Rethinking Education and Global Futures

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The Future of Work

- Fourth industrial revolution
  - A false dichotomy between the past and the present
  - Moral panics at every turn
  - Dystopic theorising
  - Rapid change
  - Wicked problems

- Platform Capitalism and new forms of work
  - The old story in new shoes
  - Deregulation, liberalisation and increase in precarious work practices
  - Moving into education as the last unconquered frontier for capital
  - Meanwhile new technologies have the potential to make some jobs obsolete while requiring more specialised skills (OECD 2030)

Dystopic Futures

- What is your worst vision for the future of education?
    - Draw images that represent the worst possible future for education
    - What are the threats that teachers face?
    - What are the threats that students face?
    - What role might technology play?
    - How will this influence the future
    - The development of skills v holistic development

The ILO global commission on the future of work

- Work for a brighter future
    - Clear focus on human centred approaches
    - The need to grow productive capabilities in people
    - A universal entitlement to lifelong learning
    - Governments, workers, employers and educational institutions have equal responsibility for making this happen

- Cradle to the grave education
    - Not going to happen without guarantees
    - Formal and informal learning
    - Can't leave out the marginalised and the oppressed
    - The future of education is inextricably linked to the future of work, but they have separate identities

Human capabilities

- Wheelahan and Moodie
  - The whole of the person the whole of their life
  - Not just influenced by market forces but driven by the person
  - Not in an atomised, individualised way but in a genuine story of growth
  - Skills or course choice mismatch, the chicken or the egg…

- Flexible Pathways
  - Everyone should have access to education at all levels
  - There should be an ability to move from TVET to academic and vice versa
  - The educational door should never be closed, let alone slammed shut…
  - Educational aspirations must be supported, we should all be astronauts

Educational Plasticity: Utopias

- Utopic vision

- What is your utopic vision for the future of education and work?

- Draw images of how work and education might interact

- Think symbolically rather than literally

- What is essential and what supports are needed?

- How will this make a difference to cradle to the grave learning opportunities?

ACTRAV, ILO and the importance of partnership

- Lifelong learning
  - Can't be achieved by just one agency
  - We can't progress our vision for quality education without partnerships
  - ILO a reliable partner
  - So are OECD, UNESCO
  - Unreliable partners include World Bank, IMF

- Partnerships count
  - TUAC the oldest social partnership in the world
  - ACTRAV not far behind
  - The academy also has a part to play
  - Employer (government), Union, agency (ILO, OECD, etc.) tripartite arrangements

The role of the academy

- Platform university
  - Students as bitcoins
  - Lecturers as disposable units
  - Partnerships only based on impact
  - Knowledge economy, knowledge control (Cambridge Analytica etc.)

- Academic freedom and a brave new world
  - Precarious work practices reversed (UCU strike)
  - Partnerships with unions, schools and governments
  - Within a frame of providing academic critique without fear or favour
  - Giving access to knowledge to all

Growing pressure for curriculum change

- **Soft skills and social and emotional developments**
  - The undiscovered country of the whole child
  - Holistic development, not brains on sticks
  - Taxonymic progression (Tristram Shandy, Tom Jones, Persuasion etc.)
  - Some countries ahead of others
  - Pressing need for all to think of the future (OECD 2030 - Vancouver meeting)

- **Education 2030**
  - Complex process but a real opportunity to make positive change
  - The future we want in a rapidly changing world
  - Broader set of competencies
  - We have argued for capabilities and a process to be undertaken with unions

The run of Capital

- Privatisation and commercialisation of education
  - Education one of the last bastions of public financing
  - The growth of EduBusinesses has targeted education spending
  - This in turn has targeted the developing world
  - Pearson and BIA, ARK etc.

- Structural reform
  - Liberalisation of school structures in the developed and developing world have led to increased opportunities to mirror the platform university and constitute students as economic units
  - Digitalisation and marketisation shape shift according to the economy and structures in operation
  - They follow the run of capital
  - Works differently in ECE, Primary, Secondary and TVET

Tech, AI, Big Data and information overload: an ethical future?

- Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning
  - The two are often confused
  - OECD AI principles sound but no compulsion for companies to follow them (TUAC)
  - A human centred agenda with a focus on ethics

- Regulation of tech, data and platforms
  - Time to push government to regulate this new area of activity
  - Nationalise data
  - The public and private two step…
  - AI has the potential to be a positive force in human development if it is not left in the hands of the market
  - The same goes for education

A brighter future: autonomous professional, professional standards and union involvement in teacher policy
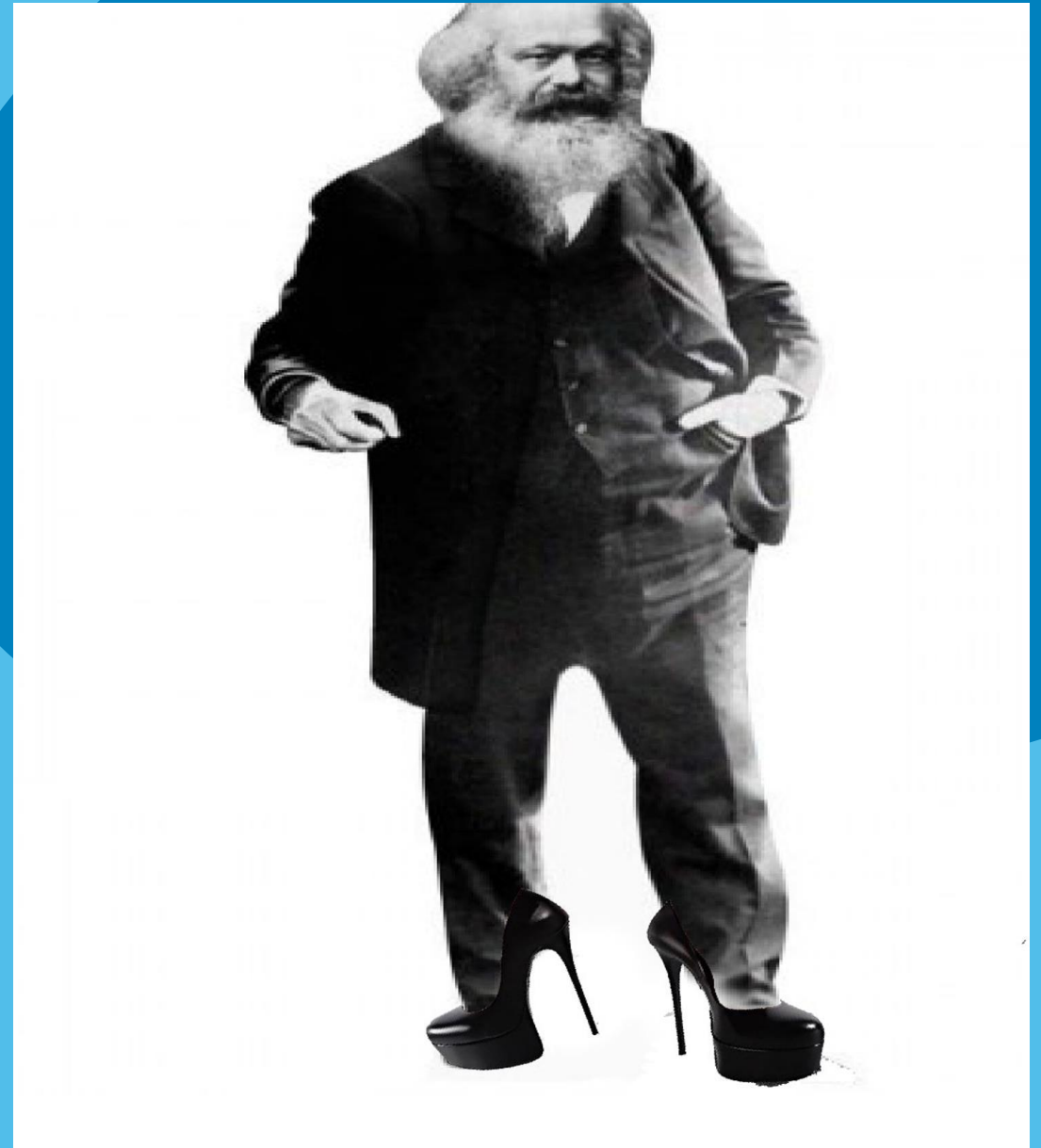
- Quality education
  - Rests on the quality of teachers
  - Teachers need access to all forms of teacher policy (TUAC survey for OECD)
  - Education Policy Outlook - teachers consulted over pay and conditions, but not much else
  - Must change

- Professional Leadership
  - Professional standards joint EI/UNESCO framework
  - Autonomous professionalism driving learning
  - Ako
  - For students, teachers and society...

Marx in platforms

Conclusion

Future pathways

Renewal:

Growth, Unity, Principles for action

Status

Autonomous
professionalism

Leading the profession

Professional standards

Rights & democracy

Solidarity

Equity

Inclusion

System

Global Response

SDG4

Climate

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