

Advice to Graduates: 2016

Advice from the Old Guy...

Andrews blathering on to his beloved recently-graduated students who are going out into the world, hoping that you can do a better job than our present leaders are doing at the moment, as they seem to have botched up the planet. As Cat Stevens asked when Andrews was young like you, "Oh Very Young, what will you leave us this time? You're only dancing on this world for a short time..."

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cQBKG4IMYpk>

Two Parts:

Part 1 – General Advice for beginning your new life!

Part 2 – How to Survive the Folks who want to Get You!

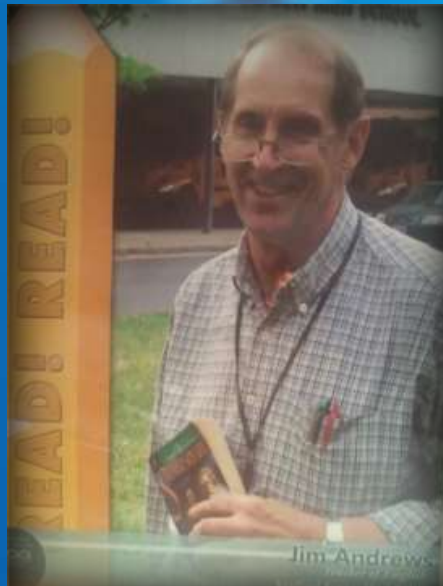
How to be an Independent Thinker:

Know stuff and avoid being a rubber stamp for anyone!

Thanks for hanging out with the Old Guy a little more.

Love ya! Mr. A

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Mark Twain and Dad

Why listen to The Old Guy – a mere English teacher?

Because, after a half-century of teaching his beloved students, the old guy has learned a few lessons that might help his kids to be better informed as they enter the present unraveling world.

As Mark Twain put it, “When I was a boy of 14, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to be 21, I was astonished at how much the old man had learned in seven years.”

Good Luck!



Part I: 1. The New You Review!

Going off to College:

- The best time for a New Start!
- If you're off to college or regular life, now's the time to become the person you've always wanted to become.
- As you leave the old folks behind, shy people can become brave, talkative people can become studious, and you can get a whole bunch of new friends who will see you as you want to be seen. Take advantage of it!



2. Old World / New World


- From the relatively uncomplicated world of a few years ago, a new world has sprouted, with the buzzards of poorly-directed change circling above our heads.
- Wars, starvation, disease epidemics, and other international turmoil seem to be warming up nicely in the background, with perhaps an earthquake, a volcano, global climate something-or-other, or another Kardashian marriage in the offing.
- Good Luck!

3. The Smartest to the Samest:

- If you've been considered the smartest at SHS, you might be a little surprised that colleges are full of the smartest kids from everywhere else. No more coasting!
- Here comes the real competition!
- However, as you have survived Andrews interminable compositions, writing should be a lot easier. Let me know....
- www.jimteach.org if you need to remember how to do Andrews' dreaded "blocks."



4. The 50/50 Split – Home Again?

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- The Short or the Long College Experience.
 - Without Mom and Dad to keep you straight, you might think that the opportunities for endless parties, late nights and late rising are just like heaven.
 - Just remember that fewer than half of the kids going to Va. Tech, for example, are there a bit later, as the \$28,000 party year often ends with a more-disappointing new start after a long trip home.
 - Parties don't help to pay the huge college loans you're now taking on. Use your time as if it will affect the rest of your life.
 - It will...

5. Major Majors—the Forever Choice:

- Major in something that has a job connected to it, not something that's easy (allowing you to spend more time partying), or that "interests me." There aren't too many jobs for folks majoring in 9th-Century Slobbovian Frog Art.
- Make sure that your major matches your skills. Andrews would make a pretty horrible mathematician. You're unlikely to become a professional photographer if you've only taken pictures with your cell phone. If you're going to become a "writer," make sure that you major in something that will keep you from starving until your Great American Novel gets discovered.



Major Majors – Fewer Jobs?

- There are not as many jobs, which is why it's important to major in something that has jobs connected to it.
- Robert Reich – former Secretary of Labor – gave a virtual commencement address about jobs:
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/robert-reich/student-loans-graduation_b_1528320.html
- Big companies are laying off tech workers:
<http://time.com/money/3678511/ebay-amex-baker-hughes-layoffs/>
- Companies are hiring cheaper workers:
<http://www.computerworld.com/article/2879083/southern-california-edison-it-workers-beyond-furious-over-h-1b-replacements.html>
- So be careful about what you major in!
Do some research about jobs.

6. College Costs Are Terrible!

– Save Some Money

- Student loans can kill you if you're not careful. Keep them as low as possible!
http://www.salon.com/2013/02/04/student_loans_the_next_housing_bubble/
- Consider community colleges to start out your college or to help you graduate earlier, as student loans take a long time to pay off.
<http://www.usnews.com/education/blogs/student-loan-ranger/2011/05/18/starting-at-community-college-can-save-thousands>
- Consider Trade and Vocational Schools to learn technical skills that have excellent jobs associated with them without degrees.
<http://www.forbes.com/sites/jennagoudreau/2012/06/21/the-best-jobs-that-dont-require-a-bachelors-degree/>



7. Barf Heaven? Booze or Brains?

- Contrary to public opinion, it's just as much fun to talk and go places with clear-headed friends as it is to have regular bleary conversations with bombed-out loud, smelly, and sometimes angry acquaintances who want you to know how much fun they had throwing up or getting high last weekend.
- Just because a significant number of friends think that ethyl alcohol imbibery (English teachers have a right to make up new words!) or miscellaneous substance intoxication is the path to happiness doesn't mean that folks who enjoy interacting with people with clear minds can't choose a better path.
- Andrews prefers chilled and stylishly decanted Welch's Grape Juice...although some like Kumquat-cucumber cocktails.



8. The Glorious Gal Window— 4 years of freedom:

- While guys can remain little boys for their whole lives, girls shortly end up taking care of the kids and the cooking and the houses and the clothes and the trips to school, soccer, swimming, hockey, baseball, dancing, and other places, in addition to a full-time job or two, while the guys are off working or fishing.
- Girls! Right Now is your 4-year window to go to the places and do the things that you'll never have the freedom to do again in the same way.
- No Babies! No Boy Baggage!
- Girl Friends are the Best Friends!
- Get a bunch of girl friends together and go places and see things in this country or abroad – like a year of college in Europe, just having a good time... without the pressure, the jealousy, and the substances of the standard social situations.



9. Gals #2: Reverse Liberation? Free to be Used?

- “Build yourself a levee deep inside.
Build yourself a levee girl
when the waters run high.”

-Natalie Merchant

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BvsRs9FRqNQ>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wCVIHB7zyYU>

- If you're being used,
or if he's jealous or controlling,
dump him and wait 30 days,
no matter how much it hurts.
And then you'll be OK.
- There are plenty more out there
with plenty of time to find them!



10. “Ripeness is All” - Shakespeare in *King Lear*

- “If you’ve done it all,
you’ve done it all.”
Don’t hurry to reach the end
while you’re still at the beginning!
- The joys of discovery
aren’t as much fun
if you’re bored from
having done too much
too soon too often
...before you’re ready.” - Old Guy



11. Having Brains is Not Enough

Brains + GRIT = Success

- **Angela Duckworth on GRIT**

http://www.ted.com/talks/angela_lee_duckworth_the_key_to_success_gr_it#

- **To be a Great Musician:**

Brains + 10,000 hours of practice.

To be a Good Musician:

Brains + 8,000 hours of practice.

To be an above-average musician:

Brains + 4,000 hours of practice.

Brains + No Practice =

Just a gray, gooey mass accomplishing nothing.

- <http://www.musicthinktank.com/mtt-open/10000-hours-of-practice-makes-perfect.html>



12. The Healing Power of Doing Good:

If you find that you are miserable and depressed and lacking in purpose, even though you have met many of your goals, go out and find someone whom you can personally help, whether it be for an organization or in your own environment - personally. ...and you'll find yourself being healed...

<http://drdavidhamilton.com/category/kindness-2>

http://www.melbabenson.com/articles_files/Healing%20Power%20of%20Doing%20Good.pdf

<http://www.luc.adventist.org/herald/Health/health0304.pdf>



13. The Old Guy: A Noiseless Patient Spider –Whitman

- Andrews teaching philosophy: Why the old guy is still around after 50 years.


A NOISELESS, patient spider,
I mark'd, where, on a little promontory,
it stood, isolated;
Mark'd how, to explore the vacant,
vast surrounding,
It launch'd forth filament, filament, filament,
out of itself;
Ever unreeling them—ever tirelessly
speeding them.

And you, O my Soul, where you stand,
Surrounded, surrounded,
in measureless oceans of space,
Ceaselessly musing, venturing, throwing,
—seeking the spheres, to connect them;
Till the bridge you will need, be form'd
—till the ductile anchor hold;
Till the gossamer thread you fling,
catch somewhere, O my Soul.

-Walt Whitman

...great voice: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kIw8BwDEbIM>

14. Enjoy Our Wonderful World: Hopkins



"Glory...for dappled things,
...for skies of couple-colour
...for finches wings...
...landscape plotted and folded...
All things counter, original, spare, strange;
Whatever is fickle, freckled
With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim;
whose beauty is past change...

<http://www.bartleby.com/122/13.html>

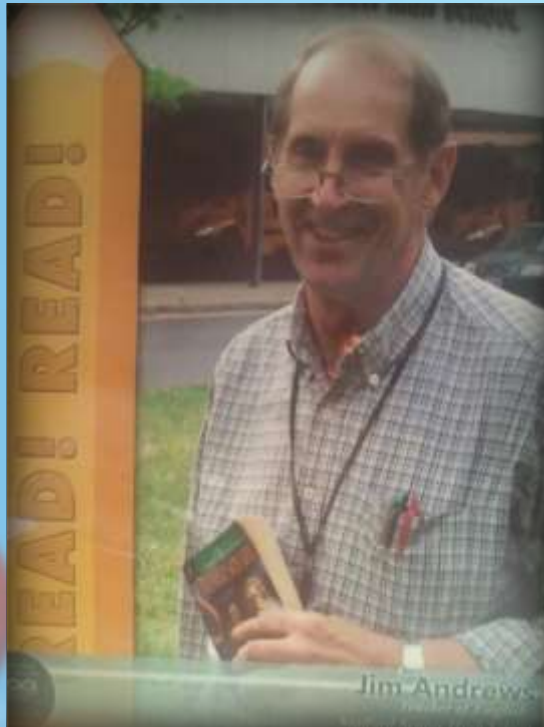
...and for all this, nature is never spent;
There lives the dearest freshness
deep down things...

...with Ah! Bright Wings... "

<http://www.bartleby.com/122/7.html>

-Gerard Manley Hopkins

Love ya! Keep in touch... Mr. A



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(or the other one where you got all your papers back)