**The humanities: Out of date?**

**人文学科：过时了吗？**

**1 When the going gets tough, the tough take accounting. When the job market worsens, many students calculate they can't major in English or history. They have to study something that boosts their prospects of landing a job.**

**当形势变得困难时，强者会去选学会计。当就业市场恶化时，许多学生估算着他们不能再主修英语或历史。他们得学一些能改善他们就业前景的东西。**

**2 The data show that as students have increasingly shouldered the ever-rising cost of tuition, they have defected from the study of the humanities and toward applied science and "hard" skills that they bet will lead to employment. In other words, a college education is more and more seen as a means for economic betterment rather than a means for human betterment. This is a trend that is likely to persist and even accelerate.**

**数据显示，随着学生肩负的学费不断增加，他们已从学习人文学科转向他们相信有益于将来就业的应用科学和“硬”技能。换言之，大学教育越来越被看成是改善经济而不是提升人类自身的手段。这种趋势可能会持续，甚至有加快之势。**

**3 Over the next few years, as labor markets struggle, the humanities will probably continue their long slide in succession. There already has been a nearly 50 percent decline in the portion of liberal arts majors over the past generation, and it is logical to think that the trend is bound to continue or even accelerate. Once the dominant pillars of university life, the humanities now play little roles when students take their college tours. These days, labs are more vivid and compelling than libraries.**

**在未来几年内，由于劳动力市场的不景气，人文学科可能会继续其长期低迷的态势。在上一代大学生中，主修文科的学生数跌幅已近50%。这种趋势会持续、甚至加速的想法是合情合理的。人文学科曾是大学生活的重要支柱，而今在学生们的大学游中却只是一个小点缀。现在，实验室要比图书馆更栩栩如生、受人青睐。**

**4 Here, please allow me to stand up for and promote the true value that the humanities add to people's lives. Since ancient times, people have speculated about the mystery of those inner forces that drive some people to greatness and others to self-destruction. This inner drive has been called many things over the centuries. The famous psychologist, Sigmund Freud, called it the "unconscious mind" or, more familiarly, "instinct".**

**在这儿，请允许我为人文学科给人们的生活所增添的真实价值进行支持和宣传。自古以来，人们一直在思索人类自身具有什么神奇的内力使一些人变得崇高伟大，而使另一些人走向自我毁灭。几个世纪以来，这股内力被称作很多东西。著名的心理学家西格蒙德·弗洛伊德称之为“潜意识”，或更为人熟知的“本能”。**

**5 From the beginning of time, this inner aspect of our being, this drive that can be constructive or destructive, has captured our imagination. The stories of this amazing struggle have formed the basis of cultures the world over. Historians, architects, authors, philosophers and artists have captured the words, images and meanings of this inner struggle in the form of story, music, myth, painting, architecture, sculpture, landscape and traditions. These men and women developed artistic "languages" that help us understand these aspirations and also educate generations. This fertile body of work from ancient times, the very foundation of civilization, forms the basis of study of the humanities.**

**从一开始，人类这股可以是建设性也可以是毁灭性的内在驱动力，就令我们心驰神往。这些惊人的、充满内心挣扎的故事形成了世界文化的基础。历史学家、建筑师、作家、哲学家和艺术家们以故事、音乐、神话、绘画、建筑、雕刻、风景画和传统的形式，捕捉到了这些撞击心灵的文字、形象及内涵。这些男男女女创造出了具有艺术性的“语言”，帮助我们了解人类的这些强烈愿望，并用以教育一代又一代人。从古时起开始的这些充满想象的大量作品，正是文明的底蕴，它奠定了人文研究的基础。**

**6 Studying the humanities improves our ability to read and write. No matter what we do in life, we will have a huge advantage if we can read complex ideas and understand their meaning. We will have a bright career if we are the person in the office who can write a clear and elegant analysis of those ideas!**

**学习人文学科会提高我们的阅读和写作能力。无论我们这一生中从事什么职业，如果我们能读懂复杂的思想并理解它们的内涵，我们都会受益匪浅。如果我们是在办公室里能对这些思想写出既明确又简洁的分析的人，我们会有光明的职业前景。**

**7 Studying the humanities makes us familiar with the language of emotion and the creative process. In an information economy, many people have the ability to produce a useful product such as a new MP3 player. Yet, very few people have the ability to create a spectacular brand: the iPod. Most importantly, studying the humanities invests us with great insight and self-awareness, thereby releasing our creative energy and talent in a positive and constructive manner.**

**学习人文学科会让我们熟悉表达情感的语言及进行创造的过程。在信息经济中，很多人都有能力创造出一个如新的MP3播放器那样的有用产品。然而，仅有很少的人具有能力创造出一个如iPod那样的精彩品牌。最重要的是，学习人文学科使我们具有伟大的洞察力和自我意识，从而以积极和建设性的方式来发挥我们的创造力和才艺。**

**8 Perhaps the best argument in favor of the humanities is the scope of possibilities that are widely open to us. Did you know that James Cameron, world-famous director of the movie, Titanic, graduated with a degree in the humanities? So did Sally Ride, the first woman in space. So did actors Bruce Lee, Gwyneth Paltrow, Renee Zellweger and Matt Damon. Dr. Harold Varmus, who won a Nobel Prize for Medicine, studied the humanities. Even Michael Eisner, Chairman of the Disney Company, majored in the humanities. Famous people who studied the humanities make a long list indeed. It's easy to see that the humanities can prepare us for many different careers and jobs we can undertake, whether medicine, business, science or entertainment. If we study only mathematics, it's likely we will be a candidate only for jobs as a mathematician. If we include studying the humanities, we can make breakthroughs on many barriers and are limited only by our effort and imagination.**

**也许，支持人文学科的最好论点是,人文学科为我们提供了广阔的机会。你知道世界闻名的电影《泰坦尼克号》的导演詹姆斯·卡梅隆拿的是人文学科的学位吗？第一个登上太空的女宇航员萨利·赖德拿的也是人文学科的学位。还有电影演员李小龙、格温妮丝·帕特洛、蕾妮·齐薇格及马特·达蒙，也都如此。获诺贝尔医学奖的哈罗德·瓦慕斯博士也学过人文学科。甚至迪士尼公司的总裁迈克尔·艾斯纳也主修人文学科。学习人文学科的有名人士确实可以列出一长串。显而易见，人文学能为我们从事许多不同的职业做准备，不管是医学、商务、科学或娱乐。如果我们仅学习数学，我们很可能只能申请数学家之类的工作。如果我们还学了人文学科，那我们就能突破许多障碍，只要我们愿意付出努力，敢于想象。**

**9 Of course, nowadays, if we study the humanities alone, we are liable to miss many opportunities. Each one of us needs to become as technically and professionally skilled as possible to help meet the needs of modern life. In fact, increasingly a pairing of technical knowledge and inner insight is seen as the ideal in the establishment of a career. If I were the Dean of Admissions at a medical school and two people applied to our school, both having the required basic scientific courses, one a philosophy major and the other solely a pre-med student, the philosophy applicant would be chosen.**

**当然，在当下，如果我们单学人文学科，可能会失去很多机会。我们每个人都需要尽可能变得技能化、职业化，以满足现代生活的需要。事实上，技术知识和内在洞察力的结合越来越被看成是建立职业生涯的理想搭配。如果我是某个医学院的招生部主任，有两个人同时申请我们学校，这两个人都学过基础的科学课程，一个主修哲学，另一个仅是医学院的预科生，我会选择那位哲学专业的申请者。**

**10 In summary, the humanities help to create well-rounded human beings with insight and understanding of the passions, hopes and dreams common to all humanity. The humanities, the ancient timeless reservoir of knowledge, teach us to see things differently and broaden our horizons. They are as useful and relevant in our modern age as they have always been. Doesn't it make sense to spend some time in the company of the humanities, our outstanding and remarkable treasure of knowledge? Who knows how famous YOU might become!**

**总之，人文学科帮助造就全面发展的人，这些人具有洞察力，并理解全人类共有的激情、希望和理想。人文学科，这个古老、永恒的知识储蓄库，教我们如何以不同的方式看待事物，同时也拓宽我们的视野。在现代社会中，人文学科一如既往地同生活息息相关，也发挥着重要作用。我们在学习中花一些时间与人文学科——我们杰出、非凡的知识宝藏——相伴，这难道不是明智的吗？谁知道你将来会变得多有名气呢！**

**What college brings us?**

**大学给我们带来了什么？**

**1 The case for college has been accepted without question for more than a generation. There has been a general consensus that all high school graduates ought to go to college because college will help them get a job, earn more money, become "better" people, and learn to be more responsible citizens than those who don't go. However, given the huge cost of attending a university and the shrinking job market, should we not re-examine the case for college?**

**受大学教育已毫无疑问被不只一代人接受了。普遍的共识是所有的高中毕业生都应该上大学，因为大学会帮他们找到工作，挣更多钱，成为“更好的”人，并学会如何做一个比那些不上大学的人更负责的公民。可是，看看上大学的昂贵费用和日益萎缩的就业市场，难道我们不应该重新审视一下是否应该上大学这个问题吗？**

**2 The reality is that college has never been magical for everyone. Now that close to half our high school graduates are attending college, those who don't fit the pattern are becoming more numerous. Excess college graduates are selling shoes and driving taxis.**

**现实情况是大学并不是对每个人都有神奇的作用。由于近一半的高中毕业生都上了大学，那些不适合大学模式的人也变得更多了。过多的大学毕业生在卖鞋和开出租车。**

**3 Some adventuresome educators and campus watchers have openly begun to suggest that we revise our attitudes and reform the system. College may not be the best, the proper or even realistic place for every young person after the completion of high school. Critics suggest we may have been looking at all those surveys and statistics upside down through the rosy glow of our own remembered college experiences.**

**一些富有探索精神的教育家和校园观察者已开始公开建议我们改变看法，改革大学体系。他们觉得大学并不是对每个完成高中学业的年轻人来说都是最好的、适宜的、甚至现实的地方。批评家暗示，我们可能是凭借自己记忆中那段大学经历的玫瑰色光环，把所有的调查和统计都看颠倒了。**

**4 Many students confirm that they feel compelled to go to college because of pressure from parents and teachers and stay there because it seems to be an alternative to a far worse fate. They quiver at the thought of the army or a dead-end job, and almost anything is better than staying at home. Potential college graduates say that they don't want to work "solely for the money" and that they want to do work that matters. Their motive is to help people and save the world, but the numbers are stacked against them. Not only are there not sufficient jobs in the world-saving fields, but in the current slowdown it has become evident that there never are enough promising jobs, presumably never will be, that require a higher education.**

**很多学生都证实：他们觉得不得不上大学是因为来自父母和老师的压力，呆在大学也是因为这似乎是能逃避更糟的命运的唯一选择。他们想到参军或做没前途的工作就不寒而栗，又觉得做任何事都比呆在家强。有潜力的大学毕业生说他们不想“只为赚钱”而工作，他们想做有意义的工作。他们的动机是帮助别人，拯救世界，但形势并不乐观。不但在那些拯救世界的领域里没有足够的工作，而且很显然在当今经济衰退的情况下，那些要求有高等学历的有前途的工作从来就不够，可能永远都不会够。**

**5 Let's acknowledge the facts. The New York Times reports close to 80 percent of new jobs can be performed by someone without a college degree. The US Department of Education estimates that only 62 percent of those enrolled in four-year institutions had earned a bachelor's degree six years later! This dilemma means that 38 percent have likely wasted time and accumulated debt! In addition, in the US, the cost of college has risen tenfold over the last 30 years, a ratio that is three times as much as general inflation over the same time period. It is clear, from an objective point of view, that many more students should be attending technical schools or two-year colleges to prepare for the jobs that will actually be available to them.**

**让我们来承认这些事实。《纽约时报》报道近八成的新工作可以由那些没有大学学历的人来做。美国教育部估计在四年制大学的学生中只有62%的人六年以后能拿到学士学位。这种窘境意味着38%的学生都浪费了时间，积累了债务。另外，美国的大学费用在过去的三十年内涨了十倍，这个比例是同期通货膨胀的三倍。从客观上来说已很清楚，更多的学生应该上技校或两年制学院，为他们能找到的工作做准备。**

**6 Of course, for many jobs a higher education is absolutely necessary and required. So, for some people, obtaining a bachelor's degree is but the first step of lifelong learning. For them, a university degree is essential.**

**当然，对许多工作而言，高等教育学历是不可或缺的。所以，对一些人来说，拿到学士学位只是终生学习的第一步。对他们而言，大学学位是必不可少的。**

**7 There is little doubt that attending college has the potential of exposing young people to new ideas and relationships and helps promote their critical thinking skills. It also accords them a relatively safe environment for experimentation and exploration. Nevertheless, many college graduates report that what they learned on campus was better described as personal rather than academic development. Likewise, they report that the real value of college has more to do with developing their identity and practicing social skills than anything to do with the college curriculum. If you accept that the prime reason for going to college is to provide a period for pure learning and maturation of a young person, the decision is made easy as it becomes a question of affordability for the individual student.**

**毫无疑问，上大学能让年轻人接触新思想，建立新关系，且有助于提高他们的批判性思维能力。大学还为他们提供了一个相对安全的环境让他们从事实验和探索。然而，很多大学毕业生反映，他们在校园所学的东西，与其被称为学术发展，不如说是个人的发展。同样地，他们说大学的真实价值与发展他们的个人特质及社会技能更密切相关，而并非与课程有关。如果你认同这一看法，同意上大学的首要原因是为了给年轻人提供一段纯粹的学习和成长成熟的时间，那么做这个决定会很容易，因为是否上大学仅决定于个人是否有能力承担大学的费用。**

**8 Whatever college graduates want to do, most of them are going to have to adjust. During the upcoming years, according to the US Department of Labor, the biggest demand will be for jobs that do not need a university degree. Those students who have gone to college to become urban planners, editors, and college professors will have a hard time to find jobs related to what they have learned. They may well find that the only jobs available are sales agents, carpenters, mechanics or cable installers. In fact, having a university degree may be a barrier to getting these jobs. On the other hand, students who have graduated in specialized fields often find that they have learned a lot of things in classrooms that they will never use. One gloomy architecture student, who had already designed and built houses, said, "I don't want to appear cynical. It's more the degree you need, not the breadth of knowledge you learn getting it."**

**无论大学毕业生想从事什么工作，大多数人都不得不进行调整。据美国劳工部报告称，在未来几年里，劳动力市场最大的工作需求并不要求大学学位。对于那些上大学是为今后成为城市规划者、编辑和大学教授的学生来说，会很难找到与他们所学相关的工作。他们可能发现唯一有空缺的工作是销售代理、木工、机械师或电缆安装工。事实上，有大学学位可能会成为找这些工作的绊脚石。在另一方面，从专门领域毕业的学生常发现他们在课堂上学到的很多东西永远也用不上。一位已从事过设计和造房的建筑专业的学生沮丧地说：“我不想显得愤世嫉俗。但人们更看重的是你的学位，而不是你在拿学位过程中所学的渊博知识。”**

**9 College is an outstanding place for that rare breed, those young adults who love learning for its own sake, who would literally rather read than bother to eat, and who like nothing better than writing research papers. But they are a minority, even at the famous colleges which attract and recruit the intellectually oriented.**

**大学对那些凤毛麟角、为学习而学习的年轻人来说是一个重要的地方。真的，他们甚至宁可读书，也不愿费心去吃东西，他们最喜欢做的莫过于撰写科研论文。但他们毕竟是少数，即使在那些吸引和招收注重学术研究人才的著名学府也是如此。**

**10 In brief, our high school graduates need to evaluate the college equation more closely and critically, calculate it as a consumer product, and decide if the value proposal is worth the very large investment each student and family must make.**

**简言之，高中毕业生需要更仔细审慎地评估上大学的综合因素，要把上大学作为一个消费品来核算，然后决定上大学这个价值主张是不是值得每个学生及家庭进行大手笔投资。**