

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

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[Zerohedge republished](#) an article by Mike Shedlock from MishTalk.com today, reporting the Return on Investment (ROI) of various college degrees. Shedlock's article is based on [an article at Freopp.com](#) by Preston Cooper. Freopp looks like another CIA front to me, with the usual in-your-face clue in the title: Freopp. It's an operation they hope you will freely accept, like propaganda.

The results are not unexpected: judged on that basis, humanities degrees like Philosophy are less than worthless. They have a negative ROI of something like -70%. Shedlock uses these results to warn parents and students about wasting their money on such degrees, sticking with degrees like computer science, engineering, or nursing.

Since I was a Philosophy/Latin major, I guess you see where I am going with this already. You are right, but I will start with a warning of my own. Shedlock doesn't draw your attention to it, but he lists the average lifetime ROI for all degrees (including dropouts) as \$129,000. Spread over 40 years, that is just about \$3,000 a year. Even so-called gilded degrees would only give you about \$12,000 a year more than no degree. These days, that ain't much. And that doesn't include the money you would make with no degree over the 4-6 years the other guys are in school. That would drop it to about \$8,000. So according to these numbers, even the gilded degrees are pretty much worthless. To even begin to make you look at a money-making degree over a more interesting degree, the first should guarantee you at least \$100,000 a year more. That is how boring the money-making degree will be. That is how life-sucking it will be. It is almost guaranteed to turn you into a small miserable person, so just ask yourself how much that is worth to you. You couldn't have paid me enough to go that route. I would have given a million a year to avoid it, and possibly I did.

And Shedlock doesn't factor in another important variable: college degrees are worth most to kids already from rich families, who also have the prestige of their family to bargain with in seeking a job. So there is a large hidden variation in these statistics. If you have no connections, your college degree will be of less use to you. They always forget to mention that. They want you to think we live in a classless society, but we don't.

That is just one reason of many I wouldn't send my kids to college for *any* degree. The other reasons include the fact that universities are now propaganda factories, are hugely overpriced, and—at least in the US—the humanities departments are all but dead. They have been watered down, censored, and infused with modern social theory. The professors are now mostly just a bunch of spooks, and few of them even know their subjects. You might as well get your education from CNN. We see the result of that even in the top colleges of the UK like Oxford and Cambridge, which for a long time bucked this trend. They have now caved, too, or are even leading the way, and you can see it by studying their top students on University Challenge. A fair percentage are now trannies or other sexual revolutionaries, and the newer tests are being tailored to their projects. Fewer questions on history or classical literature and more questions on crap Modern literature and theater.

But that was all just an intro. It isn't my main thesis, that being that ROI is a terrible way to judge an education, or anything else. I got a return on investment on my education of something like -1000%, since I never even tried to use it to get a job, and have lived like a pauper for 38 years. And yet I happen to think I have lived one of the most interesting lives anyone has ever lived. I did exactly what I wanted to do, and so so much more. In my early twenties I just wanted to paint what I wished and sell enough to live on. I was doing that within about two years of pursuing it full time, thanks to the support of my sweet wife. When I started working on problems in physics in my spare time in 2000, I had no idea I would go on to solve all the major problems I have, outranking all other alternative physicists online, and most mainstream ones. When I started questioning current events and history in about 2004, I had no idea I would become one of the top researchers in that field as well. If you had told me when I was 36 that I would go on to write 100 volumes on these topics, revolutionizing many fields, I wouldn't have believed you. It was never a goal, not even in the furthest corners of my mind.

The reason I was able to do that is that I never judged anything on ROI. Life isn't an investment. Rather, *you* are an investment of the gods, and they are the ones expecting a return. The return they want isn't money, I assure you. They have given you certain abilities, and they want to see you use those abilities in the most interesting and **important** ways. So as you choose what to do today and tomorrow, you shouldn't be thinking about returns on investments, making bank, yearly salaries, and things of that nature. You should be thinking of the most important work that is within your abilities. How can you be the biggest and best person you can be? How can you maximize your talents? Not for your own enrichment, but for the enrichment of the world.

You will say I was lucky I was taught that by my parents, but I wasn't. I wasn't taught it by my society either, which was teaching ROI fifty years ago, just like now. So where did it come from? I think I was just born with it. Actually, I think we all are, but most of us have it drummed out of our heads, though my head is harder than most. I had plenty of Shedlocks advising me to be more realistic, more finance-minded, more prudent, or more “humble”, but I never listened. The internal voice from my Muse made more sense to me all along, and so I listened to her instead, ignoring the external din.

So I am here to encourage you to do the same. If you do go to college, don't pick classes or majors based on financial concerns. Take the classes that interest you the most, and that most fit your talents. Like me, you were put here for a reason, and if you pursue the question, you will figure out what that reason is.

Don't expect an immediate answer. It took many years for me to figure it out, and some of it I have only learned recently. I am still coming to understand who I always was. This is one of the greatest joys of life: unwinding the big questions over a lifetime. Don't scream at the gods or muses, demanding quick or easy answers. It doesn't work that way. If your life works anything like mine did, it will be a long slow mystery of hints and nudges and subtle clues. Don't expect anyone to arrive on a cloud, telling you to move right or left. Don't expect them to appear in dreams, either, or not in obvious ways. The prompting will come, but it will come on its own terms, in unexpected ways. You won't get it by begging for it or taking powerful drugs, though you may get it by lying in the dark staring at the ceiling with no demands.

And here is where I finally tell you why I don't like what is called meditation. You may think I just described meditation: staring at the ceiling with no expectations. But the way I have seen meditation taught is that you are supposed to “empty your mind”. If anything comes into it, throw it out. That is not my recommendation. You should be quiet and undemanding, yes, but the last thing you want is an empty mind. In fact, you are seeking a *full mind*. So absolutely the last thing you should be doing is

attacking ideas that pop into your head. That sort of meditation is useful only if you have been going too hard all day and you are trying to wind down. In that case, emptying your mind may be useful. But if you are hoping for hints from beyond, it is the opposite of useful. The full mind meditation is clearly more important, which is why I am pausing here to point that out in very clear terms. In that case, you welcome all thoughts, the bigger the better. You let your mind wander on things that matter to you, and avoid steering. Let it go and sort of look for interesting things that arise. Follow the most interesting and novel thoughts that arise, and let those thoughts steer you. You are following, not steering, and are active only in not drifting back into thoughts about lunch or your schedule tomorrow. I find that if you let yourself go for a while in that cloud, things will occur to you. They may not seem important at first. They won't jump out at you as awe-inspiring most times. They may only seem important later. But over weeks and months and years they will coalesce.

It is the same with dreams. I have had many people recommend to me lucid dreaming, but I have never been interested. I think of lucid dreaming as yet another invention of Modern control freaks, who even want to manage their dreams. I will tell you a secret: you don't need to manage your dreams. They will manage themselves. Let the Muses manage your dreams, since they have a better idea what you need in that realm than you do. If you were so competent you could manage your own dreams, you wouldn't need any help in your waking life. So the very idea is a contradiction, you see. You are seeking help in your dreams because you can't get it in your waking life. Which means you lack some sort of competence in a managerial sense. So best to admit that and let someone else manage your dreams. Besides, I get the feeling the Muses resent lucid dreaming. They see it as grotesque, as a form of hubris. Just relax and maybe you will learn something. Quit yapping into the void and listen for a change.

Some will say that is rich: a guy like me who has posted 100 volumes of yapping in the past twenty years advising others to listen. But you have to consider many other things in that regard. One, I spent the first 40 years of my life mostly silent, and in real life I still am. I hardly say a word day to day, though I write a lot. Two, I just recommended you quit yapping in the presence of the Muses, not otherwise. I don't care how much you talk day to day: that is your business. Maybe you are a good talker. But when you are sleeping or meditating, I think you would be well advised to turn it off.

You will then say, "How can I turn it off and keep my mind full? Isn't that internal dialog what you are calling yapping?" No, not at all. Let me give you an example that may clarify it. Think of a conversation between two people. In this conversation, one person dominates, getting most of the words. The first person asks short penetrating questions, while the second one answers in longwinded fashion, never really getting to the point, constantly digressing, and talking mostly about trivial things personal to him or her. I am suggesting you try to be the first person rather than the second. That is a good recommendation regardless, in waking life as well as in dreams or meditation. But in my experience, almost everyone falls into the second category. Nearly all my conversations have fallen into that pattern, with me being the first person. You would think someone might put some short penetrating questions to me, hoping for some long answers, but no one ever has. So I finally gave up expecting it, and at last posted some of those answers here, in response to no one. After listening to the Muses for years, they finally advised me to talk a bit more. Not in their presence of course, since I can't tell them anything they don't already know. But in your presence. I am told a few of you are glad to hear it.

But in the presence of the Muses, we should all be silent, or be the first person in that conversation. We should ask penetrating questions to the ceiling, then see what comes back to us. If we have to seed an answer—and we may—we should try to seed it with interesting things we have read in books by

very smart people from the past. We can let Jesus or Confucius or Lao-Tse or Buddha or Newton or Nietzsche or Freud or any other cast of characters you like talk to the ceiling, and see what the ceiling thinks of it. The important thing is that you are trying to get beyond yourself, somehow someway. You are moving out into the unknown, seeking to fill your mind, not empty it. If you do that, you may end up transcribing that big conversation with the ceiling and discover there was someone in the cast you didn't place there yourself.

But let us return to the previous tack. My mother wanted me to be a lawyer or judge. I like to argue and am good with polemics, so it was a possibility. But I thought I could do better, and have. But I don't think she wanted me to be a lawyer or judge for that reason. I think she saw it as a good way to maximize my earning potential, which is why she was so disappointed when I became a starving artist. I remember she told me it would be so much easier for me to be rich than to be poor. That line always stuck in my head, because she didn't mean what you think she meant. She didn't mean it is always easier to be rich. She meant that for me personally, given my talents, it would be simpler and therefore easier to take the path to wealth. It would be easier to take the path offered me by society, than to take a path *not* offered by society. She told me that would just be heartache. Of course in one way she was right. It has been maddening being rejected by the mainstream in many fields, being told all the things I am best at were no longer wanted, being ostracized as a throwback, and later being outright slandered and vilified by government agents. But in the end she was wrong, and I always knew that. Not only would I have been much more miserable in mainstream society, playing by the rules, I would not have done all the things I have done. This has been my destiny, and I would have missed it.

Don't miss your destiny.

That is the real heartache of most people over 60: they think they missed their destiny. And they did. They missed it precisely because they judged things based on ROI and other mistaken ideas. They took the advice of their parents or teachers or other counsellors over their own internal promptings, refusing to listen to their Muses.

Always listen to your Muse. She knows you better than anyone, even your parents. Even yourself.

I know my way of thinking may seem alien to most people. Even those who tend to agree with it on principle may find it hard to grasp on a day-to-day basis. So I will give you some more examples. As I have proceeded, I have tried to judge things on a higher set of values than ROI or other financial concerns. The real worth of things can't be judged that way. It was easy for me to see that in the field of art, where no real artist valued Leonardo or Titian or whomever they liked due their bank accounts. Michelangelo wasn't the greatest sculptor because he made the most money. Van Dyck wasn't the greatest portrait painter because he made the most money. He was the greatest because he was the greatest, period. If he had never made a dime it wouldn't change any of the art, which was what it was. The value was in the paintings themselves, the artifacts. What I took from that was that the important thing was to leave behind the greatest set of artifacts I could, whether paintings, books, sculptures, poems, or whatever. To do that I had to ignore the market completely. I used to tell my galleries the client was always wrong, which didn't make me very popular among the sales staff, but which was almost true. And truth be told, the sales staff just as often laughed, knowing it was true. They had to work with those idiots. Your average buyer in the Southwest Art scene couldn't pick a good painting from a bad one, which is why the market is what it is. And why it finally collapsed from rot. Rather

than try to educate the buyer, the gallery dumbed itself down year after year to the given level.

Anyway, that is what I dealt with there, and that is what I have dealt with in every market. Science has been in a similar collapse over the past century, and a person like me has to contend with that fact. In order to remain relevant, most scientists have followed the market wherever it went, dragged along by the government and other corrupt institutions. But as a follower of the Muse, you can't allow yourself to do that. You do the work that needs to be done, not the work that is put on your table by the institution. You will say nobody will pay you to do that work, but the Muses won't accept that excuse. An artist creates art, with or without payment. A scientist does science, with or without payment. If you can't deal with that, don't call yourself an artist or a scientist. Make pillows or shoes or something. Fix bikes. Restore books. Anything real. I have done all those things for money on the side. Wasn't that a sell out? No, because I *like* doodling with bikes and books and shoes. I chose all those moonlights just like I chose being an artist or a scientist. In fact, I think I worked as a cobbler in a past life. But that is another paper.

I draw your attention to what I just said there: art is about the artifact. Science is about the theory. Neither are about a sale or a market or a career or a prize. Which is of course upside down to what the mainstream will tell you. You may think that is what "art for the sake of art" means, but it doesn't. That is the idea that art should be judged on its lines and colors instead of its moral or didactic content. What I am saying is *much* more than that: **nothing important is important because it is a market.** The art market is not the same as art, or even a necessary part of art. In fact, in most cases the art market is detrimental to art, and tends to destroy it, either by replacing it with empty commerce, or by corrupting it to appeal to a given audience. The same with science or anything else. As Thoreau put it, trades curses everything it touches. But in the Modern world, the opposite is true: trade is the be-all and end-all, allegedly sanctifying everything it touches. The Modern critic will tell you that art divorced from a market isn't worth considering or talking about, since no one can be paid to talk about. And so they don't. For the Moderns, the market *is* the art, and defines it. The market is the science, and defines it. The market is the literature, and defines it. Trade is everything, and so has destroyed all.

The point is, you may need to re-align yourself to life. If you have gotten used to judging things on ROI, you may need a complete overhaul. And the sooner you get to it the better. If I caught you young, you have the time and the spirit to switch course pretty easily. You can become a real person instead of a stock market chip in just a matter of a couple of years, given enough energy. But even if you are older, you may be able to find a genuine path through the last decades of your life. Your Muse is still there, though the line may be rusty from disuse. Seek her out. Talk sweetly to her like you would to a kitten hiding under the sofa. It is never too late.

It isn't too late, but the US as a whole has taken it right to the limit, I must say. If we are not already in End Times, we are on the cusp. Europe has always looked upon us as a materialistic and callow child, and they were never wrong. They are more right than ever now, except that they have mostly joined us. This deranged concern for money while throwing all other concerns overboard has turned us into a first-world of homunculi, of intellectual dwarfs, of dinner-party zombies who can't converse on any topic beyond TV, Hollywood, or Wall Street. The upper end of what used to be called society has been completely lopped, and almost no one knows anything about history, art, literature, music, or any of the humanities. They are so far removed from such things they don't even feel the loss.

Many Moderns feel superior that they have come out above such things. And this is true both left and right now. The right has ditched the humanities because they consider it useless to business. The left has ditched it because it limits their creative freedom. They see that before 1900, say, there existed a

class of people that were giants compared to them, with whom they cannot compete. But the left cannot deal with that fact. They must see themselves as the most brilliant of all possible peoples, which means the recent past must be destroyed to suit their egos. All artists who could paint better than them must be dismissed as non-artists, all scientists who could do better science must be dismissed as non-scientists, and so on.

As I have mentioned several times over the past year, I started watching University Challenge on youtube to pass the time. It is much more interesting than Jeopardy, though the older shows are better. The newer shows are falling more and more to Modernism and CRT and sexual dysphoria. But even so I admit to feeling a bit wistful while watching. I can't help thinking that these are my people, and I would have fit in better at some place like Oxford than almost any other place. The tradition, the old buildings, the smart kids often pursuing some "useless" degree. That is the only way my mother's line about easing into wealth could have ever been true. But it was never going to happen in the US, where I was out-of-place from the start.

So of course my question for the ceiling is then, "If I am here for a reason, why was I born *here* for a reason?" Why would the gods place me in a family in Lubbock, Texas, in 1963 knowing full well I had no ability to adapt to my surroundings, and knowing full well that wasn't my destiny? I wasn't *supposed* to adapt to Lubbock, was I, and I never did. So why not place me in Oxford or Cambridge or some place like that? But there is an obvious answer there, too, and we can see it just by watching those kids on the show. These are some of the smartest and best educated kids in the UK. And yet we know they all went on to conform. Some of them went on to do some interesting things, but I wouldn't trade places with any of them. I don't think I am smarter than they are, or at least not the best of them. It doesn't seem to me to be just a matter of pure brainpower: the ability to memorize the most facts or something. There is something intangible everyone is missing, and part of it is that I *wasn't* incubated in a place like Oxford or Cambridge. The fact that I was born an outsider has been my trump card, since I got used to being an outsider from the start. As you have seen, I have embraced my outsider status, using it to great effect, something none of those Oxbridge kids could have done. They couldn't imagine existing outside their class, and so they have almost zero ability to be revolutionaries. And while I can easily imagine existing inside their class—I could do it in a moment—I also have the ability to strike out on my own, with no support but my Muse.

My father was an accountant, and like Shedlock he mostly advised me to be realistic. He didn't want me to become an artist and wasn't too impressed by my life choices. He once accused me of existing in la-la land. But there was another side to that relationship. He wasn't your usual accountant. In his spare time he built antique furniture. He was a tournament golfer. He is an avid reader. He likes to go against the grain in other ways, and was always a fighter. He did some boxing as a kid and doesn't take shit from anyone. He comes from a line of fighters. His dad and uncles were tall and fast and opinionated, and a fun night out for them was going into a bar back in the 1930s in Ohio and purposely starting a fight, clearing the place out. I have some of that in me, as you know. I've got a bad temper and don't mind fighting. I am now too old to be throwing any punches, but I cause trouble in my own way. That is what I have that the Oxford kids don't, and it is why the gods placed me where they did. It wasn't an accident. There are no accidents.

I know that many will dismiss my advice, since they will feel we have nothing in common. They will see me as some exceptional case, ungeneralizable. One of my college friends was once giving me some advice on realism in 1984 (he has since become a top attorney in Los Angeles), when I turned the table on him and gave him my advice on idealism, much like above. I haven't changed much since then. He responded that it wouldn't work for him since "everything he did didn't turn to gold like it did

for me". I was sort of shocked by that statement at the time, since I saw myself as struggling. I had just gone through a painful breakup, and though I had just graduated with highest honors, I had no career plans. I was drifting and would be drifting for many years. But in a way he was right, and I now see that.

The only thing he wasn't right about was himself. I think things weren't turning to gold for him because he was listening to his guidance counsellors instead of his Muse. He was concerned for ROI instead of his soul. He may answer that he eventually found his pot of gold, while I never did, but that is only true if you are talking about actual gold. He got rich and I didn't. He may be right where he always wanted to be: I have no way of knowing. I can't get in his head and don't really want to. All I know is that I have found gold of a worth to me beyond all mineral or paper or crypto wealth, and I wouldn't trade places with him or anyone else, now or in all of history. I am the guy who did what I did, and no one else can say that. If I gave up a million a year to get to the place where I can say that, it was more than worth it.

Still, you may say, my experience is not generalizable. Most people aren't artists or scientists or writers and don't even want to be. Not everyone has a talent in that direction, so aren't I just encouraging people to chase crazy dreams, further clogging up the creative fields? They will say that I just rolled the dice and was one of the very few that got lucky. They will say it was all purest chance, from my birth in Texas to my artistic talent to my tripping upon a few ideas in physics. Even if I turn out to be right about some of that, it was all just a crapshoot, with nothing to be learned from it.

Well, we all draw our own conclusions from evidence and experience, but that isn't my conclusion, about you or about me. I finally know who I am, even if you still don't; and as for you, my guess is you are capable of far more than you know. You may have no place in the creative fields, but if you do have talent in that direction, who knows what you can do if you try. If the world rights itself and the educational system reboots on some rational grounds, someday soon there may be a new market for real paintings and literature and poems and music. New Dickenses and Dickinsons and Sargents and Whistlers will arise, and they will arise from among us and our children. In science new Maxwells and Euclids and Archimedes will arise. In music new Mozarts and Beethovens will arise. More broadly, new citizens will arise, and they will make an art out of creating homes and raising children and growing food and making clothing and farming the land. That will be where most people practice their artisanship, and all to the good. But even there they will be following their Muses, not government edicts and advice. So in that sense my counsel *is* generalizable.

Which brings us back full circle: the world will not right itself until it stops judging everything on ROI or other financial considerations. We must stop thinking like bankers and start thinking like whole creatures again. We have come to the brink of End Times because we have followed the path of our Phoenician rulers, who went mad long ago. Whether they have actually embraced Satan or just over-refined their own ancient brews, I have no way of knowing. But it took no special powers to see this coming, since it has been steeping for centuries. With hindsight, it now looks like the world crossed over some line in about 1888, going mad with Nietzsche and Van Gogh. It has been an ever-accelerating race to the bottom since then.

Because the crash is so recent, it is also very easy to correct. One sane person could right the entire ship, and I volunteer. The great-grandparents of many of us were alive then, and their memories remain in our cells. Going back only halfway, 70 years, would solve a large part of current problems, and we have much of that world still on tape. Some of it we can still buy off Ebay. It is not too late to repent. It is not too late shift into reverse. It is not too late to discard and draw a whole new hand.

You must discard now, and you must discard your Phoenician overlords. They are the anchor tied to you, tied with a silver chain. They are going down and taking the ship with them, and you must swim for shore or perish. But remember this as the ship goes down: you don't need them, you never needed them, for they were never anything but a drain upon you. The Natives know this and look forward to the sinking. They have been waiting for it for centuries, foreseeing it long ago. But that doesn't mean we are going back to living in caves or hunting with arrows. After a period of uncertainty, things will actually be *better* than before. Everyone will be richer, not poorer, because all the wealth the Phoenicians have been hoarding will then come raining down upon us.

Don't believe me? Well remember what I told you about Norway in my paper on Anders Breivik. The Phoenicians are skimming at least half the GDP of Norway off the top, via theft from the oil fields. If the people of Norway could stop that, they could all retire and be artists or beachbums tomorrow. Well, the same thing applies throughout the world, where these few families are simply stealing a large portion of worldwide wealth right off the top. So while they are trying to screw us with a Great Reset, we should flip the table on them and reset the table ourselves. We will have the perfect opportunity in the very near future, since they are about to get caught in the greatest crime against humanity of all time. They are committing pre-meditated mass murder as we speak, which will end up sparking the greatest revolution of all time. It will make Nuremberg look like Romper Room. That will be our opportunity to avoid End Times, and the gods will be watching to see what we do. If we take the advice of our Muses and Nature and rebuild on solid ground, the world may forgive us our recent sins. If not, no bunker, no hoard of food, no cache of guns will save you from what is coming.