

# "Your Career at Clark"

by Abe Brody ('94)

## A YEAR AND HALF AGO I GRADUATED FROM CLARK KNOWING ALL TOO WELL THAT I SHOULD HAVE STARTED MY CAREER SEARCH A LOT EARLIER...

When I came to Clark, many of the people who were first year and second year students had yet to resolve a focus on what they were going to do when they left Clark. Sometimes this problem was true of people in their senior year at Clark. The difficulty being that Clark's departments often focussed on keeping their graduate students working on their projects, and not on teaching undergraduates how to make a career of what they had learned. I hope that the situation has changed, but if it hasn't, a few words of advice to all students reading this article

No matter what year you are in, remember the dreams that have brought you to Clark in the first place. Every week, keep note of how these dreams evolve. Ask the professors, ask the graduate students, ask upper class people how to go about reaching your dreams. Don't give up. Even if the most adverse course schedule is imposed on you, remember what you dream you is what you want to do. Don't be bothered by people who chide you about your dreams being too unrealistic. Find the realism in those dreams, and follow that course. If a professor doesn't meet you at a scheduled time, find another until you can find one who can help you shape your dreams into something you want to do.

I came to Clark with two hobbies: one was making maps of airlines around the world using airline timetables I'd collected, the other was being a computer programmer in Basic, and using a database to help with my airline schedule collection. I was making the maps by hand. I didn't find out until the beginning of my third year that both these hobbies actually can be combined to make something that is done frequently in this world; computerized mapping, and making maps of data in a field called Geographic Information Systems (GIS). It was just by chance reading the Clark's catalog that I found out about GIS.

Surprisingly, a lot can be mapped that has not already been mapped, and a lot of environmental analysis and urban analysis can be aided by comput-

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erized mapping.

So sometimes it isn't only who advises you, but also where you look to find out if your hobbies can be made into something productive. The library is a great place to start, but so is anyone who you've contacted and shares your dreams.

It took me two and half years to find myself a job in this field, but it was well worth the effort. You should note that many people who go searching for a job in the field of their interest straight out of college will also face the dilemma of being considered entry-level, just because all they have is a BA on their record. So volunteer and intern early. You can put these things on your resume, even if you don't find a job right

off. Education is important too. If you find a project that you want to do, see if a professor can support you in order to get you into graduate school to do it. This is probably better done the year before your senior year begins. If I had known then!

Say you enjoy playing games on the Internet— well, if you take several computer programming courses, and navigate the Internet enough, you could start programming your own games to play. Make the apparent disadvantage of your hobby (namely your work doesn't get done on time), to becoming an advantage (helping others get the benefit of games). Numerous games are already available on the Internet thanks to college student programmers.

Remember the joy of finding something you can create, whether it is poetry, music, research, or some other field I haven't thought of, and you will find yourself a hobby that can become a career.

Where do you find people who share your interests you ask? Conferences are great places, social gathering places (bars, coffee shops), sometimes right in your own dormitory. Also, magazines exist for nearly every career out there, and will list where and when these conferences happen. Career Services' Library files of alumni contacts is also a great place to start. I might also add something that may sound like heresy: your parents! Don't rely on Clark's advising system alone. You can find resources in all these places. Also where you volunteer or intern you can find means for career assistance. Don't forget that many people

also go through several career changes in their life. College is a great place to begin the first career change out of the home.

Federal, state, and local governments, as well as city parks are great places to volunteer. You'd be surprised how much you learn there. The main point is now that you are in college it is time to get out in the open and find what is available. Somewhere in all of those places you will find something to help shape your hobbies into a career, or at least a first job. Each new experience will shape it into something different, but remember what you most enjoy creating, and you will feel great about it. Remember to write down a list of all contacts (no matter how insubstantial they seem at the time), and their phone numbers for future reference.

College is just one step into the future of a new job and a different life than one sheltered by your parents. How you take advantage of it will help you find out how to get to that next step.

And if you are already doing all this, congratulations! You will eventually find a job somewhere that you enjoy doing.

[Editors Note: And you thought we were kidding... If you don't know, Abe Brody in something of a legend around these parts. For a wide variety of amusing stories, ask an upperclassman. At Abe's graduation in 1994, he was greeted with a standing ovation by all in attendance.]

[This *WheatBread* feature brought to you by popular demand, and Depends disposable undergarments.]



This photo has little to do with getting a job, but think of it this way: with your degree from Clark, you might be paid to drive around one of these spiffy little trucks.