



Lost in the Meritocracy: The Undereducation of an Overachiever

Walter Kirn

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A *New York Times* Notable Book

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From elementary school on, Walter Kirn knew how to stay at the top of his class: He clapped erasers, memorized answer keys, and parroted his teachers' pet theories. But when he launched himself eastward to an Ivy League university, Kirn discovered that the temple of higher learning he had expected was instead just another arena for more gamesmanship, snobbery, and social climbing. In this whip-smart memoir of kissing-up, cramming, and competition, *Lost in the Meritocracy* reckons the costs of an educational system where the point is simply to keep accumulating points and never to look back—or within.

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