

## Undecided: Navigating Life and Learning after High School

**Genevieve Morgan**

Zest Books (Apr 18, 2014)

Softcover \$14.99 (256pp)

978-1-936976-32-4

*After high school, life isn't one-size-fits-all. Morgan provides an unbiased guide for young adults to discern the path best for them.*

At a time when many parents and students believe that four-year colleges are the best option after graduation, Genevieve Morgan presents a fair-minded guide for high schoolers intrigued by alternatives. She presents possible routes for a variety of personalities, including service, work, a gap year, and travel—none of which necessarily mean giving up on the dream of continuing education. With crisp, well-organized sections that include profiles of accomplished figures such as President Obama and Stephen Hawking, *Undecided* offers practical encouragement for taking conventional and unconventional paths.

Acquiring college debt doesn't always make sense for everyone; Morgan's book thoughtfully reveals an acceptance that there are no one-size-fits-all plans, and that not all high schoolers are destined to be scholars. With an easily approachable, conversational writing style, she notes that "Your work will be much more meaningful if it's part of a larger investment in yourself and your dreams," and that "you are at an age when a little extra time spent in the right way (or even the slightly wrong way) is not going to ruin your endgame. Instead, it will probably sharpen your focus and improve the outcome in the long run."

The inspiring emphasis on viewing life along a longer continuum offers undecided students reassurance about the future, allowing room for discovering passions without the need to follow the majority. However, the author is careful to acknowledge that for some students, the immediate path to college is indeed a good choice.

Chapters cover topics that include temperament and personality traits that may help focus one's interests; types of school, from Ivy leagues to online colleges and programs abroad; a thorough, realistic examination of the pros and cons of volunteering, military, civil, and foreign service; and employment, ranging from internships to hourly day jobs to beginning a business.

Topics are presented with clear "What You Need to Know" introductions, handy tips, and especially insightful "Looking Back" sidebars that provide glimpses of adults whose directions were not always linear. The portraits that emerge often convey a resilience that supports the book's view on taking time to forge not only a career, but a life. Morgan interweaves informative advice with her own colorful optimism, bidding readers to "blaze a mighty trail."

*Undecided* is refreshing in its appeal to find a productive activity without the common push toward the benefits of a college degree's impact on lifetime salaries. Morgan provides a balanced, modern perspective on the issue with a spirited, supportive tone that welcomes individualized approaches. This is an intelligent, surprising addition to any parent or high school advisor's collection.

KAREN RIGBY (April 25, 2014)

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