

# BOOKS

## THEY WENT TO COLLEGE

### The College Graduate in America

by Ernest Havemann and

Patricia Salter West

Harcourt, Brace, New York \$4.00

This book began as a reader survey for *Time* Magazine in 1947. But, like a similar survey started by *Time* in 1940, it grew into a full-fledged book. It is based on a questionnaire sent out to college graduates (from the class of 1884 all the way up to the class of 1947), which brought replies from 9,064 graduates of 1,000 colleges.

Of the two authors of *They Went to College*, Patricia Salter West is responsible for the statistical breakdown—a job that took her two years and became her doctor's thesis at Columbia University—and Ernest Havemann, a *Life* editor, for making the statistics as palatable as possible. Between them they have turned out a book which can serve as a kind of model of how to make statistics both interesting and understandable. Even

the charts (and there are 52 of them) are readable.

If these college graduates had it to do over again 98 percent would go to college again, and 84 percent would go to the same school. Most would repeat the same majors.

Seventy percent thought their college courses had helped them a lot in their present occupation. Those who specialized were more pleased with their choice of courses than those who didn't—and those who didn't specialize in college would exchange at least part of their education for greater vocational training.

In 1947 the median income of all working males in the United States was \$2200. Median earnings of these college men were \$4689. Doctors earned most, then lawyers, dentists, businessmen, in that order. Earning power of college graduates increases with age.

The Greasy Grind, who makes a string of A's in school and never goes out for any activities, makes more money than his better-rounded classmates.

Graduates who had to earn part or all of their college expenses (71 percent of the group, by the way), have lower incomes than those who

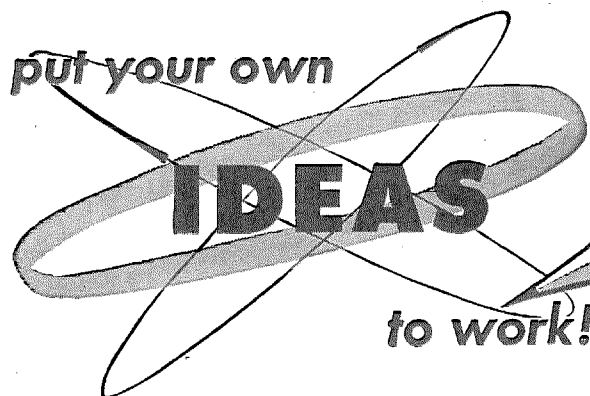
had their way all paid for them.

Students who went to the wealthiest schools—those with the highest endowments—make the best incomes.

Among men, there are practically as many graduates in engineering and the physical sciences as there are in the humanities. Of the humanities graduates only about four out of ten men actually went into the careers they had planned on, and the majority of them had a harder time getting started than the science and engineering men did.

The majority of science and engineering men leave their home grounds after graduation, though only about 44 percent of all college graduates do this.

This small dose of statistics is a sample of the kind that make up *They Went to College*; a lot of them are just what you'd expect, but there are enough surprises to keep you reading all the way through. For example, to quote one more, college graduates are far from being radical; they are, in fact, depressingly conservative. Sixty-four percent of those surveyed were anti-New Deal, and the large majority voted just exactly the way their fathers did before them.



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