The Problem With the Meritocracy

from Atlantic Magazine The Bow-Tied Bard of Populism by McKay Coppins about Tucker Carlson

> *To the extent that Carlson's on-air commentary these days is guided by any kind of animating idea, it is perhaps best summarized as a staunch aversion to whatever his right-minded neighbors believe. The country has reached a point, he tells me, where the elite consensus on any given issue should be "reflexively distrusted."*

> *"Look, it's really simple," Carlson says. "The SAT 50 years ago pulled a lot of smart people out of every little town in America and funneled them into a small number of elite institutions, where they married each other, had kids, and moved to an even smaller number of elite neighborhoods. We created the most effective meritocracy ever."*

> *"But the problem with the meritocracy," he continues, is that it "leeches all the empathy out of your society … The second you think that all your good fortune is a product of your virtue, you become highly judgmental, lacking empathy, totally without self-awareness, arrogant, stupid—I mean all the stuff that our ruling class is."*