

Future of Work Foundation

Press Clipping Quotes

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"What will work consist of in the future?" - by Susan Oliver and Gib Wettenhall from Australia's Commission for the Future

Redefining the nature of work:

"Any discussion on the future of employment and education needs also to look beyond the traditional definition of what constitutes a job. Some would argue that not only is fighting for the right to a job an unachievable goal, but it is also an undesirable one. In post industrial society, where technology is leading to massive job shedding as well as productivity gains, would we as a society be better off trying to reduce the time spent in paid work, and instead concentrate on ways of opening up the time and talents to pursue creative interests? As (Louise) Crossley commented in the most idealised of her four future work scenarios (Children and the future of work, Child Poverty Policy Review, 3, Brotherhood of St. Laurence):

Employment, in a paid capacity, would not be the only recognised form of work. Instead, work would encompass many kinds of self-organised activity or ownwork, which would become an increasingly central focus of interest and of individual and community production.

Such a reorientation of society would have a profound impact on the way we were educated and participated in working life.

So what is to be done?, asks sociologist John Wiseman. He believes there is an urgent task to stimulate an extensive and informed public debate about the future of paid and unpaid work in Australia. "If full employment is desirable and achievable tell us why and how. If it is not, then we had better begin to talk about other ways forward" (quotation taken from "*Towards or beyond full employment*", an unpublished paper from the Victorian Council of Social Services).