Major in Happiness:
Debunking the College Major Fallacies
Books Available @ navigatethechaos.com
Top Three Reasons

• To be able to get a better job.
• To get training for a specific career.
• To be able to make more money.
Declaring Earlier

• The class of 2018 was more likely to declare an academic major during freshman year than their counterparts before the 2008 recession.
Researching Careers

- 82% of 2015 graduates researched their field of choice before determining what major to pursue in college.
• Only 33% of high school graduates selected a major that is a good fit with their interests.
Few Are Confident

- 33% believe they will graduate with the right skills and knowledge.
- 53% believe their major will lead to a good job.
Starting Salaries

- 69% expect to earn more than $35,000.... but in reality only 49% do.
60% said they had experienced “overwhelming anxiety” in the past year.
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The rate of treatment increased from 19% in 2007 to 34% by 2017.

Prevalence of depression and suicidality also increased, while stigma decreased.
The Myths

1. Liberal Arts Majors Will Suffer A Life of Poverty

2. Your Major Is The Only Factor That Determines Your Long-Term Income

3. You Need to Land Your Dream Job and Figure Out What You Want to Do With The Rest of Your Life

4. You Can Only Apply to Jobs Related to Your Major
Facts & Myths

Liberal Arts Majors Will Suffer A Life of Poverty
## Salaries Upon Graduation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BROAD CATEGORY</th>
<th>2019 SALARY PROJECTION</th>
<th>2018 SALARY PROJECTION</th>
<th>PERCENT CHANGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>$69,188</td>
<td>$66,521</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Science</td>
<td>$67,539</td>
<td>$66,005</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math &amp; Sciences</td>
<td>$62,177</td>
<td>$61,867</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>$57,657</td>
<td>$56,720</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>$57,310</td>
<td>$56,689</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>$56,651</td>
<td>$56,688</td>
<td>-0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture &amp; Natural Resources</td>
<td>$55,750</td>
<td>$53,565</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>$52,056</td>
<td>$51,448</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Engineers Make More Money

Median earnings for graduates with only baccalaureate degrees

- Humanities and Social Sciences
- Professional and Preprofessional
- Physical Sciences, Natural Sciences, and Mathematics
- Engineering
5% Are Engineers

• In 2016, 6.9 million people were employed in the U.S. as scientists and engineers, accounting for 4.9% of total U.S. employment.
Earnings Not All That Different

Median earnings for graduates with only baccalaureate degrees

- Humanities and Social Sciences
- Professional and Preprofessional
- Physical Sciences, Natural Sciences, and Mathematics
## Think Long-Term

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Liberal Arts Majors</th>
<th>0-5 years</th>
<th>10-20 years</th>
<th>20+ years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>$39,000</td>
<td>$69,000</td>
<td>$73,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>$41,000</td>
<td>$72,000</td>
<td>$81,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Relations</td>
<td>$44,000</td>
<td>$74,000</td>
<td>$119,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosophy</td>
<td>$42,000</td>
<td>$82,000</td>
<td>$97,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Science</td>
<td>$43,000</td>
<td>$77,000</td>
<td>$89,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>$38,000</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
<td>$69,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other Majors</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounting</td>
<td>$47,000</td>
<td>$73,000</td>
<td>$84,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Management</td>
<td>$45,000</td>
<td>$69,000</td>
<td>$81,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Engineering</td>
<td>$56,000</td>
<td>$89,000</td>
<td>$108,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Science</td>
<td>$63,000</td>
<td>$103,000</td>
<td>$116,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitality Management</td>
<td>$39,000</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
<td>$70,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing</td>
<td>$57,000</td>
<td>$73,000</td>
<td>$75,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Your Major Is The Only Factor That Determines Your Long-Term Income
The Focusing Illusion

“Education is an important determinant of income — one of the most important — but it is less important than most people think. When you focus on education you neglect the myriad of other factors that determine income.”

2.9
Avg GPA of American Millionaires
93% of employers agree that a candidate’s demonstrated capacity to think critically, communicate clearly, and solve complex problems is more important than their undergraduate major.
Internships and Experience

- 78% of seniors had an internship or apprenticeship prior to graduation.
- 65% said it helped land a job.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Academics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Science/technology</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service/retail</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media/communications</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government/nonprofit</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health care</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The original data included a category labeled “neutral.” It has been eliminated to focus on experience and academic considerations. As a result, the numbers do not add up to 100%.
## Multiple Revenue Streams

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Income</th>
<th>Passive Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salary</td>
<td>Dividends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hourly work</td>
<td>Real Estate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business income</td>
<td>RE Crowdfunding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gig income</td>
<td>Interest income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commissioned income</td>
<td>Royalties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Side hustles</td>
<td>Peer lending</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
"Time is short, my strength is limited, the office is a horror, the apartment is noisy, and if a pleasant, straightforward life is not possible, then one must try to wriggle through by subtle maneuvers."

Franz Kafka
Geography Matters
Develop Your Grit

Grit related to four key behaviors of those sitting in the corner office:

• They are decisive
• They are relentlessly reliable
• They adapt boldly
• They engage with stakeholders without shying away from conflict
Market Your Value

- "Most workers have some sort of online presence today—and more than half of employers won't hire those without one. This shows the importance of cultivating a positive online persona. Job seekers should make their professional profiles visible online and ensure any information that could negatively impact their job search is made private or removed."

- Rosemary Haefner, chief human resources officer at CareerBuilder.
Clean Up Your Social Media

• 70% of employers use it to screen candidates
• 40% use it to check on current employees.
I have to figure out what to do with the rest of my life.

“A majority of Americans consider themselves to be ‘a work in progress’ and are willing to take any number of roads less traveled to achieve their goals.”

American Express 2013 Life Twist Study

★★★★★

Nearly 6 in 10 Americans consider themselves to be a success, yet 83% say ‘I’m a work in progress.’
It Takes More Than A Major

It Takes More Than A Major:
Employer Priorities for College Learning and Student Success

An Online Survey Among Employers Conducted On Behalf Of:
The Association Of American Colleges And Universities
By Hart Research Associates

Nearly all those surveyed (93%) agree, “a candidate’s demonstrated capacity to think critically, communicate clearly, and solve complex problems is more important than their undergraduate major.”
#4

You Can Only Apply to Jobs Related to Your Major
Three Different Career Paths
Knowledge Career Path

Historians as Educators
Elementary Schools
Secondary Schools
Postsecondary Education
Historic Sites and Museums

Historians as Researchers
Museums and Historical Organizations
Cultural Resources
Management and Historic Preservation
Think Tanks

Historians as Communicators
Writers and Editors
Journalists
Documentary Editors
Producers of Multimedia Material

Historians as Information Managers
Archivists
Records Managers
Librarians
Information Managers

Historians as Advocates
Lawyers and Paralegals
Litigation Support
Legislative Staff Work
Foundations

Historians in Businesses and Associations
Historians in Corporations
Historians and Nonprofit Associations
Issue Based Career
Skills Based Career

1. Ability to work in a team structure
2. Ability to make decisions and solve problems
3. Ability to communicate verbally with people inside and outside an organization
4. Ability to plan, organize and prioritize work
5. Ability to obtain and process information
6. Ability to analyze quantitative data
7. Technical knowledge related to the job
8. Proficiency with computer software programs
9. Ability to create and/or edit written reports
10. Ability to sell and influence others
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