



On Study: Giorgio Agamben and educational potentiality (New Directions in the Philosophy of Education)

Tyson E. Lewis

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In an educational landscape dominated by discourses and practices of learning, standardized testing, and the pressure to succeed, what space and time remain for studying?

In this book, Tyson E. Lewis argues that studying is a distinctive educational experience with its own temporal, spatial, methodological, aesthetic, and phenomenological dimensions. Unlike learning, which presents the actualization of a student's "potential" in recognizable and measurable forms, study emphasizes the experience of potentiality, freed from predetermined outcomes. Studying suspends and interrupts the conventional logic of learning, opening up a new space and time for educational freedom to emerge.

Drawing upon the work of Italian philosopher and critical theorist Giorgio Agamben, Lewis provides a conceptually and poetically rich account of the interconnections between potentiality, freedom, and study. Through a mixture of educational critique, phenomenological description, and ontological analysis, Lewis redeems study as an invaluable and urgent educational experience that provides alternatives to the economization of education and the cooptation of potentiality in the name of efficiency. The resulting discussion uncovers multiple forms of study in a variety of unexpected places: from the political poetry of Adrienne Rich, to tinkering classrooms, to abandoned manifestos, and, finally, to Occupy Wall Street.

By reconnecting education with potentiality this book provides an educational philosophy that undermines the logic of learning and assessment, and turns our attention to the interminable paradoxes of studying. The book will be key reading for scholars in the fields of educational philosophy, critical pedagogy, foundations of education, composition and rhetoric, and critical thinking and literacy studies.

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