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College has been known to cause unrealistic expectations leading to stress and unhappiness. Many young people would benefit by beginning work after high school as opposed to going straight to college. In today's society, students feel pressure to attend college. Institutions began idolizing money rather than the student's education, this in reality can set many people up for disappointment.

College is not the right choice for students who need to earn money after completing high school. Although society equates college with success. It is often assumed that a college degree is necessary for financial success and stability, but this is not always the case. This has been proven incorrect by many individuals such as Mark Zuckerberg, Bill Gates, Steve Jobs, and many more well-known multi-million/billionaires. Facebook's creator, Mark Zuckerberg, left Harvard to pursue his goal of founding the social networking site, which is now valued at billions of dollars. The co-founder of Microsoft, Bill Gates, dropped out of Harvard before receiving his degree in order to focus on founding the technology business that revolutionized the computer industry. The late co-founder of Apple Inc., Steve Jobs, left Reed College after just one term in order to pursue his passions for technology and design. These people—along with

numerous others—have shown that financial achievement can sometimes be attained without a college education.

There is no guarantee that you will enter your profession after college. The majority don't. Most likely, as a student, you feel obligated to enroll in undesirable or unnecessary courses. Sometimes, you can't even change your major and are locked into one. This typically happens in other countries like Japan or Europe. According to a New York Times article “A study reported by CareerBuilder says that a THIRD of people never find a job related to their degree. This Washington Post article suggests that the number is 27%” (Shell 2018). They also stated that “...more than 66% of grads hold their degree as insufficient for their preferred career” (Shell 2018). In today's world, many jobs need workers more than workers need the job. This has resulted in many jobs not requiring a degree, “When it comes to finding the right candidates, recruiters are now looking at talent pipelines outside of college pathways” (Mazur 2021). Based on a college reality check “...of the 55 million job openings in the country, up to 36% of job openings do not require education beyond high school” (Smith 2022).

Young people have learned that college leads to debt. The high cost of tuition fees, books, housing, and other expenses can make it difficult for some adolescents to afford a college education. Four years of college might send you over \$88,000 into debt with no guaranteed job (income) after the fact. According to a college reality check “As much as 65% of all college students in the US have student debt, which can take around 20 years to pay off” (Smith 2022).

This is a significant amount of students in debt a long time after college. As a result, many students are considering alternative routes to higher education, such as trade schools, community colleges, technical schools, and apprenticeships, which offer more affordable options for obtaining a degree. These options provide tuition that is more reasonably priced, and some of the programs can be finished faster than an ordinary college degree. The two-year associate degrees offered by community schools, for instance, can be used as a stepping stone to a four-year bachelor's degree program. These courses give students the practical skills they need to get started with the job right away. Through apprenticeships, students can learn while being paid while also receiving on-the-job training. These non-traditional paths to higher education give students more freedom and a quicker route to a job without the stress of hefty student loan debt.

Despite these statistics, there are some positives to attending college. Attending college helps students develop social awareness and have new experiences. “Attending college offers many benefits, including networking and broader career opportunities” (Bareham 2022). The U.S. Bureau of Labor states that bachelor's “degree holders earn about 65 percent more per week than those with just a high school diploma” (Bareham 2022). Bankrate demonstrates that unemployment amongst high school graduates is almost twice as high as opposed of individuals with a college degree. Some of these reasons college can be useful are that it expands your potential earnings, create long-lasting relationships and professional connections, achieve job security, explore different career options, experience independence, learn valuable skills, and achieve better job benefits. Some youth may benefit from attending college because it teaches you all subjects, not just one subject you are locked into and you make a decision based on that. This is best for a general pursuit of knowledge.

Students who need money immediately after high school are restricted from going to college and cannot afford it. Without sufficient resources and support, these students may feel forced to reject college because of the overwhelming financial burden of higher education. These students also may come from low-income families, have significant financial responsibilities, or may be supporting themselves. According to a report by the Institute for College Access and Success, 45 million student loan borrowers in the United States owe a combined total of \$1.7 trillion in student loan debt, with an average debt of \$39,351 per borrower. Additionally, the pandemic has made students' financial difficulties worse. More than half of current college students reported having financial difficulties as a result of the pandemic, including employment loss, reduced work hours, and increased expenses, according to a survey by the Strada Education Network. Due to these difficulties, it is now even more difficult for students to pay for their higher education, which has caused some to postpone or skip college.

College can be considered a waste of time and resources more specifically money. It can lead to debt or just you locked into a career field you are not happy with. College dropouts can still be successful, maybe even more, there are no limits. Trade school can be a better alternative to actually learning a specific job with specific skills.

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