

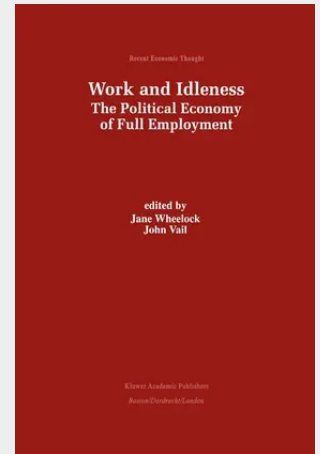
Work and Idleness

The Political Economy of Full Employment

develops the view that redistributing employment is a 'feasible capitalist' solution, not just to the unemployment which particular groups suffer, but also to the work that others have to contend with, including many women. Putting the redistribution of employment on the policy agenda opens up debate on how to ensure a more equitable and fulfilling relationship between the ways we gain our livelihoods and the lives we lead. Growing insecurity in labour markets and changing patterns in the commodification of labour have led to a redistribution of paid and unpaid labour time as the structure of power relations, the gender order, discrimination, and state regulation have been modified. The first main trend affecting insecurity is mass unemployment and the growth of workless households. A second notable trend is a gender-based redistribution of hours worked. The third major trend is a shift from full-time waged work to full-time self-employment.

Part I of this book presents the main economic theories driving the continuing divide between the intensification of work and the extension of idleness. Part II documents the ways in which the shift to mass idleness in advanced industrial countries has hit some groups particularly hard: the youngest and oldest age groups and other groups, including disabled workers, have traditionally been subject to discrimination in the labor markets. Part III provides a set of policy prescriptions.

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