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Boomerang Nation — What Happens When Kids Don't (or Won't) Grow Up?

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Elina Furman writes about the emergence of the “boomerang nation” — a nation of adult children who don't assume adult responsibilities, but come home to live again with parents. Don't get her wrong — she's not opposed to the trend. She just wants the boomerang 'kids' to understand why their parents may not be so excited to see them living at home once again. From her book, *Boomerang Nation*:

After years of changing your diapers, carting you to and from soccer practice, and barely surviving your sullen teenage phase, many parents are dying for a break. They look forward to their golden years when the house is finally quiet, the fridge is well stocked, and they can sleep soundly knowing they won't be interrupted in the middle of the night by your clamorous arrival. Who knows, they may even want to spend some quality time with each other. Anyone who's been there knows: Raising kids is no easy feat. So when the day comes that you're finally on your own, safely tucked away in your apartment, working full-time and supporting yourself, many parents quietly rejoice at their good fortune. Can you blame them?

Most of our parents were married, working toward a pension, and putting away their pennies for our college funds long before they were 25. By the time you learned to balance your checkbook, they were already navigating the new roles of adulthood. The option of moving back home with their folks was simply not available or too strange to consider.

Today's climate is much different. Economically, we're in no position to accomplish the same feats as our parents, and emotionally, many of us aren't ready to commit to raising a family. Millions of us have been forced into a state of delayed adulthood. While we are no strangers to this new reality, some parents are living in a bit of a time warp. After all, unlike us, they're not trying to make it for the first time, and probably have a vastly different idea of what it means to be successful and mature.

Despite more and more aduolescents [her term] returning to the family fold, some parents still think this is the exception rather than the rule. When they sent you off to college, they weren't prepared to see you home so soon. Many of them converted your bedrooms into offices, dens, or home gyms. You can imagine their surprise to see you on their doorstep with all your worldly possessions in tow.

