Education

There is an increasing emphasis on knowledge, which has wide-reaching effects for both the economy and wider society. The shift from an industrial to a post-industrial economy has brought about significant changes in the focus of economic activity. Academics differ on the nature of these societal effects but agree that this shift is epochal and that it signifies a continual automation and technologisation of processes of scientific communication, including access, distribution and dissemination, which are core aspects of knowledge creation.

**THE KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY AND THE KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY**

A number of scholars have contributed ideas to the concept of ‘knowledge economy’, a system of consumption and production that is based upon intellectual capital as well as to ‘knowledge society’, a society that generates, shares and makes available knowledge to all its members. Attempts have also been made to relate these concepts to wider changes in the nature of capitalism, modernity and the global economy. Both ‘knowledge economy’ and ‘knowledge society’ are complex concepts, which hold both descriptive and analytical force but these are largely based on separate literatures developed in isolation from one another. The term ‘knowledge culture’ is an attempt to overcome this dualism and recognise the significance of both streams.

**THE THREE FORMS OF KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY**

Professor Peters has discussed three forms of knowledge economy: the ‘learning economy’, the ‘creative economy’ and the ‘open knowledge economy’. Analysis of these concepts draws from economics, sociology and philosophy. The ‘learning economy’ was first coined by Bengt-Ake Lundvall, a Swedish economist, in the mid-1990s and refers to the capacity to learn, which increasingly determines the relative position of individuals, firms and systems. Sustainability of these learning economies depends on the distribution of capabilities to learn. Analysis of the ‘learning economy’ focuses upon the learning processes that are responsible for the production of knowledge.

The ‘creative economy’ originates in the work of Charles Landry, John Howkins and Richard Florida in the late 1990s and early 2000s. It emphasises the creative industries and institutions as an interlocking sector producing cultural goods and services as a rapidly growing and central element of the new global knowledge economy. These industries draw upon both the individual and collective resources of creativity, skill and talent but the idea of creative economy extends beyond this, to new creative and open processes around which technological development and economic development is organising itself. The creative economy holds strong potential for future economic growth.

---

Building knowledge cultures in the age of the digital reason

Since the Second World War, academics have described and critiqued the transformation that has occurred in Western society. This transformation entails a fundamental shift from an industrial to a post-industrial economy, emphasising the production and consumption of knowledge, and symbolic goods as a higher-order economic activity. Professor Michael A. Peters from the University of Waikato focuses his research on this transformation, discussing a range of potential developments and in particular considering the role of the University in these developments.

There is an increasing emphasis on knowledge, which has wide-reaching effects for both the economy and wider society.
Is there a downside to relying solely on digital media as an information source? Digital media are now the new normal for research, scientific communication and innovation. They use the term the ‘shift of digital reason’ to describe this philosophical shift in culture and while it has scalability, global reach, extended network and open access effects that are generally positive, it also has consequences in terms of the fight over intellectual property, knowledge and information monopolies, and the reliance on digital media and sources that configure metrics and citations controlling scientific performance dependencies on the values of control and efficiency. Digital reason is an operationalisation of a two-value algebraic logic – not all knowledge or wisdom can be captured by this process.

You describe the UK’s Research Excellence Framework (REF) as a ‘dubious practice’ – could you expand on why such schemes are problematic? I’m strongly influenced by the French philosopher Jean-Francois Lyotard who provided a strong critique of ‘performativity’. Such schemes capture that which is easily commodified, that is, a form of other academics over long distances. Peer production is one metric systems that come to govern funding and the quality of the relationship. I am widely interested in mentoring and building networks through journals that I have established, or through organisations like the ‘performativity’. Such schemes capture that which is easily commodified, that is, a form of other academics over long distances. Peer production is one metric systems that come to govern funding and the quality of the relationship. I am widely interested in mentoring and building networks through journals that I have established, or through organisations like the ‘Radical Openness’... (Peters, 2014); https://www.sensepublishers.com/medialibrary/the-research-policy.pdf

Where do you see your research going in the next five years? The knowledge distinction and marks to a work: a philosophical strand based on the philosophers Wittgenstein, Foucault and others, especially in a new base of epistemology, learning, cognition, teaching processes, subjectivity and truth; and, political economy of knowledge and information in emerging capitalism focusing on questions of the creation, production, access and distribution of knowledge. Political economy is the interdisciplinary study of how politics influences the economy and economic outcomes. My aim is to more effectively link these strands in a venue based on a concept of digital reason that sees education as a mode of development envisaging a new type of modernisation theory that also registers the significance of politics, ethics and subjectivity to concepts of ‘knowledge economy’.

Both ‘knowledge economy’ and ‘knowledge society’ are complex concepts, which hold both descriptive and analytical force.

for the generation of wealth and job creation through the development and exploitation of intellectual property.

The ‘open knowledge economy’ emphasises that information is the vital component in a ‘new’ politics economy which links space, knowledge and capital in networked practices. Freedom is a essence of these networked practices to develop into knowledge cultures. Ground rules for democratic societies have changed to favour the individual active consumer citizen who access or creates blogs via the internet, bypassing mainstream media. New media thrives on a constant streaming of opinions involving many ‘information transactions’ but also serves as a vehicle for constant feedback. An information state exists in which nobody is immune to information and information cannot be policed or controlled. Issues around state and corporate surveillance, however, remain a threat to both privacy and democratic rights. New theories have been recently put forward by critical thinkers concerning ‘cognitive capitalism’ and a new societalisation of knowledge processes through developing social media production (Peters & Bluk, 2011).

WITH OPEN ARMS

Openness has become a complex term to describe a range of digital trends and movements and has emerged as an alternative mode of ‘social production’, based on the growing and overlapping complexities of open source, open access, open archived, open publishing and open science. In this context, openness pertains to open source models of scientific communication, knowledge distribution and intellectual development. It also is connected more widely to government (‘open government’), society (‘open society’ or ‘open economy’) and psychology (openness is one of the ‘big five’ personality traits).

‘Open science economy’ refers to open source models of scientific communication, knowledge distribution and intellectual development. It also is connected more widely to government (‘open government’), society (‘open society’ or ‘open economy’) and psychology (openness is one of the ‘big five’ personality traits).

‘Open science economy’ refers to open source models of scientific communication, knowledge distribution and intellectual development. It also is connected more widely to government (‘open government’), society (‘open society’ or ‘open economy’) and psychology (openness is one of the ‘big five’ personality traits).

CREATIVITY AND THE UNIVERSITY

Professor Peters, along with other academics, has developed a model of the ‘creative university as a digital public university’. This model proposes a conception of the ‘creative university’ which embraces user-centred and open-innovation public ecosystems, which are based upon a shared ethos underlying ‘co-creation’, ‘co-production’ and ‘co-design’. These new platforms draw upon theories of collective intelligence and commons-based peer production. This model is in stark contrast to historical models of German idealism and Romanticism that emphasise individual creativity attached to passions and dark developments unconscious forces. The model of peer production and collective intelligence instead is a product of social, networked and non-rivalrous environments in which everything sparks.

COLLECTIVE INTELLIGENCE AND PEER PRODUCTION

Collective intelligence represents a cultural and evolutionary development of human intelligence, emphasising the social basis of language and consciousness. It is the evolving cultural infrastructure for the national systems of higher education. Peer production is one form of collective intelligence and is a way of producing goods and services that relies on self-organising communities of individuals. In such communities, labour is coordinated towards a shared outcome.

We are now entering a new age of digitally enabled peer production, involving the democratisation of economies, politics and culture, the participation of citizen-amateurs and the open sourcing of journalism, science, library science and field of cultural production. Questions remain about the relationships between peer production, collective intelligence, the higher education marketplace and knowledge dissemination. Professor Peters’ work sets us on the road to answering these questions. The ‘creative university as digital public university’ model proposes that by fostering economic and social equality, free discourse can be sustained and developed in the public arena, which serves to guide the political practice of democracy.