When machines liberate us from the constraints of scarcity, they also mitigate a significant source of malice in the world. The species that evolved to collaborate and compete, to work and survive, will also undergo a transformation in its desires and habits. To sustain its zest for life, this new species—*Homo liberatus*—will draw upon what it has already discovered along its evolutionary path: beauty, love, play, and other non-utilitarian skills. These are not mere luxuries but essential components of a fulfilling existence, elements that elevate us beyond mere survival and into a realm of meaningful engagement with the world. This metamorphosis signifies not just a liberation from manual tasks but also from routine cognitive labor, allowing us to refocus our energies on more complex, creative, and intellectually stimulating endeavors.

It is important to consider the role of human control in shaping the impact of AI on society. As theorists like Stuart Russell argue, AI systems should be aligned with human values and goals to ensure that their development and deployment serve the interests of humanity (Russell 2019). This raises the question of whether AI, if properly aligned, could potentially empower rather than threaten Marx's conception of species-being. In Marx's vision of a communist society, individuals would have the freedom to engage in a variety of activities without being reduced to any single role. The advanced capabilities of AI systems, particularly AGI, could potentially expand the means by which humans can achieve their ends, enabling a greater diversity of pursuits and experiences. However, it is crucial to recognize that this liberatory outcome is not predetermined. The realization of a world in which AI empowers human agency and creativity depends on the active struggle to ensure that the development and control of these technologies serve the collective interests of humanity, rather than the narrow interests of a few. As such, the political struggle over the control of AI remains a precondition for the liberatory potential of these technologies to be realized.

5 Educating homo liberatus

Labor has long been a defining aspect of human life, serving both as a source of fulfillment and a burden. This dual role not only reshapes our relationship with work but also carries significant implications for education. Traditional education systems have been built on the premise that humans are primarily defined by their productive capabilities. This perspective, held by various schools of thought including Marxists, Pragmatists, and Human Capital theorists, places an undue emphasis on skill acquisition and professional competency. However, this viewpoint is increasingly inadequate, as it fails to account for the broader dimensions of human existence that extend beyond labor.

The advent of AI, particularly text-generating AI, serves as a watershed moment in the ongoing evolution of our species. The shedding of skills, once considered quintessentially human, can also be a liberating process. In this emerging landscape, the drudgery of both manual and cognitive labor is gradually diminishing. Consequently, education must pivot to prepare students for a world where human creativity and the capacity for joy are the primary existential features worth preserving. Shifting the focus away from productive ability will change education.

In an AI-transformed world, the educational focus may shift towards qualities that are less likely to be externalized by machines, such as agency, creativity, will, desire, and values. These qualities could potentially foster resilience, adaptability, and moral guidance in a rapidly changing world. As the importance of producing utilitarian objects recedes, education may place greater emphasis on cultivating appreciation for beauty, love, and play. However, it is important to acknowledge that the precise content of flourishing and the most appropriate educational focal points in an AI-driven future remain open to debate and may require ongoing re-evaluation.

While the exact set of qualities that will define human flourishing in an AI-transformed world remains uncertain, it is clear that educational curricula will need to evolve. The traditional linear construction of curriculum, which emphasizes mastery of basic skills before progressing to more advanced ones, may need to be re-evaluated. As lower-level skills become increasingly delegable to computers, education may need to focus more on nurturing higher-order attributes and competencies. However, the specific nature of these attributes and the best ways to cultivate them will likely be the subject of ongoing discussion and experimentation.

As we approach an AI-induced paradigm shift, the role of education becomes increasingly pivotal. An education that nurtures human qualities transcending labor and production serves as our guiding light in this new era. By focusing on these aspects, we not only adapt to AI-induced changes but also reaffirm our commitment to uphold the value and dignity of the human spirit.