

Parallels and Responses to Curricular Innovation: The Possibilities of Posthumanistic Education (Routledge International Studies in the Philosophy of Education)

By Brad Petitfils

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This volume explores two radical shifts in history and subsequent responses in curricular spaces: the move from oral to print culture during the transition between the 15th and 16th centuries and the rise of the Jesuits, and the move from print to digital culture during the transition between the 20th and 21st centuries and the rise of what the philosopher Jean Baudrillard called "hyperreality."

The curricular innovation that accompanied the first shift is considered through the rise of the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits). These men created the first "global network" of education, and developed a humanistic curriculum designed to help students navigate a complicated era of the known (human-centered) and unknown (God-centered) universe.

The curricular innovation that is proposed for the current shift is guided by the question: What should be the role of undergraduate education become in the 21st century? Today, the tension between the known and unknown universe is concentrated on the interrelationships between our embodied spaces and our digitally mediated ones. As a result, today’s undergraduate students should be challenged to understand how—in the objectively focused, commodified, STEM-centric landscape of higher education—the human subject is decentered by the forces of hyperreality, and in turn, how the human subject might be recentered to balance our humanness with the new realities of digital living.

Therein, one finds the possibility of posthumanistic education.

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- Sales Rank: #3139990 in eBooks
- Published on: 2014-10-24
- Released on: 2014-10-24
- Format: Kindle eBook

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Review

"Brad Petitfils*' Parallels and Responses to Curricular Innovation: The Possibilities of Posthumanistic Education* is the best critique of technology in education I have seen, and I have seen several. What is being done to the young in the name of educational 'innovation' is distressing. Petitfils charts a sensible course for educators and administrators. If you read one book this year, make this one it."

--William F. Pinar, Professor and Canada Research Chair, University of British Columbia, Canada

About the Author

Brad Petitfils teaches at Loyola University New Orleans, USA. His research focuses on hyperreality and posthumanism and the ways these theories affect the undergraduate classroom and the development of young adults. He teaches First-Year Seminars and is the co-director of Loyola's summer abroad program in Paris, France.

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