

# Beleaguered Rulers



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Professionals today wield an enormous public power. Collectively, their decisions affect the patient's plight, the client's fate, the student's future, the city's scape, the Earth's sustainability, the worker's fair treatment, and the durability of institution's great and small. Yet professionals do not perceive themselves as power wielders. They feel beleaguered, marginal, insufficiently appreciated, often under siege. Thus they tend to obscure for themselves their obligation to the common good. This book explores eight professions as they struggle with their double identity--as a means to livelihood and as a "common calling in the spirit of public service." An interpretation of American culture emerges from its pages, as social critic William May opens up the ways in which each profession answers to something deep in the American spirit.

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