The Value of Higher Education in the Disrupted Age

Notes from Australia

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The Value of Higher Education

• The Australian H.E. context: cycles of access/equity/cost
• Framing young people’s futures in the present
• Higher Education futures and the future of higher education.
Australia: possibly a hoax?

Australia doesn’t exist! And other bizarre geographic conspiracies that won’t go away

A theory denying the existence of the country is gaining ground. But the suggestion that countries and cities are mere figments of our imagination is a meme that dates back to the birth of the web.
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The three projects for mapping disruption

- Tracing H.E. messaging geo-spatially & in/over time
- Tracking & tracing changes in message/recruitment materials over time
- Examining dis/placement of types of educational futures over time, in place.
Compounding advantage in H.E.
A story of geography, equity, or access?

Top 2 Household Income Quintiles

La Trobe University
University of Melbourne
RMIT University
Deakin University
Monash (Oakleigh)
Monash (Clayton)
Monash (Penninsula)

Victoria University
Deakin (Warrun Ponds)
A Timeline of Australian H.E.
The last 5 decades

1974: Tertiary Education Fees Abolished
   (Raising participation focus)

1988: Dawkins Review
   Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) Introduced

1998: ‘Learning for Life’
   (Equity & access focus with specific regional/rural focus)

2002: Nelson Review
   (Conservative push to raise student contributions)

2011: Lomax-Smith Review
   (Review of base funding for post-graduate research)

2008: Bradley Review
   (Raising participation focus & ‘demand-driven’ funding)

2014: Abolition of demand-driven funding
   (Conservative push to raise fees and re-cap places)

2016: Improving the Transparency of Higher Education Admissions
   (Review of the use of ‘ATAR’)

2018: Review of Retention, Completion, and ‘Success’
   (Review of ‘lowering standards’)
Australian Tertiary Admissions Ranking

- A ‘ranking’ not a ‘score’
- State-based but national language
- Each student given a position from 99.95 to ‘less than 30.00’
- Based on commencing age-cohort.

Basis of admission for higher education undergraduate commencements 2014-2016
The changing role of Higher Education?

Framing young people of the future

‘Group of Eight’ (Go8)
The changing role of Higher Education?
The changing role of Higher Education?

Regional Universities Network ‘RUN’
The changing role of Higher Education?
Hacking the University of the Future

• How does the University of the future ‘move’?

• How does that ‘future’ inform the present?

• How does this look in different spaces/places?
The University of the Future
More than a question of relevance

• How do we understand the shifting physical, digital, and symbolic footprint(s) of the University?
  • What are the ‘documents of life’ that make up the University and its relationship to young people’s lives?
  • What prescriptions, disruptions, and opportunities are coded into conversations within & around the University of the future?
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The three projects for mapping disruption

We need to think about how these projects are sped up and influenced through and by disruption: technical, social, economic, and ecological.

This requires a joined up approach that recognizes policy mobilities, but also their ‘stuckness’.

This means maintaining a healthy skepticism around those who propose, fund, and seek to advance ‘solutions’ within and beyond the global north.