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## Download Free Anti Intellectualism In American Life

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A trenchant critique of failure and opportunism across the political spectrum, American Idyll argues that social mobility, once a revered hallmark of American society, has ebbed, as higher education has become a mechanistic process for efficient sorting that has more to do with class formation than anything else. Academic freedom and aesthetic education are reserved for high-scoring, privileged students and vocational education is the only option for economically marginal ones. Throughout most of American history, antielitist sentiment was reserved for attacks against an entrenched aristocracy or rapacious plutocracy, but it has now become a revolt against meritocracy itself, directed against what insurgents see as a ruling class of credentialed elites with degrees from exclusive academic institutions. Catherine Liu reveals that, within the academy and stemming from the relatively new discipline of cultural studies, animosity against expertise has animated much of the Left's cultural criticism. By unpacking the disciplinary formation and academic ambitions of American cultural studies, Liu uncovers the genealogy of the current antielitism, placing the populism that dominates headlines within a broad historical context. In the process, she emphasizes the relevance of the historical origins of populist revolt against finance capital and its political influence. American Idyll reveals the unlikely alliance between American pragmatism and proponents of the Frankfurt School and argues for the importance of broad frames of historical thinking in encouraging robust academic debate within democratic institutions. In a bold thought experiment that revives and defends Richard Hofstadter's theories of anti-intellectualism in American life, Liu asks, What if cultural populism had been the consensus politics of the past three decades? American Idyll shows that recent antielitism does nothing to redress the source of its discontent—namely, growing economic inequality and diminishing social mobility. Instead, pseudopopulist rage, in conservative and countercultural forms alike, has been transformed into resentment, content merely to take down allegedly elitist cultural forms without questioning the real political and economic consolidation of powers that has taken place in America during the past thirty years.

- A New Republic Best Book of the Year • The Globalist Top Books of the Year • Winner of the Maine Literary Award for Non-fiction • Particularly relevant in understanding who voted for who in this presidential election year, this is an endlessly fascinating look at American regionalism and the eleven "nations" that continue to shape North America According to award-winning journalist and historian Colin Woodard, North America is made up of eleven distinct nations, each with its own unique historical roots. In American Nations he takes readers on a journey through the history of our fractured

continent, offering a revolutionary and revelatory take on American identity, and how the conflicts between them have shaped our past and continue to mold our future. From the Deep South to the Far West, to Yankeedom to El Norte, Woodard (author of American Character: A History of the Epic Struggle Between Individual Liberty and the Common Good) reveals how each region continues to uphold its distinguishing ideals and identities today, with results that can be seen in the composition of the U.S. Congress or on the county-by-county election maps of any hotly contested election in our history.

Describes the influence the theories of evolution had on social philosophy and concludes that man's fate in society is not biologically determined

This much-needed book provides a systematic introduction, both conceptual and applied, to the sociology of the professions. Keith Macdonald guides the reader through the chief sociological approaches to the professions, addressing their strengths and weaknesses. The discussion is richly illustrated by examples from and comparisons between the professions in Britain, the United States and Europe, relating their development to their cultural context. The social exclusivity that professions aim for is discussed in relation to social stratification, patriarchy and knowledge, and is thoroughly illustrated by reference to examples from medicine and other established professions, such as law and architecture. The themes of the book are drawn together in a final chapter by means of a case study of accountancy.

This examination of Western civilization's cultural turmoil presents a new and innovative social theory, arguing that we have evolved into a post-intellectual culture—a society characterized by information overload, increasing illiteracy, loss of critical thinking, and psychological isolation.

Together for the first time: two masterworks on the undercurrents of the American mind by one of our greatest historians Richard Hofstadter's *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life* and *The Paranoid Style in American Politics* are two essential works that lay bare the worrying trends of irrationalism, demagoguery, destructive populism, and conspiratorial thinking that have long influenced American politics and culture. Whether underground or—as in our present moment—out in the open, these currents of resentment, suspicion, and conspiratorial delusion received their authoritative treatment from Hofstadter, among the greatest of twentieth-century American historians, at a time when many public intellectuals and scholars did not take them seriously enough. These two masterworks are joined here by Sean Wilentz's selection of Hofstadter's most trenchant uncollected writings of the postwar period: discussions of the Constitution's framers, the personality and legacy of FDR, higher education and its discontents, the relationship of fundamentalism to right-wing politics, and the ad-

vent of the modern conservative movement.

This book explores popular media depictions of higher education from an American perspective. Each chapter in this book investigates the portrait of higher education in an exciting array of media including novels, television, film, comic books, and video games revealing the ways anti-intellectualism manifests through time. Examining a wide range of narratives, the authors in this book provide incisive commentary on the role of the university as well as the life of students, faculty, and staff in fictional college campuses.

In this book, Dane S. Claussen argues that the news media have fed vocationalism and self-doubt in higher education, and anti-intellectualism throughout American culture. Analyzing articles in popular national magazines since the G.I. Bill of 1944, Claussen finds that media have overwhelmingly portrayed college as a time and place for students to play sports, date and marry, drink and take drugs, protest, join fraternities and sororities, go on vacations, avoid the draft, escape their parents, and, perhaps most of all, network and find jobs - in short, do almost anything except research, study, write, think, or debate. In the tradition of Richard Hofstadter's Pulitzer Prize-winning *Anti-intellectualism in American Life* and Allan Bloom's *Closing of the American Mind*, Claussen illustrates the counterintuitive and underestimated - nearly overlooked - role of the news media in higher education and anti-intellectualism.

In 1987, Allan Bloom's *The Closing of the American Mind* was published; a wildly popular book that drew attention to the shift in American culture away from the tenants that made America—and Americans—unique. Bloom focused on a breakdown in the American curriculum, but many sensed that the issue affected more than education. The very essence of what it meant to be an American was disappearing. That was over twenty years ago. Since then, the United States has experienced unprecedented wealth, more youth enrolling in higher education than ever before, and technology advancements far beyond what many in the 1980s dreamed possible. And yet, the state of the American mind seems to have deteriorated further. Benjamin Franklin's "self-made man" has become a man dependent on the state. Independence has turned into self-absorption. Liberty has been curtailed in the defense of multiculturalism. In order to fully grasp the underpinnings of this shift away from the self-reliant, well-informed American, editors Mark Bauerlein and Adam Bellow have brought together a group of cultural and educational experts to discuss the root causes of the decline of the American mind. The writers of these fifteen original essays include E. D. Hirsch, Nicholas Eberstadt, and Dennis Prager, as well as Daniel Dreisbach, Gerald Graff, Richard Arum, Robert Whitaker, David T. Z. Mindich, Maggie Jackson, Jean Twenge, Jonathan Kay, Ilya Somin, Steve Wasserman, Greg Lukianoff, and R. R. Reno. Their essays are compiled into three main categories:

- **States of Mind: Indicators of Intellectual and Cognitive Decline** These essays broach specific mental deficiencies among the population, including lagging cultural IQ, low Biblical literacy, poor writing skills, and over-medication.
- **Personal and Cognitive Habits/Interests** These essays turn to specific mental behaviors and interests, including avoidance of the news, short attention spans, narcissism, and conspiracy obsessions.
- **National Consequences** These essays examine broader trends affecting populations and institutions, including rates of entitlement claims, voting habits, and a low-performing higher education system.

*The State of the American Mind* is both an assessment of our current state as well as a warning, foretelling what we may yet become. For anyone interested in the intellectual fate

of America, *The State of the American Mind* offers an accessible and critical look at life in America and how our collective mind is faring.

Politicians come and go, but the Constitution stands as the supreme law of the land. Setting forth the workings of our democracy, it is the bedrock document from which we derive our policies on topics as diverse and galvanizing as immigration, gun ownership, voting rights, taxation, policing, civil liberties, and war. In this indispensable edition, acclaimed historian and Constitutional expert Ray Raphael guides us through the origins, impact, and current relevance of the original text and all twenty-seven amendments. Here is the key historical context for issues in the news today—from the Electoral College to Washington gridlock, from peaceful protests to executive power. Thoughtful and nuanced, lively and highly readable, this annotated Constitution is for all of us to read and refer to—the ultimate political fact-checking source for every American.

Winner of the Pulitzer Prize in Non-Fiction. This book is a landmark in American political thought. Pre-eminent Richard Hofstadter examines the passion for progress and reform that colored the entire period from 1890 to 1940 with startling and stimulating results. *The Age of Reform* searches out the moral and emotional motives of the reformers the myths and dreams in which they believed, and the realities with which they had to compromise.

Technology and increasing levels of education have exposed people to more information than ever before. These societal gains, however, have also helped fuel a surge in narcissistic and misguided intellectual egalitarianism that has crippled informed debates on any number of issues. Today, everyone knows everything: with only a quick trip through WebMD or Wikipedia, average citizens believe themselves to be on an equal intellectual footing with doctors and diplomats. All voices, even the most ridiculous, demand to be taken with equal seriousness, and any claim to the contrary is dismissed as undemocratic elitism. Tom Nichols' *The Death of Expertise* shows how this rejection of experts has occurred: the openness of the internet, the emergence of a customer satisfaction model in higher education, and the transformation of the news industry into a 24-hour entertainment machine, among other reasons. Paradoxically, the increasingly democratic dissemination of information, rather than producing an educated public, has instead created an army of ill-informed and angry citizens who denounce intellectual achievement. When ordinary citizens believe that no one knows more than anyone else, democratic institutions themselves are in danger of falling either to populism or to technocracy or, in the worst case, a combination of both. An update to the 2017 breakout hit, the paperback edition of *The Death of Expertise* provides a new foreword to cover the alarming exacerbation of these trends in the aftermath of Donald Trump's election. Judging from events on the ground since it first published, *The Death of Expertise* issues a warning about the stability and survival of modern democracy in the Information Age that is even more important today.

The #1 New York Times bestseller that sparked international dialogue is now a book for young adults! Based on the adult bestseller by Ibram X. Kendi, and co-authored by bestselling author Nic Stone, *How to be a (Young) Antiracist* will serve as a guide for teens seeking a way forward in acknowledging, identifying, and dismantling racism and injustice. The New York Times bestseller *How to be an Antiracist* by Ibram X. Kendi is shaping the way a generation thinks about race and racism. *How to be a (Young) Antiracist* is a dynamic reframing of the concepts shared in the adult book, with young adulthood front and center. Aimed at readers 12 and up, and co-authored by award-winning

children's book author Nic Stone, *How to be a (Young) Antiracist* empowers teen readers to help create a more just society. Antiracism is a journey—and now young adults will have a map to carve their own path. Kendi and Stone have revised this work to provide anecdotes and data that speaks directly to the experiences and concerns of younger readers, encouraging them to think critically and build a more equitable world in doing so.

In *The Secular Religion of Franklin Merrell-Wolff*, Dave Vliegthart investigates the life and teachings of a twentieth-century American mystic, with implications for the socio-historical background of the ongoing grand narrative that asserts a widespread anti-intellectualism in modern American culture.

*The American Political Tradition* is one of the most influential and widely read historical volumes of our time. First published in 1948, its elegance, passion, and iconoclastic erudition laid the groundwork for a totally new understanding of the American past. By writing a "kind of intellectual history of the assumptions behind American politics," Richard Hofstadter changed the way Americans understand the relationship between power and ideas in their national experience. Like only a handful of American historians before him—Frederick Jackson Turner and Charles A. Beard are examples—Hofstadter was able to articulate, in a single work, a historical vision that inspired and shaped an entire generation.

Meditating on how and why we teach the humanities, *Generous Thinking* is an audacious book that privileges the ability to empathize and build rather than simply tear apart.

A book which throws light on many features of the American character. Its concern is not merely to portray the scorers of intellect in American life, but to say something about what the intellectual is, and can be, as a force in a democratic society.

Richard Hofstadter (1916-70) was America's most distinguished historian of the twentieth century. The author of several groundbreaking books, including *The American Political Tradition*, he was a vigorous champion of the liberal politics that emerged from the New Deal. During his nearly thirty-year career, Hofstadter fought public campaigns against liberalism's most dynamic opponents, from McCarthy in the 1950s to Barry Goldwater and the Sun Belt conservatives in the 1960s. His opposition to the extreme politics of postwar America—articulated in his books, essays, and public lectures—marked him as one of the nation's most important and prolific public intellectuals. In this masterful biography, David Brown explores Hofstadter's life within the context of the rise and fall of American liberalism. A fierce advocate of academic freedom, racial justice, and political pluralism, Hofstadter charted in his works the changing nature of American society from a provincial Protestant foundation to one based on the values of an urban and multiethnic nation. According to Brown, Hofstadter presciently saw in rural America's hostility to this cosmopolitanism signs of an anti-intellectualism that he believed was dangerously endemic in a mass democracy. By the end of a life cut short by leukemia, Hofstadter had won two Pulitzer Prizes, and his books had attracted international attention. Yet the Vietnam years, as Brown shows, culminated in a conservative reaction to his work that is still with us. Whether one agrees with Hofstadter's critics or with the noted historian John Higham, who insisted that Hofstadter was "the finest and also the most humane intelligence of our generation," the importance of this seminal thinker cannot be denied. As this fascinating biography ultimately shows, Hofstadter's observations on the struggle between conservative and liberal America

are relevant to our own times, and his legacy challenges us to this day.

In this imaginative history of modern American evangelicalism, Molly Worthen offers a dramatic rethinking of the evangelical movement, arguing that it has been defined not by shared doctrines or politics, but by the struggle to reconcile head knowledge and heart religion in an increasingly secular America. -- Back cover.

A cultural history of the last forty years, *The Age of American Unreason* focuses on the convergence of social forces—usually treated as separate entities—that has created a perfect storm of anti-rationalism. These include the upsurge of religious fundamentalism, with more political power today than ever before; the failure of public education to create an informed citizenry; and the triumph of video over print culture. Sparing neither the right nor the left, Jacoby asserts that Americans today have embraced a universe of "junk thought" that makes almost no effort to separate fact from opinion.

Intellectual history has never been more relevant and more important to public life in the United States. In complicated and confounding times, people look for the principles that drive action and the foundations that support national ideals. *American Labyrinth* demonstrates the power of intellectual history to illuminate our public life and examine our ideological assumptions. This volume of essays brings together 19 influential intellectual historians to contribute original thoughts on topics of widespread interest. Raymond Haberski Jr. and Andrew Hartman asked a group of nimble, sharp scholars to respond to a simple question: How might the resources of intellectual history help shed light on contemporary issues with historical resonance? The answers—all rigorous, original, and challenging—are as eclectic in approach and temperament as the authors are different in their interests and methods. Taken together, the essays of *American Labyrinth* illustrate how intellectual historians, operating in many different registers at once and ranging from the theoretical to the political, can provide telling insights for understanding a public sphere fraught with conflict. In order to understand why people are ready to fight over cultural symbols and political positions we must have insight into how ideas organize, enliven, and define our lives. Ultimately, as Haberski and Hartman show in this volume, the best route through our contemporary American labyrinth is the path that traces our practical and lived ideas.

Ideas die at the hands of journalists. This is the controversial thesis offered by Michael McDevitt in a sweeping examination of anti-intellectualism in American journalism. A murky presence, anti-intellectualism is not acknowledged by reporters and editors. It is not easily measured by scholars, as it entails opportunities not taken, context not provided, ideas not examined. Where *Ideas Go to Die* will be the first book to document how journalism polices intellect at a time when thoughtful examination of our society's news media is arguably more important than ever. Through analysis of media encounters with dissent since 9/11, McDevitt argues that journalism engages in a form of social control, routinely suppressing ideas that might offend audiences. McDevitt is not arguing that journalists are consciously or purposely controlling ideas, but rather that resentment of intellectuals and suspicion of intellect are latent in journalism and that such sentiment manifests in the stories journalists choose to tell, or not to tell. In their commodification of knowledge, journalists will, for example, "clarify" ideas to distill deviance; dismiss nuance as untranslatable; and funnel productive ideas into static, partisan binaries. Anti-intellectualism is not unique to American media. Yet, McDevitt argues that it is intertwined with the nation's cultural history, and consequently baked into the professional train-

ing that occurs in classrooms and newsrooms. He offers both a critique of our nation's media system and a way forward, to a media landscape in which journalists recognize the prevalence of anti-intellectualism and take steps to avoid it, and in which journalism is considered an intellectual profession.

From a leading voice among young conservatives, an impassioned argument that to stay relevant the Republican Party must look beyond short-term electoral gains and re-commit to historic conservative values. In 1963 Richard Hofstadter published his landmark book *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life*. Today, Matt Lewis argues, America's inclination toward simplicity and stupidity is stronger than ever, and its greatest victim is the Republican Party. Lewis, a respected conservative columnist and frequent guest on MSNBC's *Morning Joe*, eviscerates the phenomenon of candidates with a "no experience required" mentality and tea party "patriots" who possess bluster but few core beliefs. Lewis traces the conservative movement's roots, from Edmund Burke to William F. Buckley, and from Goldwater's loss to Reagan's landslide victory. He highlights visionary thinkers who understood nuance and deep ideology and changed the course of the nation. As we approach the 2016 presidential election, Lewis has an urgent message for fellow conservatives: embrace wisdom, humility, qualifications, and inclusion -- or face extinction.

*Book Banning in 21st Century America*, based on thirteen contemporary book challenge cases in schools and public libraries across the United States argues that understanding contemporary reading practices, especially interpretive strategies, is vital to understanding why people attempt to censor books in schools and public libraries.

This timely reissue of Richard Hofstadter's classic work on the fringe groups that influence American electoral politics offers an invaluable perspective on contemporary domestic affairs. In *The Paranoid Style in American Politics*, acclaimed historian Richard Hofstadter examines the competing forces in American political discourse and how fringe groups can influence — and derail — the larger agendas of a political party. He investigates the politics of the irrational, shedding light on how the behavior of individuals can seem out of proportion with actual political issues, and how such behavior impacts larger groups. With such other classic essays as "Free Silver and the Mind of 'Coin' Harvey" and "What Happened to the Antitrust Movement?", *The Paranoid Style in American Politics* remains both a seminal text of political history and a vital analysis of the ways in which political groups function in the United States.

Why has it been so long since an American president has effectively and consistently presented well-crafted, intellectually substantive arguments to the American public? Why have presidential utterances fallen from the rousing speeches of Lincoln, Teddy Roosevelt, Wilson, and FDR to a series of robotic repetitions of talking points and sixty-second soundbites, largely designed to obfuscate rather than illuminate? In *The Anti-Intellectual Presidency*, Elvin Lim draws on interviews with more than 40 presidential speechwriters to investigate this relentless qualitative decline, over the course of 200 years, in our presidents' ability to communicate with the public. Lim argues that the ever-increasing pressure for presidents to manage public opinion and perception has created a "pathology of vacuous rhetoric and imagery" where gesture and appearance matter more than accomplishment and fact. Lim tracks the campaign to simplify presidential discourse through presidential and speechwriting decisions made from the Truman to the present administration, explaining how and why

presidents have embraced anti-intellectualism and vague platitudes as a public relations strategy. Lim sees this anti-intellectual stance as a deliberate choice rather than a reflection of presidents' intellectual limitations. Only the smart, he suggests, know how to dumb down. The result, he shows, is a dangerous debasement of our political discourse and a quality of rhetoric which has been described, charitably, as "a linguistic struggle" and, perhaps more accurately, as "dogs barking idiotically through endless nights." Sharply written and incisively argued, *The Anti-Intellectual Presidency* sheds new light on the murky depths of presidential oratory, illuminating both the causes and consequences of this substantive impoverishment.

**NATIONAL BESTSELLER** *The three Great Premises of Idiot America: · Any theory is valid if it sells books, soaks up ratings, or otherwise moves units · Anything can be true if someone says it loudly enough · Fact is that which enough people believe.* Truth is determined by how fervently they believe it With his trademark wit and insight, veteran journalist Charles Pierce delivers a gut-wrenching, side-splitting lament about the glorification of ignorance in the United States. Pierce asks how a country founded on intellectual curiosity has somehow deteriorated into a nation of simpletons more apt to vote for an American Idol contestant than a presidential candidate. But his thunderous denunciation is also a secret call to action, as he hopes that somehow, being intelligent will stop being a stigma, and that pinheads will once again be pitied, not celebrated. Erudite and razor-sharp, *Idiot America* is at once an invigorating history lesson, a cutting cultural critique, and a bullish appeal to our smarter selves.

This historical study of intellectuals asks, for every period, who they were, how important they were, and how they saw themselves in relation to other Americans. Lewis Perry considers intellectuals in their varied historical roles as learned gentlemen, as clergymen and public figures, as professionals, as freelance critics, and as a professoriate. Looking at the changing reputation of the intellect itself, Perry examines many forms of anti-intellectualism, showing that some of these were encouraged by intellectuals as surely as by their antagonists. This work is interpretative, critical, and highly provocative, and it provides what is all too often missing in the study of intellectuals—a sense of historical orientation.

With eyewitness accounts and contemporary reports—linked together by succinct analytical commentaries—Richard Hofstadter and his young collaborator, Michael Wallace, have created a superb documentary reader that is, in effect, a history of violence in America through four centuries. Here, as experienced by men and women who lived through them, are not only the familiar, chilling eruptions—Harper's Ferry; the Civil War draft riot in New York; Homestead; Centralia; the Detroit ghetto; the assassinations of Lincoln, Malcolm X, and Robert Kennedy—but also less commonly remembered episodes, such as the New York slave riots of 1712, the doctors' riot of 1788, vigilante terror in Montana, the anti-Chinese riot in Los Angeles in 1871, and the White League coup d'état of 1874 in New Orleans. In his extensive introduction, Richard Hofstadter shows how, in the face of the record, Americans have had an extraordinary ability to persuade themselves that they are among the best-behaved and the best-regulated of peoples. With more than one hundred entries, the editors have documented and put into perspective the thread of violence in American history whose rediscovery—as Hofstadter suggests—will undoubtedly be one of the most important intellectual legacies of the 1960's. The book clearly demonstrates, even as the reader comes to grips with long-eluded truths,

that America's consistent history of violence has not yet breached beyond hope of restoration our long record of basic political stability, that most social reforms in the United States have been brought about without violence.

Throughout the twentieth century, popular songs, magazine articles, plays, posters, and novels alternated between representing intelligence as empowering and as threatening. In *Inventing the Egghead*, Aaron Lecklider cracks open this paradox by examining representations of intelligence to reveal brainpower's stalwart appeal and influence.

Demonstrates how the colonies developed into the first nation created under the influences of nationalism, modern capitalism and Protestantism.

The brilliant, controversial, bestselling critique of American culture that "hits with the approximate force and effect of electroshock therapy" (*The New York Times*)—now featuring a new afterword by Andrew Ferguson in a twenty-fifth anniversary edition. In 1987, eminent political philosopher Allan Bloom published *The Closing of the American Mind*, an appraisal of contemporary America that "hits with the approximate force and effect of electroshock therapy" (*The New York Times*) and has not only been vindicated, but has also become more urgent today. In clear, spirited prose, Bloom argues that the social and political crises of contemporary America are part of a larger intellectual crisis: the result of a dangerous narrowing of curiosity and exploration by the university elites. Now, in this twenty-fifth anniversary edition, acclaimed author and journalist Andrew Ferguson contributes a new essay that describes why Bloom's argument caused such a furor at publication and why our culture so deeply resists its truths today.

Inquiring into the future of the university, Susan Giroux finds a paradox at the heart of higher education in the post-civil rights era. Although we think of "post-civil rights" as representing a colorblind or race transcendent triumphalism in national political discourse, Giroux argues that our present is shaped by persistent "raceless" racism at home and permanent civilizational war abroad. She sees the university as a primary battleground in this ongoing struggle. As the heir to Enlightenment ideals of civic education, the university should be the institution for the production of an informed and reflective democratic citizenry responsible to and for the civic health of the polity, a privileged site committed to free and equal exchange in the interests of peaceful and democratic coexistence. And yet, says Giroux, historically and currently the university has failed and continues to fail in this role. *Between Race and Reason* engages the work of diverse intellectuals—Friedrich Nietzsche, W. E. B. Du Bois, Michel Foucault, Martin Luther King, Jr., Jacques Derrida and others—who challenge the university's past and present collusion with racism and violence. The book complements recent work done on the politics of higher education that has examined the consequences of university corporatization, militarization, and bureaucratic rationalization by focusing on the ways in which these elements of a broader neoliberal project are also racially prompted and promoted. At the same time, it undertakes to imagine how the university can be reconceived as a uniquely privileged site for critique in the interests of today's urgent imperatives for peace and justice.

Winner of the 1964 Pulitzer Prize in Nonfiction *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life* is a book which throws light on many features of the American character. Its concern is not merely to portray the scorners of intellect in American life, but to say something about what the intellectual is, and can be, as a force in a democratic society. "As Mr. Hofstadter unfolds the fascinating story, it is no crude bat-

tle of eggheads and fatheads. It is a rich, complex, shifting picture of the life of the mind in a society dominated by the ideal of practical success." —Robert Peel in the *Christian Science Monitor*

Mark Noll has written a major indictment of American evangelicalism. Reading this book, one wonders if the evangelical movement has pandered so much to American culture and tried to be so popular only to lose not only its mind but its soul as well. For evangelical pastors and parishoners alike, this is a must read! --Robert Wuthnow.

Why do students who belong to racial minority groups—particularly black students—fall short in school performance? This book provides a comprehensive and critical examination of black identity and its implications for black academic achievement and intellectualism. • Uses African American identity as the framework to understand academic achievement and to expose the biases of "deficit thinking" that presumes that under-achievement among black students is related to deficiencies in motivation, intelligence, culture, or socialization • Presents information and viewpoints informed by empirical research in a manner that is accessible to general readers and non-specialists • Uses personal anecdotes and examples from popular culture to connect with readers and better illustrate the validity of the author's strengths-based approach rather than the conventional deficit-based approach • Challenges the idea that black students are inherently anti-intellectual and do not value school as much as their non-black peers

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The *New York Times* film critic shows why we need criticism now more than ever Few could explain, let alone seek out, a career in criticism. Yet what A.O. Scott shows in *Better Living Through Criticism* is that we are, in fact, all critics: because critical thinking informs almost every aspect of artistic creation, of civil action, of interpersonal life. With penetrating insight and warm humor, Scott shows that while individual critics--himself included--can make mistakes and find flaws where they shouldn't, criticism as a discipline is one of the noblest, most creative, and urgent activities of modern existence. Using his own film criticism as a starting point--everything from his infamous dismissal of the international blockbuster *The Avengers* to his intense affection for Pixar's animated *Ratatouille*--Scott expands outward, easily guiding readers through the complexities of Rilke and Shelley, the origins of Chuck Berry and the Rolling Stones, the power of Marina Abramovich and 'Ode on a Grecian Urn.' Drawing on the long tradition of criticism from Aristotle to Susan Sontag, Scott shows that real criticism was and always will be the breath of fresh air that allows true creativity to thrive. "The time

for criticism is always now," Scott explains, "because the imperative to think clearly, to insist on the necessary balance of reason and passion, never goes away."