

Eight reasons not to pick an Ivy League School



ELLIE JANZEN
Lewis and Clark

There it shines, far off on the eastern horizon, glimmering in the exhausted, teary eyes of AP students everywhere. Fingers stained with the lead of number two pencils grow chilled on keyboards and cramped around pens as the Great Application Deadline draws ever nearer, sending high school students scraping and studying and pleading to higher powers. And all of this effort, the blood, sweat, and carpal tunnel syndrome is directed to three mighty, golden words. Ivy. League. College. Brown, Columbia, Cornell, Dartmouth, Harvard, Princeton, Yale, and the University of Pennsylvania; eight exclusive, royal colleges clustered in the northeast part of the United States. Ivy League acceptance rates vary from twenty to a microscopic seven percent. The reputations, prestige, and sheer fame of these schools draw hopefuls from every corner of the nation.

Yes, the Ivy League is prestigious. Yes, a degree from one of them will probably get you accepted into Wall Street at a glance. And yes, you will get a marvelous education. But is the entire package that exceptionally, extraordinarily, above-and-beyond wonderful? Following are eight reasons for you to consider the next time you have to choose between going to a birthday party and studying for your biology test.

1. Competition

What do you think will happen if you take the 40,000 most competitive students in the country and stick them all on a campus together? If getting into an Ivy League school is stressful and cutthroat, attending one only gets worse.

2. Distance

Yes, our parents are all tyrants who are out to spoil our lives and our fun, and we DO eventually need to leave our houses.

One of the best things about going to college is getting a chance to learn what it's like to live independently. But there is a wide difference between independence and complete isolation.

Two thousand miles is a long, long way away, and I can guarantee that you'll feel the full measure of it when you have the stomach flu at two in the morning and you have to clean up your own vomit in the cold, lonely dark.

3. Cost

Everyone who wants to start their glowing future with enough debt to buy a house in cash, raise your hand. Didn't think so.

4. Dog

How's this for a welcome policy? There is a taxidermed dog in Yale's admission's office; a creepy, glassy-eyed, stuffed bulldog. What sort of school puts a corpse of their mascot on display in the front hall?

5. Other options

Ivy League schools deserve their academic reputation, it's true. Their departments and professors are outstanding. But attending an Ivy League school will not give you a photographic memory, killer fashion sense, telekinetic powers, or anything else that you couldn't get at many other schools. In fact, plenty of regular old state colleges are at par with or even exceed Ivy League standards in many departments, such as anthropology (Penn State), mathematics (NYU), political science (Washington University), and dozens of others.

6. Weather

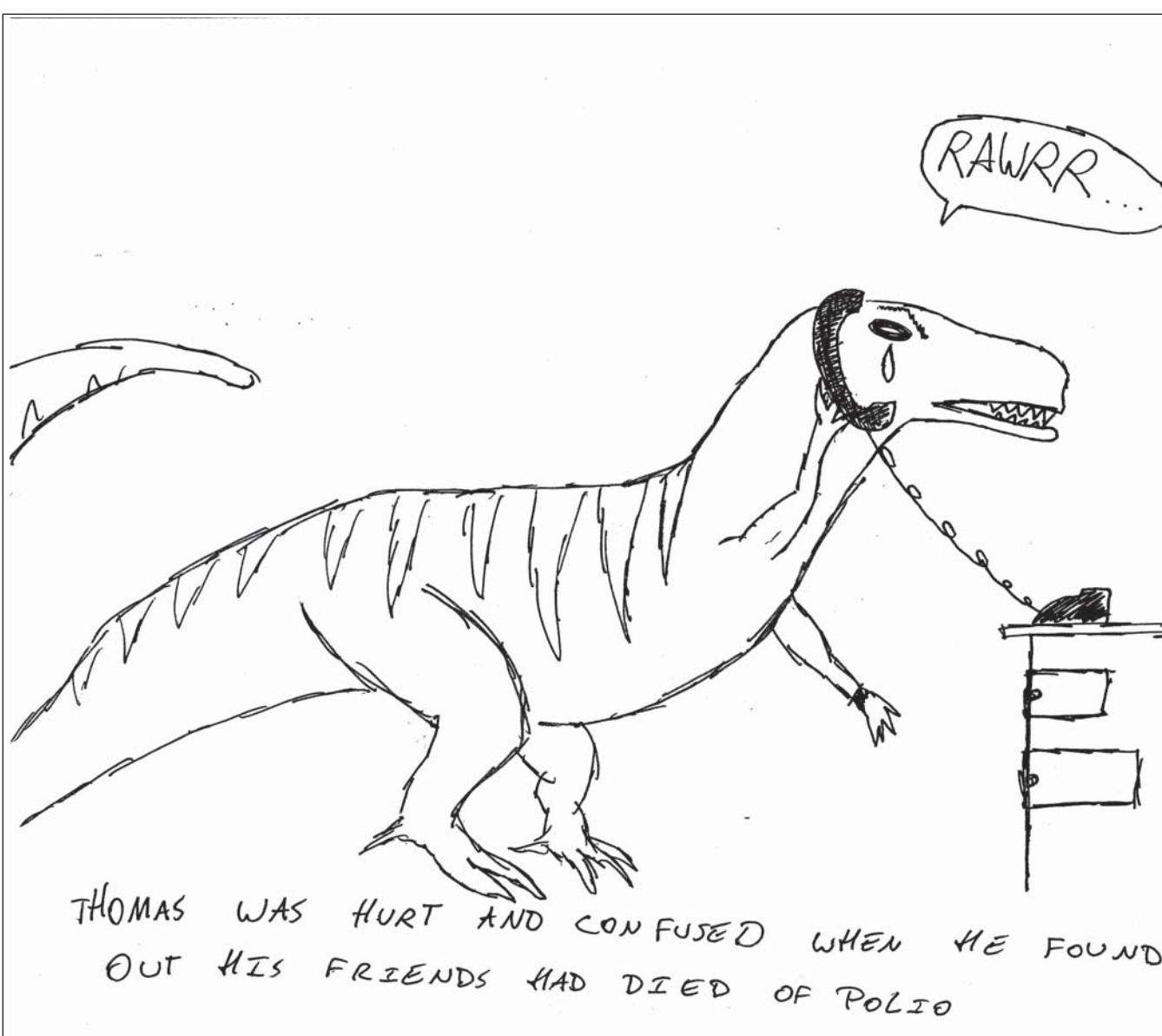
The weather in the northeast is terrible. Humid cold is like wearing damp, refrigerated underwear.

7. Grad school

So you want to be a doctor? Get a PhD? That's how you rake in the big bucks, after all, which is half the reason anyone would want to attend an Ivy League school in the first place. But the top per capita producers of PhDs aren't Ivy League at all. Instead, many smaller colleges like Reed, Swarthmore, Cal Tech, Morehouse and 45 others dominate in the arena of advanced degrees.

8. Stress

Getting into an Ivy League school requires a ridiculous amount of work. When you're aiming for Harvard, very little room is left for sleeping through first period after a hard night or spending the weekend at your best friend's lake cabin. Who wants to look back on these years and only recall a blur of stress? As shocking as it may seem to many AP students, there are worst things in life than not getting into or doing the best that is humanly possible. So take a break. Research other colleges that cater to your area of interest, write a killer admissions essay, and let the mighty eight rest.



Crisis has been blown out of proportions



JORDAN LEE
The Oaks

"In my adult lifetime I don't think I've ever seen people as fearful, economically, as they are now... The economy is going to be getting worse for a while," said Warren Buffet, in an October interview with Charlie Rose.

Unless you have been trekking through some remote jungle for the past month, you are aware that the United States is suffering some economic turbulence.

The stock market is plummeting. The unemployment rate is creeping upward. People are panicking as they realize what flimsy security money really provides.

The immediate horizon appears a bit gloomy for Americans, and the media is doing its part to herald this gloom throughout the land. Expose yourself to enough media vibes, and you will inevitably begin to feel a bit discouraged, if not panicked, yourself.

The media loves a crisis.

Of course, no one is denying the legitimacy of this economic crisis. Indeed, it is no joke when people lose jobs and life's savings. But perhaps it is not to our country's benefit to be filled with panicked, depressed people. Fearful people do not help lift an economy upward. They only help an economy stagnate lifelessly.

This is not the first time America has come to face rough economic times, nor will it be the last.

History has made its circuit. The Great Depression of the 1930's was mammoth compared to today's condition, which at present people are terming a recession.

My great-grandmother was a teenager during the Great Depression. She, like the rest of Americans, pulled through it. She witnessed the restoration of the US to its former wealth and glory, if not its surpassing thereof.

Markets fall, and they recover. People panic and sell, but soon they will be investing again.

The U.S. will pick itself up again. That is the nature of our country; it is the nature of Americans. Our history speaks to our strength.

If you find yourself succumbing to doomful meditation, and economic anxiety, turn off your TV and go take an economics class.

A fetus- the *it* item for the fall ...and they are flying out faster than friendship bracelets



CAITLIN HARRIS
North Central

Jaime Lynn Spears got famous, got pregnant, got engaged... and then she had her sweet sixteen. Juno MacGuff Hollywood-ized teen pregnancy in the 2007 hit comedy, "Juno" by maintaining a high spirited attitude towards her condition, which she brings to term while managing a high school course load, relationship problems with the father of the baby, and the recruiting of a married couple to adopt her baby. Bristol Palin also hit the spotlight in her mother's vice presidential campaign, as Republican nominee Sarah Palin announced that the newest addition to the family would come from her seventeen year old daughter, who was pregnant and, according to aides of the Republican presidential candidate John McCain, "is going to keep the child and marry the father." Yet out of the three, the fictional character might have had the more realistic approach to her situation in giving the baby up for adoption than the two famous teen mothers.

The celebrity cases of teenage pregnancy represent an outcome that, while romantic in nature, is unrealistic to most teenagers that find themselves in similar situations. Jaime Lynn and Bristol both come from wealthy families which lends advantages to the girls that most teens won't experience. Both Jamie Lynn and Bristol are to be wed but this may be confounding one mistake with another. Today, the American divorce rate is nearly twice what it was in 1960.

The average couple marrying in good times still has a 40 to 50 percent chance of divorcing before one of them bites the dust. Teenagers, especially high school dropouts which commonly make up teenage mothers, have only a 50 percent chance of lasting longer than 15 years, according to The Center for Law and Social Policy. But while divorce rates are climbing, the number of births out-of-wedlock are increasing as well. According to the "The

State of Our Unions: Social Health of Marriages in America" in 2003 a reported third of all births were to unmarried women. It is preposterous to assume all these unwed mothers (and fathers) should jump a plane to Vegas at the sight of that little pink plus sign, no matter their age.

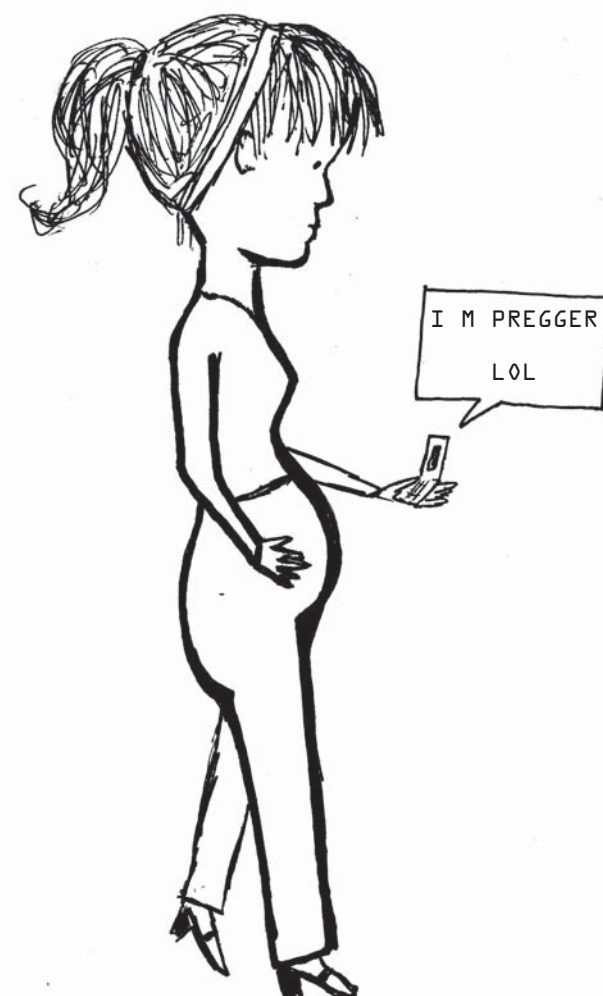
It is assumed that the future grandparents are key in this decision for teens as in Washington and most states, minors are required to get parental permission to marry. Those under seventeen in Washington and sixteen in Idaho also have to get approval from a family court. For Jamie Lynn Spears and Bristol Palin it may certainly be a public saving grace. That big belly is so much more acceptable when accompanied by a big diamond ring on the finger.

The motive for such time-table marriages is to provide the incoming child the best chance at a "normal" life. But when modern times incorporate 37 percent of families being either single-parent or involving a step-parent, normal is a relative term.

Regardless of parental opinion, over half of today's teens find out-of-wedlock birth acceptable. Jumping into marriage unprepared and at an early age creates more problems than as adults that are well-established financially and vocationally. Compound that with the difficulties of raising a child and the stress on a young family can be enormous.

For teens the chance of having a marriage that is successful under such conditions is slim and according to marriage.about.com the risk of facing abuse or poverty levels is higher. The report "The State of Our Unions" shows on average, the age that people are choosing to get married at has increased: twenty-six years of age for women and twenty-seven years for men. This is due to a rise in pre-marital cohabitation and people who choose alternative lifestyles to marriage; something teenage mothers and fathers might want to consider and more than 50 percent of teens seem to feel is acceptable.

Wedding gowns should not be picked to hide a growing baby bump; marriage should be entered into because both sides want to, not because they feel they have to.



SIDENOTE:

With the unfortunate layoffs at the Spokesman Review this month, *The Vox's* future was momentarily threatened. The head honcho at the Spokesman, namely new editor-in-chief Gary Graham, has decided officially to let us finish our year here at *The Vox*. The editorial staff at *The Vox* would like to thank everyone at the Spokesman for letting us continue our project, and we express our

deepest sympathy to those who lost their jobs. We would also like to thank all the parents and students who wrote in, commented on the blog, and supported us. You all helped us through this time of uncertainty, and we are glad that we have the rest of the year to publish *The Vox*.

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