

2020/07/26 - Hobby or Work?

I watched a video yesterday:

I thought Curtis Holt made a good argument about the trade off of making your hobby your job, and the risk you might end up hating your hobby. But as I was watching through it, I realized he was really talking about younger people; single with no one relying on them having a job which brings in a steady income; a category I fall square in. Now I have to put a note here. I know nothing about Curtis. I'm merely saying his argument pertains to the group I mentioned, at least in my humble opinion.

I've always enjoyed writing, but I never thought I could make a living out of it. And I grew up in a culture and an environment which encourages young people to pursue more "concrete" careers, like engineering or computer science. And I did end up being a computer scientist. I can't say it was a bad decision. I've been employed (knock on wood) since I graduated. And I enjoy my current work. But sometimes I think, would I've been more satisfied if I had pursued a career in the arts. Maybe become a filmmaker at the end. However, when I sit back and think about it I can see two major paths towards that goal, had I pursued it from my college days.

1. I would've had to pay my dues, work small jobs, and climb the ladder from there. Maybe end-up being a director for hire.
2. I would've specialized in a field, say sound engineering, or lighting and sort of stayed stagnant.

The truth of the matter is if you look at film crews you find people who had made a career of being a 1st AD or a 2nd AD or some other job on set. And sitting here right now, having the benefit of 20/20 hind sight, I know I would've hated my life if I had taken option two. Not saying people who choose this path are wrong. Absolutely not. It is a personal journey and success shouldn't be measured by decisions others make. It should be measured by improvements and forward steps you make in your own life.

With option 1 I'm forced to ask how likely is it? Yeah, I know the idiom, if you work hard you can achieve anything. But at what cost? At what cost would this path have been? My private life? My family life? Having worked on sets, the days are long. They can go up to 16 hours. And if my goal was to become a director, then I would have had to dedicate my life to that goal until it's achieved and then I can pull back. I'm just not sure if that's something I would've enjoyed. And really at the end, you're working to bring someone's else's vision to life. And there is nothing wrong with that. I help people bring their vision to life when I help out on set. I think we have to pay it forward. We have to help and prop each other up. But as a career, I'm not sure if it would've made me happy.

At the end of the day, I decided to keep my hobby a hobby and become a Software Developer. I've made movies which are largely obscure, but they are my ideas. I have written novels. I have written short stories. And who knows maybe one day something I do will make it big. But I don't think that's my goal anymore.

I come now to my main point. The journey to achieve a goal is more satisfying than the goal itself. But without the goal there can be no journey. Whether it is a hobby or a career, setting a goal and putting your utmost effort into achieving it is all anyone can ask for. When it's all said and done, I can look back at the journey and feel that I have accomplished something. That I have trudged the road less travelled. Don't let people tell you just cause you're making movies, or whatever else, as a hobby, then you're not a professional, you're somehow less. Those people are haters. They don't know the meaning of being a professional. A professional is a person who sets a goal, plans and never lets up until the goal is achieved.