

# How Did Six Highly Accelerated Gifted Students Fare in Graduate School?

Julian C. Stanley  
The Johns Hopkins University

## Abstract

This article reports follow-up information on six very young college graduates. The myth of "early ripe, early rot" is clearly refuted by the outstanding success of each of these six young accelerants.

---

In the October, 1977, issue of the *Smithsonian* magazine, seven unusually young college graduates were featured (Nevin, 1977; *Time*, 1977). Six of them had begun graduate work that fall at five different universities. Five of them have their doctorates, and the sixth is still in progress. As the following information indicates, that is a remarkable record:

Colin Farrell Camerer, a graduate of Johns Hopkins the month he became 17 years old, received his M.B.A. degree from the University of Chicago's School of Business at age 19 and his Ph.D. degree there in December, 1981, the month he became 22. After being an assistant professor of decision science in the School of Business of Northwestern University, 1981-83, he moved to the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania (see Holmes, Rin, Tremblay, & Zeldin, 1984).

Eric Robert Jablow, a summa cum laude graduate of Brooklyn College at age 15, received his Ph.D. degree in mathematics from Princeton University in December, 1982, at age 20. In the fall of 1983 he became an assistant professor of mathematics at the State University of New York at Stony Brook.

Michael Thomas Kotschenreuther, a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Johns Hopkins at age 18, received his Ph.D. degree in theoretical plasma physics from Princeton University in December, 1982, the month after he became 24. In

1982 he became a researcher at the University of Texas (Austin).

Paul Frederick Dietz, a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Johns Hopkins at age 17, completed work for his Ph.D. degree in computer science at Cornell University in May, 1984, at age 24. In 1981 he became an assistant professor at the University of Southern California. Currently, he is a computer scientist with the Schlumberger-Doll Company in Connecticut.

Eugene William Stark, an honors graduate of Johns Hopkins at age 17, completed his Ph.D. degree in computer science at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in June, 1984. That fall he became an assistant professor of computer science at State University of New York at Stony Brook.

Mark Tollef Jacobson, a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of George Washington University at age 18, is a doctoral student in statistics at Stanford University.

Clearly, in this group, there is no hint of "early ripe, early rot"! Five have maintained their precocity, receiving the Ph.D. degree in difficult subjects from top-flight universities 5 to 8 years earlier than is usual and obtaining positions at excellent universities. The sixth is still young. It will be interesting to follow their professional progress.

## References

- Holmes, J. S., Rin, L., Tremblay, J. M., & Zeldin, R. K. (1984, May/June). Colin Camerer: Radical educational accelerant, now well along professionally. *G/C/T*, 33-35.
- Nevin, D. (1977, October 7). Young prodigies take off under special program. *Smithsonian*, 8, 76-82, 160.
- Smorgasbord for an IQ of 150. (1977, June 6). *Time*, 109 (23), 64.