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Since You're Here...

First Night Of Freedom Spent Alone In Dorm Room—The Onion, Aug 15, 2008

Unhindered by a curfew and free from parental oversight, freshman Phil Melton, 18, spent his first night of independence Saturday inside his Penn. State dorm room and was asleep by 11:45 p.m. Released from the rules and restrictions that had been imposed on him since birth, Melton unpacked and set up his computer, checked the schedule for his upcoming orientation 4 times, and watched 2 episodes of *South Park* he had previously downloaded off the Internet.

"I think I'll loft my bed," said Melton, making the brash decorating choice without first consulting his parents or anyone else. "I can put my desk under it, and then we'll have more room to put in a couch or maybe a few chairs for when we have people over here to play video games or whatever."

For nearly two decades, Melton lived according to the whim of his parents, who did not once allow their son to funnel an entire beer into his stomach, blow off classes to play football in the quad, or have sexual relations with a woman he barely knows. Within hours arriving on campus, however, Melton had already spent 15 minutes running his Ethernet cord behind his bed and decided to leave the bottom drawer of his dresser empty in order to use it as a make-shift pantry for cereal.

Dr. Dennis Misercola, a psychologist at Penn State's student health center, said experimentation during the first few months of college is common, and can help a student make a healthy transition into newfound independence. "It's perfectly natural for an 18-year-old man who is getting his first taste of freedom to experiment with various poster arrangements or consume in one sitting an entire box of Golden Grahams, which his mother never bought because she said they were too sugary. He may even act out by waiting three whole days before calling his parents."

After sleeping soundly for 10 hours and then not taking a shower, Melton is expected to leave his dorm room for the first time since moving in to walk directly to the building's cafeteria. Once there, he will likely eat a breakfast of hash browns and soft-serve ice cream and meet the two guys he will hang out with for the next four years.



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