

# PERSPECTIVES

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## The college adventure is an *Interactive* experience

*Freedom from parents allows freshmen to discover fun,  
 friends and themselves*

**H**ey freshmen, welcome to the world! Maybe this statement is somewhat broad, but if we all remember our first year of freedom, away from the watchful eye of mom and dad, we'll laugh, shed a tear and wonder how we made it through.

A smile. A nod. We all know the look. It's the "Hey, you live in the dorms. Maybe we can be friends sometime" that lights up the faces of uncorrupted freshmen experiencing their first taste of freedom.

Oh, the freshman mentality of freedom: no more curfews or checking in with mom and dad. Finally on their own, many freshmen are testing the waters of the big school, meeting new people who they think will be their friends forever—and loving the fact they can stay up all night and do whatever they want.

And the first few weeks are like this.

Your classes and Freshman Interest Groups are easier than expected, and the kids in your hall are fun to party with. Perfect. What could be better?

But wait.

Could there be such a thing as too much freedom all of a sudden? What happens when Tyler drops out, or your new friend Jan discovers heroin? When you've lost your virginity to some person you met at a party, or you're on your knees praying to the porcelain throne and yearning for mom to be there with a cool cloth, holding your hair back and saying you will be okay.

Guess what? You will be okay.

Freshman freedom doesn't necessarily consist of complete and utter chaos. The good parts just get hidden sometimes. Being proud of yourself because you passed up beer-bonging lessons to study for a test

is a good thing. Knowing that you have taken care of yourself for the confusing first days of school without help from parents is something you can smile about.

You realize that you study for you, not for mom, dad or your high school guidance counselor. You've finished the SATs and made it to the big school now. It's your choice whether you study, and most of you will at some point. How you treat your education is in your hands. It's a different way to enjoy the new-found blessing of freedom.

This new freedom allows you to discover what you like, that you can't write a three-page paper in German, or that your new passion is marine biology. And all this new stuff is cool.

The long lines for buying books are scary, but that weird professor who sucks all the life from a subject really will answer your question during his office hours. The upperclassmen aren't that mean, and they will even point you in right direction if you're headed backwards (presuming you catch one in a good mood).

Your opinions all of a sudden matter, and people value what you say. You'll meet friends who will become your support and entertainment. They will grow with you, experience with you, try to guide you, but mostly—be lost with you.

You'll lose friends you had and misplace others along the way. But somehow they will be there for you when you need them (it's a dorm thing). Remember, they just got their taste of freedom, too.

Over half of you have no idea where your lives are headed, but that's okay. You don't need to be scared yet. A handful may even be lucky enough to figure their way around campus early in the year.



Stick by these people. This way you won't accidentally wander into an Organic Chemistry midterm.

So go out and about. Explore. Have fun being free from the watchful eyes of mom and dad.

But be careful. You'll be surprised at what you stumble into out there.

Try to remember that you don't need to turn yourself into a human "kegerator," as tempting as it may sound. Don't smoke it if you don't want to. And keep your nose

clean.

Freedom is your state of mind, so do what you want. All of you earned it. And remember: You are going to be fine.

Hey, if you can do your laundry without turning everything pink—you've come a long way, baby.

*Amy Goldhammer is a columnist for the Emerald. Her work appears on alternate Wednesdays. Her views do not necessarily represent those of the newspaper.*

## Thumbs



### TO ASUO VOTER REGISTRATION:

The ASUO is registering voters and hopes to get students involved in this year's elections. Less than 38 percent of Oregon's registered voters exercised their right in the last primary election. Here's to the ASUO's success.

### TO MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL:

In this season of home runs and heroics, Mark McGwire and Sammy Sosa revitalized America's interest in the national pastime. Now, who said baseball was boring?



### TO A POSSIBLE EXERCISE PILL:

American researchers have discovered a genetic "switch" that triggers the effects of exercise. They hope to eventually create a pill based on their findings. Coming from one of the world's least healthy countries, this could be a bad discovery.

### TO THE UNIVERSITY ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT:

Athletic Director Bill Moos recently asked football fanatic Scott Spaan to stop beating opposing teams' stuffed mascots after the Ducks score. Spaan is now limited to swinging the mascots through the air. Watch for flag football soon.

### Correction

On Sept. 29, Steve Lyons should have been referred to as the Delta Sigma Phi president in the page one outline. The Emerald regrets this error.