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Higher Education in the Making: Pragmatism, Whitehead, and the Canon (Suny Series in Constructive Postmodern Thought)

George Allan

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George Allan argues that the so-called culture wars in higher education are the result of the dogmatic and unyielding certainty that both canonists and anti-canonists bring to any discussion of how best to organize an undergraduate curriculum. He then proposes a middle way. Drawing from William James, John Dewey, and Alfred North Whitehead, he contrasts the absolutist claims of both canonists and anti-canonists with a fallibilist approach and argues for a more pragmatic canon that is normative and always in need of renovation.
A wide variety of voices are heard in Allan s conversation about the nature and meaning of an education canon, including philosophers Aristotle, Descartes, Arthur Lovejoy, Hannah Arendt, Spengler, Emerson, Lyotard, and Rorty. Contemporary voices include Eva Brann, Charles Anderson, Francis Oakley, Martha Nussbaum, Gerald Graff, Henry Louis Gates Jr., and Bill Readings."

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