

COLLEGE BOUND

YOUR APPLICATION MENTORSM

Books, Essays, and Applications

Summer, 2009

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Congratulations on making it through another school year. As finals become a distant memory, summer is a great time to relax and read something that *you* get to choose. Many colleges will also ask either on the application or during your interview what you have read in the last year, so find something that you enjoy and can speak about with passion. Below are some recommendations.

The last week of August is a great time to visit schools! Many schools are back in session.

Success, Secrets, and Submission

Many Books; Many Perspectives

I've read several books that have made an impact on me and changed the way I understand people and define success. The books range from a memoir about a Somalian woman to a novel about a former Nazi Bookkeeper.

This summer's book ideas represent something for everyone's taste and hopefully you will enjoy them as much as I did.

Success

Application Checklist

1. Finalize list.
2. Set up common application account
3. Request applications so you get them as soon as released.
4. Ask teachers to write letters of recommendation who can write well and reveal a different piece of your puzzle.
5. If applicable, put together portfolio, tapes, etc.

Outliers: The Secrets of Success by Malcolm Gladwell

Gladwell is part marketing guru, part social anthropologist. His former books *The Tipping Point* and *Blink* were very popular among business and marketing executives. His latest book, *Outliers*, takes a systematic look at how people become wildly successful. (think Bill Gates, Professional hockey players, etc.) He illustrates how success is obtained through a combination of opportunity, community support, hard work (10,000 hours), and the ability to take advantage of a given opportunity. [Outliers](#)

Good to Great by Jim Collins

This was one of my students' favorite book when I taught Management and Organizational Behavior. It profiles companies in the same industry during the same time period and outlines why some become great and others flounder. It is a very interesting book about business and success.

Secrets

Not Me by Michael Lavigne

What would you do if you found out that your Jewish Dad was a Nazi? This is the premise of *Not Me*. It is an interesting story and brings up a some fascinating discussion points. What is a person's moral responsibility when he is just "doing his job?" Can a person be held accountable for his actions in this situation? How does a son reconcile new information with the information that he's had his whole life? It is a quick read and brings up some interesting moral dilemmas.

The Reader by Bernard Schlink

Set in post-WWII Germany, this story gives yet another perspective. The prose is straight forward and reads like a memoir. It describes how a 15 year old boy's encounter with an older woman influences his life in numerous ways. It also explores how a secret can shape one's actions in a profound way. You may have seen the movie last year, but I prefer the book because it delves into the psychology more. Each time I read it, I walk away with a new take on it.

Submission

Infidel by Ayaan Hirsi Ali

6. Work on Personal Statement and essays.
7. Rewrite, rewrite, rewrite!
8. Visit schools (Most schools are back in session the last week in August)
9. Try to enjoy the process; this is your road to a great 4 years

The Personal Statement

Get yourself outside of the "box"

It is your job to reveal what's in "your" box to the admissions director through your personal statement. The best personal statements speak from the heart and share something about you that college admissions' officers cannot tell from your application. Think about what you want them to know about you and then keep asking yourself: "Does my essay communicate this?" If not, keep writing!

Set Up an Appointment

Rising Seniors: Meeting to Work on Personal Statements

If you have not done so yet, please call or e-mail to schedule an appointment to work on your essays, finalize your lists, or plan out next year. The more we get done over the summer, the less you have to do come fall.

How does an Islamic woman born in Somalia become one of Europe's most controversial political figures? Ali's memoir recounts her story of going from Somalia to Kenya, to Ethiopia, to the Netherlands. It is a fascinating exploration of Islam, Africa, and Europe and how one woman can make a difference to so many lives. Fascinating read.

***A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini**

This book describes Afghanistan's culture from a girl's perspective. Hosseini captures the struggle faced by Afghan women, but also paints a beautiful story of kindness and hope.





I will be away visiting schools July 13-17 and on vacation August 20-September 4 (see if you can guess where). Have a great summer.

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Enjoy your summer!

Warmly,

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