



# Postmodern Philosophical Critique and the Pursuit of Knowledge in Higher Education (Critical Studies in Education and Culture Series)

*Roger Mourad*

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This work explores the philosophical positions of five postmodern thinkers?Lyotard, Rorty, Schrag, Foucault, and Derrida?to show how their critiques imply that scholars are unduly limited by the belief that inquiry is fundamentally about gaining knowledge of phenomena that are assumed to exist prior to and independent of inquiry, and to persist essentially unchanged by inquiry. The author argues that there are good reasons why this constraint is both unnecessary and undesirable, and he resituates the disciplines within a more flexible foundation that would expand what counts as legitimate inquiry. This foundation would emphasize the inquirer as a cause of reality, not just an observer who aims to accurately describe and explain phenomena. Mourad proposes an intellectual and organizational form which he calls post-disciplinary research programs. These dynamic programs would be composed of scholars from diverse disciplines who collaborate to juxtapose disparate disciplinary concepts in order to create contexts for post-disciplinary inquiries.

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