



In Defense of Elitism

William A. Henry Iii

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From the Pulitzer Prize-winning culture critic for *Time* magazine comes the tremendously controversial, yet highly persuasive, argument that our devotion to the largely unexamined myth of egalitarianism lies at the heart of the ongoing "dumbing of America."

Americans have always stubbornly clung to the myth of egalitarianism, of the supremacy of the individual average man. But here, at long last, Pulitzer Prize-winning critic William A. Henry III takes on, and debunks, some basic, fundamentally ingrained ideas: that everyone is pretty much alike (and should be); that self-fulfillment is more important than objective achievement; that everyone has something significant to contribute; that all cultures offer something equally worthwhile; that a truly just society would automatically produce equal success results across lines of race, class, and gender; and that the common man is almost always right. Henry makes clear, in a book full of vivid examples and unflinching opinions, that while these notions are seductively democratic they are also hopelessly wrong.

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