

**Review: Making a Difference College and Graduate Guide:
Outstanding Colleges to Help You Make a Better World**

By Miriam Weinstein

Reviewed by [William Ted Johnson](#)

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Weinstein, Miriam. *Making a Difference College and Graduate Guide: Outstanding Colleges to Help You Make a Better World*. 6th edition. San Anselmo: Sageworks Press, 1999. 350 pp. ISBN 0-9634618-4-2 (paperback). US\$19.95.

This guide will make you think and anyone looking for a good college should be made to think about what they are doing and why. Too many college freshmen enter a four-year institution without a clue as to what they will study or what they will do with that degree for the rest of their lives. I am not suggesting that college students should have it "all figured out" before they even get started or that there is no place for flexibility. I am saying that the *Making a Difference Guide* is an excellent tool, whereby prospective college students can evaluate a wide selection of schools in an effort to find a good match for their goals, values, and perceived purpose in life. A number of introductory essays facilitate this process. For example, Jeremy Rifkin, author of *The End of Work: The Decline of the Global Labor Force & the Dawn of the Post-Market Era*, wrote "Rethinking the Mission of American Education." David Orr of Oberlin College wrote "What is Education for?" Other essays focus on the value of community service, environmental literacy, socially responsible technology, and more.

Entries are alphabetical and include a narrative describing the school's mission and how it strives to make the world a better place to live and how its students become world builders themselves. Other information includes current enrollment, a student body profile, costs, housing availability, address, phone number, Web page, and a sample of courses taught. Graduate and Peace Corp programs are included. A college report card is provided, which is a tool for choosing the best college for you among your top choices. Sound advice is also offered on how to test drive a college. Unfortunately, this advice ends with a self-centered focus on individual happiness rather than world improvement. Another shortcoming includes the inconsistent presentation of cost data. It is not always specified if the amount is for the semester, year, or all four years. Accreditation information is not always included and no standardized ranking system is utilized. Finally, I expected to see more religious schools represented, but they are few and far between.

In spite of its shortcomings, the guide is an essential tool for discovering small and private schools as well as large public institutions with a strong interest in equipping their students to improve the world for future generations. Additionally, if you believe that your niche in life may be a little specialized, then this guide is for you since many of these schools can be just as focused. Your college years are critical years. Please take seriously your responsibility to prepare yourself for this exciting adventure. Weinstein's guide is a good place to begin for college and the rest of your life.

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