

RICHARD WRIGHT

Reality of graduation hits hard

Clint Eastwood said it all. In a line from one of his movies, he summed up how to get through the struggle called life.

It was in "Heartbreak Ridge" and it's a saying today's graduating students need to learn and practice: "Improvise, adapt, overcome."

Even though his character was speaking to a group of Marines, it can be used by anyone. Improvise, adapt, overcome.

After graduation next week, real life sets in.

It's no fun. It's a lot of hard work and struggling, with little bits of happiness and enjoyment.

When people talk about the daily grind, that's what life is about. Like they say, it's a cruel world out there.

All of us have dreams, hopes and expectations. Only a few actually live those dreams.

The rest of us will keep on dreaming.

After a little while of fun, the road to work starts. It's not paved with yellow bricks. It's filled with disappointments, let-downs and more hopes to hold on to.

After a while, you'll realize the only thing a college diploma guarantees is that it gives you something to hang on a wall.

Getting a degree is the easy part. The hard part comes after the classes end.

Most of us want the jobs our degrees have trained us to do. But most of today's graduates won't use that degree.

Those few who have jobs waiting should feel lucky. The rest of the pack will keep working their retail or restaurant jobs while they look for a "real job."

Maybe they'll find that job. Maybe they won't. It's all based on luck.

In today's job market, employers have the benefit of hundreds of resumes to look at. When there are



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only a few positions open, it's an employer's market. They get to pick and choose. From the many resumes they will see, throwing out the so-so ones will be easy.

All the internships, experience, community service, grade point averages and schmoozing in the world sometimes won't get you a job. There will always be someone ahead of you in line.

They may be more qualified than you or they may not be as qualified as you. They may be a relative of someone, they may already know the employer, they may be a quota.

I don't know how many resumes I've sent out for a wide range of jobs. From media related to insurance companies — just because I need a job, to other business jobs and teaching jobs, I've been rejected for one reason or another.

One employer said they decided to hire someone from within because that person had a bit more computer experience than I did.

My journalism experience didn't matter for this media-related position. It didn't matter that I had a 4.0 grade point average. They had someone inside who who knew their computer system.

It's always something.

That's the hard part. It hurts. It's hard to keep going to those job interviews, knowing that there is a possibility someone else will get the job for

some reason or another.

But, like Eastwood said, "improvise, adapt, overcome."

It's easy to say "the hell with it." But when you have responsibilities, like a family, you do what you must to survive. You work several jobs, you keep going. There is some hope.

I know I wasn't put on this earth just to go to grad school and work several part-time jobs.

Just like the students graduating next week. They didn't go through four or five years of college to not do the kind of job or live the kind of life they wish to.

The struggle will be tough, but don't give up the search.

The secret is to do what Eastwood said.

"Improvise," work several jobs, it gives you a wide span of experience; "adapt," be flexible, roll with the changes, don't worry too much; "overcome," it will happen. The overcome part comes if you do the other two. You will get the job if you try hard enough. It will come, be patient.

After graduation, enjoy life for a while, take a deep breath, then get to it. You'll need to if you want to make it.

When you walk across that stage, get that degree, life as you have known it is over. Life as you will know it for the rest of your life is just beginning.

Wright is a graduate student in journalism and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

ALAN PHELPS

University needs divine guidance

Ah, regents weekend. How I, as a student, do love that time once a month, when all of the regents get together for a non-secret meeting, when we are privy to true words of wisdom from on high.

Saturday marked just such a time: a time to relish, a time to savor.

Regent Robert Allen of Hastings always brings a special flair to meetings. He spoke out Saturday against Del Weber, chancellor of the University of Nebraska at Omaha, for advocating the creation of a separate engineering college in Omaha.

"I am expected to show leadership and advocacy on my campus and in the city of Omaha," Weber responded. He said the press asked him for his opinion, and he gave it.

However, Allen said Weber was trying to "affect policy." And, darn it, that's a job for the regents. Allen even offered a resolution for the board to "consider whether it is appropriate for the president or chancellors to initiate public debate" to influence major changes.

How awful it would be to have public debate. Especially in a democracy.

The other regents quickly tabled the resolution, apparently believing university chancellors should be able to think for themselves.

Saturday's meeting also dealt with important subjects such as which student regents should have a free trip to the Orange Bowl. None of the regents play college football, but what the heck.

If it's such a big problem, I'm sure they could just fire up the regents' airplane. That is, unless one of their sons wants to use it over New Year's weekend.

While it's fun to watch our Rejects in action, one has to wonder if they are the best people for the job. All of the board's infighting, firings and Hastings grocers must make the university look a bit silly in the eyes of, say, the Legislature's Appropriations Committee.

But then, who would do it if we



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kicked out this group? The cute little band of small-time politicians favored by Nebraska voters doesn't appear to be exactly useful, but they know how to get to Varner Hall and they show up on time.

As I pondered this question at the Daily Nebraskan, an answer suddenly came to me in the form of a letter — a letter sent by God to "The Editor."

"As Almighty GOD, I greet you," the letter began. God explained he needed our prayers, and he also wouldn't mind if we read his book, "All Souls are Mine," (Carlton Press, Inc., New York: 1941).

God also wrote about his son, Eugene/Jesus Changey, who happens to be the second coming of Christ. Eugene/Jesus lives with His sister-in-Ohio, the letter said. He has little in the way of earthly possessions, save for an old typewriter, a television, some old clothes and \$600. All in all, God, who doesn't sign his real name as it is "void of form," seemed pretty polite in his letter.

However, he also included a copy of the letter he sent to an editor in Duluth, Minn., who requested he be taken off God's mailing list. Signed "Condemningly yours," the letter to Duluth was full of fury from the self-named Holy Spirit. Suffice to say, God promised the editor would have a hard time on Judgment Day.

This God guy sounded to me as though he could run a university. "Omnipotent" and "omnipresent" look pretty good on a resumé, and he obviously could crush any day-to-day problems. Also, God wouldn't whine like

the Rejects do.

I thought Sunday would be a good day to try and catch up with God and ask him if he or Eugene/Jesus might want to pick up some part-time work. Praying might do the trick, but God's letterhead included his address, so I simply called him up — a modern-day Tower of Babel.

"Hello?" Eugene/Jesus said. I wasn't sure what to say. You don't often speak with the Second Coming of Christ. I told Eugene/Jesus I had read about him and his father. I said I had heard they were both reincarnated as the same Holy Spirit.

"Yes, that's right," he said. As I talked to him, I found out his book has been out of print since 1959. He and his father had sent copies around the world, he said.

Eugene/Jesus, it turned out, was a 74-year-old retired machine shop worker. Remembering the regents problem, I asked Eugene/Jesus if he ever considered working again. He said no, he was too old.

Eugene's letter said his father found him in a mental hospital in 1941. I wondered if Eugene's father were even alive anymore. I wondered what made Eugene send out all those letters to newspapers around the country.

I said goodbye to Eugene Changey and decided he had enough trouble without worrying about a university. So I guess we're stuck with the regents we have.

Phelps is a senior news-editorial major, a Daily Nebraskan senior reporter and a columnist.

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