by Brunsson and Jacobsson had the potential to being politics back into the study of institutions." *The Journal About the Author*

Nils Brunsson is Professor of Management at the Stockholm School of Economics and Chairman of the Stockholm Centre for Organizational Research (SCORE). He has published eighteen books and numerous articles in the field of organizations, including *The Irrational Organization* (Wiley, 1985), *The Organization of Hypocrisy* (Wiley, 1989), and *Organizing Organizations* (Fagbokforlaget, 1998). His main focus has been decision theory and the institutional analysis of organizations. He has held the City of Stockholm Chair in Management at the Stockholm School of Economics since 1986. He is a member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Engineering Sciences. Bengt Jacobsson is Professor of Public Management at Lund University and works at the Stockholm Centre for Organizational Research (SCORE). His main focus has been organization theory and complex decision-making processes involving political organizations as well as companies. His current interest is transnational regulation, especially its consequences for states. He has published numerous books and articles.