

“Be True to Yourself...As Long as You Go to College”

When college opt-outs say things like “I don’t want to go to college. Instead, I’m going to try starting a business or I’m going to pursue this creative venture I love”, everyone loves to whip out income statistics about having a degree. We get so worried about how much money people are going to make when they decide that school isn’t right for them. That’s cool. I think it’s a good exercise to worry about how much money people are going to make. So let’s go with that logic for a minute.

Here’s my question for the people who love to bring up money: should we also whip out those same income statistics when people go to college to major in things like music, drama, art, education, social work, theology, ministry, philosophy, and family studies? Shouldn’t we be encouraging these people to become anesthesiologists and nuclear engineers? At least they should go into something like accounting, right? If I remember correctly, don’t we love to complain about how underpaid school teachers are? Shouldn’t we be challenging those people and telling them to major in computer science or engineering instead? By the way, did you know that some of the worst paying majors are the ones that involve feeding people and caring for them?

It’s funny how we actually praise people for blatantly rejecting the opportunity to maximize their income potential simply because they want to “make a difference” or “follow their heart” or “work in a field that seems like the right fit for their personality.”

I know, I know. We should support people who major in those things because those subjects are meaningful and important. Yes, we should support them even if they knowingly leave a lot of money on the table to pursue those fields. I get it now. So it’s not really about the income statistics. It’s about doing work that’s meaningful, important, and authentic...as long as you go to college.

Dogma is a funny thing.