

This is a handout from a seminar presented at Spring Guidance Night in 2006 by Mr. Dan Crabtree. Please consider investing some research into this important process. I have added to the list and starred the ones I believe are “must reads”. However, the bulk of this research and reviewing was done by Dan Crabtree, Wheaton Academy’s College Counselor. --Heather Mills-- updated 9/06

Suggested Readings

For the Christian student or parent wanting to engage in serious thought about choosing a college, here is my suggested reading list. Some authors are Christians; others are not.

The Idea of a Christian College by Arthur Holmes

This classic book “provides a concise case for the Christian college and defines its distinctive mission and contribution.” I intentionally put this book at the top of my suggested reading list.

**Colleges That Change Lives* by Loren Pope

Loren Pope, former education editor of the *New York Times*, is a strong advocate of the small liberal arts college. This book profiles forty colleges, but I believe its greatest value is in Pope’s introductory pages, with his criticism of “designer-label colleges” and “brand-name universities” and convincing case for the kind of education that takes place in a good liberal arts college. If you don’t buy this book, at least find it in your local bookstore and read those fourteen pages. *There is also a website that his research team heads up. Visit www.ctcl.com for more information.

Engaging God’s World: A Reformed Vision of Faith, Learning, and Living by Cornelius Plantinga

“Written as a guide for college students, this volume spells out the central themes of the Christian faith from a Reformed perspective and shows how Christian higher education fits inside a view of the world and of human life that is formed by these themes.”

Conceiving the Christian College by Duane Litfin

This book, by the President of Wheaton College, “makes an important contribution to the conversation about the nature and purpose of Christian colleges and universities.” I especially appreciate his chapter on the meaning of a Christ-centered education.

*“Christian Academe vs. Christians in Academe” by Kenneth Elzinga

An excellent essay from the September 2005 *Inside Higher Ed* about the nature of Christian scholarship. It is available on-line at <http://insidehighered.com/views/2005/09/30/elzinga>

Choosing the Right College: The Whole Truth About America’s Top Schools

This book, written from a decidedly conservative (not distinctively Christian) perspective, “provides candid assessments of the state of [the] academic curriculum, political atmosphere, and campus life” of 125 colleges and universities. As with Pope’s book, read the introductory twenty-four pages regarding such themes as a core curriculum and the humanities.

**God on the Quad* by Naomi Schaefer Riley

This book is described as “invaluable for anyone interested in the future of higher education in America – and the future of religion.” Riley writes about a wide variety of religious (not necessarily Christian) institutions and their students. An interesting and worthwhile book.

**Harvard Schmarvard: Getting Beyond the Ivy League to the College that is Best for You* by Jay Mathews

Mathews, of the *Washington Post*, is my favorite education reporter. He also writes a weekly column in the *Post* called “Class Struggle” which should be required reading.

**An Educated Choice: Advice for Parents of College-Bound Students* by Frank A. Brock

Brock, former president of Covenant College in Lookout Mountain, Georgia asks some thought provoking questions about choosing a college for & with your child. He offers statistics and some practical advice for parents.

Other suggested books: *The Fabric of Faithfulness* by Steve Garber; *Quality with Soul* by Robert Benne, *The Outrageous Idea of Christian Scholarship* by George Marsden.