



THE FUTURE OF THE SELF

**UNDERSTANDING PERSONALIZATION
IN CHILDHOOD AND BEYOND**

NATALIA KUCIRKOVA



THE FUTURE OF THE SELF

PRAISE FOR THE FUTURE OF THE SELF

‘An astonishing amount of information for educators, other professionals and parents on almost every aspect of technology’s impact on children’s development of “self” and sense of agency. Dr Kucirkova has written a powerful book about the growing impact of technology induced personalization on children and our collective future. The book contains rich information to how children learn that is embedded in context including social science, child development, philosophy and literature. A must read!’

– **Barry Zuckerman MD**, Boston
University School of Medicine, USA

‘Anyone concerned about the impact of technology on their life and the lives of children should rush to read *The Future of the Self*, by Natalia Kucirkova.

This book captures the multiple, interacting forces shaping the sense of self in the digital age and encourages readers to reflect on the implications.

The book explores how technologies personalize our experiences using data collected by search engines documenting our activities, educational software guiding our learning, and social media monitoring our interactions.

This book will motivate teachers, parents, designers, policy makers, and users of technology to re-examine the implications of personalization in their lives. Drawing on technological advances, research findings, and theoretical insights Kucirkova identifies trade-offs, dilemmas, and paradoxes that deserve our attention.

The book gives readers tools for thinking about the interacting factors determining how experiences are personalized. In one example, Kucirkova identifies the trade-offs that ensue when balancing personalization targeted to the individual and pluralization targeted to the overall audience. This distinction arises every time teachers make decisions about whether to assign the same book to their class or to let each student select their own book.’

– **Marcia C. Linn**, Evelyn Lois Corey Professor of
Instructional Science, Graduate School
of Education, University of California, Berkeley, USA

THE FUTURE OF THE SELF

Understanding Personalization in
Childhood and Beyond

BY

NATALIA KUCIRKOVA

*University of Stavanger, Norway and
The Open University, UK*



United Kingdom – North America – Japan – India
Malaysia – China

Emerald Publishing Limited
Howard House, Wagon Lane, Bingley BD16 1WA, UK

First edition 2021

© 2021 Natalia Kucirkova. Published under exclusive licence by
Emerald Publishing Limited.

Reprints and permissions service

Contact: permissions@emeraldinsight.com

No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, transmitted in any form or by any means electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without either the prior written permission of the publisher or a licence permitting restricted copying issued in the UK by The Copyright Licensing Agency and in the USA by The Copyright Clearance Center. Any opinions expressed in the chapters are those of the authors. Whilst Emerald makes every effort to ensure the quality and accuracy of its content, Emerald makes no representation implied or otherwise, as to the chapters' suitability and application and disclaims any warranties, express or implied, to their use.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN: 978-1-80043-945-0 (Print)

ISBN: 978-1-80043-944-3 (Online)

ISBN: 978-1-80043-946-7 (Epub)



ISOQAR
REGISTERED

Certificate Number 1985
ISO 14001

ISOQAR certified
Management System,
awarded to Emerald
for adherence to
Environmental
standard
ISO 14001:2004.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

CONTENTS

<i>List of Figures</i>	vii
<i>About the Author</i>	ix
Introduction	1
1. Personalization–Pluralization	17
2. Quantity and Complexity	39
3. Agency	65
4. Acceleration	89
5. Density	123
6. Sequence	157
7. Distance	183
Conclusion	209
<i>Notes</i>	219
<i>References</i>	237
<i>Index</i>	277

This page intentionally left blank

LIST OF FIGURES

Fig. 1:	Conceptual model of adjusting practices, processes and products at the macro-, meso- and micro-levels.	4
Fig. 2:	Examples of categories and sub-categories of personal data.	6
Fig. 3:	Explanatory diagram of differences between individualization, customization and personalization.	33
Fig. 4:	A mnemonic for remembering a balance in P-P.	35
Fig. 5:	Examples of how diversity and multiplicity make up data complexity.	60
Fig. 6:	A schema of the bi-composition of agency.	67
Fig. 7:	An illustration of how agency develops over time.	80
Fig. 8:	The relationship between agency and optimal, minimal and extreme levels of P-P.	82
Fig. 9:	A simplified account of the emphasis on personalized time and space in different eras.	106
Fig. 10:	Distance combined with types of literature and examples.	194
Fig. 11:	The four quadrants of social cognition.	196
Fig. 12:	The four quadrants of immersion/identification options in stories.	196
Fig. 13:	The four quadrants of empathy options in relation to stories.	197

This page intentionally left blank

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Natalia Kucirkova is Professor of Early Childhood Education and Development at the University of Stavanger, Norway and Professor of Reading and Children's Development at The Open University, UK. Her research concerns innovative ways of supporting children's book reading, digital literacy and exploring the role of personalization in the early years. Her research takes place collaboratively across academia, commercial and third sectors. She is author of *Digital Personalization in Early Childhood* (Bloomsbury) and *How and Why to Read and Create Children's Digital Books* (UCL Press) and currently blogs for *Psychology Today*.