



Part-time work is better than a résumé gap



Parker Moyer

The other day, a friend of mine expressed her grievances about the fact that she might not get an internship this summer. She told me it would put a hole in her résumé and no employer would want to hire her if she had a gap in her internship experience. Contrary to what she, as well as many others, might think, a gap filled with something such as a part-time job or volunteer experience can show a potential employer that you can, in the words of the kids these days, keep calm and carry on.

Internships are highly regarded by potential employers as part of a student's transition from school into the work environment. An internship can give you valuable work experience in your chosen career field and even can get you a job with a specific company. However, internships are highly competitive — my friend told me she applied to more than a dozen places for a summer internship and only heard back from one lonely, unpaid internship. Let me stress that she is highly qualified, with a résumé full of professional experience.

So what happens to those who can't work their way into internships? If you're anything like my friend, you feel you are over-qualified to work a summer job, but think if you just sit idly and take your summer off, an employer would not look kindly on that. However, don't be too quick to condemn part-time summer work.

First, employers will like that there is not a gap in your work experience, according to a July 16 AOL Jobs article. While a gap the size of only a couple months is not that big of a deal, it is better if you showed that you were active doing something during that time. A part-time job is an excellent way of showing this. Plus, you're making money, so there is really nothing to complain about.

Second, don't forget that work experience is work experience. This means you are picking up skills you can take into the job market after school. In fact, because many jobs are based on customer service, you can take these customer service skills into any job field — you're not going to make money without a happy customer. And believe it or not, all customer service is not created equal. You're going to interact with vastly different customers at a gas station than you will at a grocery store — each will give you different experiences to take with you.

Third, consider doing philanthropy — not only is it good for your résumé and down time, it also could make you feel better. According to an August 2013 Huffington Post article, studies showed people who volunteered their time were happier and suffered from depression at lower rates. Specifically, the study showed the most significant effect came to those that volunteered for an organization they cared about. So if dogs are your thing, how about volunteering at a no-kill animal rescue?

Regardless of what you do, do it with purpose and you'll be able to show a potential employer that when times got hard and you didn't get that internship you wanted, you persevered and did what you needed to do. They are going to see that you kept busy and made a point to be proactive, which looks great on a résumé.

Parker Moyer is a senior philosophy and religion major from Columbia, Mo.

Standardized tests should remain a difficult challenge



Jessica Hack

Recent changes to the SAT are bringing relief to future test takers beginning during 2016.

The test no longer will use "arcane" SAT words, using simpler vocabulary instead, according to a March 5 New York Times article. According to the article, the essay portion will be optional, allowing students to opt out of the critical analysis portion of the exam. Math questions will be focused on three areas — linear equations, complex equations and ratios and percentages, according to the article. The test changes will leave students less stressed out and will require them to know less material.

The SAT is supposed to provide a valid measure of a person's ability to reason through verbal and mathematical materials, a skill required by colleges and our increasingly information-oriented workplaces. With these changes, students no longer will excel academically as much as they could and will be less knowledgeable about information required for success at colleges and universities.

The trend of creating simpler tests should not be followed. Standardized tests should not be "dumbed down" to meet the so-called education standards of today's younger generation. Standardized tests help states and schools determine the capabilities of a student. These tests should keep their uncommon vocabulary and rigorous material because these are the challenges that separate a good student from a great one. Handling difficult material creates more definite distinctions between students.

When colleges and universities consider students for admission, they not only look at the grades, activities and leadership positions of the student throughout high school, but also at standardized test scores. This is because standardized testing is reliable.

According to the Center for Public Education, "All standardized tests must meet psychometric (test study, design, and administration) standards for reliability, validity, and lack of bias."

For multiple choice questions, each student is scored by a machine, so few errors are made. Each student is given the same test, or variations of the same test, to ensure testing is the same for each student.

According to a Jan. 2012 study in International Journal of Testing, 93 percent of studies have found student testing, including the use of large-scale and high-stakes standardized tests, to have a positive effect on student achievement. For those students who wish to achieve and excel throughout their education, standardized testing contributes to these goals.

Standardized tests give students a goal to work toward. Students will strive to study and prepare for these tests so their scores will reflect their knowledge about the core curriculum, thus giving colleges and universities an accurate depiction of their ability.

Many argue standardized testing is not an accurate representation of a student's ability because some students are bad test takers or have not learned all the material covered in the test.

However, 45 states, including Missouri, set their education standards by following a common core of educational standards for ensuring students are prepared for college and careers, according to the Common Core Standards Initiative.

According to a Nov. 2004 U.S. Department of Education report, "If teachers cover subject matter required by the standards and teach it well, then students will master the material on which they will be tested — and probably much more."

Most students who do not do well on standardized tests have a lack of preparation to blame. If teachers taught to the curriculum specified by state governments, there would be no need for students and teachers to spend extra time preparing for standardized testing.

Rather than changing standardized tests so they are easier, teachers should prepare lessons and curriculums that coincide with the material on the tests. Students today shouldn't have expectations that are lesser than those of students 20 years ago — if anything, we should expect more.

Jessica Hack is a sophomore computer science and economics major from St. Louis, Mo.

What is your opinion of standardized tests?

"They're a necessary evil, in order to level the playing field [between students]."

Max McDermott
Junior



"I hate them. I don't feel they accurately measure the intelligence of students."

Alec Rentschler
Senior



"I think there's a difference between intelligence and how to take a test. It's not always an accurate predictor."

McKenzie Tate
Senior



"Standardized tests don't grasp the knowledge attained in each class, since each teacher has their own teaching style [and] style of tests."

Nicholas Merz
Sophomore



AROUND THE QUAD

Art should be judged separately from artists



John Riti

When an artist finishes a painting, it's common for them to take a step back and look at their work from a distance. By stepping back from a creative piece, the opportunity to view the work as its own entity becomes possible.

This idea of maintaining a critical distance between art and the artist is an important concept that shouldn't be overlooked.

I got to thinking about this subject after controversies regarding American filmmaker Woody Allen made headlines. After Allen's stepdaughter Dylan Farrow wrote a much discussed letter to The New York Times dur-

ing February accusing him of sexual abuse, many celebrities have commented about the topic, including Scarlett Johansson, Lena Dunham and Alec Baldwin.

I actually agreed with the typically hot-headed Baldwin — who was personally pinpointed in Farrow's letter — when he tweeted Feb. 2 that it's wrong everyone feels the need to comment on a family's personal struggle. Allen hasn't officially been charged of anything and I don't think it's the place of outsiders to comment, as they simply don't have the facts and speculation about such a serious issue isn't appropriate.

Moreover, this current event is a good example of the importance of artistry and critical personal distance. I can despise Woody Allen as an individual but still think "Blue Jasmine" was a wonderful film. Whatever happened with Allen and Farrow, watching a Woody Allen film shouldn't make me feel guilty in any way. The creative works that are put forth in the world should not be condemned along with an individual. Good people are not always good artists and bad people shouldn't always be considered bad artists, even though

our natural and emotional reasoning might tempt us to think otherwise.

The fact is, throughout time, many not-so-great people have produced wonderful pieces of art. The world in which we consume art is so multi-dimensional that perhaps this shouldn't be surprising. What this means for all of us, however, is that a certain degree of objectivity is necessary when consuming art from controversial people.

For example, it's pretty well known that musical artist Kanye West is fairly conceited and narcissistic, but that didn't stop Rolling Stone from naming his latest album, "Yeezus," as one of the best of 2013.

Filmmaker Roman Polanski is a fugitive who fled the U.S. after rape charges. This reputation rightfully has stuck with him, but that doesn't mean one can't look at a film like "Chinatown" or "The Pianist" and appreciate its cinematic achievements.

Even Renaissance painter and sculptor Michelangelo had a reputation for being an arrogant and unfriendly person, according to michelangelo-gallery.org. He had a lot of rivalries and fought with many individuals. This doesn't take away from the

beauty of his work and his merited legacy as being one of the most important figures in art history.

Art means different things to different people and everyone justifiably will have a different opinion about the moral dimension of the art they choose to consume. My problem is when this dynamic unfairly influences public opinion. For example, Cate Blanchett's recent Best Actress Oscar campaign for "Blue Jasmine" was wrongfully targeted because of the Allen scandal. Actors like Baldwin and Johansson who frequently collaborate with Allen should not be under fire in the media like they have been.

We shouldn't feel pressured to avoid a work of art because of the reputation of the artist associated with it. The beauty of art creation is even people who are deemed to be "bad" still can generate something deserving of our attention.

John Riti is a senior English major from St. Louis, Mo.