



Excellent Sheep: The Miseducation of the American Elite and the Way to a Meaningful Life

William Deresiewicz

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A groundbreaking manifesto about what our nation's top schools should be—but aren't—providing: “The ex-Yale professor effectively skewers elite colleges, their brainy but soulless students (those ‘sheep’), pushy parents, and admissions mayhem” (*People*).

As a professor at Yale, William Deresiewicz saw something that troubled him deeply. His students, some of the nation's brightest minds, were adrift when it came to the big questions: how to think critically and creatively and how to find a sense of purpose. Now he argues that elite colleges are turning out conformists without a compass.

Excellent Sheep takes a sharp look at the high-pressure conveyor belt that begins with parents and counselors who demand perfect grades and culminates in the skewed applications Deresiewicz saw firsthand as a member of Yale's admissions committee. As schools shift focus from the humanities to “practical” subjects like economics, students are losing the ability to think independently. It is essential, says Deresiewicz, that college be a time for self-discovery, when students can establish their own values and measures of success in order to forge their own paths. He features quotes from real students and graduates he has corresponded with over the years, candidly exposing where the system is broken and offering clear solutions on how to fix it.

“*Excellent Sheep* is likely to make...a lasting mark...He takes aim at just about the entirety of upper-middle-class life in America...Mr. Deresiewicz's book is packed full of what he wants more of in American life: passionate weirdness” (*The New York Times*).

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