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Hidden Street to Surveillance

Students are constantly making choices in their everyday life. The choices range from the clothes picked out in the morning to the colleges and programs he or she will pursue as a career. “Students often have difficulty looking through these choices and they end up making poor decisions about what program to enter, what courses to take, when to seek help, and many drop out of college altogether” (CCRC). However if a student does not have proper resources, guidance, or opportunities he or she will end up getting nowhere. We have seen this prevalently in college students today. “Only about 35% percent of students graduate with a Bachelor’s degree on time” (CCA).

Students are obtaining an unnecessary amount of credits from schools and waste time and money on classes that do not apply to their degree. This is a result of the ‘cafeteria’ approach in college. Schools offer a huge amount of dizzying array of courses, programs, and scheduling options and then they ask the students to pick and choose from them” (Bailey). How can students be expected to make career decision at 18 or 19 years old without guidance? In order to prevent this from happening, Macomb, as well as other colleges and universities have adopted the Guided Pathways to Success program.

The motive behind Guided Pathways is focused on increasing student success and on-time graduation. This step-by-step program will guide students to complete their needed credits in a timely fashion to avoid wasting time and money. “GPS does this by planning all the required classes ahead of time, narrowing down your choices for the fields of study, preventing a switch in your degree and using technology that monitors students’ work” (CCA).

Although guided pathways has good intentions, there are many unforeseen consequences that result from it; in this case, monitoring students. Other programs like guided pathways call themselves risk management services (Warrell). Even though laws have been passed to protect student data, the digital age and technological innovations have been completely unforeseen. Students are going to be constantly watched and colleges will know everything about the student. Surveillance causes the student to lose their privacy, if they even had any. Students are redlined based on their actions, interests and social class. Information exposed to students in the future will be affected and filtered based on the searches students make in the present. They will only have access to what information is deemed as applicable to their class or occupation. By giving educational companies easy access to students’ demographics and other personal information they will be put on a path to a destination they can’t control.

Once again, a factor that has nothing to do with educational abilities is used to separate groups of students and promote ‘success’. This refers back to Anyon’s idea of the “hidden curriculum”. Knowledge and skills leading to social power and rewards are made available to the advantaged social groups but are withheld from the working classes, to whom a more “practical” curriculum is offered” (Anyon 67). Students will be restricted to associate with others that are only interested in their same subjects or from the same social classes. They won’t be exposed to a variety of information and different perspectives because they are limited by what is set for

them. Students' will be single-minded because they wouldn't know any better. It could result in a never ending cycle of students being shoved down a one way street.

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