

your goal for getting a PHD is to go into academia, this can be sort of corrupt. In other fields, I'm not sure if this is true for the hard sciences, the rule for getting tenured is publishing seven papers in seven years. They don't even need to make a meaningful impact or be read by anyone, and universities don't check if they've been self-published in predatory journals (according to the ranting of an old philosophy professor of mine).

Financially? No. Fuck no. But if we value our careers simply by fiscal sense, then the same argument can be applied to most teachers. Instead, I propose that while academia is riddled with toxic cultures, questionable ethics, and exploitative labor, working within (and without) academia toward changing those outcomes is a necessary and worthy endeavor.

Based on the quora article and the page we looked at in class on Monday, it looks like the biggest issue with getting a PhD is that there is a pot of grant money that is staying pretty flat, while the number of PhD graduates continues to increase. As a result there is more competition between PIs for the limited pot of money, which encourages PIs to submit proposals and do research that will get results, whether interesting or useful or not, in order to have something to write up as a success to help win future grants.

I see where this can be very problematic for university researchers, who almost fully rely on grant money to conduct research. This system encourages safe science, and a results before impact environment, like the article talked about. It also creates an extra stressful environment for researchers, who need to be competitive and work extra hard to have the edge to “win” grants or face losing funding. This system also has the potential to take the fun and passion out of research, which is at least what I thought was the best part of being a researcher. If you can’t follow and investigate a topic that you are passionate about, and you have to dedicate all your efforts to something that will get a result the review panels are looking for, I do not see how university research is all the different from industry. So, based on all this, I would argue that getting a PhD for the sake of university research is not worth it, and I can say that I will not be pursuing a PhD to stay in academia.

However, I would argue that at least in physics, a PhD for industry and government work is still very worth it, as companies still want PhD physicists to work and do their R & D and pay

I'm considering a psychology doctorate only because my parents are supportive and a PHD is often referred to as the only means for private practice. I don't like working for people so an extra however many years could be satisfactory for some extra peace and a better paycheck. I imagine a masters program to be more rewarding than undergraduate and I intend to do that at the least. I imagine doctorate work will become as repetitive as the psychology work I have now if I pursue that. It's nice to read a useless blog someone wrote about how their efforts are really useless. I'm sure it's different across disciplines but psychology professors are often opinionless and have little to provide other than links to things other people have argued without success. Psychology is a rabbit hole and the research we do is honestly worthless and mostly word games without good insight. I imagine Aeronautics people are much easier to exploit and I'm sure it's more concerning to put so much effort into that study knowing nothing you accomplish belongs to you.

I don't think a PHD is worthless but it is not as respected perhaps. It's a formality and it is expected from people. Holistically it may have less value. I imagine it's utility is largely determined in hindsight though which makes any evaluation troublesome.

Yes, it's not ideal, but if universities actually can't offer fully funded research opportunities for the increasing number of qualified people who have ideas they want to pursue, then it would probably be better for the greater good of scientific progress and expanding our knowledge to give researchers adequate means and opportunity to research, even if it is in the private sector. Our current system of having scientists spend time and brainpower writing meritorious proposals that will never be funded is incredibly inefficient, and at least in the private sector they would be doing actual productive scientific work. (I am not sure what exactly are the downfalls to science being done in the private sector vs. federally funded through universities. Is it mainly because we are concerned the private sector is only in it for a profit?)

I am not aware of what is involved in business decision making but corporations are centralizing more than ever and it follows that research could be done by themselves without universities. In the long run this would probably be more problematic than not. Less collaboration between entities would likely follow. It could be smart for their own interests though and maybe research would be more focussed in the short term.

I think that the private sector already offers a good number of well paying research opportunities to science researchers, but that the environment for research is much different than the ideal university research environment. After my previous response, I imagine that researching in either sector is probably fairly similar these days, but for the purpose of this response, I'll work under the idea that ideal university research is where the number of awards has kept up with the number of PIs so there hasn't been flat funding causing all sorts of non-ideal things.

I know that UO is already jumping on the private sector bandwagon, with the Masters Industrial Internship program that they offer (now in the Knight Campus). Based on flat funding rates for university research and the growing number of PIs, the private sector and government are good avenues to divert the influx of PIs, creating more opportunities for jobs and research.

However, compared to the ideal university research, I think that private sector research is much less free in thought, since you would be researching for the companies gain. I mean that a software company will expect a researcher to explore something related to computers, which could be somewhat constricting to scientists who may find something during a project that takes them an entirely different direction. Private sector research also rejects widespread collaboration between projects to protect company interests. So, I think that private research is not a bad thing to get into, but that it is very different from ideal university research.

