

Why So Many Teachers Moonlight & Start Businesses

I Got Schooled...

Update: Video and two reference links for Teacher Salary Project are added at the end of the post.

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The title of filmmaker M. Night Shyamalan's latest book on school reform also accurately describes what I learned when I took a close look at the economics of teaching from an entrepreneurial viewpoint.

It's no secret that teachers are poorly paid. But I suspect that many people do not stop to think about what that reality means in the daily lives of educators. And the cost to society overall. Previously, Jonathan Kozol's essay *Savage Inequalities* assigned for a social policy class in 2009 was my primary point of view as was Morgan Spurlock's *Inside Man on Education* and the little girl who began to cry when informed she'd have to undergo more testing at school. And of course my fond and not so fond memories as a student.

But what I recently discovered is that personal experience limits understanding of a large, complex problem. Activists in the field of education present compelling arguments but often focus on students...one part of the elephant in the room. The problems viewed through a business lens are primarily one of ineffective infrastructure and longstanding historical issues yet to be addressed.

Consider these words spoken during an episode of a popular '60s western set in the mid-1800s. Outlaw Frank Coulter revealed why he'd changed his occupation.

"I was a schoolteacher tasked with educating the children...and I was held in high esteem, but the decent people paid me 30 cents a day and one day, I'd had enough..." – Frank Coulter

Today, philosophical and political differences continue to bring overall positive change at glacial speed. And the bureaucracy continues to ignore the math, spending more than 7 billion dollars annually to replace teachers who burn out from low salaries and overwork, according to the National Commission on Teaching. The popular notion that teachers have the summer off to work is a myth.

Many educators work second jobs after school during the academic year. While the infrastructure turns slowly, there are bills to pay, incidentals, such as school supplies, rent, food, health insurance, and student loans. In some cases graduate students in the teaching profession attracted to the finance industry for part-time work, discover they can make far more income and leave for greener...literally... pastures, according to a Sam Houston State University professor.

Ironically, moonlighting, by its very nature stressful and time-consuming is viewed as a problem-solving solution allowing educators to continue to afford to teach... The teaching profession yields a larger number of part-time entrepreneurs than other professions, which makes sense when you consider how widespread moonlighting activity is within the profession versus the general population. But there is also the issue of entrepreneurial traits, which many good teachers possess.



Quiz

Teaching Fact or Fiction

1. True or False? In the 1960s teacher, Jonathan Kozol was fired for reading the poems of Langston Hughes to children of color
2. *In Russia Teachers, earn an annual salary of
a. \$48,000 b. \$4,800 c. \$29,700
- 3.**How much do teachers spend on school supplies during the year...each year?
a. \$600-\$2000 b. \$250- \$500
4. True or False IRS Rules allow nearly all expenses spent on supplies as a write-off.



Answers

1. True. Some say the resulting publicity helped propel his career as an activist.
2. b. But professors at Sam Houston point out significant differences in socio-economic policies, in Russia. For instance, health insurance is paid for by the government.
3. a. Almost \$700, according to the recent Sam Houston study. But one teacher in the Parham study reportedly spent \$2,000.00.
4. False. \$250.00 is the maximum allowed for deductions.

*Source: Sam Houston State University researchers TSTA 2012

** Source: Sam Houston State University researchers & Parham dissertation.

References

Sam Houston State University School of Education Survey: TSTA Texas & Russia, 2012 **Note:** Survey conducted or the Texas State Teachers Association (TSTA)

Niche Creativity Press release – Online PR Media.com

<https://onlineprnews.com/news/475783-1397016889-increase-in-teachers-schooled-in-moonlighting-entrepreneurial-tasks-inspires-new-guide.html/>

Fordham.edu Savage Inequalities: Children in American Schools, Beauford, 1991, pdf.

Circumstances of Kozol's firing on page 4.

Amazon.com Reading Between the Lines – Note: An assigned textbook with Jonathan Kozol's work.

<http://tinyurl.com/bqzj8t8>

City Journal.org America's Most Influential—and

Wrongest-School Reformer

Note: Description of firing and resulting publicity starts in para. 4.

<http://tinyurl.com/loszhks>

Chicagoland/CNN.com

<http://tinyurl.com/n2r5nok>

YouTube: The Big Valley Tunnel of Gold, 1966.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1M86N6DJkEE>

Abc News wfaa.com: More Texas teachers moonlighting to make ends meet

<http://tinyurl.com/ks7ahjn>

DigitalLibrary.txstate.edu

Moonlighting; A Reality for Many Public School Teachers
Dissertation,

Janis Newby Parham, B.S, M.Ed...Texas December 2006

Note: Profiles of several moonlighting teachers begins on page 51.

Sobering inside look at the daily life of a teacher. Some of whom already exhibit entrepreneurial activities...one in particular. And arguably, this resource is a script in a reality TV show.

Parham's suggestions include better and realistic career counseling

information for aspiring teachers. A good argument

could be made that reviewing this dissertation would be a good starting point.

<http://tinyurl.com/lebsye3>

Globalpublicsquare.blogs.cnn.com

What Finland Can Teach America about Education

<http://tinyurl.com/kbzfbpo>

Insideman.blogs.cnn.com

Inside Man Morgan Spurlock

<http://tinyurl.com/mbwcyzs>

Texas State Teachers Association

Note: Press release discusses survey

findings from Sam Houston State University researchers.

<http://www.tsta.org/sites/default/files/Moonlighting13.pdf>

CNN.com

Linda DeRegnaucourt Skilled Math Teacher

in Florida Forced to Quit Beloved Career

<http://edition.cnn.com/2011/US/07/20/why.quit.teacher/>

Public News Service.org

Moonlight Madness for North Carolina Teachers

<http://tinyurl.com/kqlfvpz>

Ncpublicschools.org/pdf

North Carolina: educator effectiveness survey

and the turnover report include a list of dissatisfaction.

<http://tinyurl.com/kc4mwdl>

Dallas News.com

Kristie Smith...Opinion Teachers are

overworked underpaid and moonlighting

<http://tinyurl.com/p8utolj>

McKinsey on Society.com

Closing the talent gap: Attracting and retaining

top-third graduates to a career in teaching

<http://mckinseysociety.com/closing-the-talent-gap/> –

See more at <http://tinyurl.com/luu6ssd>

National Center for Education Statistics nces.ed.gov/pubs/pdf

<http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2013/2013153.pdf>

Bureau of Labor Statistics.gov

New data on multiple job holding available from the CPS

<http://bls.gov/mlr/1997/03/art1full.pdf>

Edpolicy.org Note: Policy analysis for California education

<http://www.edpolicyinca.org/>

Scholastic.com/primarysources/pdfs

Note: Survey in which teachers describe ways to improve the system <http://tinyurl.com/ydaldy2>

CNN.com

Why one good teacher decided to quit Note: Florida math whiz leaves

beloved teaching for a nursing career.

<http://edition.cnn.com/2011/US/07/20/why.quit.teacher/>

Nctaf.org

National Commission on Teaching Education

Note: pdf Cost of Teacher Turnover policy brief estimates cost at more than 7 billion annually in 2003-2004.

<http://tinyurl.com/lonblm2>

Ashley Lewis-Cook Authorexpress.com

Note: Blog post by Texas educator: Our Teachers & Leaders are Leaving the Profession in Record Numbers...

<http://tinyurl.com/mj3hwhe>

Entrepreneurial Teachers & Related Issues

Artez.nl Dance teacher as an entrepreneur

<http://finals2013magazine.artez.nl/en/dance-teacher-as-entrepreneur/>

So You Want to Become A Freelance Online Teacher

Niche Creativity.com <http://wp.me/P3Kr4S-1dG>

NYC.gov

Conflicts with teacher ventures and governmental policy.

<http://tinyurl.com/lmz5bql>

Edsurge.com

Arrested development when teachers are blocked from building edtech products.

<http://tinyurl.com/m46c7zn>

Learnlaunchx.com

Note: Boston-based accelerators for ed-tech start-ups names seven ed-tech startups for the 2014 accelerator program.
<http://tinyurl.com/m82bpdb>

Sireview.org
Stanford Social Innovation Review
Teachers and Social entrepreneurs
<http://tinyurl.com/knn6eu8>

Science Explorers.com
Note: Fun after school science activities
<https://scienceexplorers.com/ask-jupiter-jen/>

Heartland.org
Edventures Teachers/entrepreneurs
<http://tinyurl.com/kccdch6>

TechCrunch.com
Teachers Making Moola on the Web
<http://tinyurl.com/nyh59y4>

Learnlaunchx.com in the News
<http://learnlaunchx.com/in-the-news/>

Bioeyes
Note: Nonprofit established to teach children science using fish
<http://bioeyes.org/inthenews.html>

The Moonlight Attic Note: Former teacher discovered her skill at photography and creating postcards for her church was the beginning of a business
<http://www.etsy.com/shop/TheMoonlightAttic>

Habits of mind.org
Note: Australian teacher leaves the classroom to start an educational company based on her "Gift of Gab."
<http://www.habitsofmind.org/resources?page=2>

<http://tinyurl.com/m3hrxcb>

<http://spectrumeducation.com/portal/index.php>

Diverseeducation.com

Moonlighting becomes them: college faculty

become entrepreneurs, high-priced

consultants off-campus – African Americans

<http://diverseeducation.com/article/7586/>

Nytimes.com New Breed of Teachers

Become Entrepreneurs & Roving Innovators,

Peter Applebome, Published: May 31, 1995

<http://tinyurl.com/l5hfuf1>

Teacher Care.com Personal Childcare Agency Staffed by Teachers

<http://www.teachercare.com/userreviews.htm>

Infographic Edpreneurs: Could Teachers Become the Next Batch of Startup Entrepreneurs?

<http://www.bestmastersineducation.com/edpreneurs/>

SFChronicle.com

Why Do Teachers Need Side Jobs to Pay Bills?

Op-ed by Ninive Calegari

<http://tinyurl.com/pnm2xq>

The Teacher Salary Project.org

Infographic

Short Videos