

America's Economist Mark Skousen Suggests a Compromise to the New Debate: "Is Going to College Worth It?"

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, November 3, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As questions surrounding the value of higher education dominate the national conversation, renowned economist, author, and Chapman University professor [Dr. Mark Skousen](#), widely known as "America's Economist," has entered the debate with a bold yet balanced perspective. In his latest [Skousen CAFE column, titled "The New Debate: Is Going to College Worth It?"](#), Skousen challenges both extremes of the argument and proposes what he calls the Aristotelian "Golden Mean": a life built on both formal education and lifelong self-learning.

"It doesn't have to be an either-or decision," says Skousen. "You can and should pursue both a formal education and a broad range of personal interests. That's what I did, and it served me well. I've always believed in living a Renaissance life, balancing the social, intellectual, physical, and spiritual. Though I majored in economics, I also explored genetics, literature, art, philosophy, and world religions. That well-rounded education made me a better person."



Dr. Mark Skousen, the Professor with many hats.

At a time when escalating tuition costs, student debt, and ideological bias have cast doubt on the traditional college path, Skousen argues that education, done right, remains one of life's greatest investments. Yet he cautions against blind allegiance to the system. "Students should be careful what college they choose," he warns. "Too many institutions indoctrinate rather than educate."

Skousen's nuanced stance draws inspiration from America's founding intellectual, Benjamin Franklin, whose relentless pursuit of knowledge exemplified the balance between formal study and self-improvement. Franklin's life story, spanning 22 careers, forms the heart of Skousen's

new book, "[The Greatest American: Benjamin Franklin, The World's Most Versatile Genius.](#)"

"Franklin never stopped learning," Skousen notes. "He said, 'Genius without education is like silver in the mine.' He proved that you don't need an Ivy League degree to be extraordinary, you just need curiosity, discipline, and a lifelong commitment to learning."

Skousen's essay revisits the growing chorus of critics challenging the traditional value of higher education, from investors who label college "a consumption good" to advocates of trade schools and self-directed learning. While acknowledging their arguments, Skousen cautions that abandoning formal education altogether is shortsighted.

Television host Mike Rowe, best known for Dirty Jobs, argues that a four-year degree isn't always the wisest path. He points out that many well-paying careers don't require a diploma and that college is no guarantee of success. Instead, Rowe encourages vocational training and apprenticeships as more practical and cost-effective routes to acquiring valuable skills.

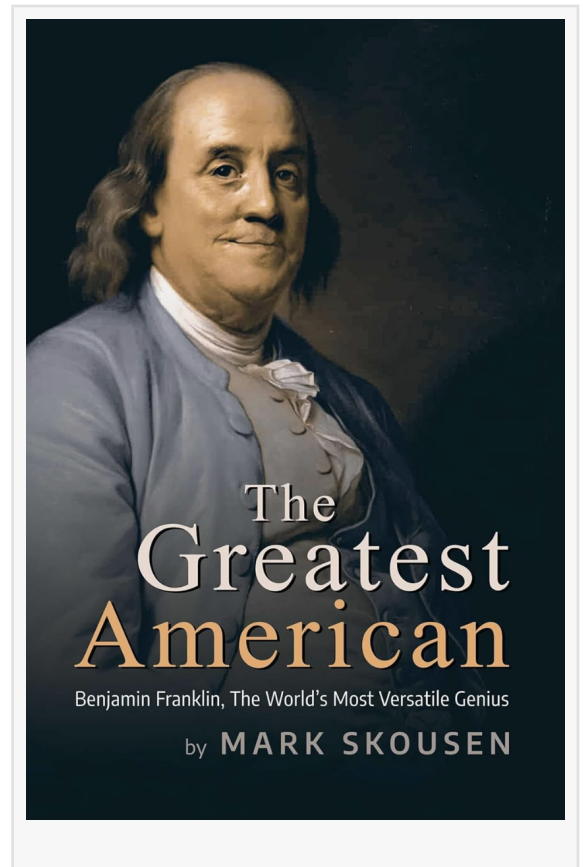
Billionaire entrepreneur Peter Thiel takes an even bolder stance. Through his Thiel Fellowship, he offers young innovators \$200,000 over two years to leave college and pursue entrepreneurial ventures, describing higher education as an "education bubble." For many students, Thiel contends, college has become less an investment and more a "consumption good - a four-year party."

"The future belongs to those who specialize first, then diversify later," Skousen says. "Even Franklin started as a printer before branching into science, politics, and invention. Once you achieve financial stability, you can safely pursue a Renaissance lifestyle."

Dr. Skousen will discuss the topic further at a special Veterans' Day event on November 11 at Barnes & Noble, 2418 E. Colonial Dr., Orlando, Florida. The evening will include a discussion of "The Greatest American" and a book signing. Each copy will include a collectible Franklin stamp, personally autographed by Skousen. Follow this link for more information:

<https://stores.barnesandnoble.com/event/9780062197335-0>

He will also host a Sunday Fireside discussion on November 23 in Arizona titled "America's Divine Destiny: Is the Constitution Hanging by a Thread?" featuring Congressman Andy Biggs, Floyd Brown, Earl Taylor, and Jo Ann Skousen. Click here to learn more: <https://bit.ly/3JGTwWE>



About Mark Skousen

Dr. Mark Skousen, Ph.D., is an award-winning economist, investment advisor, and author of over 20 books on economics, finance, and history. He serves as the Doti-Spogli Endowed Chair of Free Enterprise at Chapman University and is the producer of FreedomFest, the world's largest gathering of free minds. His celebrated newsletter, Forecasts & Strategies, and his free weekly e-letter, Skousen CAFE, reach thousands of readers worldwide.

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