



Yes, "Too Many Kids Go to College" In First-Ever Chicago Intelligence Squared U.S. Debate

For the Motion **Peter Thiel**, PayPal Co-founder, and **Charles Murray**, author of AEI Article "Are too many people going to college?" Win Debate Over **Henry Bienen**, President Emeritus, Northwestern University, and **Vivek Wadhwa**, Director of Research at the Center for Entrepreneurship and Research Commercialization at Duke University

Debate to be broadcast on NPR stations nationwide and to be telecast on WNET/Thirteen on 10/22

Chicago, IL - October 13, 2011 - Last night audience members at the first ever Intelligence Squared U.S. debate in Chicago, "Too Many Kids Go to College," gave a victory to the team arguing for this resolution. By the end of the debate **Peter Thiel** and **Charles Murray** convinced 8% of the audience to change their minds to support the motion, thus winning the Oxford style debate (see full numbers below).

The final vote, 47% for vs. 46% against, is the slimmest in Intelligence Squared U.S. history.

Thiel and Murray argued that, while college was an important step for some, many young people could better benefit society by pursuing other endeavors rather than accruing massive debt through higher education.

The resolution was argued against by **Vivek Wadhwa** and **Henry Bienen**, who asserted that higher education is a necessary and important stepping stone to success, and that young people still see higher chances of success after attending college.

Among the audience members in the packed house was Rahm Emanuel, Mayor of Chicago, and former White House Chief of Staff to Barack Obama.

This latest intellectual matchup was IQ2US's 54th debate, the first as part of Chicago Ideas Week, and was streamed live by media partner Slate. Watch clips of the debate here:

<http://intelligencesquaredus.org/index.php/past-debates/too-many-kids-go-to-college/>

ABC News Nightline's John Donvan is the moderator, and the executive producer is Dana Wolfe.

Key Excerpts for the Motion:

PETER THIEL

"The amount of debt that people leave college with has gone up tremendously so the choices are very different from the ones people had 25 years ago. High school college costs in nominal dollars have gone up by more than a factor of 10 since 1980. Even after inflation, it's gone up by 300 percent. Costs about four times as much. Inflation adjusted to go to college now as it did 30 years ago, it's gone up more than anything else in our society, more than health care, more than housing, more than any of a number of other things we think of as having been subject to runaway cost inflation and escalation."

CHARLES MURRAY

"When I agreed to debate on too many kids are going to college, I thought of college as being four-year colleges leading to the BA. I didn't think of it as a whole range of community colleges and the rest. Anyway, that's the way I'm going to argue tonight because if the proposition were that too many kids are trying to get more education and training after high school, I wouldn't have accepted the position on the affirmative. Almost everybody needs more education after high school. What they don't need is to chase after this fraudulent, destructive, antediluvian thing called a BA. The thesis of my argument really is that the BA is the work of the devil."

Key Excerpts Against the Motion:

HENRY BIENEN

"4.3 percent of college graduates are unemployed. More than triple that number of high school students or high school dropouts are unemployed. This is very compelling. There's a clear wage premium to education. There's also a social premium to society, not just individual. Society benefits through greater productivity, lower crime, better health, better citizenship for more educated people."

VIVEK WADHWA

"Look at the industry [in China and India] in which everyone is moving, technology, engineering. 1.5 million versus about 100, 150,000 of

ours. They're eating our lunch. You should -- you know, they have become -- India has become an \$80 billion IT industry which came out of nothing at all the last 15 years. How? By educating its people. Zero to \$80 billion in 15 years."

Before the debate, the IQ2US audience voted with the following:

- **39%** of audience agreeing with the resolution
- **40%** of audience against the resolution
- **21%** undecided

After careful consideration of the points by the audience, Peter Thiel and Charles Murray won the debate: the team that moves the most votes at the end of the evening is determined the winner.

- **47%** of audience agreeing with the resolution (+8%)
- **46%** of audience against the resolution (+6%)
- **7%** undecided (-14%)

To learn more about the debate and review a detailed breakdown of how the audience voted pre- and postdebate, please visit our Facebook page at: <http://www.facebook.com/Think2Twice>

NOTES TO EDITORS

- To view transcripts and videos, download audio or video clips or learn more about Intelligence Squared US, please visit: TKTK
- NPR will air the debate on stations nationwide and the podcast will be available to download. Please check with your local NPR stations for additional details or visit: <http://www.npr.org/series/6263392/intelligence-squared-u-s>
- WNET/Thirteen will air this debate Saturday October 22 at 4PM

ABOUT INTELLIGENCE SQUARED DEBATES (IQ2US)

Rethink your point of view with Intelligence Squared U.S. (IQ2US), Oxford-style debates.

Based on the highly successful debate program based in London, the Intelligence Squared Foundation has presented over 50 debates on a wide range

of provocative and timely topics. From global warming and the financial crisis, to Afghanistan/Pakistan and the death of mainstream media, Intelligence Squared brings together the world's leading authorities on the day's most important issues.

Since its inception in 2006, the goals have been to provide a new forum for intelligent discussion, grounded in facts and informed by reasoned analysis; to transcend the toxically emotional and the reflexively ideological; and to encourage recognition that the opposing side has intellectually respectable views.

The Rosenkranz Foundation initiated the Intelligence Squared U.S. Debate Series and continues to provide major support.

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