



Educational Wastelands: The Retreat from Learning in Our Public Schools

Arthur E. Bestor

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2016 Reprint of 1953 Edition. Full facsimile of the original edition, not reproduced with Optical Recognition Software. In the mid-1950s, Bestor became well-known in educational circles as a critic of then-common educational doctrines; "Educational Wastelands" was his manifesto about declining educational standards. "Bestor charged that professional educationists had "lowered the aims of the American public schools," particularly by "setting forth purposes for education so trivial as to forfeit the respect of thoughtful men, and by deliberately divorcing the schools from the disciplines of science and scholarship" (pp. 8, 10). For Bestor, the traditional liberal arts curriculum represented the only acceptable form of secondary education. He claimed that Progressive educators, "by misrepresenting and undervaluing liberal education, have contributed ... to the growth of anti-intellectualist hysteria that threatens not merely the schools but freedom itself." (p. 11)-Cited in WWW.Stateuniversity.com article on Bestor.

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