



RACHEL ULLRICH
AT LEAST MY ROBOCROUCH POSTER IS UP

My life as a 20-year-old tenant

As far as the housing draw has gone, I've been pretty lucky. Craige-North my freshman year, Connor for sophomore.

Thank a persistent case of asthma and a doctor's note, I guess.

But I was still thrilled to head off campus and out into the great unknown of downtown living ... in a duplex, no less.

"DUPLEX," as both my unit and my roommates and I forevermore would be called (and yes, you must read that, as we say it, with a capital-worthy emphasis), would be open and ready by the time I got to Chapel Hill last August.

And it was just as great as I imagined it for the first few weeks.

I bought far more paint than ever would be necessary, (half-) unpacked all my bags and moved everything I own from the storage unit where it sat all summer.

My roommate and I hosted grill-outs every weekend, watched far too many marathons of *Degrassi* and *Sex and the City* and even after a few weeks found out what it was like to have cable again.

I had a whole refrigerator to share with only one person — which meant as much ice cream and Bagel Bites in the freezer as my body could handle —, and my laundry didn't cost \$5 a load anymore.

Ah, yes. Life in a duplex is great. Until it turns cold and you realize the walk to Carroll Hall no longer is five minutes — it's about 15.

Or until you realize that by the time you've walked to the gym you feel like your workout should already be finished.

The kicker, of course, always will be when the moving-in food your mom bought you runs out and you have to go buy groceries for the first time.

You should have seen me in front of the deli counter. It was a shambles.

That paint I bought is still sitting on my floor, and my dad finally hung up my framed posters when he came to visit last weekend.

Of course, I'm not sure I'm even ready to relive those months in November (Remember November? When it was obscenely cold?) when my roommate and I had no heat.

We couldn't get our gas turned on, and so every night was spent in two sweat shirts, three pairs of sweat pants and about 16 blankets.

I had to get a rug to put on my bedroom floor just so I didn't have to put my feet on the hardwood.

Imagine a month without heat. It's terrible. So we were thrilled when the heat man was coming one morning to fix it.

So thrilled that I got in the shower and missed him, and my roommate stayed asleep.

The next week when he was coming back, I set six alarms and slept on our den's futon so as to be sure I woke up. I also put a sign on our front stoop that said "We are home! But asleep. Don't leave please. Call this number."

And of course, turning on the gas meant starting the gas bill. On top of the water bill. And the energy bill. And the cable bill. Forgot about those when I thought about how cheap the rent would be, too.

Then there's cleaning the bathroom — you take that for granted way too much in a dorm. And the first time I had to Drano my sink I didn't know what to do.

So, life in a duplex isn't the weekly trips to brunch, parties every weekend, constant movie-fest I thought it would be.

But it is free parking. It is cheap(er) laundry and better food-keeping (pantries are just fantastic).

And it is the chance to run across the hall or next door to make your friend sing karaoke at 2 a.m.

It is a TiVo to tape the Australian Open at 3:30 a.m. — and no roommate to tell you she's studying in your room so you can't watch it.

It's the decision to hang music notes in your living room and give your hallway a football theme — complete with signage and lights.

That's gotta be worth going cold every other week to save money. Right?

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South Campus pivotal aspect of freshman year

BY ANITA RAO
STAFF WRITER

Ten-pound backpack in tow and racing through the quad to find your Chem 101 lab, you are so busy staring at your campus map that you trip on the uneven bricks and faceplant in front of an intimidating Pit preacher — freshman year has officially begun.

"It's the embarrassing, klutzy things, like not knowing where buildings are, and accidentally dropping my heavy book bag that remind me I'm a freshman," freshman Cara Peterson said.

Many of these stereotypical "fresh-

man moments" at UNC have stayed the same during the past four years.

"Everything to do with South Campus really makes up freshman year," senior Shepard Daniel said. "The 30-minute walk to get anywhere, eating in the dining halls and rides on the P2P."

While the uphill trek from Hinton James Residence Hall to an 8 a.m. class in Hanes Art Center can be horrific, many freshmen enjoy the South Campus feel.

"You are really able to get to know people well because it is easy to spend time with them," said freshman Chris Clayman, who lives in

Ehringhaus South Residence Hall. In the last two years, South Campus has become even more like its own community, Clayman said, with additions of the Rams Head Dining Hall and workout facilities.

But the jukebox jams of Rams Head Dining Hall have not always been a freshman year memory.

For seniors, the only South Campus dining option in their first year was Chase Dining Hall.

"Breakfast and Sunday lunches at Chase were legendary," senior Richard Johanson said. "But, you always had to have your 'Chase clothes' ready, because no matter

"South Campus really makes up freshman year. The 30-minute walk to get anywhere ... and rides on the P2P."

SHEPARD DANIEL, UNC SENIOR

what, you would come out smelling like Chase, and until you changed people would say, "You went to Chase, didn't you?"

And with changes in basketball ticket distribution, seniors say current freshmen have it much easier.

While freshman Hogan Medlin said he felt young when he received an e-mail notifying him of his Duke basketball ticket rejection, current seniors had to line up outside of Kenan Stadium for a chance at tickets to any home basketball game their freshman year.

But it is the wild, expansive freedom of living alone that helped define freshman year for senior Allison Rose.

"Labor Day weekend my freshman year, my friends and I played four square in the Pit at three in the morning," Rose said. "Freshmen really take advantage of college being the time to do crazy things."

Because the lack of pressure to declare a major quickly dwindles away, Rose said to be sure to take advantage of UNC's opportunities.

"The best thing is that there is a four-year adventure lying in front of you," she said. "You have four years to fill your experience with whatever classes, extracurriculars, friendships and experiences you want."

Contact the Features Editor
at features@unc.edu.



Freshman Ryan Houston searches the near-empty shelves of the UNC Student Stores on Aug. 24, 2007. Houston decided to purchase all of his books through Student Stores but planned to do it online next time.

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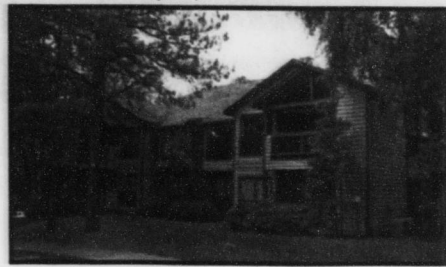
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