Expectations, College, and (the good) Life

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Expectations
What is the primary purpose of a college education?
What is college for?

From “Is College Worth It?” a study by the Pew Research Center (May 2011)
You’ll need the knowledge and problem-solving skills you learn in science and math to cure diseases like cancer and AIDS, and to develop new energy technologies and protect our environment. You’ll need the insights and critical thinking skills you gain in history and social studies to fight poverty and homelessness, crime and discrimination, and make our nation more fair and more free. You’ll need the creativity and ingenuity you develop in all your classes to build new companies that will create new jobs and boost our economy.
Education Pays

Unemployment rate in 2011 (in %)

- Doctoral degree: 2.5%
- Professional degree: 2.4%
- Master's degree: 3.6%
- Bachelor's degree: 4.9%
- Associate degree: 6.8%
- Some college, no degree: 8.7%
- High school diploma: 9.4%
- Less than high school diploma: 14.1%

Average: 7.6%

Median weekly earnings in 2011 (in $)

- Doctoral degree: $1,551
- Professional degree: $1,665
- Master's degree: $1,263
- Bachelor's degree: $1,053
- Associate degree: $768
- Some college, no degree: $719
- High school diploma: $638
- Less than high school diploma: $451

Average: $797

Lifetime Earnings by Educational Attainment.

- Less than High School: $973,000
- High School Diploma: $1,304,000
- Some College/No Degree: $1,547,000
- Associate’s degree: $1,727,000
- Bachelor’s degree: $2,268,000
- Master’s degree: $2,671,000
- Doctoral degree: $3,252,000
- Professional degree: $3,648,000
On average, a person with a college degree earns almost one million dollars more (over a lifetime) than a person who only has a high school diploma.
Major/Minor + College Courses = Job Preparation

*The Expectation*
## How Useful Was College For You?

% of college graduates saying college was very/fairly useful in...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very useful</th>
<th>Fairly useful</th>
<th>Net</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increasing knowledge and helping you to grow intellectually</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping you grow and mature as a person</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparing you for a job or career</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>88</td>
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Notes: Based on four-year college graduates, n=757.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER GP/35
Has College Been a Good Investment for You?

Share of college graduates who say ...

- Good investment: 86%
- Not a good investment: 6%
- Not sure: 7%

Note: Based on four-year college graduates ages 18-64 who are not currently enrolled in school, n=513. “Don’t know/Refused” responses are shown but not labeled.

*Is college worth it?*
People expect job prep from college. Many find that college is not what they expect. Even still, most are happy for having gone to college.
Our initial expectations may sometimes be mistaken. But expectations dashed don’t always disappoint. Recognizing this in others can help us reset our expectations.

The Moral of the Story
* Higher education is NOT job training.

* Higher education is about personal transformation.

* Soul Formation

* Reset Your Expectations for College
Personal transformation (or soul formation) involves coming to know and to love what is true, beautiful, and good.

It’s about “the good life” or a life well-lived.

*Expectation Reset*
The Opportunity
Think of my college experience as an opportunity to cultivate an understanding of what it means to live a “good life”

Think of my college experience as mere job training - nothing more than a necessary box to check off on the way to full-time employment

The Decision
“... the belief that reality never present us with an absolutely unavoidable ‘either-or’; . . . This belief I take to be a disastrous error.”

- *The Great Divorce*
- C.S. Lewis

*Must I make a choice?*
* Life/Death (Deut. 30:15,19)
* Darkness/Light (Gospel of John)
* Sheep/Goats (Matt. 25:32)
* Broad/Narrow (Matt. 7:13-14)
* Good/Evil (Proverbs)
* God/Money (Matt. 6:24)

* Is it really like that?
The Choice