

Labour and Industry:

A Journal of the Social and Economic Relations of Work
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A technological paradigm shift is underway in developed economies. Every day, we learn of another dramatic technological advance that promises life-changing effects. Driverless cars are taking to our roads. Drones are appearing in the sky. Surgeries are being performed by robots with minimal human assistance. And ever-more sophisticated 'learning algorithms' are mediating our contact with other humans and our interactions with the physical world ... (continue reading on overleaf)

Call for Papers: Transformative technology and the future of ER

We seek to instigate and bring together further significant contributions to the emerging research and policy debates around this theme.

Topics of interest include (but are not limited to) the following:

1. How are new technologies being implemented in different work settings?
How do managers learn and make decisions about their adoption?
2. How are workers involved in the process of technological change?
How do they seek to shape, resist and accommodate changes to their jobs?
How important are unions and the state?
3. What are the outcomes of technological change for workers most affected by it?
In what ways have their work roles and their subjective experiences of work changed?
4. To what extent are workers engaging with the new forms of employment available in the gig economy?
Which workers do this, under what conditions, and to what ends?
5. Are new forms of regulation required to mitigate the risks to workers arising from new gig-type employment arrangements?
What forms should this intervention take?

We encourage papers presenting studies on any of the above themes and other pertinent areas. Empirical and theoretical works, historical analyses, and contributions from PhD students and established scholars are all welcomed.

Process:

Manuscript length: 6,000-8,500 words, incl. references, appendices, tables, graphics and figures. Please indicate which of the themes outlined above is addressed by the manuscript – or if it has a different focus.

**For more information on formatting requirements, instructions for authors,
and to submit your manuscript, go to:
www.tandfonline.com/rlab**

Each manuscript will be subject to a double blind review, overseen by the **special issue editors:**

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It is widely thought that these technologies will continue to have disruptive consequences for work and workers. According to one recent account, '(t)echnology will up-end countless careers, workers across fields will be displaced, and it's not entirely clear how many jobs will be replaced' (Illing, 2016). Although other assessments are more cautious, this view is close to the mainstream consensus. Many authors have gone further, warning about the prospect of widespread 'technological unemployment' (Dunlop, 2016; Thompson, 2015). We have by now become accustomed to automation in manual lines of work, on farms and ports and in factories. But emergent technologies are now advancing on skilled work, in accounting, law and medicine, leading some to question the future of the established professions (Susskind and Susskind, 2015).

Alongside these technological developments, new business models are appearing that have been enabled by technology, and which are affecting aspects of the labour exchange. Uber, Airtasker, Deliveroo and a range of other new platforms represent a 'gig economy' in which work is episodic and the obligations on both sides of the employment relationship are weak. While such arrangements have the potential to expand employment opportunities for some (Minifie and Wiltshire, 2016), they also present new threats, including fragmented job tasks, ambiguous employment rights, and pressures on minimum labour standards (Mishel, 2015).

The nature and unprecedented speed of current technological change poses important and urgent questions for employment relations researchers and other scholars focused on work. The changes are occurring at a time of historical weakness for organised labour, with falling union density and the lowest labour share of national income seen in half a century (Cowgill, 2013). The issues in play have begun to attract interest from employment relations scholars.

References

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