

# FabLabs and Social Innovation in Detroit

Summary for 2019 Fab Academy Economics Recitation

Community Production

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Catalytic change driver

# Mechanics of Community Production

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high leverage competencies

# (Our) Tools of Community Production

- Digital Fabrication
- Agroecology / Permaculture
- Agile and lean techniques in project management and business development
- Appropriate Technologies

# Social Change



and



speculative jobs vs  
functional work

# What Do We Need



live within limits, but not poorly



time for high quality-of-life experiences (rich)

# Survey Results... we spend a majority of our time earning money to pay for

- Food
- Shelter
- Utilities (energy, water, waste, communications)
- Transportation
- Clothing and personal accessories
- Furniture
- Health (illness and wellness)
- Education
- Childcare

# to become less dependent on larger systems that are dysfunctional, fragile, vulnerable, non-sustainable, etc...

- Food and Water in good quality and adequate amount [building and maintaining health]
- Reclaim our own “waste streams” to build fertility and carrying capacity
- Heating (space, water) - source of fuel
- Other forms of energy, inc ability to cook and prepare food
- Ability to make some of our own medicines and apply them intelligently to deal with common conditions/maladies of human life [restoring health]
- Ability to derive fiber and building materials from the environment around us - to create shelter in clothing and structure
- Companionship with other people
- Something useful to do
- Ability to entertain ourselves

Based on work by Peter Bane, Permaculturalist



# Current Scenario



## Speculative Jobs

# Current - Speculative Jobs

the flow

fateful conversation in HS and at home

education and training for speculative jobs

work for someone outside your community with the result that neither your family nor your community get the full value of your work

# Current - Speculative Jobs

the business case

selling our time at wholesale prices

pay others for products and services at their retail price

selling at low wholesale prices and buying at high retail prices is a losing strategy, however that is what we do with our most valuable resource - our time

# Current - Speculative Jobs

the psycho-social case

the passionless pursuit of making a living

The work-consume-status cycle produces a perspective of scarcity which promotes conflict and competitive erosion of social bonds

# Evolving Scenario

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Functional Work

# Future - functional work

## the flow

The new normal & principles of community self-determination

Deep learning through place-making, experiential education and formal study

use modern, highly capable tools to maximize the results that you can produce with your time.

# Important Note

Those are some of the same tools that are eliminating the need for many people's labor in industry - we can and are acquiring those same tools and using them for our own benefit.

# Future - functional work

the business case - use our time to:

produce what we need directly,

collaborate to produce things of value to others - gain  
currency or time exchange units for trade

pursue interests that make us feel complete and  
fulfilled and provide the ability to become truly expert  
at a skill, craft, etc



# Future - functional work

## Revenue minus Expenses

reducing expenses has the same financial impact as  
increasing revenue

# Future - functional work

produce what we need directly

→ Housing and structures

→ Energy

→ Food

→ Water

→ Transportation

# Future - functional work

collaborate with others to produce things of value to others

capture the full value of that innovation and production

gain currency or time exchange units for trade

# Future - functional work

pursue those interests that bring forth our best selves

Activities that make us feel complete, fulfilled, ourselves, living with purpose

Ability to become truly expert at a skill, craft, etc

# Future - functional work

## lowest risk pathway

Community Production skills allow us to live in a self-determined way outside of the job system, but are also some of the most highly sought after job skill sets that there are - so it is a no lose situation

Psycho-Social Environment

“Work and Spend Less, Create and Connect More”



in turn leading to



“ecological benefits – emit and degrade less – and human ones  
– enjoy and thrive more.”



Juliet B. Schor

# Blair Evans

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## Executive Director

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