“TURNING RIGHT TO GO LEFT: JEAN BAUDRILLARD AND EDUCATION FOR COUNTER-INTUITION”
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ABSTRACT: In his later work Jean Baudrillard made descriptive arguments about the world in which he highlighted its radical uncertainty. The sheer volume of information available in the late (post)modern world turns out, perhaps counterintuitively, to negatively affect what we know. For example, in pharmacology, despite the technology development since the mid-20th Century that has allowed for the collection and testing of massive amounts of data, the production of new drugs has steadily declined throughout the same time period. Eroom’s law is what this phenomenon is called in pharmacological research but the idea has a wider range of applicability when taken together with Baudrillard’s arguments about the loss of the comforting world of determinacy and certainty. Specifically, Baudrillard was concerned with the diminishing returns of a world in which everything is visible, everything is transparent. He consistently said that accepting uncertainty and, indeed, responding to the enigmatic world with more enigma, was preferable to a relentless (and doomed) pursuit of empirical certainty. In educational discourse and policy, almost without exception, the usefulness of the pursuit of empirical certainty, of new pedagogical technology, of big data, is presumed. In this paper, I introduce a radical departure from that conception of education – a Baudrillardian-inspired education for counter-intuition.

Education and Philosophy Seminar Series
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