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Three Views on College Degrees

Carson Frost is 65-year-old male living in Rhode Island and majored in engineering at an Ivy League school. He is a strong believer that it does matter what each student gets their degree in. He continuously argues that the people who major in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics create the jobs that supply the most jobs, thus helping the economy the most.

Carson continuously encourages his grandchildren to major in a 'STEM' field. Raven Bensen is a 31-year-old female living in Los Angeles, California. She is a motivational speaker that travels to the different high schools in the Los Angeles area, letting them know that although thinking long term is a good idea, major in what you want and what you're passionate about. Meredith Noble is an 18-year-old female from Denver, Colorado on her way to study at New York University in the fall. She is an undeclared major on a full scholarship and does not know what she wants to major in at the moment, but hopes to find her calling within her first year of college. She does not think that it matters what you major in from college. She believes that every person should have their own experience and should not be forced to major in anything they do not find interesting. These three characters are interacting with Todd Greene, the Television Host for *Education TV*.

This scene takes place at a television interview located in Northern Connecticut, which will be used for a documentary on the value of education in the eyes of different ages and sexes. In this segment, Meredith Noble, Raven Bensen, and Carson Frost will be discussing whether or not it matters what students get their degree in.

Scene begins.

TODD GREENE: Welcome to *Education TV*! I am your host Todd Greene, and I am here today with Meredith Noble, Carson Frost, and Raven Bensen.

CARSON FROST: Thank you for having us Todd.

MEREDITH NOBLE: Yes, thank you.

RAVEN BENSEN: It is a pleasure to be here, Todd.

TODD GREENE: Thank you for all coming on such short notice. Today we will be discussing whether or not it matters what a college student gets their degree in.

CARSON FROST: I think this is a fascinating topic that I have researched immensely for. I believe that students should challenge themselves to study in a 'STEM' field.

TODD GREENE: Can you clarify what is considered to be a 'STEM' field of study?

CARSON FROST: Of course, Todd. A 'STEM' field is an acronym for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics.

RAVEN BENSEN: I disagree with you Mr. Frost. I go to different high schools across the Los Angeles area encouraging students to choose a major that they might want to study for the rest four years of their lives. It is important for these young adults to be passionate about what they want to study.

MEREDITH NOBLE: I agree with you Raven. I will be attending New York University in the fall on a full scholarship and I am going in undeclared because I am not sure what my true passion is.

CARSON FROST: Congratulations! You should choose a major in a 'STEM' field. After all, Dave Denslow, author of "Research Shows the Advantages of STEM Majors" says that by achieving a Bachelor's degree in a 'STEM' major, a college graduate can earn up to \$3.7 million dollars over a career (Denslow).

RAVEN BENSEN: Yes, the money is a nice bonus to majoring in 'STEM'. However, if one majors in the humanities, they will not be fearful of having enough money to live.

MEREDITH NOBLE: That is good to know.

RAVEN BENSEN: Norman Bradburn and Robert Townsend state, "If their interest lean towards the humanities, the evidence is clear- majoring in the humanities is no path to poverty" (Bradburn; Townsend).

TODD GREENE: Do we know the average income for people who majored in the humanities in college?

RAVEN BENSEN: Yes, we do. The average income for students with bachelor's degrees in the humanities is \$50,000 a year (Bradburn; Townsend). That being said, one could choose to get a high education in order to make more money in the future.

CARSON FROST: How will the humanities graduates be able to attend a higher education if they cannot pay of their debt right away? If you major in the 'STEM' fields, the student will be able to pay off their student debt quicker because of all the money they will be making (Denslow).

RAVEN BENSEN: Actually Carson, humanities majors are more likely to receive advanced degrees. Only 38.4% of engineers go on to get a higher education, versus 42.5% of humanities bachelor majors and graduates (Bradburn; Townsend).

TODD GREENE: Alright you two. I am going to put a pause on your discussion and I want to hear from Meredith.

MEREDITH NOBLE: Thank you Todd. I do not believe a student any student should be forced into studying in the humanities or studying in a 'STEM' field. I think a student should work their way to finding what they are passionate about throughout college.

CARSON FROST: Sometimes what you are passionate about does not earn you \$3.7 million dollars.

TODD GREENE: Mr. Frost, please allow Miss Noble to speak without any interruptions. Please continue Miss Noble.

MEREDITH NOBLE: This day in age, people are choosing to obtain a liberal arts degree knowing that they will be taking classes from different areas of study. What I have researched is that these college students tend to add an internship while completing their studies. Therefore, I believe that it doesn't matter what you major in college because an internship will help you out the most (*What's Your Major and Does it Matter?*).

RAVEN BENSEN: I did not think about the value of internships and their role in college educations.

CARSON FROST: However, most people take internships because their major does not directly correlate with a profession once they obtain a bachelor's degree.

RAVEN BENSEN: What do you mean by that?

CARSON FROST: I mean that if one decides to earn a degree in a 'STEM' field, then they would not have to worry about getting an internship because they would have a job set up. "The Earnings Benefits of Majoring in STEM Fields among High Achieving Minority Students" written by Tatian Melguizo and Gregory C. Wolniak state "students who major in fields with more direct links to jobs or occupations tend to enjoy greater earnings, while earnings lag for those individuals who have jobs unrelated to their field of study" (Melguizo; Wolniak).

MEREDITH NOBLE: You both make valid points. However, did you ever think about how lucky we are to have the opportunity to attend colleges and universities here in the United States?

TODD GREENE: Wow! What a great point, Meredith.

MEREDITH NOBLE: I am a hug fan of Malala Yousafzai and I have recently watched her interview with Jon Stewart. She shares her story about how where she is from girls are not granted the same rights as boys to earn an education of any level (Yousafzai).

RAVEN BENSEN: Malala Yousafzai is a wonderful young lady.

MEREDITH NOBLE: Isn't she? I think we should all learn from her and realize that a college student should not have to worry about what to major in, but rather be grateful for the chance to study at universities and colleges (Yousafzai).

CARSON FROST: You make a valid point, Meredith. But, let's look at this discussion from an economic stand point.

RAVEN BENSEN: I am not really sure why college graduate education must be looked at through an economic lens, but I am eager to hear your argument.

CARSON FROST: The students who study in a 'STEM' field will create more jobs and better the economy throughout the United States of America. The 'STEM' related jobs will provide thousands of jobs, this decreasing the rate of unemployment (Conard 469).

RAVEN BENSEN: You make a clear point, but I also know that the rate of unemployment of humanities bachelor students is very low at only 3.4% (Bradburn; Townsend).

TODD GREENE: Both very interesting arguments. Do you have anything to add, Meredith?

MEREDITH NOBLE: Yes. Jobs and unemployment are important obstacles to think about, but we are discussing whether or not it matters what a college student majors in.

RAVEN BENSEN: Thank you for keeping us on track.

MEREDITH NOBLE: Although thinking long term about jobs and income is an option, it is best to think about what you are studying at the time and work your hardest in order to get a college degree (Rotella 467).

CARSON FROST: Yes, work your hardest to earn a ‘STEM’ degree.

MEREDITH NOBLE: Every college student needs to put all their time and effort into their Bachelor’s degree. “It doesn’t matter what you focus on, as long as you focus on it in a rigorous way” (Selingo).

CARSON FROST: Also, a student needed to make sure that he or she hits the right number of units.

RAVEN BENSEN: I don’t think that is her point.

MEREDITH NOBLE: Not exactly. The skill a student gains in college alone will be useful on a job, no matter what they major in (Selingo). “Does the College Major Matter? Not Really” by Jeffery Selingo asserts, “Gaining underlying skills and knowledge is often an after thought and it shouldn’t be” (Selingo). This is the most important thing, rather than making sure a student has taken enough classes.

RAVEN BENSEN: You supported your points very well Miss Noble.

CARSON FROST: I agree, Raven. I do not doubt that you will accomplish great things at New York University this fall and will decide on a major that interests you most.

TODD GREENE: Well, that's all we have time for today. A special thanks to Carson Frost, Raven Bensen, and Meredith Noble for accompanying me on *Education TV*. See you all next week!

End Scene.

After completing my research and writing my screen play, I believe that it does not matter what you major in college. I can speak from a personal experience because I made the mistake of choosing a major based on the reputation of earning a lot of money after graduating from college. I was an engineering major at the University of California, Irvine my freshman year of college. I quickly realized that I hated both the major and the school, and began to chat with other engineering majors to see if they were feeling the same way. I spoke with some friends when I was there and learned that they too were not too crazy about the major either. However, I was the only one to act on my decision and decided to find my true passion. I left the University of California, Irvine after completing my freshman year and later found my true calling, Child Development, at Saddleback College. I am more than thrilled to be studying what I absolutely adore, and even though I won't necessarily be making as much money as I would have as an engineering major, I am happy. And money cannot buy happiness.

Works Cited

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