

Concept

a powerful, intriguing, inspiring or perhaps odd idea distilled to its essential elements

I have spent most of my life in pursuit of a job. In elementary school, I was told not to pick the grass during recess because that wasn't the sort of thing someone did if they wanted to go to college and get a good job.

But, as I'm quickly learning, I might just as well have spent my younger days eating glue and sniffing markers because a bachelor's degree isn't the all-access ticket to career building that it's purported to be. While higher education proffers numerous intangible rewards, its financial returns can be slow to materialize in today's economic climate.

So, with the insight I've gained from the past six months of post-baccalaureate job hunting (count the months slowly on your fingers, then calculate the weeks and days therein if you want a true sense of how very long six months can be), I offer the following advice on how to survive the dull interim between college graduation and landing a job in a bad economy.

Join your local library. Books are expensive, but at the library—the wonderful library—

everything is free. Most libraries also have computers to use for free, and many even have dial-up connections to their servers, with which you can access the Internet from home.

Become familiar with your local television line-up. Going out for entertainment can be a strain on your budget. In the Baltimore area, for example, *Seinfeld* airs at 6:30 p.m., 7:30 p.m., and 10 p.m.

Root for a local sports team. Game days can help you keep track of the otherwise indistinguishable days of the week.

Find a good happy hour. Going out after 9 p.m. is too expensive. Leave that to the trendy and employed.

And finally, remember, a job will come eventually. But when it does, you'll yearn for the days when you could watch *Seinfeld* thrice nightly, read two novels a week, and set your alarm for noon.

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The Real Real World

How to Look for a Job After College in a Bad Economy



By W. Andrew Ewell