



# The War Against Excellence: The Rising Tide of Mediocrity in America's Middle Schools

*Cheri P. Yecke*

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Radical activists do not see the American middle school as an organization to impart academic knowledge, but as an instrument through which they can force social change. Yecke, an experienced teacher and administrator, shows how these activists have implemented their plans and endangered the education of all middle school children?especially those who are gifted.

In 1983 *A Nation at Risk* declared, If an unfriendly foreign power had attempted to impose on America the mediocre educational performance that exists today, we might well have viewed it as an act of war. How did American educators respond? In their quest to establish a more egalitarian society, middle school activists and social reformers made it clear that the middle school was not just a new educational organization, but a means promoting social egalitarianism by coercing gifted students to be like everyone else. This was nothing less than a declaration of war against gifted children.

Yecke shows that the inadequacies of our systems of research and education pose a greater threat to U.S. national security over the next quarter century than any potential conventional war that we might imagine. The achievement of students in other nations now regularly surpasses that of American students, and it will be impossible to reverse this trend within the confines of the contemporary middle school concept. Yecke asserts that it is time for the American public to reject the radical middle school movement before too much damage is done.

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