

Where Are They Now?

- Ian Kingsbury

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Last week Grace asked me to provide a brief update on my life and I happily obliged. So now here I sit camp-side in the Congo, a modern-day Livingstone with malaria in bowels, tablet in hand, and fears of a hippo attack dancing in my mind.

Kidding. After graduating from William & Mary in May I was fortunate enough to land a financial services job in downtown Boston. Though I feel blessed to have this opportunity, my lifestyle (wake at sunrise, leave at sundown, workout, play Xbox, wash, rinse, repeat) isn't terribly exciting and need not be further expounded upon.

With apologies to Grace for utterly failing to follow the guidelines of this assignment, I would like to use this opportunity to impart some wisdom from my college years. While I could bore you with abstractions and references to long-dead Irish poets that I've never read and wouldn't understand if I did, allow me to be brief and concrete in my words.

When you make the critical choice of where to attend college, go West, young man. Or any direction, really. Should the opportunity afford itself to you, it is ideal to get outside of the geographic zone in which your parents (or more importantly, their laundry machine and refrigerator) are an easy car ride away. Doing so provides greater independence, while living in another part of the country expands your horizons.

Similarly, go out and experience the world. Note that "experience" is the opportune word here. Don't simply walk around the Champs-Élysées buried in your camera while remaining oblivious of the world around you. Interact with locals and explore areas off the beaten tourist path. Study abroad at least once, twice if it's possible. You will learn more in this time than you do during a regular semester at your university, quality of academics aside.

More important yet, be wise about how you spend your time in college. You have been groomed to understand that academic success begets personal success and for now that assumption is largely correct. However, once you graduate college prospective employers view GPA as a small part of your portfolio. Work experience, volunteer experience and disposition will matter, a reality which can provide a rude awakening to individuals with polished academic success but little else. While grades are important, take the time to volunteer and become involved in organizations, assuming leadership positions when possible.

In *The Graduate*, Mr. McGuire approaches the aimless Benjamin at his graduation party to implore him to consider a future in plastics, "For there's a great future in plastics." In the same vein, here is my one word, just one word of advice to you: drones. They represent the cutting-edge of our military technology and hold great promise for integration into our everyday lives.

More broadly, get in the habit of thinking about the future and recognizing opportunities. The times are a-changin' and if you don't swim, you'll sink like a stone, your floaties having been forfeited the day you receive your college degree.

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