

Degrees of disappointment

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There is one obvious way to end the escalating levels of credentialism, cheating and apathy plaguing university campuses: eliminate academic credentials as a prerequisite of employment.

This heretical attack on the modern religion of schooling was first suggested by the late Ivan Illich in *Deschooling Society*, his 1970 masterful analysis of what ails our education system. In fact, Illich went much further than suggesting the elimination of these credentials as a job requirement -- he advocated that this practice be deemed illegal.

As one of the most revered left libertarians of our age -- a man the *Utne Reader* lauded as the greatest social critic of the 20th century -- he knew that to break the monopoly of our current school system, we needed to render worthless the product this system sold -- namely the report card, the degree, the credential.

As an academic himself, he was no fan of watered-down learning. To the contrary, he recognized that the deregulation of education would result in a rapid expansion of educational resources being made available, especially to the poor, and that one's "worth" as a potential employee would be gauged not by, as he put it, "one's educational pedigree" but by the skills, knowledge and abilities one brought to the job.

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