

### 'Dead' week lives

UNL disregards students' catch-up time

Welcome to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Dead Week. The purpose of dead week is to ease students' tight schedules during what, for many, is the busiest week of the year, full of final projects and papers.

Students are supposed to catch up on studies and prepare for the final exams next week that in many cases determine grades.



David Badders/DN

In the ASUN office, our diligent student representatives are on the prowl, ready to pounce on any dead week violations in the name of student rights. However, their efforts really aren't necessary, because it is nearly impossible to violate dead week regulations.

Only certain kinds of examinations are allowed during dead week, but professors can get around that by calling them "quizzes." New material can be introduced, pop quizzes can be thrown, classes are held as always.

Dead week policy does prohibit examinations — unless they're laboratory, practical, make-up, repeat or self-paced. Or, remember, unless they're called quizzes.

At UNL, dead week exists only in name. During dead week at many schools around the country, classes are cancelled altogether, giving students a full week to study for finals and wrap everything up.

Here we have a mere ghost of a dead week. We walk around campus, referring to the week as dead, but there's nothing dead about it.

There's nothing special about this week at all. It's a farce. Either dead week should be reformed, or we should just bury it.

Maybe dead week isn't necessary. No one ever said college was supposed to be easy. But calling this week a dead week is no help to students — it's a joke at best, and an attempt to pacify students through nomenclature at worst.

Welcome to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Normal Week.



YET ANOTHER STARTLING DEEP SPACE DISCOVERY. SCIENTIST ARE STILL UNCLEAR HOW THIS RELATES TO THE BIG BANG THEORY.

ALAN PHELPS

## Stamp of approval withheld

Wop ba ba loo bop, a-wop bam boom.

Someone is finally coming to his senses about this Elvis stamp thing. And it's about time.

Ralph Nader, self-appointed superconsumer, accused the Post Office of wasting some \$300,000 on this little vote to decide whether a fat or skinny Elvis will grace a new U.S. stamp next year.

"This is a costly trivialization and diversion of the Post Office's main purpose: the dependable and reliable delivery of the mail," he said. To me, it sounds like a tall order to be dependable AND reliable. But then, Ralph Nader knows what he's talking about.

Although voters have to buy a 29-cent stamp to mail in their ballot, Nader said 1 million of them would have to be sold to recoup the expense. He said the Post Office would end up losing \$300,000 before the final blue suede shoe fell.

It all seems pretty fishy to me. I obtained an "Official Ballot" to see what everyone was all shook up about. The back of the postcard-sized piece of paper has a huge "A" and "B" next to two boxes. "A" is, of course, for the young Elvis, while "B" is for the mature Elvis.

I'm not sure why they include the "A" and "B." It says which box is for which Elvis right next to the letter designation. Perhaps the "A" and "B" make things go quicker at Elvis Central.

The front of the ballot has the place to affix the stamp you must buy and the address — Post Office Box ELVIS, Memphis, Tenn.

Post Office Box ELVIS? Can we get post office boxes named after people now? My parents have one, but it's just a bland No. 846. The folks at the Post Office were lucky they were able to reserve that P.O. box for this poll.

The smartest people on campus, the University Operators, have access to many documents and memos that we normal people are too dumb to understand. I asked them which Elvis, young or mature, was winning.

"Let me ask someone," the operator I called said. She then conferred with the other Operators just out of the phone's range. When Operators talk to each other, they use a special language or sometimes link their minds to facilitate a faster information exchange.

The Operator then told me their



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verdict in the slow, easy-to-understand English I can comprehend:

"We think maybe the young Elvis."

I'm not sure how the Operators came to this conclusion, but they do know everything, so I'm sure they're right.

Why, it's not even worth going to the time and expense of voting for the mature Elvis. It's a done deal.

But while the young Elvis might win the actual poll, I'm going to go out on a limb and make a prediction: In the end, postal patrons will be able to buy both stamps — that way, collectors will have to have two stamps instead of one.

The Post Office of days gone by, when friendly postmen always rang twice and delivered your mail with a smile, has been replaced with a lean, mean Post Office, where letter carriers are out to make a buck through fanciful votes over sequined singers.

The publicity this stunt has won for the Post Office is enormous. However, does publicity really do the P.O. any good? Most corporations advertise to make people aware of their product and convince them to use it. I doubt a whole lot of people around the country don't know about the Post Office.

Clyde: Hey, Emma, these "post" people — you know, the guys doin' that Elvis deal — will take a letter, and give it to someone else for a measly 29 cents!

Emma: You mean I don't have to go around town anymore, delivering

my mail myself?

Similarly, the Post Office doesn't have a lot of competition. When I drop a letter in a mailbox, I don't choose which postal service will deliver it for me based on who offers the coolest stamps.

Maybe the Post Office is going through all of this just to give the country something to do. Perhaps the leaders of the country take turns providing entertainment to take the masses' minds off the issues. After George Bush came up with the war, the Post Office had to dig deep and think of something truly grand.

Whatever the reason, it worked. The King still holds sway over an incredible audience in America, and the young vs. mature controversy has captured the attention of a nation.

H. Ross Perot, Texas billionaire, has declared his independent candidacy for the Elvis stamp. He is not going to run in the Young or Mature Party, he said, but bring the Elvis back to the people.

Perot said in a news conference over the weekend that he didn't want the job, but if he had a mandate from the people, he would spend up to a \$1 quadrillion to run a "first-rate" campaign.

"Let me be your teddy bear," he told the nation on the Larry King show.

The Post Office didn't comment on Perot's entry into the Elvis run. If citizens actually do write in Perot's name on their Elvis ballots, however, the mail people will be forced to print up Perot stamps.

Of course, there is that rule about how a person must be dead to be on a stamp, but everyone knows Elvis isn't dead, either — he's an actuarial science major who works at the Holiday near 27th and O streets.

I want to know if the Post Office is going to start listening to the public on all stamp decisions. For instance, if we have a Michael Jackson stamp one day, will it be the pre- or post-plastic surgery Michael? Should each University Operator have their own stamp, or should there just be a group shot?

Maybe we could vote on what flavor the glue on the back of a stamp should taste like.

I know what I would vote for: A Ralph Nader commemorative set.

Phelps is a sophomore news-editorial major, the Daily Nebraskan opinion page editor and a columnist.

## Reproductive freedom essential

I am not here to say how all women should feel about abortion. I am wondering why abortion is such a dilemma with people. I am wondering why it is even a controversy in the law and politics. I am curious why it has grown into such a violent subject.

When the white men decided to form a government, they wanted to keep church (religion) and state (the law, power) separate. They, the founding fathers, wanted to have freedom, equality and happiness. Of course, not all people have been and are still not treated as equals. This is not just about racism, sexism, inequality and bigotry. It is about the fact that whoever has the money and position/status to create laws has missed the point: freedom.

From Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary:

Freedom: the state or quality of being free; especially a) exemption or liberation from the control of some other person or some arbitrary power; liberty; independence. b) being able to act, move, use etc. without hindrance or restraint.

Equality: the state of being equal; likeness in magnitude or dimensions, values, qualities, degree and the like; the state of being neither superior or inferior; as the equality of men; an equality of rights.

Happiness: the enjoyment of pleasure without pain; felicity and satisfaction.

So, with some type of definition to work from and the base of keeping church and state separate, who or what made the issue of abortion a

moral or even an ethical question? I can understand the need to have medical standards and laws to oversee the clinics themselves. However, the choice itself must not be up for debate, it must be a freedom. The "gag ruling" should not even be in discussion, that was one of the freedoms that began this great nation of democracy.

Democracy: the absence of hereditary or arbitrary class distinctions or privileges. Government by the people.

Having options, choices, free will, a body and a brain is what we are all given. What we do with these is an individual's right. This is, of course, simplifying the major dilemmas of our world, but it is what the beginning of the white government started as.

Another problem that arises is what are they talking about? I mean, what does God have to do with the law and why cram an idea, philosophy, moral or ethical beliefs into the law when not everyone believes in the same religion or God? Again, this goes against freedom. If a woman does not want to reproduce and finds out she is pregnant, it is her business alone and others must allow her to find out what her freedoms are. Just the same, if a woman wants to reproduce, people must allow her the choice.

In such a democracy, a woman must be allowed freedom of choice.

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Love Library

## EDITORIAL POLICY

Staff editorials represent the official policy of the Spring 1992 Daily Nebraskan. Policy is set by the Daily Nebraskan Editorial Board.

According to policy set by the regents, responsibility for the editorial content of the newspaper lies solely in the hands of its students.