In face of first-year denial, it turns out some change is good

I can't remember a time when I didn't know I'd be college-bound after my senior year of high school. While I wanted to attend college, my internal attitude about post-secondary education - the idea that college was a requirement, not a privilege — led me to make the assumption that college would be an extension of high school, another step I had to take before beginning my real life. Relatives and friends assured me of the life changing experiences I'd have, but I quietly blew off

their enthusiasm. I was going to college to take courses and get a degree. I didn't sign up for any life changes.

Year one. Fifteen hundred miles from home, I was given but one housing choice: the residence halls. As an only child, I struggled with dorm life, which I believed

was a collective effort between the University and my parents to force me to live in a specially tailored hell with the most irritating, idiotic, drunken 19-year-olds that could be found. Luckily my roommate and I shared similar feelings about our neighbors and together we managed to avoid every required dorm function. She transferred after the first term. I made no friends in the hall and as a result. I started the next fall in a deceptively nice-looking quad complex on the south side.

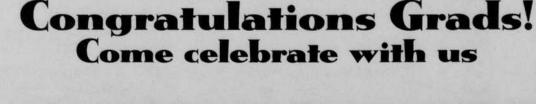
My second year, my grades reflected major troubles, and I changed my path. Sharing cramped facilities forced me to connect with my quadmates and by chance, one of them became my main squeeze: the man I will probably marry one day. College was getting more interactive than I'd expected. That summer, I got a local job instead of going back to my hometown. My partner and I moved from the quads into a real apartment. I'd begun to take charge of my real life.

My third year, I changed my ma-

jor again. Then my senior year I took on a second job, looking to involve myself in work more closely related to my future career. We got a cat: a cuddly little ball of responsibility. I sold a car I'd owned for seven years — a car that meant more to me than I thought any object could. I got a

small and discretely placed tattoo in memorial. I was accepted to a graduate school closer to my home.

As I graduate, I'm thankful for the opportunity and support my parents and grandparents have given me in this endeavor. They encouraged me through success, disappointment and difficult choices. My boyfriend's familv also needs thanks - they opened their home and hearts to me because my family is so far away. Anticipating graduate school and a new home, I'm excited to become involved in course work, research and the community. I will move on, and I will keep living.





Lane County's **Hottest** Gentlemen's Club!

11am-2:30am

Slothower: Missing Eugene landmarks — in moderation

ADRIENNE NELSON

personally, the past four years have been about as real as I could handle. In days I'll move 1,200 miles to Durango, Colo., a gorgeous mountain paradise filled with attractive, well-educated young people like myself. There I will continue to see what I can do with language and information while paying off an absurd amount

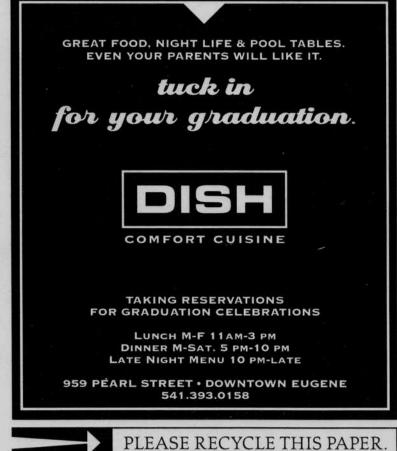
of student debt.

I'll miss Mac Court, Espresso Roma, college parties and foosball. I'll miss Eugene's burnt-out hippies

In high school, a wise teacher delivered a solid but clichéd piece of advice for college: "Everything in moderation." To this, I would add, 'including moderation."

Keep on rockin' in the free world.





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