

Sound bits of advice from a hasn't yet been

Brooks Dareff
Of the Emerald

If you're like me, you'll make a career out of looking for a job.

The seven year itch, that's what I've got. Seven years after a bachelor's, two years after a master's, I'm writing for the Emerald — again.

Think the economy is picking up? Guess again. It's election time folks, which means the powers-that-be pull strings to make the economy look good, then come November it will look about as perky as an old bloodhound that's been loitering on the porch all summer.

reporters notebook brooks dareff

Don't make the mistakes I've made. Don't bother sending out scores of resumes no one ever reads, wringing your hands over a future that never materializes, and humiliating yourself in a two-bit suit before entrepreneurs who never want to see you or your sweaty palms again.

Instead, make the best of a bad situation; get food stamps, collect unemployment, drink Blitz and wait for the second coming of John Paul Getty. Or better yet, save the hassle and your innocence and move home. But first, read on.

THE GRADUATE'S GUIDE TO LIVING AT HOME

There are certain concessions and demands you'll have to make if this is going to work. Here are some of the most important.

Concessions:

•**Wash the dishes at least once a week.** The traditional Mom will love you for this, even if you still don't pick up your room or make your bed. And if you've got the old lady on your side, the traditional Dad will soon follow — unless he's already retired and living at home and must see you as much as Mom does. In that case, just buttering up Mom, who, if you're a guy, loves you no matter how much of a jerk you are, just won't be enough.

•**Seek Dad's advice.** Dad loves this, especially if you don't pay attention, because then he can continue to burn your ears.

•**Pay for your long distance phone calls.**

Nothing irritates Dad more at the end of the month than \$50 in phantom phone bills from



Photo by Mark Pynes

What next?

some long lost love or drinking buddy who's living in Phoenix or Boston.

And if you're really ambitious:

•**Paint the house.** You'll score with both on this one. Dad will think you've finally learned the work ethic. Mom will appreciate your efforts to "beautify" the nest. And there's a bonus — they may even pay you.

•**Take them out to dinner.** They'll both think you've grown up. But make this a symbolic gesture and don't do it more than once or twice — anything that actually costs money should be avoided at all costs.

Demands:

(There are bound to be precious few of these — remember who holds the purse strings. But there are a few points you can — and should — hold firm on).

•**Refuse to pay rent or buy groceries.** Remind your parents you could be having more fun paying expenses practically anywhere else. They'll readily admit that you're right.

•**Secure use of a car.** Remind your parents of the last time you were around the house all the time. They'll soon remember and may even give you a gas card just to keep you away on weekends.

•**And finally, start looking for a job.** You can't rely on Mom and Dad forever.



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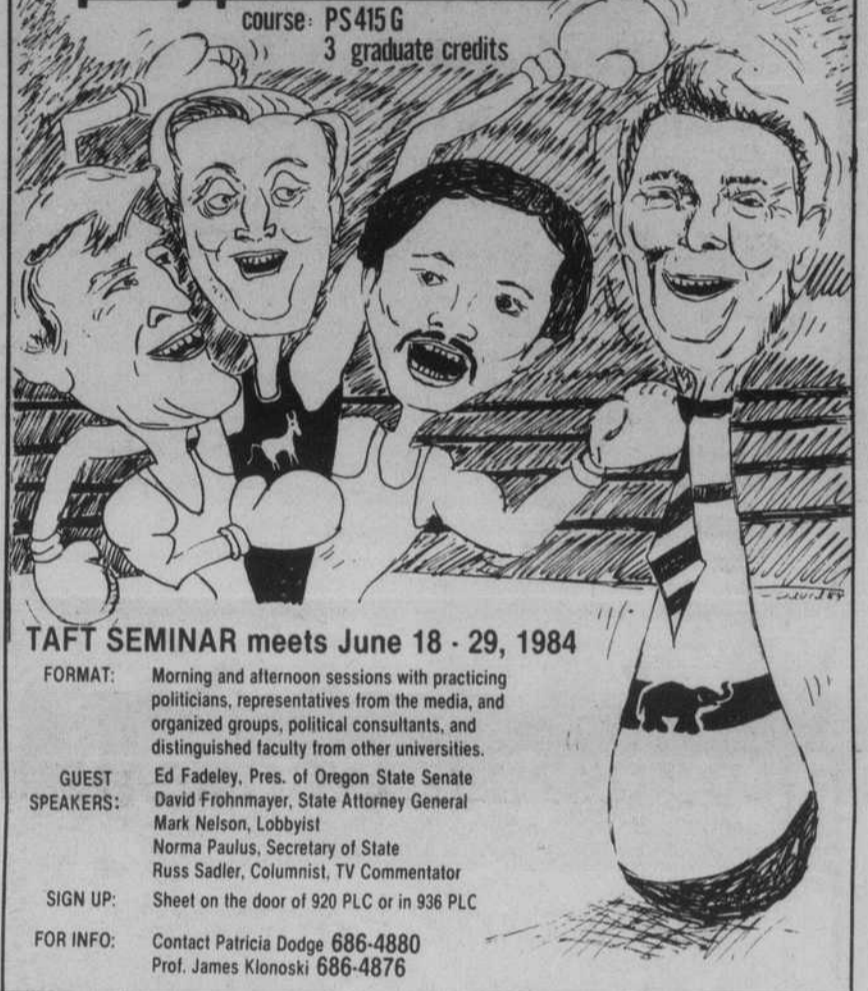
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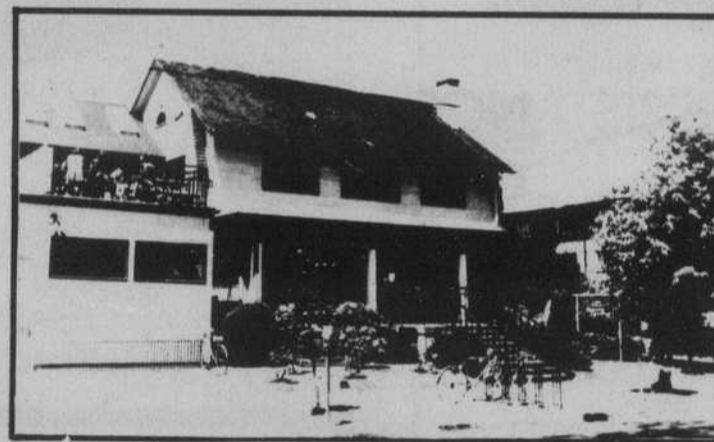
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