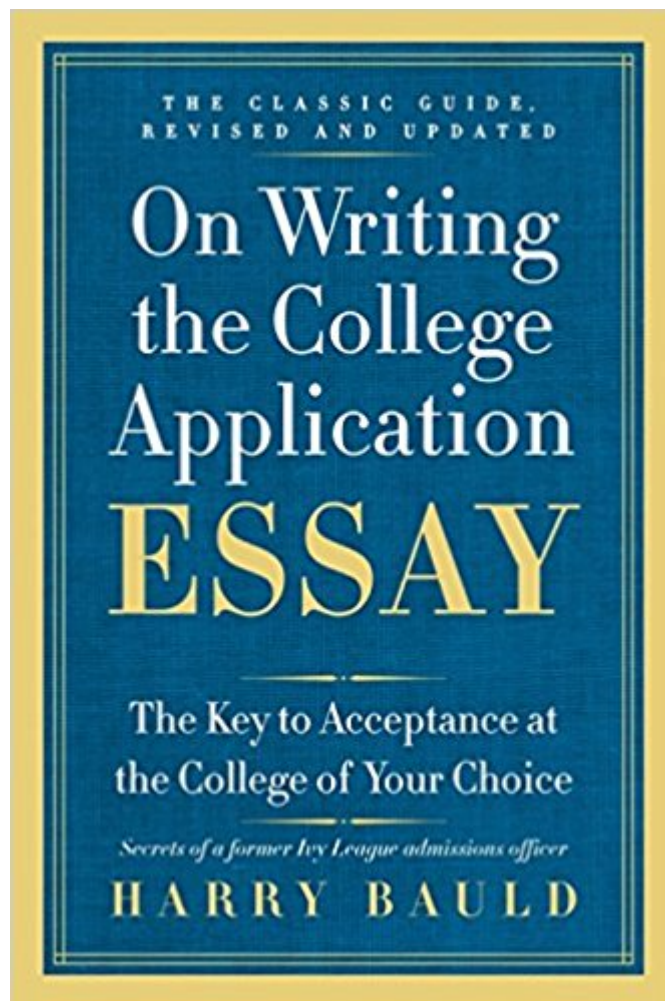


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# On Writing The College Application Essay, 25th Anniversary Edition: The Key To Acceptance At The College Of Your Choice



## Synopsis

A newly revised edition of a perennial favorite, *On Writing the College Application Essay* by Harry Bauld "formerly an admissions officer at Brown University and assistant director of admissions at Columbia University" is an insider's guide to writing a college application essay that will stand out from the pack.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Though it would initially seem aimed at applying to undergraduate schools, "On Writing the College Application Essay" is excellent for essay writing in general (including MBA applications :-). The first half emphasizes the importance of knowing your audience. Although we're inclined to think noble laureates will pore over our applications, the reality is they're screened by the Sarah Bleary and Henry Haggards of the world: real folks who see so many applications, that they struggle to differentiate them. Knowing your audience is only one part of the equation. In the essay, you must convince the reader that you're YOU. Instead, many applicants portray themselves based on what they think the admissions committee wants, often to the extent of sweeping banalities. Bauld explores several of these with his sharp wit. Perhaps the funniest is Pet Death: "As I watched Buttons' life ebb away, I came to value the important things in this world." In the second half, Bauld suggests you take a chill pill, then start keeping a notebook of any ideas and observations -- anything. Eventually you'll start to relax enough that your writing will come alive. However, before it can come alive, you must get something on paper. You'll continuously refine and tighten your opus,

and the author gives several suggestions of how to approach this, with examples of first, second and third drafts. Finally, Bauld includes several different essays, a few from college applications, and most not. Each of these conveys a different style but illustrates the crux of the book: you gotta be you.

I've read several books on the college application process and it is clear that the essay plays a major role in determining whether or not an applicant is accepted. Mr. Bauld has written an entertaining, informative and very easy-to-read book that is also thankfully short. No long-winded, self-congratulatory filler here! It gets right to the point and is generous with excellent examples. In fact, this book is a great resource not only for those prepping to write a college application essay, but it contains great advice for writers in general. This book is well worth its reasonable price for the ideas, motivation and examples it provides. Now I need to get a clue from Mr. Bauld and keep this short and to the point. Bye.

This book gives an excellent and easy to read look at writing your college application essay. If you are just going to read a book and not do the exercises, this is a great choice - it doesn't have any exercises. Instead, the emphasis is on finding your own voice and telling your story. For example, he gives a list of the most overused, deadly topics and then shows how you can write a really good essay on one of the "forbidden" topics. He also includes a number of sample essays with comments from real college admissions officers - so you can see for yourself the difference between good, bad and mediocre.

This is not only the best book on writing the college application essay, but one of the best books about writing, period. With amazingly fresh and funny examples throughout, it shows how bored admissions officers are by the pompous, self-congratulatory essays that students often think they're supposed to write--and how those students can do much, much better. It literally changed my daughter's life, not only because she got into the very competitive college of her choice, but because she now is a sharper, more interesting writer.

As Bauld states up front, the proper question is not - "What should my essay be about?" - but rather - "What should I avoid?" Speaking from the position of someone who has had to endure the tedious job of reading college admissions essays, Bauld describes the process from \*their\* point of view to give the reader some insight into things that will immediately get you relegated to the "reject" or

"wait list" stack. The list of cliches is short, easy to understand, and easy to identify in my own attempts at writing. In addition to that invaluable service of pointing out the pitfalls, the book offers some basic guidelines on essay writing. Obviously, it can't replace years of slacking off in school, so most students should know some of these things before they begin the admissions process, but it doesn't hurt to have a concise list of what to do and especially what \*not\* to do. I liked having the refresher - sometimes we have to be reminded about little rules and annoyances.

I teach high school juniors, and we have a unit on writing the college admissions essay. This is one of the best on the subject that I've read. It is short, which will appeal to the teenage reader, and it is humorous, which appealed to me and, I am sure, will appeal to them. My daughter, who is in the midst of writing the application essay, read the book. To me, that is high praise. I recommend it.

This book really helped me through the college application process. I was having a hard time trying to come up with a topic that wouldn't put admission officers to sleep, and this book did exactly that. Harry Bauld worked for a university and knows what catches the eye and what doesn't. I was able to come up with a clever topic for my essay. This may sound too good to be true, but my essays, with the advice and tips on from Harry Bauld, partially helped me get a full scholarship to college. I highly recommend this book to anyone having any trouble writing essays! Good luck!

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