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3 Reasons why college still matters

***Introduction***

If someone wants to understand what college or a college education means to well over a billion people in this world, a quote from the Great Gatsby truly emphasizes their feelings. It states,” *He had come a long way to this blue lawn, and his dream must have seemed so close that he could hardly fail to grasp it,”* (Fitzgerald 138)*.* The feeling that this quote generates will be one most new college freshman and graduates will feel once they either arrive at their colleges in pursuit of their dreams or are leaving their colleges to face the future and all its perils. But there is a growing notion that college education is not worth the time and amount of money it costs. They base this argument on the hike in student loans or the time spent to take such education could have been spent towards working for a better financially stable future. In response to this Andrew Delbanco wrote an essay to state the reasons why college education still matters and this essay carries on his work and supports the argument that college education still matters because it allows for a broader world view, it is financially valuable and gives students the ability to build their own view.

***A Broader World View***

The primary reason for supporting the fact that college education still matters is because it allows for its students to build a broader world view. This is because once a freshman decides to enter a college, he has to move out of his existing bubble and break out of his existing barriers to truly enjoy the college experience and take lessons learned from it to form his/her view about the world. In his essay, Andrew Delbanco states that a college education opens one's mind and their senses to the possibilities and experiences of life. These experiences would not be understood by people if they did not have gone to college. He supports this argument from the words said to him by an elderly alumnus of Columbia University. This man stated that “*college taught him how to enjoy life and all its experiences”* (Deblanco 466). College is not just about delving into books and studying all night and day. It is more about meeting the people around you and understanding their stories, where they come from, what their aspirations are and what they are doing to achieve their goals. It is more about gaining independence and creating an ability within ourselves to think on our own two feet. According to Erica Sanders, an undergraduate admissions officer at the University of Michigan” *The true value of education experience pertains to expanding your mind, changing the way you see yourself, see others and see the world”* (Gough)*.* She is able to emphasize on how a student builds a world view from the different ideas and points of view he faces on a daily bases in his or her college years. This, in turn, allows the students to understand how big the world around them is and how they can work towards building their standing in it.

***Financially Valuable***

If a closer look is taken at today's working environment, it is clearly visible that having an education or a college degree provides greater financial stability than not having one. Most of the people who go to college go in hopes that they would increase their earning potential and have more success in their professional life. However, for most people money is not always the only motivation but the truth is the monetary gain derived from any endeavor is an important factor in order to make a decision regarding that endeavor. In his essay, Andrew Delbanco states views of people who are against a college education. According to them going to college becomes a heavy burden in the future in the form of student debt, which students have to spend their lifetimes to pay off. They also state that there are high disproportionate rates of attainment of minorities within the current system compared to other countries (Deblanco 464). In a report put out by the US Bureau of Labour Statistics states that *“it is hard to quantify the full value of an education. But US Bureau of Labor Statistics data consistently shows that in terms of dollars education makes sense”* (Eldrige, et al 121). So if an analysis is done on the earning power of college graduates versus their non-graduate compatriates it can be seen that college graduates earn more than a million dollars more than non-graduates. If the unemployment rate is to be considered then there is a lower rate of unemployed college graduates compared to non-graduates. Furthermore, by going to college a person has the chance to build his network through internships or work-study programs but most importantly a new student is allowed the chance of networking through their alumni channels. These channels help students in opening doors for them that would be most probably closed to non-graduates.

***Ability to Build Own View***

Democracy is a frail concept and is only strengthened when the public knows its rights and presents its opinion regarding the attainment of those rights. These opinions are not developed overnight but through extensive research and learning. This where a college education comes in, it allows for its students to use the information they have learned to form an informed opinion regarding the events prevailing within the society. So the presence of a literate and educated citizen is very important for democracy to have a chance to succeed. As Thomas Jefferson puts it,*” The basis of any democracy or the government is the opinion of the people”* (Lerner)*.* Furthermore, the higher education systems established within a country and the quality of the leaders it produces are interlinked and their relationship has very far-reaching consequence for any country. Colleges and the education they provide are very vital in shaping the minds of the current and of the future generation regarding the situations they might face. For example, on one side the educational system of America shaped some of its government's most important components such as political system, foreign policy, the judicial system and etc. While on the other side, institutions in South Africa played an important hand in rationalizing and creating the horrific situation of apartheid. Another example would be when a Pakistani leader by the name of Zia used the system to further his motives and the repercussions of his actions are still felt today. Andrew Delbanco provides an even stronger argument regarding the importance of college education and building a personal view in his view. In his essay, he states that each and every day there is a bombardment of pleading and persuasive punditry and advertisements that are focused on capturing our attention, money, vote, and our loyalty. The best chance for a functioning state and a functioning democracy is to understand the difference between demagoguery and arguments that are responsible (Deblanco 466).

***Conclusion***

It can be summarised very clearly that going to college and attaining a college degree proves very beneficial for all individuals. It helps individuals in developing a broader view about the world and the students are prepared for the life ahead before life engulfs them. Furthermore, there is also the financial aspect which shows that college graduates have more earning power than college dropouts. They should also consider the fact that not everyone that drops out of college suddenly becomes a millionaire. Lastly, in order to have a sustainable democracy and to be able to navigate through loads of punditry that is thrown at the common man, colleges are very important. In the end, the only thing that can be said that the benefits and costs of going to college should not only be considered in monetary form but also the social benefit it generates.

Works Cited

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