

Re/humanizing Education and the Posthuman Turn

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Abstract: Recent scholarship has interrogated the place of the human, humanism, and humanization in educational thinking. Methodologically positioned as an act of educational theorizing based on literature review, the current paper seeks to add to that body of work by comparing two emerging areas of study: critical posthumanism and work aiming to re/humanize education. First, I describe critical posthumanism as a movement beyond anthropocentrism and European humanism, but one that maintains the subject and the human as meaningful categories. Second, I describe re/humanizing as a reclaiming of the category of the human within neoliberal education systems that seek to diminish it. I then compare critical posthumanism and re/humanizing, highlighting their mutual movements toward equity and relationality before focusing on their different emphases and visions for systemic change. I conclude by suggesting a value in further interrogations of the human in education and by discussing the subjective nature of this paper.

Résumé : Des recherches récentes ont interrogé la place de l'humain, de l'humanisme et de l'humanisation dans la pensée éducative. Positionné méthodologiquement comme un acte de théorisation pédagogique basé sur une revue de la littérature, le présent article cherche à compléter ce corpus de travaux en comparant deux domaines d'étude émergents : le post humanisme critique et les travaux visant à ré/humaniser l'éducation. Premièrement, je décris le post humanisme critique comme un mouvement au-delà de l'anthropocentrisme et de l'humanisme européen, mais qui maintient le sujet et l'humain comme catégories significatives. Deuxièmement, je décris la ré/humanisation comme une récupération de la catégorie de l'humain au sein des systèmes éducatifs néolibéraux qui cherchent à la diminuer. Je compare ensuite le post humanisme critique et la ré/humanisation, en soulignant leurs mouvements mutuels vers l'équité et la relationnalité avant de me concentrer sur leurs différents accents et visions du changement systémique. Je conclus

en suggérant de voir à d'autres façons de réfléchir sur l' aspect humain en éducation et en discutant la nature subjective de cet article.

Education and the Human

Education is a project of humanization. That, Nathan Snaza (2013) argued, has been the predominant disposition of educational thinkers for the last several millennia. Snaza (2013) traces the idea of education as a means to become more fully human back as far as Plato and Socrates, and those in Indigenous education might be able to trace the idea much further through creation stories and oral histories (e.g., Battiste, 2016). More recently, calls to humanize education have picked up on the emancipatory tradition of Paulo Freire (1970), whose humanizing pedagogy operates as the foundation of much critical education. Always, it seems, education has been aimed at humanization.

As Snaza (2013) suggests, however, aiming education at humanization often invites the possibility of dehumanization. One example is the Canadian Indian Residential School System. The architects of that system justified the practice of removing Indigenous children from their families and the brutal pedagogies employed in the “schools” through the pervasive belief that they could “kill the Indian in the child” (Young, 2015, p. 65). Their aim was to “save” the child through “civilization”, a project of pulling those deemed unhuman according to the unjustified hierarchies of race into their exclusionary, Eurocentric definition of the human. Presumably, they thought of this as a humanizing project. How wrong they were.

The tension between humanization and dehumanization is a perennial concern in educational thinking, but there seems no debate. Nearly all educational thinkers advocate for some sort of humanization. Indeed, as the above suggests, even those who are in favour of dehumanizing practices argue for those practices with appeals to some version of the human. Another example is Giovanni Gentile, the Italian philosopher who provided much of the justification for Mussolini’s fascism. Like many others, Gentile argued that humanity could be transformed through education. According to one account, Gentile “organized the opening of new elementary schools all over the country.... But the syllabus was

highly ideological, impressing on young minds the grandeur of imperial Rome and a general sense of Italy's unique destiny" (Bakewell, 2023, p. 306). Education became a project of humanization, but it was aimed toward producing a *particular version of the human*, one steeped in ideological nationalism. Gentile's was a vision of the human with dogmatic, near religious, reverence for the state, and it came through an education system many would today recognize as dehumanizing—if not for those within it, certainly for those outside of it. Bakewell (2023) also points to the way Nazi Germany and Stalinist Russia installed similar system of education designed to produce humans who fit the ideals of the state, an extreme sort of *homo nationalis*, or a national being (Balibar, 2004).

This perennial focus on humanization through education, along with the accompanying tension of dehumanization and the question of what sorts of humans are being moulded through an education system, is increasingly the subject of educational thinking (e.g., Donald, 2019; Lyle & Cassie, 2021; Snaza, 2013). The current paper seeks to map and extend parts of that discussion by comparing two recent engagements with the idea of the human: the posthuman turn and re/humanization.ⁱ

First, the posthuman turn can be thought of as the proliferation of works seeking to extend, displace, or otherwise challenge the status of the human. The posthuman turn attempts to move beyond the human, humanism, anthropocentrism, and/or the limits of the human form. Within this expansive definition, I include all those posthuman figures who live after death, live forever, or live enhanced lives. I also acknowledge the presence of those posthumanist discourses that flatten the status of the human to an object or a thing, ultimately functioning as another form of dehumanization. All of these contribute to the proliferation of posthumanist discourses, but all do not deserve even attention. In this paper, I focus on Rosi Braidotti's (2013, 2019, 2022) critical posthumanism as representative of the wider posthuman turn. Braidotti's is a critical, feminist posthumanism that engages thoughtfully and thoroughly with the rest of the field and critiques directed at it and, thus, makes a sound choice as representative.

Second, the idea of re/humanization can be thought of as the process of responding to conditions of dehumanization and reversing their effects. While re/humanizing has less of a distinct body of literature surrounding it than posthumanism, the term has often been used in discussions of dehumanization as a form of

response. Fanon (1963), for example, used the term in the conclusion of *Wretched of the Earth* as part of his response to European colonization:

Let us reconsider the question of mankind [*sic*]. Let us reconsider the question of cerebral reality and of the cerebral mass of all humanity, whose connections must be increased, whose channels must be diversified and whose messages must be re-humanized. (p. 314)

In my reading, Fanon resists Europe's exclusive claim to humanity (i.e., European humanism) and suggests that those deemed unhuman under Europe's gaze ought to reclaim their own humanity apart from it. Such a vision of re/humanization still carries weight today (e.g., Mbembe, 2019), as does a wider call to re/humanization. Indeed, a recent book edited by Ellyn Lyle (2022), titled *Re/humanizing Education*, localizes this concept in educational thought and practice. Through the chapters in Lyle's text, robust responses to the dehumanizing conditions of schooling are posited under the name of re/humanization, and such responses are sorely needed amid the global landscape of neoliberal public education (Kumar, 2019).

My intent in this paper is to put these two movements in conversation with one another in hopes of plotting their commonalities and differences. I envision this paper as an act of educational theorizing based on literature review and situated within the polyphonic tradition of the foundations of education (Schwarz-Franco, 2020) and the complicated conversation of curriculum studies (Pinar, 2012). In what follows, I first outline critical posthumanism in more detail and discuss the ways it has been taken up in education. I then discuss re/humanization as put forward in Lyle's recent edited text. Next, I put posthumanism and re/humanization in conversation with each other, highlighting their parallel movements toward relational ontology and focusing on their conceptual divergences. The conclusion suggests a value in further interrogations of the human in education and discusses the subjectivity of this essay.

The (Critical) Posthuman Turn

The current moment can be thought of as a posthuman convergence (Braidotti, 2019). It is the convergence of mass environmental destruction and the ever-increasing rate of change in the world of

technology, both of which occur within the social context of ongoing systemic oppression and advanced capitalism. Indeed, for Braidotti (2023) “what marks the posthuman turn is the expansion of technological mediation of the very fabrics of living systems—both human and nonhuman” (p. 8). Such conditions, Braidotti (2019) argues, warrant new ways of understanding and relating to the world—enter critical posthumanism.

Braidotti (2013) frames critical posthumanism as conceptually moving beyond the human in two ways: beyond the hierarchical subjectivity of European humanism, or the social elevation of white, able-bodied, cis men above other humans; and beyond anthropocentrism, or human-centered thinking. In the first, Braidotti (2019) highlights the way European Man was constructed as the ideal human to which all other represent degrees of pejorative difference. Indeed, European Man’s racialized, sexualized, and naturalized others were, to varying degrees, viewed as less than human. As Braidotti (2013) puts it “not all of us can say, with any degree of certainty, that we have always been human, or that we are only that” (p. 1). The concept of “the human”, then, has been mobilized in was that limit the agency of certain members of the species; they were perceived as object (acted upon) rather than subject (actor) in the subject/object division (Smith, 2012). Moving beyond European humanism means moving beyond this deficit view of difference (Braidotti, 2011) and its centering of white, cis able-bodied men as the ideal human (Braidotti, 2022).

Braidotti’s second movement is beyond anthropocentrism. Here, Braidotti (2019) draws on Deleuze’s (1988) reading of Spinoza to suggest a material monism of the world and a pervasive agency to matter—that all matter is one thing, albeit differentiated in permutation, and capable of action, albeit at differing speeds and intensities. This monism gives a pathway to critique the unjustified hierarchies between humans and other beings: “If all matter can act and be acted upon, why do humans act as though they are more important than everything else,” one might ask. While this may suggest that the category of the human be erased or flattened to create equity among all things (i.e., everything is object; see Latour, 2007), Braidotti (2019) redefines the category of the human seeking to show the ways it is interconnected and entangled with other beings and to elevate the attention and ethical considerations given to those other beings (i.e., everything is subject). To be a bit more technical, for Braidotti (2019) the posthuman subject is acted upon from below by the affective, above by the social, and alongside by

“adjunctive bio-technical assemblages of posthuman relationality” (Braidotti, 2019, p. 53). Posthuman subjectivity, then, is a biological, geological, and technological assemblage (p. 47) but is still caught up in the social, meaning that the human experiences of racism, sexism, and colonial violence still matter.

Posthumanism is still somewhat new to educational theory and is often regarded with considerable skepticism. That said, there are many who have taken up posthumanism in critical and generative ways. In addition to Nathan Snaza’s (2013) formative work (see also Snaza et al., 2014; Snaza & Weaver, 2015), there has been ongoing discussion of posthumanism in literacy education (Kuby et al., 2019; Lemieux, 2020), curriculum development (Sidebottom, 2021) and curriculum theory (Downey, 2022), and early childhood education (Nxumalo & Rubin, 2019) among other fields (e.g., Strom & Martin, 2022). Below, I sketch a few examples.

In early childhood education, posthumanism is mobilized to disrupt developmental understandings of childhood and expand the definition of what learning might be for young children. For example, early childhood scholars have recontextualized relationships between children and place (Nxumalo & Rubin, 2019) as well as the “very small beings” who are always co-present in those places (Taylor & Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2015), both in life and in death (Harwood et al., 2018). Fundamentally, these works view the child as interconnected with the world in which they live (Murriss, 2016). In literacy education, posthumanism is used to broaden what it means to be literate beyond reading words on a page. Specifically, readers today can be thought of as always enmeshed in an intertextual network of digital and social media like films, videogames, and chat websites (e.g., Wargo, 2019). The commonality in all these manifestations of posthumanism in education is a close attention to the material or physical world and the ways human beings are lodged within it. Braidotti (2019) summarizes other contributions to suggest movements toward non-hierarchical, relational, trans- and post-disciplinary (transversal) pedagogies that disrupt the binary between student and teacher and emphasize mixing, hybridity, and difference.

Having discussed some of the main tenets of posthumanism as articulated by Braidotti, as well as some of the ways that thinking has been taken up in education, I now turn to a consideration of re/humanizing education.

Re/humanizing Education

If Braidotti's posthumanism paints the human as enmeshed in a series of interconnected and overlapping entanglements, both biological and technological, re/humanizing education (Lyle & Cassie, 2021; Lyle, 2022) characterizes the human as situated within bureaucratic, racist, and colonial social systems that effectively work to dehumanize those who operate within them. Re/humanizing also suggests the possibility of escape from those oppressive structures and ways of resisting them.

At the broadest possible level, the term "re/humanizing" sets up a dichotomy between dehumanization and re/humanization—something has robbed education of its humanity, and something different must be done to restore it. In characterizing this dichotomy, Freire (1970) is helpful. He first describes dehumanization as turning people into things: "The oppressed have been destroyed precisely because their situation has reduced them to things" (p. 68; see also Mahani, 2022). He then suggests response through authentic dialogue:

Propaganda, management, manipulation—all arms of domination—cannot be the instruments of [the oppressed's] rehumanization. The only effective instrument is a humanizing pedagogy in which the revolutionary leadership establishes a permanent relationship of dialogue with the oppressed. In a humanizing pedagogy the method ceases to be an instrument by which the teachers (in this instance, the revolutionary leadership) can manipulate the students (in this instance, the oppressed), because it expresses the consciousness of the students themselves. (pp. 68-69)

This negation of any form of coercive pedagogy and/or leadership showcases the only instance of the term "rehumanization" in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*; Freire's dichotomy is more between humanization and dehumanization. The recent work on re/humanizing education, thus, builds on Freire's dichotomy to offer possibilities for humanity in the current educational era.

Before those possibilities can come to fruition, however, dehumanization must be understood. As two reviewers of *Re/humanizing Education* note, "re/humanizing education' requires a critical analysis of an education system that values productivity over relationality" (Weibe & Bishop, 2023, p. 189). To re/humanize,

there must first be a sound understanding of those forces that have made education dehumanizing. Apartheid (Pithouse-Morgan et al., 2022) and residential schools (Leddy, 2022) ring through as examples of large-scale systematic dehumanization, now historical but with continuing effects such as intergenerational trauma. At one level, the global movement toward neoliberal education—specifically measurement practices, rigidly structured curricula, siloed subject areas, and high-stakes testing—is often marked as a dehumanizing force (Holmes, 2022; Leddy, 2022; Oniță, 2022; Pithouse-Morgan et al., 2022; Thomas, 2022). At another, related, level, schools often create unnecessary suffering (Jardine, 2022), and within them “social inequalities, racism, sexism, ableism, ageism, and homophobia are among the issues contributing to dehumanization” (Cho et al., 2022, p. 62; see also Grace-Williams, 2022; Khan, 2022; Menon, 2022). Finally, on an existential level, dehumanization in schooling manifests as isolation (Mahani, 2022), fragmentation of the self (Thomas, 2022), anxiety (Holmes, 2022), and a broader disequilibrium (Lyle & Snowber, 2022).

Here, there is always more to say; understandings of systemic oppression always seem inadequate to the magnitude of its physical manifestations. Nonetheless, they also always elicit response. Such is the nature of the dichotomy built into the term “re/humanizing”, which Lyle (2021) addressed in the book’s initial call for submissions: “Teaching and learning are profoundly personal experiences, yet systems of education often prioritise agendas that alienate people rather than engage them. Reconceptualising teaching and learning as a *human engagement* re/positions individuals at the heart of education” (p. 1). The call goes on to address the centrality of lived experience, equity, and re/centering the human—collectively or individually—in the work of re/humanizing education. Indeed, in the opening chapter of *Re/humanizing Education*, Lyle and Snowber (2022) highlight the following modalities of re/humanizing:

- slowness and rest (see also Holmes, 2022; Msiza et al., 2022)
- turning toward nature for insight (see also Leddy, 2022),
- disrupting inequality (see also Khan, 2022; Menon, 2022),
- sharing personal story (see also Crawford et al., 2022; Pithouse-Morgan et al., 2022; Thomas, 2022).

Other authors add culturally responsive pedagogies (Mahani, 2022; Menon, 2022; Sivia et al., 2022), critical race theory in education

(Grace-Williams, 2022), valuing students as active participants in their learning (Mahani, 2022; Norris et al., 2022), artmaking (Cho et al., 2022; Ferguson, 2022; Forte, 2022; Oniță, 2022;), critical consciousness raising (Cho et al., 2022; Mahani, 2022; Menon, 2022), re/spiriting education (Rosenhart & Elke, 2022), healing from the wounds of schooling (Holmes, 2022; Sivia et al., 2022; Valencia, 2022), and valuing the stories learners bring to the classroom (Crawford et al., 2022; Pithouse-Morgan et al., 2022; Ricketts et al., 2022; Thomas, 2022; Sivia et al., 2022).

Each of these deserves more attention than can be provided here. Indeed, there is a considerable difficulty in condensing 21 original chapters written from diverse perspectives into a few short paragraphs—the task is necessarily reductive. This limitation noted, the commonality I can see across works taking up re/humanization is a desire to expand the number of ways one can *be* in education. This is captured in the call, where Lyle (2021) writes that re/humanizing education “has the capacity to transform the classroom from a place of containment into one of expansiveness” (p. 1; see also Lyle & Cassie, 2021). Jardine (2022) takes up that sentence, questioning whether the classroom *is* a place of containment—can the apparent infinitude of human beings ever be contained, he seems to ask. He suggests that it cannot, and that there may be a third space between containment and expansiveness—a sort of living-with that which seeks to restrict the possibilities of being. While this negation of the dichotomy built into re/humanizing is, by the author’s own admission, a privileged perspective to take, I think it may also serve as a telling point of contact between re/humanizing and critical posthumanism. In the following section, I take up the intersections and tensions between those ideas.

Convergence and Divergence

Posthumanism and re/humanizing can be seen as parallel but distinct movements toward a relational ontology. They are not competing discourses; they are moving in the same direction, and they often pass through similar ground. There are, however, also theoretical differences that matter significantly in their application to educational thought and practice. Below, I discuss the overlaps and the main tensions that I see.

To begin, both posthumanism and re/humanizing draw extensively on artistic practice as a way of building community, a pedagogical site, and a form of expression (e.g., Braidotti, Jones, &

Klumbyté, 2023; Forte, 2022; Oniță, 2022). Furthermore, a clear movement toward relationality is an essential component of both ideas (Braidotti, 2019; Lyle & Cassie, 2021).

At the core of both projects, there is also a common desire to move away from the dehumanizing systems and discourses endemic to the post-industrial world (e.g., Braidotti, 2022; Grace-Williams, 2022; Leddy, 2022; Khan, 2022), but, as has been highlighted above, the critiques of those systems are different in tone and emphasis, if not in substance. More specifically, Braidotti's (2019, 2022) critical posthumanism seeks to disrupt the legacy of European Man's dominance over other beings. Conversely, while re/humanizing education draws on several theories and theorists in the movement against inequity, many turn toward Paulo Freire's (1970) dichotomy between humanization and dehumanization as a starting point before adding in intersectional lenses (e.g., Cho et al., 2022). It seems fair to say that the emphasis in re/humanizing education is on reclaiming the category of the human, while in posthumanism the emphasis is on deconstructing that category.ⁱⁱ The end result, however, is similar in that both seek an expansion of who is included in the category of the human.

There is somewhat less agreement about what receives the attention so often ascribed only to the human. Specifically, in Braidotti's movement beyond anthropocentrism, she forwards the new materialist idea of a pervasive agency (Braidotti, 2013). Once more, posthuman subjectivity is "composed in the mode of ecosophical assemblages that include non-human actors" (Braidotti, 2019, p. 54). All things are interconnected and deserving of ethical attention. Except for some Indigenous perspectives on re/humanizing (e.g., Rosenhart & Elke, 2022), which I discuss in my conclusion, that emphasis seems absent in much of the re/humanizing work.ⁱⁱⁱ While there is a pull toward the natural world (e.g., Lyle & Snowber, 2022), the emphasis is more on what nature can teach humans about being more fully human. Beyond biological entities, Ricketts et al. (2022) highlight the power of things (i.e., material objects) to affect the way humans see the world, but posthumanists take this further to suggest that things exist in networked co-constituting interrelations with humans (Braidotti, 2013). The common trajectory toward a more sustainable existence is, thus, complicated by divergent views on the precise nature of relationships between humans and non-humans.

The first of two major divergences I see between re/humanizing and critical posthumanism is their respective emphases on

interiority and exteriority, especially where theories of change are concerned. Lyle and Snowber (2022) state that, “believing as Parker Palmer (2017) does, that we project onto others the conditions of our souls, we begin by turning inward” (p. 1). Here, they suggest that a turn inward, toward the cultivation of an interior life, can lead to re/humanization (see also Holmes, 2022; Lyle & Cassie, 2021). Likewise, Rosenhart and Elke (2022) aim their interpretation of re/humanizing education toward the re/spiriting of education, or a movement toward nourishing the learning spirit (Battiste, 2013). Many other authors point to Freire’s (1970) notion of critical consciousness raising as the starting point for change. The idea that social change begins with interior change is often taken up in education despite critiques that it has failed to materialize meaningful systemic change (Tuck & Yang, 2012) and that it relies on the empathy of people in power to create change (Nxumalo & Tuck, 2023). Despite these critiques, starting with the self is perhaps the most actionable form of social change possible in education, as educators have ready access to their own interiorities and those of the students with whom they work.

The emphasis on cultivating a balanced interiority, or even a critical consciousness, as a starting point for social change is largely absent from critical posthumanism. The possibility of a human interiority does exist in posthumanism; Braidotti (2019) clearly articulates that the subject is worked on from below by affective forces “including the singular psychic landscapes” (p. 53). Despite this acknowledgement, however, very little space is given to the treatment of the psychological in posthumanism. Much more emphasis is placed on the subject as connected with others. More specifically, Braidotti’s (2022) vision of social change comes through social organization, relying on the collective affect of an assemblage mobilized through an ethics of affirmation. Bignall (2023) gives a more complete, albeit technical, treatment:

the agential character of posthumanist subjects arises from their material *affects*—their powers of affecting others, and of affection by others—and the type of assemblages they form when participating in the constitutive relations of power comprising an ecology of activity that includes non-human agencies. (p. 104)

She concludes that,

systemic transformation takes place through the effort to make a definitive break from the constituting forces of assemblage that dominate in a problematic structure, to create a dispositional pathway to the outside enabling a line of flight to an alternative arrangement. (p. 105)

In other words, systemic change comes not from the awakening of critical consciousness within the individual human subject, but from breaks with the current system made through relational and restorative effort, guided by a sensitivity to ethical association across difference. Once more, there are some similarities in outcome (i.e., relationality and systemic change), but the origin point remains meaningfully divergent.

The second key difference between posthumanism and re/humanization I see is in the distinction between being and becoming. In Lyle's (2021) call for submissions, she writes "this collection aims to explore the co-curricular capacity of lived experience to re/centre human *being* [emphasis original] in education" (p. 1). As I suggested above, the common thread running through *Re/humanizing Education* is the desire to proliferate possible ways of being human in and through education. In Lyle's (2021) words, re/humanizing seeks expansion rather than containment. Jardine's (2022) intervention is to say that humans cannot be contained, despite the frequency with which it seems the case. Jardine suggests that there cannot be a human essence unless it is emergent. The possibilities of being are infinite; each individual is different, and any attempt to generalize runs the risk of creating essentialist categories—creating "us" and "them."

In my reading, Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 1994; see also Braidotti, 2011) would take this one step further and say that each individual is different from previous versions of themselves in every moment, and any attempt to generalize them runs the risk of creating a fixed identity that quickly becomes obsolete and untrue (perhaps constraining). Backtracking slightly, what Jardine (2022) identifies as the absence of any but an emergent human essence might, if taken beyond the human, be otherwise articulated as Deleuze and Guattari's (1987, 1994) movement away from the transcendent toward the immanent—away from being and toward becoming.^{iv} While a full discussion of this work exceeds the scope of this paper,^v suffice it to say that Deleuze and Guattari (1994)

move away from the tradition of seeking the absolute essence of things and carry forward the tradition of seeing what things *do*. For Deleuze and Guattari, nothing is static; there is no pure essence, no “being” in an absolute sense. There are only infinite becomings. Everything and everyone are changing constantly, both socially and materially. The world is fundamentally in a state of flux. Jardine’s (2022) suggestion that there isn’t a simple dichotomy between containment and expansion takes on new meaning in this context. Nothing can be contained. Social structures like education, for Deleuze and Guattari, only direct flows; they do not contain them. And rather than limiting this to the human, Braidotti (2013) would characterize *all* life—in Braidotti’s (2013) terms, *zoe*—as emergent in this way.

This difference between a fixed and fluid world, or between being and becoming, is substantive in so far as it not only resists the pull toward a shared human essence or human nature, but also to an individual human essence or nature. In the first case, appeals to collective humanity quickly become essentialist in nature, and once again Braidotti (2013) reminds that not everyone can say they have always been human and that, “we-are-(all)-in-this-together-but-we-are-not-one-and-the-same” (Braidotti, 2019, p. 52). Critical posthumanism does not extinguish the category of the human, but it does acknowledge that the category has been constructed in exclusive ways. In the second case, Braidotti says that “we are rooted, but we flow” (Braidotti, 2023, p. 1), meaning that subjectivity is embodied and embedded, but also nomadic and constantly changing (Braidotti, 2011). The first emphasis on a differentiated human *is* present in the work on re/humanizing education (e.g., Grace-Williams, 2022; Valencia, 2022), though in slightly different form. The movement toward nomadic, fluid, subjectivity, however, is largely absent, thus constituting a second major difference between the two.

Conclusion: A Moment of Vulnerability

Methodologically, what I have attempted in this paper is to draw a Venn diagram around Braidotti’s critical posthumanism and recent work on re/humanizing education. I have held those two ideas together, highlighting their commonalities and their differences. Doing so has yielded insight into both. Posthumanism and re/humanizing both move toward relationality and away from the bureaucratic, racist, and colonial structures that mark modern social systems, including schooling. Where the differences lay are in

the divergent emphases they make, intellectual traditions they draw upon, and visions of how to achieve systemic change and the individual's relationship to society.

This approach has not been without its limitations. Clearly, I have been selective in choosing my representatives of each movement, and there are other treatments of the human outside these two frameworks. Specifically, Indigenous engagements with re/humanizing (Leddy, 2022; Rosenhart & Elke, 2022; see also Mignolo & Walsh, 2018), emerging from traditional Indigenous ways of knowing and being where agency has always been pervasive and the human has always been understood in relation to others (Todd, 2016), in some ways respond to both the calls for re/humanizing and for a move beyond anthropocentrism. Indeed, despite Snaza's (2013) call to move beyond the perennial educational project of humanization, I think Dwayne Donald (2019) may have the right of it when he suggests the need to "[remember] other ways to be a human being" (p. 103).

Future research should follow that advice and look at the idea of the human in education through other lenses. For example, how is the human being taken up, tacitly or explicitly, in the science of reading movement now overtaking literacy education in Canada? Questions of this nature, I think, constitute a valuable program of research for those interested in interrogating the paradigmatic assumptions and the systemic effects of different educational interventions, as well as for those seeking an otherwise to what currently exists.

One last limitation lingers. Lyle and Cassie (2021) name two key tenants of re/humanizing education: relationality and vulnerability. While above, I have discussed the first substantively, suggesting that re/humanizing and critical posthumanism both envision a human that is interconnected, the second has been left unaddressed. Indeed, the style in which I have written this essay has enacted precisely the sort of authorial erasure Lyle and Cassie (2021) argue against. Their movement is toward embracing lived experience in scholarship and in education (see also Msiza et al., 2022). In that, my engagement has been lacking.

Yet, there is a personal purpose here. The purpose driving this paper has been to draw a preliminary, rough map of how the human is taken up in two different areas of contemporary educational thought. The final limitation of this paper is that the map drawn here is my own. I have often found myself lost in discussions of the human and its otherwises, desperately looking for familiar

landmarks to help orient myself—perhaps a marker of my own anthropocentric ties to education as a humanizing project. Lyle and Cassie (2021) ask us not to hide ourselves in academic references and footnotes, and in drawing this map, I am not sure I could have if I tried. The subjective nature of this engagement, then, may at once be a limitation and a strength of the approach, depending on the contour of the human(ity) yet to come.

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ⁱ Throughout this paper, I use the formation "re/humanizing" for consistency with Lyle's (2022) text except in quoted material, where I maintain the quoted author's formation.

ⁱⁱ Valencia (2022), who offers a substantive critique of the human following Sylvia Wynter, is the exception.

ⁱⁱⁱ Though not in Lyle's other writing (e.g., Jardine & Lyle, 2022).

^{iv} Some chapters in *Re/humanizing Education* do use the term “becoming” rather than “being” (e.g., Sivia et al., 2022), but the intent in doing so seems to be to acknowledge the processes of learning rather than the fluidity of material and social reality.

^v For a more robust discussion, see the work of Todd May (2003) or Braidotti’s (2011) *Nomadic Subjects*.

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