The Robot Problem’ and the Potentials of Labour Law
(or ‘I for one welcome our new robot overlords’)

Liam McHugh-Russell

CRIMT 2015: Institutional Change and Experimentation
What About the Institutions?
The Way of the Dodo
MARTIN FORD

RISE OF THE ROBOTS

TECHNOLOGY AND THE THREAT OF A JOBLESS FUTURE
TYLER COWEN

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR

of THE GREAT STAGNATION

AVERAGE IS OVER

POWERING AMERICA

BEYOND the AGE of

THE GREAT STAGNATION

FORD

A FUTURE

OF

JOBS

AND THE THREAT

OF

LESS FUTURE

Europe University Institute
Ad Hoc Committee on the Triple Revolution

“A new era of production…
the cybernation…
almost unlimited productive capacity…
progressively less human labor”
The Imminent, Inevitable Automation Apocalypse
1. Apocalypse
Who is Stoker?
(I FOR ONE WELCOME OUR NEW COMPUTER OVERLORDS)
$1,000
2. Coming Soon
We Can Do It!
Labour Demand

Prices

Products
Figure 2: Real Hourly Wages by Education
(all workers, normalized; 1973=100)

Source: Economic Policy Institute
Autonomous cars will destroy millions of jobs and reshape the US economy by 2025
3. But Definitely Coming
The Future/No Future
Why bother with Science Fiction?
• Imminent Change
• Bad News for Workers
• Air of Inevitability
• Politics of Bad Ideas
Case of Globalization (cont’d)

- Labour Law and the Institutional Dimension
• Automation: Whither Labour Law
• Basic Minimum Income
• National Mutual Funds
• Managed Technology
• Job subsidies

THE SECOND MACHINE AGE
WORK, PROGRESS, AND PROSPERITY IN A TIME OF BRILLIANT TECHNOLOGIES
ERIK BRYNJOLFSSON
ANDREW MCAFEE
• Against Reactive Analysis