

Many College Students are 'Book Virgins'

To gain admittance to college in the 17th century, students had to be able to read and translate various Latin authors on sight. [100 years ago](#), students were required to have read various classical works before being admitted.

Today, however, many American students are being admitted to colleges without ever having read a book from start to finish. They are part of a cohort of students known as “book virgins.”

The National Association of Scholars (NAS) has pointed out this phenomenon in their recent report titled [“Beach Books: 2014-2016. What Do Colleges and Universities Want Students to Read Outside Class?”](#) The report offers a detailed assessment of the books that colleges across America recommend to their students before they begin classes in the fall.

The reading level of these books is oftentimes very low, meant to cater to the group of students who are “book virgins”:

“The desire to appeal to incoming students who have rarely if ever read an adult book on their own... lead selection committees to choose low-grade ‘accessible’ works that are presumed to appeal to ‘book virgins’ who will flee actual college-level reading... [S]uch ‘book virgins’ have to be wooed with simple, unchallenging works.”

And how many “book virgins” are there among entering college freshmen? According to NAS’ David Randall—who drew upon NEA and Pew statistics—about 4 million, which represents about 20% of the entering freshmen class. Sadly, these students have discovered that they can receive adequate, and even good, grades in high school without ever reading a page of assigned texts.

For many students today, it's considered an embarrassment not to have lost one's virginity before going to college.

Would that more were embarrassed about being "book virgins."

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