



How Testing Came to Dominate American Schools: The History of Educational Assessment

Gerard Giordano

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Although originally designed as instruments to gauge students' progress, tests eventually were used to modify curricula, learning materials, pedagogy, and many practical features of schooling. Tests were employed to shape attitudes toward national issues such as employment, immigration, and defense. Worried about the enormous consequences that were at stake, advocates and opponents pitched their cases to educators, parents, journalists, and policymakers and also targeted special audiences. Testing proponents pleaded with military leaders, businesspeople, and scholastic publishers while their adversaries appealed to job seekers, college applicants, racial minorities, and anti-establishmentarians. This book illustrates how all of these parties showed interest; many became passionate; and some decisively influenced the course of American educational testing.

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