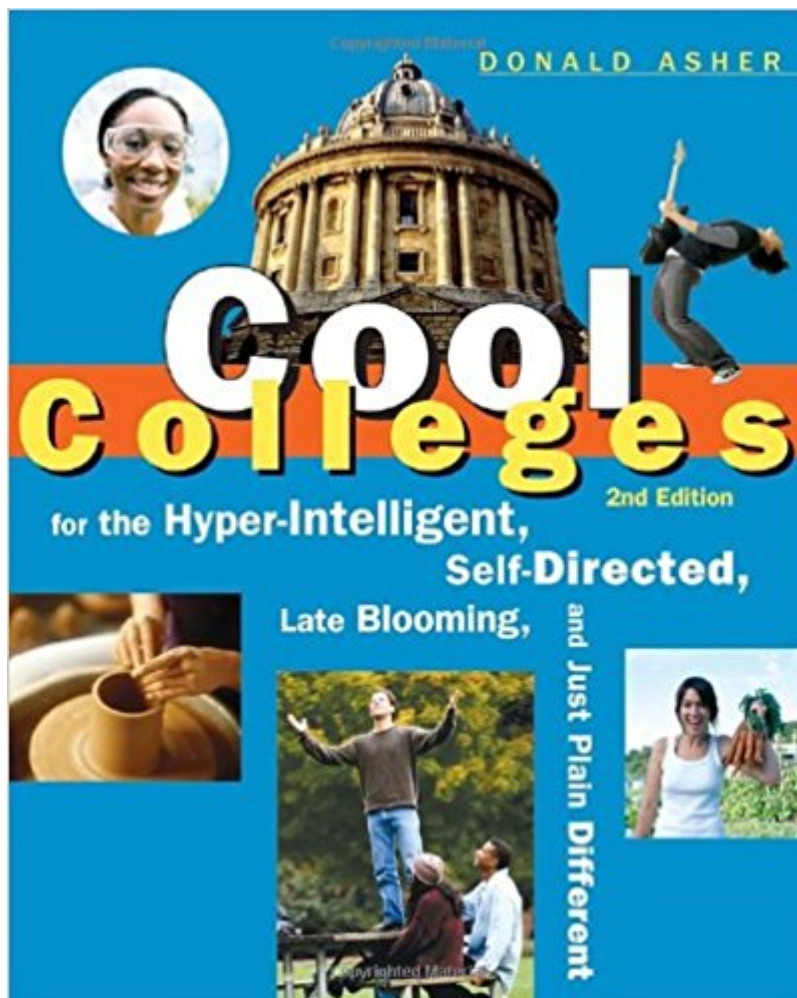


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# Cool Colleges: For The Hyper-Intelligent, Self-Directed, Late Blooming, And Just Plain Different (Cool Colleges: For The Hyper-Intelligent, Self-Directed, Late Blooming, & Just Plain Different)





## Synopsis

Fully revised since the first edition, COOL COLLEGES covers the most exciting schools in the U.S. and Canada, with a new chapter on eco schools, an update on tuition-free schools, and the total low-down on the so-called top-ranked schools. Are you hyper-intelligent? Self-directed? A late-bloomer? Or just different? Then you need a great school that will challenge, nurture, inspire, and motivate you-and COOL COLLEGES has got 'em. It will also give you the scoop on: What the Ivy league is and what it really wants Totally free schools, including one where financial need is a requirement for admission Universities that don't give grades Schools that don't want your SAT scores Data on the highest (and lowest) paying majors The schools that graduate the most millionaires Men's, women's, and minority-focused colleges Schools where you can design your own degree program A college where you can hike and camp your way to a degree A college that runs its own ranch on an 80-square-mile campus Science and engineering schools where undergrads get their own labs The most competitive colleges, including one that rejects 95% of applicants Campuses where students love to study, even on Saturday nights Schools that offer programs in computer game studies, comedy, auctioneering, special-effects makeup, and more Plus a link to the Web addresses for every college and university in the United States and Canada. COOL COLLEGES is the resource for finding your dream school-and gives you the edge you'll need to get accepted. Reviews "Worth a look, if you're headed for college or getting ready to apply."-San Diego Union Tribune I received a used copy of your book, Cool Colleges (2nd Edition) in the mail this morning and (admittedly) out of vague interest and the slight boredom that comes with not having a driver's license, I picked it up and went about my usual hole-up-in-my-bedroom-with-new-book-and-blinds-down-and-stay-holed-until-I-have-finished-the-text-in-it's-entirety routine. The purpose of this message is to express my nearly inexpressible gratitude to you and your associates in research. I have read life-changing books, articles, and speeches but I have never, not once, been so deeply affected by a work of this type: A guidebook? I have perused U.S. News & World Report's 2007 College Guide and the Newsweek/Kaplan 2007 College Guide, each with their individual talents and faults, but your book was different. For once I felt like the book was directed to students such as myself. I'm not an athlete and I'm no academic superstar: at my school, that's what it takes to be a favorite. I am just another mediocre teenager in millions who wants to save the world. Your book made me feel, for once, as though someone was looking at those of us hanging by our fingernails on the edge of being completely lost in our distinction. I love to learn for the sake of learning and not because I'm aiming for any star-studded diplomas or accreditations, but because there is so much to learn. Your book not only allowed me to

see that there were other "Lost Kids" (that's what my guidance counselor called me) but further that there were places trying to find us because we aren't as lost as some of our superiors like to think. Again Sir, thank you for all your work. It has not gone unnoticed nor was it in vain. If nothing else, you made at least one girl's life (and future) a little brighter. -Carina, 17St. Petersburg, FL

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

\* An in-depth look at the best-kept secrets in higher education for outstanding and unusual students, providing an insider's edge to getting accepted. \* Fully revised and updated with the most current information, including the latest on free colleges, the scoop on top-ranked institutions, and a new chapter on the rise of eco-schools.

Career consultant DONALD ASHER is a featured speaker at more than 100 colleges and universities every year, coast to coast. A columnist for MSN Encarta and contributor to the Wall Street Journal's CareerJournal.com and CollegeJournal.com, he divides his time between Nevada and San Francisco.

I am a college counselor at a large private high school. There is a whole category of students who are very intellectual but not necessarily the highest-achieving. Often they are artistic/not motivated by grades/simply marching to the beats of their own drummer. So I was delighted to see that there

is a book written to target this population in their search for colleges. This book was clearly a labor of love, and it has lots of interesting little ideas for where to look: for example, there's an in-depth review of Cook Honors College at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, not something most college guides will mention. (Unfortunately, the review is not in the index under Cook or Honors, but it appears in the table of contents at p. 107, though the entry actually starts on p. 105.) Another example is the author's own characterization of Bryn Mawr as having students with the highest humor index (they will get every joke). There is a good deal of information in this book, but some of the content is outdated. For instance, the only sample college essay is the now gimmicky essay published all over the internet in the last 10 years, that begins "I am a dynamic figure, often seen scaling walls..." and ends, "I have played Hamlet, I have performed open-heart surgery, I have spoken with Elvis. But I have not yet gone to college." The author acknowledges that it's old and a gimmick, so why include it? It's as if a seasoned college counselor took out his manila folder of clippings and notes and favorite anecdotes dating back many years and compiled them into a book without considering their usefulness. Conversely, however, many of the gems of wisdom in this book are still very good advice, such as why the size of a college matters, and why college rankings are almost useless. My biggest complaint about the book, which I hope will be remedied in the next edition, is the layout. It's almost impossible to go from one page to the next and continue where you left off. Too many inserts, graphics, and disparate blocks of text make it quite confusing visually (my students agree). It's as if the book's designer thought that a quirky, messy layout would appeal to quirky students. There are instructions at the beginning for "how to use this book," but the pages remain confusing. I've attached a picture as an example. The index pages make it look as though a lot of colleges are described or reviewed in this book: they aren't. Most colleges appearing in the index are simply listed in a category of colleges students should look at. For instance, the index lists Macalester, and when you go to the page, you find Macalester with a list of colleges that are members of the Consortium of Liberal Arts Schools. In the years since this book was published, many liberal arts schools mentioned in the book have become twice as selective and possibly out of the reach of "late bloomers." Loren Pope's Colleges that Change Lives would be a better option for late bloomers. Also since this book was published, the power of college search engines (one of them on the College Board's website) has grown exponentially, making books like these largely obsolete unless they contain very accurate, up-to-date information that is aimed at a particularly narrow range of students.

Bought this for my son who is a freshman in high school and not quite seeing the connection

between today's grades, tomorrow's college opportunities, and his ultimate future. He doesn't like to be nagged -- who does? So I kept it for myself and read it on a road trip. Once in a while I'd read a little blurb aloud (and this book is full of witty and insightful observations and interesting facts!) and he finally demanded I hand it over. He read it cover to cover. The tone is conversational but not dumbed down, the author is clearly a smart, quirky, rebellious, honest guy, and the colleges discussed all have something unique to offer. This is not a substitute for a comprehensive guide but a book that asks (and answers) different questions from those you usually read. If your high schooler is an outside-the-box person -- introverted, creative, old-fashioned, geeky, super smart, a fast learner, a slow learner, etc.-- this a great book for him or her. Gave copies to 3 people already.

Cool Colleges is my favorite college guide and I recommend it, along with Colleges That Change Lives, to all my clients. Compared to something more comprehensive like the Fiske Guide, there's no contest. It's fairly easy to find a school that specializes in your favorite activities. Most people know where strong athletes or performers get the best training. For others the search comes down to size, location and price. But what if you're looking for a quirky college that matches your style? Cool Colleges highlights schools where you run a ranch or a nuclear reactor, study the great books, don't receive grades, take one class at a time, or attend after 8th grade or attend for free. I took away one star for the layout of the book. It's quirky, like it's subject matter, and can be difficult to follow. Do not buy the Kindle version: the hyperactive layout makes it virtually impossible to read in that format. That is the only drawback for an otherwise terrific book!

A font of cool information on off beat colleges and some very 'on beat' colleges with off beat programs. The somewhat frantic format is clearly aimed at the post-literate web crawler with the attention span of a nat and will probably drive a more linear USNews&WorldReport College Guide reader to distraction, but hey, Asher knows his market... I'm just sayin'... .Seriously, this is a hard copy guide for the post hard copy audience: i.e. for kids who can't or won't sit still for Loren Pope's truly excellent but'black page'guides; you know, the ones that are just line after black line of just excellent, sustained and well developed argument. Some 16 year olds can handle Pope 'straight up,' but not many. And even the ones that can would do well to expand their search with this book by Asher. So for most kids: Asher first and (maybe) Pope second. And for the Parents: Pope first and Asher to learn how to sell Pope to the kids. Pay particular attention to Asher's "Cool guides" sections scattered throughout the book: he may be the best reviewer of other guides on the planet. Colleges That Change Lives: 40 Schools That Will Change the Way You Think About Colleges Colleges That

## Change Lives: 40 Schools You Should Know About Even If You're Not a Straight-A Student

super guide to colleges! if you have trouble reading this then perhaps you need to rethink whether this book is for you. the title makes it clear who this is for and i use it consistently with my students and every one of them adores it as well. great selection of "off the beaten track" kinds of schools (deep springs, college of the atlantic) as well as traditional power houses (university of chicago, reed, and st. johns).

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