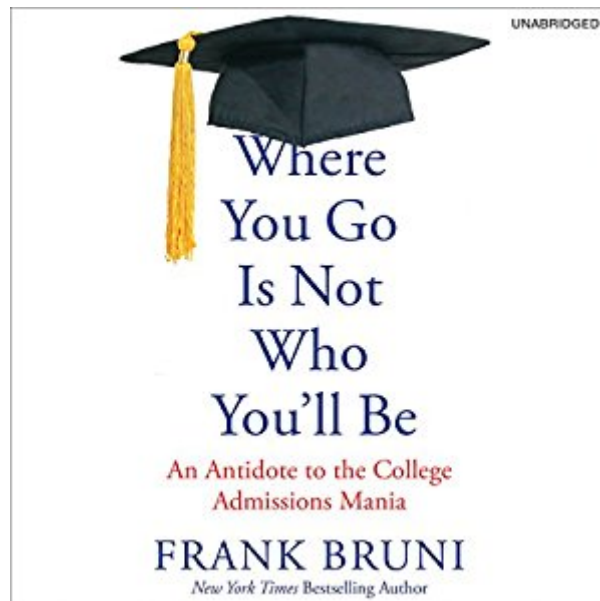


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# Where You Go Is Not Who You'll Be: An Antidote To The College Admissions Mania



## Synopsis

Over the last few decades, Americans have turned college admissions into a terrifying and occasionally devastating process, preceded by test prep, tutors, all sorts of stratagems, all kinds of rankings, and a conviction among too many young people that their futures will be determined and their worth established by which schools say yes and which say no. That belief is wrong. It's cruel. And in *Where You Go Is Not Who You'll Be*, Frank Bruni explains why, giving students and their parents a new perspective on this brutal, deeply flawed competition and a path out of the anxiety it provokes. Bruni, a best-selling author and a columnist for the *New York Times*, shows that the Ivy League has no monopoly on corner offices, governors' mansions, or the most prestigious academic and scientific grants. Through statistics, surveys, and the stories of hugely successful people who didn't attend the most exclusive schools, he demonstrates that many kinds of colleges - large public universities, tiny hideaways in the hinterlands - serve as ideal springboards. And he illuminates how to make the most of them. What matters in the end are a student's efforts in and out of the classroom, not the gleam of his or her diploma. Where you go isn't who you'll be. Americans need to hear that - and this indispensable manifesto says it with eloquence and respect for the real promise of higher education.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

WHERE YOU GO IS NOT WHO YOU'LL BE goes against everything you've been told about college - i.e., do anything you can to get your son or daughter into the absolute BEST university you can. Getting into a top university is like the ultimate report card. When you get that "A" it means, "You have arrived!" So, take practice SAT tests, hire tutors; talk to alumni--in short, DO ANYTHING!

Try for Harvard or Yale or maybe Stanford. Of course, one doesn't mention the lowly community colleges. That's for those who don't want to succeed. This modern thinking is utter folly, explains Frank Bruni. First of all, you need to see that your value as a person is NOT the same as the school you attend. Secondly, it is simply a lie to connect top achievement solely to top universities. That is empirically untrue, shows the author. Instead, achieving your goals is a matter of perseverance, character, and drive of the individual—those are the keys, not the name of your alma mater. The author cites numerous public figures—including presidents, many of whom went to second or even third-tier schools (I had not heard of many of their schools.) Ditto for top corporate executives. Of course, some CEOs indeed went to ivy league schools, but many did not. Ditto for honorees in science. The author concludes that there's no pattern to achievement and the school attended. It's a patchwork. The author also notes that the admittance process plays favorites in all kinds of ways—for example, athletic prowess. The big danger in our falling victim to this line of thinking is that we start BELIEVING IT as a fundamental precept of our life. We allow a huge chunk of our life to get tied up into something that is simply FALSE.

This book wasn't all that great. It made me laugh, although I'm sure that wasn't the intention. Yes, the focus of trying to get into an Ivy League for college is ridiculous. What is also ridiculous is that the author wrote a whole book on a very slim subject. One story especially made me laugh, which I had to tell my husband, who got his bachelor's degree from Lehigh University. One kid couldn't get into an Ivy League or didn't even bother applying to them because he didn't think he'd get in. So . . . this kid "settled" for Lehigh. My husband loved Lehigh and although it wasn't an Ivy League school, it is still a very good school. His engineering degree from Lehigh helped him get a job at IBM 35 years ago. Today he is a senior advisor at a consulting firm in Washington DC. So, YES, KIDS--don't dismiss the "second-rate" schools. My brother and I didn't start out at prestigious schools. We attended the University of New Mexico because we lived in Albuquerque and that was the only school our parents could afford. Eventually I got my Master's Degree in International Relations from the University of Chicago (not Ivy League but ranked #4 in US News and Report's national university rankings) and my brother got his Master's in Computer Engineering from Stanford (ranked #4 also). YES, KIDS, you too can get into prestigious universities if you get good grades at your undergrad universities. You will just have to wait until graduate school to get into a top university. So don't fret, all is not lost if you don't get into a top school right away as an undergrad. Now, here is the other side of the coin: our daughter in high school was a real academic whiz and attended a specialized math and science academy.

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