

The oppressive cycle of education

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Why do people go to college? There was always an emphasis on higher education. In high school, my guidance counselors would extensively talk about the college processes as if college became the only word in the dictionary from January of junior year to May of senior year. Throughout high school, I was a geeky overachiever. As a good student, college was the only way to “succeed” and the most socially accepted option at my school.

My principal and fellow students would constantly say a person needs to be a well-rounded student for the interest of good colleges like the Ivy Leagues. Sometimes I would simply join a club because it would look good on my college application. Because of this expectation I was never really happy and motivated in high school. I was living under societal expectations of what everyone around me were telling me to do. Applying to college, I knew I felt pushed by the expectations of my parents.

To my parents, college was seen as the only opportunity to move up the financial ladder. It was unacceptable for me to not go to college. They would see me as stupid and poor, viewing me very negatively. My father especially saw people who did not go to college would immediately go into working. He never wanted that for me and my sister because he had worked so hard for us to be successful. There was no arguing with my parents because their beliefs were unchanging.

I became motivated by my parents' ambitions. School and I were never friends. School was not hard, but insanely boring. This feeling was stomped by the expectations placed on me throughout high school, so I remained a

geek. Going to college, academic work became more about my motivation than these expectations.

I had to want to go to class and to do my work. I still do not have motivation, having more interest in playing my cute stuffed koala, for my grades are suffering. I do not feel that college was the right decision. I am learning what people are telling me to do, taking general education classes. These expectations are the same from high school to college making it becomes a cycle of me never doing what I wanted to do. Other students who feel this way, should stop their cycles! College does provide a great opportunity to be successful in society's eyes.

“ Being successful” has not necessarily lead to my personal happiness, so I am taking a semester off to find my ambitions for a happier academic experience. I am not saying people should not go to college. For people who enjoy learning, college is for those people. Whether one's happiness can be found in college or not, students should be more conscious of their decision to go to college. Students should not conform to the norm of going to college because that is what is expected of students, but have the ambition for and truly enjoyment of their academic experience.