Career guidance and the changing world of work: Contesting responsibilising notions of the future

Tristram Hooley

ORCID: 0000-0002-1453-4535

This is the accepted manuscript of a chapter published in Peters, M.A., Jandrić, P. and Means, A.J. (Eds.) (2019). *Education and Technological Unemployment* (pp.175-192). Berlin: Springer.

Abstract

Career guidance is an educational activity which helps individuals to manage their participation in learning and work and plan for their futures. Unsurprisingly career guidance practitioners are interested in how the world of work is changing and concerned about threats of technological unemployment. This chapter argues that the career guidance field is strongly influenced by a "changing world of work" narrative which is drawn from a wide body of grey literature produced by think tanks, supra-national bodies and other policy influencers. This body of literature is political in nature and describes the future of work narrowly and within the frame of neoliberalism. The 'changing world of work' narrative is explored through a thematic analysis of grey literature and promotional materials for career guidance conferences. The chapter concludes by arguing that career guidance needs to adopt a more critical stance on the 'changing world of work' and to offer more emancipatory alternatives.

Keywords: career, career guidance, critical pedagogy, future of work, neoliberalism, social justice

Biography

Tristram Hooley is Professor of Career Education at the University of Derby, Professor II at the Inland Norway University of Applied Science and Director of Research at The Careers & Enterprise Company. He writes and researches on career and career guidance and has a particular interest in how they intersect with public policy, technology and ideology. He has been working to open up more critical perspectives

on the study and practice of career guidance and has recently co-edited the book *Careers Guidance: Contesting Neoliberalism*, published by Routledge. He also writes the Adventures in Career Development blog at https://adventuresincareerdevelopment.wordpress.com/.

Career guidance and the changing world of work: Contesting responsibilising notions of the future

Tristram Hooley

Introduction

In 1930 John Maynard Keynes wrote an essay to his grandchildren setting out the future as he saw it. The future looked bright. People would be getting more time to choose what to do with their lives. Self-determination and self-actualisation would become real possibilities for an ever-growing number of people. Perhaps even more excitingly, Keynes wrote that these changes would lead to an increase in altruism and social solidarity. As life becomes less brutal, the best of humanity will thrive and the principal problem will be "how to live wisely and agreeably and well." Keynes optimistically predicts that in such a situation "the nature of one's duty to one's neighbour is changed" and that "it will remain reasonable to be economically purposive for others after it has ceased to be reasonable for oneself." (p.7).

This essay by Keynes is frequently misunderstood in contemporary writing about the future of work, for example by the International Monetary Fund (2018, p.6) who describes the essay as warning about "technological unemployment", or dismissed as naïve and outdated, for example by Hagel, Schwartz & Bersin (2017, p.27), writing in the *Deloitte Review*, who conclude that "we've long since given up on early 20th-century utopian visions of a leisure society in which machines do almost everything for us."

Recent discussion on the future of work has taken a more dystopian turn. Ford's (2015) influential account of the "rise of the robots" and the "jobless future" has been picked up in popular culture and political debate. Headlines in mainstream newspapers examine "Why we need to protect our income from robot automation" (Independent, 12/05/2018); "Ten million British jobs could be gone in 15 years. No one knows what happens next" (The Guardian, 30/04/2018); "Robots interviewing graduates for jobs at top city firms as students practice how to impress AI" (The Telegraph, 21/04/2018);

"Artificial intelligence: Hero or villain for higher education?" (Forbes, 18/05/2018) and "How you can raise robot-proof children" (Wall Street Journal, 26/04/2018). Anxiety about the future abounds with accounts often tipping into alarmist predictions.

The world of work is changing, so the story goes, and for the most part it is not changing for the better. We had better get ready for these changes otherwise we are at risk of barbarism. The robots will take over and there will be nothing left for humanity. The story about automation is part of a broader narrative which I call "*the changing world of work*". The changing world of work story includes ideas about how individual's careers are changing, how organisations are changing, shifts in working culture, the encroachment of globalisation and the influence of a wide range of technologies beyond automation.

Youtube includes many films that address the topic of the changing world of work. An example is offered by Next Generation Recruitments "How the world of work is changing", which was first broadcast in 2016. The film adopts a jaunty style to explain a series of inter-connected changes that people have seen, or should expect to see, in their working lives. It shows how technology mediates organisational processes like recruitment and management, how organisational boundaries are crumbling, self-employment is growing, women have moved into the workplace while formal dress codes have moved out and how some organisations now allow staff to work from home, take longer holidays and even support them to freeze their sperm and eggs to prolong their pre-family working life.

The Next Generation Recruitment film combines discussion about technological change with an examination of political, cultural and economic change and serves to obscure the differences between these different types of change. It frames the changes that it describes as inevitable rather than contestable and defines the good life people should aspire to by emphasising the value of the work ethic and of consumption over family and community. It is underpinned by an argument about the quickening of economic, organisational and technological change and the need to adapt and keep on adapting in response to these changes.

How the world of work is changing is not unique. Films talking about how the world is changing are familiar to anyone who uses the internet and are used regularly in career-related workshops and

presentations. Such films are underpinned by a wide range of reports which make similar arguments. In this chapter I will explore some of these reports to illuminate the changing world of work concept.

This chapter explore the changing world of work narrative in relation to the activity of career guidance. Career guidance professionals are charged with helping individuals to manage their relationship with education and work by helping them to decode the labour market and the education and training system, to think about themselves and their place in the world of work and to develop strategies for advantageous engagement with this world (OECD, 2004). Career guidance is used as an umbrella term to describe a range of approaches to helping individuals to develop their careers which draws on education, counselling and human resources practices. While the term is often used to describe face-to-face, one-to-one career counselling interactions where a professional supports the learning and reflection of an individual, increasingly this is seen as just one amongst many possible interventions with alternatives including classroom-based career education, experiential encounters with workplaces and working people and the provision of information and interactions online (Andrews, 2011; Hooley, 2012; Mann, Stanley & Archer, 2014).

Career guidance is a global activity with Watts (2014) reporting that formal reviews of career guidance policies and systems have been conducted in 55 countries and that it is likely that the activity is practised in many more countries. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (2004) has argued that career guidance can support three main policy areas: (1) the effective functioning of the labour market and through this the economy; (2) the effective functioning of the education system; and (3) increasing social equity. These rationales have made career guidance perennially popular with policy makers who frequently invest in the activity with specific and utilitarian aims. Practice and policy are underpinned by a growing evidence base that highlights how career guidance can contribute to both individuals' career development and to these wider policy goals (Hooley, 2017; Hughes, Mann, Barnes, Baldauf & McKeown, 2016).

In this chapter I will be seeking to understand how career guidance addresses the changing world of work, in part through a thematic analysis of the promotional materials used in recent careers

conferences. I will be arguing that the changing world of work concept has been taken into the mainstream of the rhetoric of the career guidance field even though it is both contestable and politically aligned to neoliberalism. I will conclude by arguing that career guidance needs to relate to the changing world of work in a far more critical way both by offering individuals the tools to critique such notions and by opening up opportunities to build more emancipatory paths into the future.

Understanding the changing world of work

There is an extensive public debate which addresses the changing world of work and asks how we will work in the future. This debate is conducted in part through a series of policy and research reports. This grey literature describes how work is changing, theorises these changes and offers advice to a wide range of actors about what should be done. Some reports focus on the individual and their career management, others on the organisational implications of the changing world of work and still others make suggestions for public policy. As individual reports such papers come and go, rarely making any kind of substantial impact. But as a collective body of work they constitute a steady drip feed of ideas about the future of work, which are regularly picked up by the press, profiled at career guidance conferences and discussed amongst those with an interest in the future.

To explore the conception of the changing world of work contained within this body of grey literature I have identified and analysed 30 papers. These papers were identified through a Google search using the strings ”filetype:pdf changing world of work” and ”filetype:pdf future of work”. The criteria for inclusion was that they had to be a report or paper rather than a short article or blog. They also needed to have a date of publication so that I could be sure of when they were published. All articles published in academic peer reviewed journals were excluded. All papers were produced between 2015-2018 and the types of organisations which produced them are set out in table 1.

Table 1: Breakdown of the changing world of work literature by organisational type

Organisational type	Example organisations	Number of papers
Consultancy	McKinsey & Company, Deloitte	8

Think Tank	Institute of Economic Affairs, Centre for International Governance Innovation	7
Supra-national organisation	OECD, International Labour Organisation	4
Professional/employers association	Design Council, National Employment Services Association (NESA)	4
Tech company	Atos, Fuse	2
Recruitment company	Adecco, ManpowerGroup	2
Other		3

I read all of these papers and coded them into 51 inductively derived themes. All papers were then re-read and re-coded based on the complete code book.

The papers reveal a high degree of agreement about the causes, nature, consequences and potential responses to the changing world of work. They argue that technology is a key driver of such changes (mentioned in 29 of the 30 papers), and that the key technologies that are driving change are automation (26), growing digital connectivity (10), big data (10), 3D printing (6) and augmented reality (3). Other possible drivers of change are also acknowledged with demographic change (12), globalisation (11), the 'great recession' (5), environmental change (4) and urbanisation (3) the most commonly cited alternatives. But, even where these wider changes are acknowledged they are typically given less attention than technology. Some papers note that technology is not destiny and highlight that it is "how humans respond to the challenges and opportunities" that will "determine the world in which the future of work plays out" (PWC, 2017: 10). However, technology and technological development is generally externalised and viewed as separate to and superordinate to the social and political responses to it.

There is some optimism about the way in which the world of work is changing, with papers highlighting the way that it will increase productivity (12) and innovation (5), give individual's opportunities for flexible and remote working (7) and change the nature of work to make it more creative and less routine (5). The most optimistic paint a utopian picture of workplace freedom, flexibility, creativity and opportunity.

> The future of work is innovative, flexible, lean. Its employees challenge hierarchies, self-organise, and readily share ideas with their small teams. Its managers re-think

> everything from office furniture to wellness, enabling and empowering rather than ordering and controlling. Its smart offices sense employee mood and automatically take measures to reduce stress. And its hiring practices are shaped by the new realities of skill obsolescence and a global market of talent that can easily look elsewhere for work. (van Hooijdonk & Hewlett, 2017, p.6)

Despite the optimism there are also concerns about the way in which the labour market is going to be restructured (19) with fears that it will lead to increased unemployment (17), the growth of the casualised "gig" economy (15), shifts in job content (13) and a growth in under-employment (5).

Often the opportunities offered by the changing world of work are balanced with the dangers. For example the McKinsey Global Institute (2017, p.vi) argue that "automation technologies including artificial intelligence and robotics will generate significant benefits for users, businesses, and economies, lifting productivity and economic growth" but also go on to recognise, in common with many other reports, that these benefits might not be evenly shared amongst the population and that one possible consequence is the growth of inequality (13). There is generally little of Ford's doom-mongering about the collapse of capitalism, but for many of the authors of these reports the prizes of the transformed workplace will only manifest if individuals, organisations and governments attend carefully to the risks.

Individuals are expected to be adaptable in the light of the changing world of work. A positive mental attitude, a "growth mindset" and a willingness to be flexible are viewed as key attributes. In addition to agentic adaptability (12), individuals are expected to embrace the opportunity to work seamlessly with machines (6), to desire the different kinds of work-life balance that are facilitated by flexible working (5) and to exhibit entrepreneurship (4). EY (2018, p.4) summarise the attitudes and behaviours that future workers will need to possess as follows.

> The idea of work needs to be reimagined. Professionals can no longer regard education as a phase of life that occurs before entering the workforce. Continuous education and the ability to adapt to new tasks and processes will be crucial.

> Individuals should also expect that a job on the market today may no longer exist tomorrow; preparing for a new work path should be a constant quest. Millennials and people entering the workforce should explore different careers, in order to gain exposure to diverse fields of work.

Organisations also need to change and become more flexible if they are to make the most of the opportunities offered by the changing world of work. Farsighted leadership is required to make the most of the opportunities (11) and drive the necessary changes in organisational culture and structure (19). As the ManpowerGroup (2016, p.3) note, “business as usual is a thing of the past”. At the heart of this is a need to recognise that workers are no longer going to be tied to organisations in the same way as in the past and that business leaders will have to learn to lead and manage boundaryless organisations populated by protean careerists. The psychological contract between employer and employee is expected to change (22) with the growth in flexible and freelance working. Millennials, it is anticipated, will be particularly keen on driving such a change (6).

These changes raise issues for public policy. The growth of flexible workers and dynamic boundaryless organisations will require action from government if it is going to play out in ways that do not destabilise society through the growth of inequality. Government has a critical role of putting in place policies and frameworks to ensure the maximisation of human capital. There should be increased investment in education (18) designed to drive the development of skills in general (18) and soft skills in particular (20). The development of “soft skills” (variously named as “transferable skills”, “future skills” and ”21st century skills”) is central to the idea of how human beings will need to respond to the changing world of work. Many of the papers propose the skills that are required, setting out frameworks and discussing the role of the education system in developing these skills. The Foundation for Young Australians (2017) talks about the need to develop “work smart skills” which will include both academic and technical knowledge and skills (e.g. maths, science and the ability to use advances technologies) as well as written and verbal communication, interpersonal skills, problem solving, judgement and critical thinking.

Such skills form a curriculum which individuals should aspire to, businesses should use to inform their human resource development processes and governments should use to guide the reform of the education system. Such reforms should focus on increasing the availability of retraining and lifelong learning (12), improving the use of technology within education (8) and increasing the integration between education and employment (7), including the provision of careers and transition support services (5). Although "career guidance" is rarely named in these reports, the vision of a reformed education system is one in which career guidance would have a much stronger position. Education in general, and career guidance in particular, have a vital role in developing workers with the right skills, in encouraging a positive orientation towards change and a willingness to adapt and participate in reskilling and transition learning.

While human capital policies dominate the discussion of the role of government there is also a recognition that a range of other public policies could help to underpin the changing world of work. Concern about inequality leads to discussion about the importance of welfare systems and safety nets (10), universal basic income (7) and other forms of redistribution. Even less commonly other reports talk about the importance of planning and co-ordinated strategic responses to the changes and challenges in the labour market e.g. changing employment law (8), developing or signing up to international labour standards (4), and Keynesian style investment in the public infrastructure to stimulate jobs (3). Some emphasise the importance of the social partners (trade unions and employers) to such strategic responses (4).

The changing world of work literature argues that there is going to be a fundamental change in the way work is organised. It views new technology as the primary, but not only, driver of this change. While the anticipated changes will bring many positives, there is a recognition that the opportunities may not be equally shared around society. To address this, individuals are entreated to be adaptable, organisations willing to change and politicians prepared to address the challenges that will emerge. The political response is focused around education, training and the development of skills – especially soft skills.

The picture of the changing world of work that is contained within these papers is, perhaps unsurprisingly, strongly influenced by a neoliberal rationality. Individuals are viewed as participants in a competition state, who are required to exhibit an "entrepreneurial subjectivity" (Scharff, 2016). The future of work is viewed as one in which there will be winners and losers and in which the responsibility for success lies primarily with the individual. Although the state may have some role in revising the rules of the competition and compensating for its worst failures through limited redistribution, its primary role is, as Cerny (2010:1) says, is "to ensure that citizens keep up with the multiple pressures and demands" of the competition. This is imagined as being done primarily through investments in human capital development and this in turn is where career guidance can interpolate itself as a key resource for the contemporary state in supporting individuals to accommodate and acclimatise to the changing world of work.

How career guidance addresses the changing world of work

The picture of the changing world of work that is contained within the grey literature reviewed above is familiar to me as a regular participant in career guidance conferences and as a consumer of the professional literature of the field. Concern about change and the speed of change in the world of work are legitimate concerns for an area of education that is focused on helping people to learn about and manage their engagement with the world of work. The agentic and individualistic approaches to managing these changes that are advocated by the changing world of work literature aligns with much theory and practice in career guidance which often serves to enculturate people into neoliberalism. Additionally, or alternatively, career guidance can individualise people's experience of their career decontexutalise them "socioeconomic and cultural factors and restraints", promising them in effect that they should follow their dreams and it will all work out (Hooley, Sultana & Thomsen, 2018, p.15).

It is therefore interesting to examine how career guidance specifically addresses the changing world of work concept. Again, I gathered 30 examples to explore the positioning of the changing world of work concept in the career guidance field. In this case I used the strings "careers conference", "career conference" and "employability conference" to conduct searches on Google and Event Bright for

conferences aimed at career professionals. Results were included in the sample if they provided information on general (rather than sectoral or single organisational) career conferences and if they provided information about the rationale for the conference in English. The information provided was then analysed and coded inductively resulting in 12 codes. All information was then re-read and coded against the full code book.

Around half of the conferences reviewed did not address the changing world of work directly. Generally, these conferences were focused on the expectations and requirements of government policy (14 of the 30 conferences) and did not discuss the future of the labour market or the education system explicitly. Such a find reminds us that career guidance is largely a state funded activity and consequently it is an area that is directly shaped by the whims and priorities of government.

Slightly over half of the conference did include discussion of the changing world of work as part of their rationale (16). In these cases, the future of work was generally described as being challenging (14) and necessitating a new kind of response from both careers professionals and individuals. New technology was seen as a critical driver of these labour market changes (13) with automation explicitly mentioned by a minority (4). Globalisation was viewed as the other important driver of the changing labour market (7). Such changes were generally viewed from the perspective of the individual who it is argued will need to become more agile and adaptable (13), to develop new digital skills (4), anticipate a change in the psychological contract with their employer (2) and retire later (1).

The clearest articulation of the changing world of work theme was offered by the AGCAS (2018) conference for careers professionals working in UK higher education. The theme is ‘‘Future Proof – Responding to the Revolution” with the conference promising to answer questions about “What does employability mean in the midst of the fourth industrial revolution?”, “How will AI, automation and big data transform our clients’ careers and our own?” and ”How do we demonstrate our value by being agile and responsive in a rapidly changing world?”.

Most careers conferences reproduce the changing world of work narrative. A change is coming, driven by technologies and individuals should expect that it will rewrite many of their assumption about their careers. If they are going to survive in this changing world of work, they will need to be able to respond to these changes flexibly. Resistance is likely to be futile and there is little acknowledgement that they might have a role in shaping these changes collectively or politically.

The analysis conducted for this chapter highlights the close alignment between the wider public policy debate about the changing world of work and the way that these issues are taken up and debated as part of the practice and professional development of careers professionals. If we have concerns about the way in which the changing world of work constructs the future and narrows what is possible and contestable it is important to think about how these concerns can be addressed within the education system. Career guidance offers a key place that such education can take place, but if it is going to allow learners to contest some of the assumptions inherent in the changing world of work discourse, career guidance will need to find a new emancipatory register.

The invisible force of continuity

The changing world of work narrative, both as it is articulated through the grey literature and as it is represented in the discourse of career guidance, is based around the central assumption that change is the primary and most important force in society and for people's careers. It is easy to notice things that have changed over the course of our lifetimes and so there is a tendency to focus on such changes and to ignore the importance of continuity. The narrative of the changing world of work urges us to pay attention to change and to change ourselves, our businesses and our societies in response to it. However, the idea that we are in a period that is changing more than ever is contestable.

In the UK we are fortunate to have good historical labour market data which allows us to look at how the labour market is changing over time. Very little of this data suggests that we are seeing radical shifts in the way that work is structured and organised. For example, job tenure has stayed remarkably consistent over the last forty years (Burgess & Rees, 1996; Unwin & Parry, 2016). Self-employment has risen substantially, particularly since the recession, but still only accounts for around

15% of the UK workforce (ONS, 2018a). The overall employment rate has remained remarkably stable over the last 50 years and is currently at its highest ever recorded level (ONS, 2018b). And most people still work for businesses with more than 50 employees (DBEIIS, 2017). Such differences between rhetoric and reality are important for those involved in career guidance as it changes the way in which individuals understand what is happening in the labour market and shifts the way in which they might plan their engagement with it and anticipate their likely future.

The fact that there is a lot of continuity within the UK labour market does not mean that the labour market never changes. Rather it means that it is important to notice that the overall speed of change is typically gradual. Close attention to labour market structures reveal how such changes relate to wider political and economic forces as much as to the technological and cultural shifts that are highlighted in the changing world of work narrative. So, the CIPD's (2013) investigation into changes in job tenure concludes that job tenure has been *increasing* in the UK for 10 to 15 years. The CIPD attributes these changes to public policies like the minimum wage and shifts in the way occupational pensions are arranged, to organisational innovations around employee engagement, to the recession and to an aging workforce. In other words, while the world of work might be changing, it is changing fairly slowly and in response to a range of identifiable influences, at least some of which can be contested.

An important corrective to the changing world of work narrative is therefore to contest both its explanatory power around current labour market trends and its predictive power around the future. Technological (and other) changes are nothing new and there is no reason to believe that we are in a unique period of history where change is happening more rapidly or more fundamentally than ever before (Denning, 2015; Shackleton, 2018). Labour markets have historically been able to adapt to previous waves of automation without the total number of jobs going into decline.

Furthermore, it is important to recognise that just because something can be done technically does not mean it will become the new paradigm and that upwards trends will often peak before they become dominant. So, home and remote working has been a feature of the UK labour market for over 100 years (McOrmand, 2004) and has been steadily rising to comprise around 14% of employment by

2014 (ONS, 2014). However, there are many challenges for individuals, managers and organisations in successfully implementing homeworking arrangements which mean that it is doubtful that such arrangements will become the dominant paradigm in the foreseeable future (Beauregard, Basile & Canonico, 2013).

Implementing change is neither straightforward nor inevitable and there are many factors that mitigate against rapid change in the labour market. Short termism within businesses and a lack of capacity to innovate and implement technological change often slows down or prevents anticipated changes (Dundon and Howcroft, 2018). Human beings remain both cheaper and more flexible than robots in many cases (Shackleton, 2018). There are also considerable legal, ethical and societal hurdles to the implementation of new technologies and other features associated with the changing world of work (OECD, 2017). One of the most obvious examples of this is driverless cars. Much of the technology already exists to enable a shift which could have profound implications for people working in the logistics and service sectors. But, such changes rely on the development of a new ethical and legal framework capable of assigning blame in the case of accident and death. Developing such a framework is complex and raises issues about what end we are trying to achieve (Hevelke & Nida-Rümelin, 2015) and such contestability inevitably places decisions into the political domain where they can be influenced by public opinion and by the lobbying of vested interests including the car companies, environmental and safety lobbies and trade unions.

Case studies of technology like the driverless car remind us to be sceptical of technological determinism. There are many ways in which different technologies can be deployed and public policy, employer behaviour and the expectations of individuals all set the context within which the career and employment consequences of such deployments will be played out. Career guidance has the potential to play a range of roles in helping individuals to understand the rhetoric of change, interrogate it and consider what the implications are likely to be for individuals, communities and societies. The analysis of the career conferences suggests that such critical engagement with the changing world of work may not be the norm and that career guidance is often swept up in the rhetoric of the inevitability of technologically driven change. Given this, it is now important to consider the politics of the changing

world of work and to begin to consider how educational activities such as career guidance can relate to them.

The politics of the changing world of work

Technology is not an external force which acts on or is acted on by politics. As Febvre (1935/1983, pp. 14-15) wrote in his reflections on the history of technology, "'technological activities cannot be isolated from other human activities. Securely enclosed by them it is driven by their action, individual and collective…technology undergoes the influence of general history: and, at the same time, acts on history." Such a perspective radically shifts the assumptions that can be found in the changing world of work narrative that technology is an external driver of changes in working life to which individuals, organisations and societies have to respond. Rather technology is positioned as something which is mutable, contestable and intertwined with politics.

The mutability of technology and its integration with wider social change opens up radical possibilities for career guidance. The changing world of work narrative focuses the problem on the individual, asking - how are you going to adapt to the change? Career guidance has frequently served as a handmaiden to responsibilisation by encouraging people to focus individual responses and emphasising "career adaptability" as the core construct for individuals to develop in the face of a changing world (Savickas, 1997). The point made by Febvre, challenges this focus on career adaptability and brings important new questions into the wheelhouse of career guidance: How do you use technology? How would you like to use technology in your life? How is technology being used by employers – and how should it be used? How can you influence, shape, resist and encourage the development of technology in ways that are beneficent? Such questions are empowering and encourage individuals to remember that they have both individual and collective agency and that technological changes are contestable rather than inevitable.

Braverman (1974/1998) extends this point by highlighting the role that power and ownership have in determining how new technologies are adopted and utilised. "Machinery" he writes is "the instrument of those to whom the accumulation of capital gives the ownership of the machines" and it

”has in the capitalist system the function of divesting the mass of workers of their control over their own labor.” He goes on to make a prescient critique of the changing world of work narrative by noting that it is “ironic that this appears perfectly ‘natural’ to the minds of those who, subjected to two centuries of this fetishism of capital, actually see the machine as an alien force which subjugates humanity!” (p.133).

Where technology acts as an important driver of change in people’s careers it does so within a social structure characterised by inequalities of power where the consequences of technological change are felt differently depending on where you sit in the social hierarchy. As Buchanan (2018) notes social media and its adoption by employers as a form of surveillance drives those about to enter the labour market into forms of self-commodification and immaterial labour. While employers may welcome the opportunity to review every aspect of potential workers’ lives in advance of employment, labour market entrants often object to this and seek to subvert it (Hooley & Cutts, 2018). Similarly, Moore & Robinson (2018) argue that the development of wearable devices in the workplace increases the capacity of employers to surveil workers, drives overwork, stress and burnout and encourages the internalisation of structural and organisational problems and oppressions. None of these technological changes are inevitable nor pre-determined. Rather technologies are developed for particularly purposes and deployed to serve the interests of those who have the power and control over their development. Braverman’s machines are now acting on our psychologies and our bodies to maximise the accumulation of capital, and the changing world of work narrative is one of the ways that we are convinced that this is natural and inevitable.

Illuminating the fact that technology and power are intertwined and that they structure the rewards and benefits that are generated through work should be an important part of career guidance. If career guidance seeks to help individuals to understand the labour market and to build a career, it also needs to help them to understand that the working world is structured by class, ownership, capacity to develop technology and the exercise of power. Importantly it needs to call attention to the way in which existing structures and power relationships define not only the present but also the path which is taken into the future. Such analysis poses career problems that are not easily solved through adaptability and

individuals' action. Building a meaningful response to such problems is likely to require collective and even political action and this is likely to make new demands on career guidance professionals.

This is not completely new ground to the field with Law (1981) and more recently Thomsen (2017) already exploring how collective and community perspectives can be introduced into career guidance and a range of writers examining how critical and emancipatory positions can be introduced into practice (e.g. Bengtsson, 2018; Hooley, 2015; Precarious Workers Brigade, 2017). With respect to the changing world of work narrative this might include engaging with campaigns such as that advocated by Srnicek & Williams (2016) who transform concern about automation into a political manifesto based around four interlinked demands: (1) full automation; (2) the reduction of the working week; (3) the provision of a basic income; and (4) the diminishment of the work ethic. Adopting such a manifesto offers a different kind of response the changing world of work, albeit one which remains concerned with helping people to build a personally satisfying career. Political demands and political action should not be viewed as a distraction from career development, but rather as a different way to progress. Indeed, in some circumstances collective and political action offers the best, or even the only way, through which personal advancement can take place.

Critically rewriting the future through career guidance

The analysis of career conferences presented above suggests that career guidance can often be deterministic, uncritical and responsibilising. At its worst it suggests that many in the field have adopted a narrative of the future which serves the interests of neoliberalism and narrows the opportunities for human action down to the ability to manoeuvre within existing structures. However, this is not the only role that career guidance can take. It is also possible to imagine career guidance taking a more critical role which encourages individuals to think about the future in different ways.

There is a radical tradition within the practice of career guidance which goes back to its origin as part of late nineteenth century and early twentieth century progressive movements (Zytowski, 2001). Such traditions have been picked up episodically across its history and infused by ideas from critical psychology, radical education and critical theory (Hooley, Sultana & Thomsen, 2018). To draw this

tradition together and increase its centrality to the career guidance field, Hooley, Sultana &Thomsen (2018, p.20) propose a new definition for career guidance which emphasises the possibility of collective action as well as individual agency, of building a critical account of the world as it is and as it could be and, critically, of bringing into view the importance of 'leisure' alongside learning and work.

> Career guidance supports individuals and groups to discover more about work, leisure and learning and to consider their place in the world and plan for their futures. Key to this is developing individual and community capacity to analyse and problematise assumptions and power relations, to network and build solidarity and to create new and shared opportunities. It empowers individuals and groups to struggle within the world as it as it is and to imagine the world as it could be.
>
> Career guidance can take a wide range of forms and draws on diverse theoretical traditions. But at its heart it is a purposeful learning opportunity which supports individuals and groups to consider and reconsider work, leisure and learning in the light of new information and experiences and to take both individual and collective action as a result of this.

This definition provides a very different basis for career guidance's' engagement with the changing world of work discourse. It would encourage career guidance practitioners to critically explore the changing world of work rhetoric and to encourage discussion about in who's interest such a narrative works. It further asks that they consider both what is contestable and what kind of instruments and actions might allow things to be contested. For example, discussions about the changing nature of the psychological contract and the growth of the gig economy take a different direction when information about the Independent Workers Union of Great Britain's successful campaigns to change the practices of cycle courier companies is introduced (Hinsliff, 2018).

Such discussions highlight the contestability of economic and labour market changes and also resituate career as a collective endeavour which people do together rather than an individualistic participation in the competition state. Rather than offering people one option (develop your skills, get

a new job and stop being a cycle courier) a more emancipatory position opens up new options through which individuals can develop their career (join or form a union and work collectively to improve your pay and conditions). In a previous article (Hooley, 2018) I looked at how career guidance could encourage critical engagement with automation. In this I built on an earlier emancipatory curriculum framework (Hooley, 2015) focused around the questions:

- Who am I?
- How does the world work?
- Where do I fit into the world?
- How can I live with others in the world?
- How do I go about changing the world?

These questions can be used to organise curriculum content in ways that allow critical interrogation of ideological, but seemingly "common sense" notions like "we are all going to be replaced by robots". An emancipatory career guidance would help people to understand what labour market changes were taking place as a result of automation and what skills needed to be developed to participate in the changing labour market. But, it would also encourage people to consider the political economy of automation and think about different individual, collective and societal responses to it. Encouraging learners to take a historical perspective on such questions and to engage in analysis of power and vested interests provides new and interesting perspective on their own careers. If this is then combined with an opportunity to think about both the collective dimension (that we are all careering together) and the possibility of changing not just yourself, but also the world and the structures around it, it radically resituates the focus of career guidance.

Career guidance remains an intensely practical and personal area of education. People seek it out because they want help in locating themselves in the world, in making decisions and in navigating structures. Such practical groundings can raise doubts about how far it is possible to address concerns politically and to propose collective and transformational answers to people's immediate questions. The changing world of work rhetoric potentially opens up a space where we are invited to think beyond the

immediate and the day-to-day grind of finding a course or job. At its heart is the argument that fundamental changes are happening to the world and it is important that we think radically about our position within the world. In the words of Marx & Engels (1848/2010, p.16) this is an example of the ”constant revolutionising of production” which means that ”all fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify. All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man is at last compelled to face with sober senses his real conditions of life, and his relations with his kind.”

The changing world of work rhetoric represents a moment when we are told that “all that is solid melts into air” in such a situation career guidance’s role becomes absolutely to help people to come to terms with the “real conditions of life” and to develop a range of possibilities about the future. In this chapter I have argued that the changing world of work narrative provides a narrow set of ideas about what is possible in the light of labour market changes. I have also argued that these possibilities tend to individualise and responsibilise the career solutions that are open to people and to justify them with contestable notions of how the future is likely to unfold. Against such a backdrop career guidance can encourage people to take a critical perspective and to expand the range of possibilities that are open to them.

References

Andrews, D. (2011). *Careers education in schools*. Stafford: Highflyers.

Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS). (2018). AGCAS conference for HE careers and employability professionals. https://www.agcas.org.uk/Training-and-conferences/agcas-annual-conference-for-he-careers-and-employability-professionals-2018/6289?OccId=9149. Accessed 16th June 2018.

Beauregard, A., Basile, K. & Canonico, E. (2013). *Home is where the work is: A new study of homeworking in ACAS – and beyond*. London: ACAS.

Bengtsson, A. (2018). Rethinking social justice, equality and emancipation: An invitation to attentive career guidance. In Hooley, T., Sultana, R. & Thomsen, R. (Eds.) *Career guidance for social justice: Contesting neoliberalism* (pp.255-268). London: Routledge.

Braverman, H. (1974/1998). *Labor and monopoly capital: The degradation of work in the twentieth Century*. New York: Monthly Review Press.

Buchanan, R. (2018). Social media and social justice in the context of career guidance. Is education enough? In Hooley, T., Sultana, R. & Thomsen, R. (Eds.) *Career guidance for social justice: Contesting neoliberalism* (pp.109-124). London: Routledge.

Burgess, S. & Rees, H. (1996). Job tenure in Britain 1975-1992. *Economic Journal*, 106(435), 334-344.

Cerny, P. G. (2010). The competition state today: from raison d'État to raison du Monde. *Policy studies*, *31*(1), 5-21.

Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD). (2013). *Has job turnover slowed down?* London: CIPD.

Cross, G. S. (1986). The political economy of leisure in retrospect: Britain, France and the origins of the eight-hour day. *Leisure Studies*, 5 (1), 69–90.

Denning, S. (2015, June 4). The 'jobless future' is a myth. Forbes. www.forbes.com/sites/stevedenning/2015/06/04/the-robots-are-not-coming/#6d10363c2e39. Accessed 22nd June 2018.

Department of Business, Energy, Innovation and Industrial Strategy. (2017). *Business population estimates for the UK and regions 2017*. London: Department of Business, Energy, Innovation and Industrial Strategy.

Dundon, T & Howcroft, D. (2018). Automation, robots and the 'end of work' myth. https://theconversation.com/automation-robots-and-the-end-of-work-myth-89619. Accessed 19th May 2018.

Febvre, L. (1935/1983) Reflections on the history of technology. *History and Technology, An International Journal*, 1(1), 13-18.

Foundation for Young Australians. (2017). *The new work smarts*. Melbourne: The Foundation for Young Australians.

Hevelke, A., & Nida-Rümelin, J. (2015). Responsibility for crashes of autonomous vehicles: an ethical analysis. *Science and Engineering Ethics*, 21(3), 619-630.

International Monetary Fund. (2018). *Technology and the future of work*. Washington: International Monetary Fund.

Keynes, J.M. (1930). Economic possibilities for our grandchildren. http://www.econ.yale.edu/smith/econ116a/keynes1.pdf. Accessed 2nd June 2018.

Hinsliff, G. (2018). The gig economy can be changed after all – thanks to unions and activists. *The Guardian*. https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/mar/27/gig-economy-unions-activists-courier-dpd-precarious-employment. Accessed 16th June 2018.

Hooley, T. (2012). How the internet changed career: framing the relationship between career development and online technologies. *Journal of the National Institute for Career Education and Counselling (NICEC)*. 29: 3-12.

Hooley, T. (2015). *Emancipate yourselves from mental slavery: self-actualisation, social justice and the politics of career guidance*. Derby: International Centre for Guidance Studies, University of Derby.

Hooley, T. (2017). Moving beyond ‘what works’: Using the evidence base in lifelong guidance to inform policy making. In Schroder, K. and Langer, J. (Eds.) *Wirksamkeit der beratung in bildung, beruf und beschäftigung* (The Effectiveness of Counselling in Education and Employment). Bielefeld: WBV.

Hooley, T. (2018). A war against the robots? Career guidance, automation and neoliberalism. In Hooley, T., Sultana, R. & Thomsen, R. (Eds.) *Career guidance for social justice: Contesting neoliberalism* (pp.93-108). London: Routledge.

Hooley, T. & Cutts, B. (2018). ‘It all kind of symbolises something doesn’t it?’ How students present their career image online. *Journal of the National Institute of Career Education and Counselling*, 40(1), 40-47.

Hooley, T., Sultana, R. & Thomsen, R. (2018). The neoliberal challenge to career guidance: Mobilising research, policy and practice around social justice. In Hooley, T., Sultana, R. & Thomsen, R. (Eds.) *Career guidance for social justice: Contesting neoliberalism* (pp.1-28). London: Routledge.

Hughes, D., Mann, A., Barnes, S., Baldauf, B. & McKeown, R.. (2016). *Careers education: International literature review*. London: Education Endowment Foundation.

Law, B. (1981). Community interaction: A ‘mid-range’ focus for theories of career development in young adults. *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling*, 9(2), 142158.

Mann, A., Stanley, J. and Archer, L. (Eds.). (2014). *Understanding employer engagement in education*. London & New York: Routledge

Mark, K. & Engels, F. (1848/2010). Manifesto of the Communist Party. https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/download/pdf/Manifesto.pdf. Accessed 17th June 2018.

McKinsey Global Institute. (2017). *Jobs lost, jobs gained: Workforce transitions in a time of automation*. McKinsey & Company.

McOrmond, T. (2004). Changes in working trends over the past decade. *Labour Market Trends*, January 2004, 25-35.

Moore, P. & Robinson, A. (2016). The quantified self: What counts in the neoliberal workplace. *New Media & Society*, *18*(11), 2774-2792.

Next Generation Recruitments. (2016). *How the world of work is changing*. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HYPxrzHJhF8&t=2s. Accessed 13th June 2018.

PWC. (2017). *Workforce of the future*. London: PWC

Office for National Statistics (ONS). (2014). Characteristics of home workers, 2014. http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20160107085351/http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/lmac/characteristics-of-home-workers/2014/rpt-home-workers.html. Accessed 2nd June 2018.

Office for National Statistics (ONS). (2018a). Trends in self-employment in the UK. https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/articles/trendsinselfemploymentintheuk/2018-02-07. Accessed 2nd June 2018.

Office for National Statistics (ONS). (2018b). Employment rate (aged 16 to 64, seasonally adjusted). https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/timeseries/lf24/lms. Accessed 2nd June 2018.

Precarious Workers Brigade (2017). Training for exploitation? Politicising employability and reclaiming education. *Journal of Aesthetics and Protest*. http://joaap.org/press/trainingforexploitation.htm. Accessed 22nd June 2018.

Savickas, M. L. (1997). Career adaptability: An integrative construct for life-span, life-space theory. *The Career Development Quarterly*, *45*(3), 247-259.

Scharff, C. (2016). The psychic life of neoliberalism: Mapping the contours of entrepreneurial subjectivity. *Theory, Culture & Society*, *33*(6), 107-122.

Shackleton, J.R. (2018). *Robopocalypse now?* London: Institute of Economic Affairs.

Srnicek, N. & Williams, A. (2016). *Inventing the future*. London: Verso.

Thomsen, R. (2017). *Career guidance in communities: A model for reflexive practice*. Derby: International Centre for Guidance Studies, University of Derby.

Urwin, P., & Parry, E. (2016). 4. Two decades of employee retention, tenure and turnover. In Saridakis, G. & Cooper, C.L. (Eds.) *Research handbook on employee turnover* (pp.59-78). Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing.

Watts, A. G. (2014). Cross-national reviews of career guidance systems: Overview and reflections. *Journal of the National Institute for Career Education and Counselling 32*(1), 4-14.

Zytowski, D. G. (2001). Frank Parsons and the progressive movement. *The Career Development Quarterly*, *50*(1), 57-65.