Why this boy is homeless by choice

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A California college student has gone homeless [http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2333712/Santa-Cruz-student-whos-lived-car-year-half-choice.html?ito=feeds-newsxml/] for a year and a half, living out of his car in the pursuit of maturity – but also to rebel against ‘the concept of rent.’


Seckelman left an upper-middle class life to live in his car in Santa Cruz, acknowledging that he is homeless by choice: “For me, I have the luxury of returning home any time I want.”

Why?

“The entire purpose of moving was for maturity. And to experience things I hadn’t attained yet,” he told the Cabrillo Voice. “It is through the struggle that you realize that outside the sheltered life of your parents, this is how the world really works and to get out of this situation you have to try harder.”

Seckelman described his tearful first night going it alone in his 2006 Toyota Matrix, which he’s souped up with a camp stove set and black nylon curtains for privacy: “I parked in a Wal-Mart, and it was somewhere up north. The temperature dropped to, like, [-5]. I didn’t have a blanket or a pillow.”

He described the “inconvenience” of having to sneak into McDonald’s or Macy’s washrooms to shave, and confessed that he feels like an “outcast” because he has nowhere to hang out with friends, let alone a girlfriend. And although he initially hit up homeless services centres for blankets, Seckelman has now opted to work two Joe jobs (including one at the Gap) to make ends meet.

“I have a much greater appreciation for my parents, my family and the things I take for granted, like a sink and a proper stove-top,” the boy explained.

But perhaps her best comparison was Christopher McCandless, who gave his $24,000 savings away to Oxfam, burned up his pocket change and left his yellow Datsun in the middle of nowhere to rely on the kindness of strangers, eventually hitchhiking to Alaska to live in Thoreau-inspired solitude. He drove his family through hellish anguish [http://www.nytimes.com/books/97/05/18/reviews/krakauer-wild.html] before starving out in the wilderness.

Unlike McCandless, Seckelman will be returning home to mom and dad, and plans to major in computer science and business.

Some Daily Mail commenters facing (actual) eviction blasted the boy for this cushy safety net while others lauded him for his frugality. But “Michelle” of Long Beach, Calif., may have said it all: “Instead of volunteering his time and resources to help the homeless, he pretended to be one? Did he blog about it, too?!”