

Society's Books of Note

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George M. Marsden, *The Twilight of the American Enlightenment*. New York: Basic Books, 2014. \$26.99. 219pp.

Marsden, professor of history emeritus at Notre Dame, presents a compelling argument about America's failure to maintain a liberal consensus against the dashed hopes of the 1950s and the culture wars that began in earnest following the turmoil of the 1960s. His insights provide a thoughtful reconsideration of the nature of pluralism in 21st century America.

Olga Shevchenko, ed., *Double Exposure: Memory and Photography*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2014. \$49.95. 245pp.

Shevechnko, associate professor of sociology at Williams College, has assembled a distinguished group of commentators, including Richard Chalfen, Anna Lisa Tota, Martin Jay, and Elizabeth Edwards, who offer analyses of the social and material practices through which photographs are used and shared in communicating the past. The result is an important example of multi-disciplinary scholarship about the nature of memory and representation.

William Deresiewicz, *Excellent Sheep: The Miseducation of the American Elite and the Way to a Meaningful Life*. New York: Free Press, 2014. \$26.00. 245pp.

An abundance of insiders and outsiders have written about the poor state of higher education in America. Deresiewicz, a former insider, who taught at Yale for a decade, enlists the voices of his students to argue about

the conspiracy of meritocracy to produce both successful and uninteresting graduates, in particular, from elite universities. The book joins the ranks of previous jeremiads that seek to define and direct the soul of higher education.

Joel Best and Kathleen A. Bogle, *Kids Gone Wild: From Rainbow Parties to Sexting, Understanding the Hype over Teen Sex*. New York: New York University Press, 2014. \$24.95. 177pp.

Best, professor of sociology and criminal justice at the University of Delaware and Bogle, associate professor of sociology and criminal justice, address the sensationalizing of teen sexuality, debunking media claims that contemporary teens are out of control. They analyze how the fears of the growing sexualization of childhood emerge in a sensationalized culture, and they raise concerns about the real problems related to the teenage years.

Laurence Ralph, *Renegade Dreams: Living Through Injury in Gangland Chicago*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2014. \$20.00. 256pp.

Ralph, assistant professor in the departments of anthropology and African and African American studies at Harvard University, offers an ethnography of the streets of one of Chicago's most violent neighborhoods—where the local gang has been active for more than 50 years. He talks with people whose lives are irrecoverably damaged, seeking to understand how they cope and how they can be better helped.