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OPINION | INSIDE VIEW

Graduation Is a Time for Unlearning

You're now free from empty campus dogma, so seize the chance to try out better ideas.



By [Andy Kessler](#)

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A University of Georgia graduate in Athens, Ga., May 7.

PHOTO: JOSHUA L. JONES/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dear grads, lockdown class of 2020: Switch off “Animal Crossing,” wrap up that episode of “The Masked Singer,” pause practicing your TikTok “Renegade” dance, finish ironically chugging your Corona beer, and listen up—Karens, Beckys and Chads, too.

Yes, someone owes you an apology. You're heading into the worst job market, competing with 33 million recently laid-off plus furloughed employees. I told you to take that antifungals course. To paraphrase the philosopher Bluto, 3¾ years of college down the drain. All this from a coronavirus 22-year-olds have a statistically insignificant chance of dying from. You will forever be Generation C. All of Gen X through Z's FOMO—fear of missing out—has morphed into FOGO, fear of going out.



The Jobs Report, Tara Reade and Michael Flynn



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come from Oprah, Awkwafina, Jennifer Garner, Lil Nas X and Simone Biles, with special musical guest Miley Cyrus. But, get this, only two of those six graduated from college and they are all incredibly successful. I think this is Harvard dropout Mark Zuckerberg rubbing it in.

You got cheated out of a graduation ceremony, but don't despair: [Facebook](#) to the rescue. This Friday it's hosting #Graduation2020. Woo-hoo! And professors be damned—“words of wisdom” will

They may not be sages, but neither are the people you trusted who got you to blow through your parents' savings. Especially since you finished classes via videoconference—remember, you can't Zoom a zoomer because a zoomer can't be zoomed (ask your dad). The only good news is that you won't have bad dreams like the rest of us about missing class or that last test. You likely passed automatically.

You were told to go to college, study hard and you'll get a good job. But that model has been broken for a while. Instead you got cancel culture, pronoun police, plus diversity and inclusion—of everything but sound ideas, which need to be free to mingle and test-drive. You've been run down, you've been lied to. You ended up with someone else's agenda.

"You're going to find that many of the truths we cling to depend greatly on our own point of view. . . . The truth is often what we make of it; you heard what you wanted to hear, believed what you wanted to believe." Sound familiar? For 20 points, who said it? Socrates? Kant? Hume? Rousseau?

These aren't the ideas you're looking for. The continued lockdowns are proof that those we trust, politicians and omniscient public-health officers, flunked economics. You probably took an Econ 101 course filled with tired Keynesian dogma. Or a comparative-lit class that ignored the Western canon. Or consumed a culty climate catechism.

You might even have trusted to expect a sustainable, intersectional, collectivist utopianism paying you to sit at home collecting Universal Basic Yang Bucks. Well, you're sitting at home all right—unemployed and maybe unemployable. If you're floundering, don't expect anyone to admit, "You messed up, you trusted us."

But it's not too late. All of a sudden, everything is up for grabs. Education. Health care. Travel. Energy. Commercial real estate. Government. Transportation. Missing meat! Most of these are crony industries being destroyed before our eyes. It's time to trust progress, price signals and perpetual change. Are you ready?

You'll have to stay focused, because the indoctrination will continue even after graduation. When you hear about stakeholder capitalism, living wages, network neutrality, income equality, election meddling or gig workers as employees, it's often a front for someone else's agenda. Movies are infused with manipulative messages. Many articles on technology and Silicon Valley shoehorn in the obligatory "you didn't build that" paragraph—it was government-funded research. That's like saying Mark Zuckerberg didn't build Facebook because he learned fractions at a public school in fourth grade. Again, other people's big government agenda. Trust yourself to build the future while others wait for government help.

The Showtime series "Billions," a comic-book rendition of Wall Street, has the tag line "Trust No One"—a bit much. My advice? Take it all in and then make up your own mind. Read voraciously and watch studiously, but always with a skeptical eye. And don't fall for windbags at cocktail parties or protest marches. Trust your own judgment.

There are really only a few things you can trust. Trust data: the sum of available information, the more the better. Trust markets: the sum of price signals and what everyone thinks that's hard to distort. And finally, trust your gut: the sum of your experiences. Let's face it, that's why you went to college, to hear new things, learn new perspectives, and share ideas with new people. Trust me: Use all of that and you'll be successful. And the "truth is what you make of it" quote? Obi-Wan Kenobi said it a long time ago. He didn't graduate college either.

Write to Kessler@wsj.com.

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