

New label to nurture male ego

Our own Gov. Nelson has proclaimed that this was to be called the year of No. 1 Nebraska, which is nice, but it lacks a good cause. So what I have done is taken it upon myself to be the first to stamp 1995 with the label of the Year of "No More Whipped Males in Relationships."

OK. So this may seem a little long and not quite as catchy as the names of past years, but it fits, this sure-to-be-stealing-national-headlines idea.

Now I know all of you are asking yourself, "Robb, why do you spell your name with two b's?" Wait a second. Wrong question.

What you're really asking is how I concluded the all-too-obvious fact that 1995 should be the Year of "No More Whipped Males in Relationships." The answer came to me through tireless hours of conclusive studies and intensive field research that probed deep into this subject.

To show you exactly what I mean, let me introduce you to one of the men whom I have observed. Just for the sake of anonymity, let me call him Aaron. Now this poor individual is mercilessly under the power of his domineering girlfriend and, almost like a robot, willingly does whatever she says.

It's so pitiful that his girlfriend, a good and decent young lady, can be in her dorm room fully clothed and craving popcorn. But instead of going down the flight of stairs to get it herself, she'll call her Aaron and ask him to pick some up and bring it to her. It means nothing to the girl that he's getting ready for bed, that it's minus-42 degrees outside, that he has an Edsel for a



Robb Goff

car and that he lives all the way across Lincoln. Then when Aaron shows up, she has the audacity to send him back if there's not enough butter.

Another male — I'll call this one Alan — was about as bad as the one previously mentioned until he came to his senses and dumped the girl last summer. I mean, this guy was a bigger sap than Warren. (I just had to get one Miami slam in.) I've never seen a guy say "Yes, dear" or "OK, dear" more in my life.

I would swear on my most holy collegiate sanity-saver, my Sega Genesis, that he would have mooned the entire Memorial Stadium if she would have asked him to. Wait a minute. I think he would do that without having her ask. I'll see what he says and get back to you on that one.

The point that I'm trying to make is that we men can't be letting ourselves fall into these vicious traps anymore.

This is the reason why I have proclaimed this year the Year of "No More Whipped Males in Relationships." I'm sick of everybody saying that we need to save the whales, the trees, the ozone layer and Graham Spanier's hair.

We need to save the most important thing of all, the delicate male ego. I'm not really chastising females that much — OK, maybe a little — but actually giving a wake-up call to all the males who fit into this category.

With this in mind, I have devised a comprehensive game plan that we, as the males of this planet, can use to help stop this insanity before another poor soul ends up like Aaron or Alan.

My idea is that we should lock ourselves in a room and play John Wayne and Clint Eastwood movies all night long and then, just before the crack of dawn, guzzle a Bud and finish up with a good round of Tim Allen-style grunts to get us in the mood.

Can't you just feel the testosterone building? After that there could be a good romp down to Memorial Stadium for a no-rules football game, followed by a bonfire made of all those trendy female magazines like Cosmo and Elle. To top it off, a nice brisk walk in the cold January air to your girlfriend's place of residence (in short sleeves, of course) to state your case.

So, for all of you poor whipped guys out there, don't worry. There are others who are looking out for you. And for all of you women out there who have knowingly pushed your boyfriends around for so long, just beware, because the call is out, the title is set, the writing is on the wall and the fat lady is singing your song. Let the Year of "No More Whipped Males in Relationships" begin.

Are you scared yet, ladies?
Goff is a senior secondary education major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

Fight the happies with public radio

For most people, waking up in a cheerful mood is a fine way to begin the day. But not in my line of work.

Feeling bright and chipper could cause me to lose control and irresponsibly write something bright and chipper. And that would turn the stomachs of regular readers, thereby ruining their days, too.

Fortunately, that's seldom a problem. I was blessed with a naturally glum temperament that views each bright dawn as a potential disaster. When the golden sunlight streams through the window, my reaction is: "That hurts my eyes." Maybe I have a Transylvanian ancestor.

But once in a while it happens. I awake feeling cheerful. Maybe it is the result of a chemical imbalance. Just about everything is. And I can only hope that science will someday come up with an anti-happy pill for those of us who suffer from this affliction. Until then, I have to do whatever it takes to shake the dreaded mood or it festers all day.

And some time ago I stumbled across an antidote that works every time. I will share it with fellow sufferers.

In Chicago, it can be found on the far left-hand side of the FM radio dial, about 91-point-something or other. It's the public broadcasting station, and I guarantee that it will drive away whatever happy thoughts might be plaguing you.

At first I thought it was just coincidence that every time I turned it on, some bleak and depressing story was being told.

If it wasn't bloodshed or broken promises in Bosnia, it was rampant tooth decay and shortage of floss in Third World nations. If it wasn't a new report on famine and hunger in some faraway jungle community, it was obesity and heart disease in some nearby city.

And it was never the sort of fleeting, everyday unhappy news heard on other newscasts — the previous night's teen-age shooting or 4-11 fire. Public radio prefers wide-scale suffering with deep social meaning.

That's when I became convinced that it couldn't be a coincidence. The law of averages says that once in a while they would have to pass along something that could prompt a chuckle. Even O.J.'s trial has had its lighthearted moments.

No, it has to be policy. I suspect that someone in authority at public radio shares the dread of morning happiness and examines every potential news



Mike Royko

item to make sure it has the proper misery and gloom content.

Any doubt I had vanished when I tuned in and heard a lengthy report on the spread of killer tattoo needles.

Do you know about that health problem? Probably not, unless you, too, are a devoted public radio listener.

It seems that prison inmates in some of our meaner pokeys try to bring a bit of color into their drab lives by covering their skin with tattoos.

But because most prisons are overcrowded, the guards can't keep an eye on every convict who is adding a fire-breathing dragon or the slogan "Life sucks" to his chest.

So the convicts pass around the tattoo needles but sometimes fail to sterilize them.

And all this swapping of used tattoo needles is believed to be leading to a rise in AIDS infections among prisoners who decorate their hides.

During this report, various experts were interviewed about this new crisis, expressing grave concern that little is being done to halt the furtive exchange of tattoo needles in prison. And they warned that if something wasn't done, more and more prisoners would wind up brightly decorated but dead.

With all of the problems in this city, country and the world, it never would have occurred to me that I should start the day by wringing my hands over some convict placing himself in mortal danger simply because he wanted his skin to say: "I love Mom, even though I threw her out the window."

When I stopped for breakfast at Eddie's later that morning, I told the regulars at the counter: "Heard on the radio that lots of convicts are getting AIDS from tattoo needles."

Tony took a sip of his coffee, snorted and said: "Yeah, sure — that's what they tell their wives."

That's another serious problem: Some people have no compassion in the morning.

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Swami Doug boldly predicts all

Dear readers, the time has come once again.

The New Year is in full swing (even though I'm still writing 1994 on all my checks), and with it comes the fearless predictions.

Forget the Weekly World News, The Star and the National Enquirer. I, Swami Doug, prognosticator of prognosticators, have taken it upon myself to make 15 bold predictions for the New Year.

If you are a pregnant woman, or if you have any heart ailments, you may want to turn back now. Otherwise, strap yourself in. It's going to be a bumpy ride.

● Newt Gingrich will become president after surprise resignations from both Bill Clinton and Al Gore, who will resign to join the press corps. "I just wanted to blame everything on the president," Clinton will say.

Gingrich himself will resign after one month in office, citing intense teasing by White House staffers, who insist on calling him "President Doughboy."

● The line of presidential succession will move on, with cabinet members, members of Congress and senators all taking the job and then promptly resigning. Finally, freshman congressman Jon Christensen will become the 540th President of the United States in the fall of 1995. Shortly after taking office, Christensen will issue his first executive order, banning all curricula except creationism and "racial awareness" in public schools.

● ASUN elections will go on as scheduled, with a record 57 students casting votes. The new administration pledges "sweeping changes."

● Regent Robert Allen of Hastings will challenge University of Nebraska-Lincoln Chancellor Graham Spanier to a high-stakes match of thumb wrestling for control of the UNL administration.



Doug Peters

● The Nebraska Unicameral will be dissolved; Tom Osborne will be named King of Nebraska. Tommie Frazier will then be installed as crown prince, and Ernie Chambers will be chosen to be the court jester.

● A killer earthquake will strike Southern California, and the lower half of the state will be swallowed by the Pacific Ocean. The day is declared a national holiday.

● Elvis Presley, who turned 60 just last Sunday, will re-emerge, surprised at the worldwide uproar.

"Ah wasn't dead," the King will announce. "It was just a long nap."

Just hours after his re-appearance, Presley will die of heart failure after learning of his daughter's marriage to Michael Jackson. Son-in-law Jackson will then make a bid to purchase Presley's remains for his collection at his Neverland estate.

● A 7-year-old boy in Goehner will become a millionaire by drawing crayon stick figures of football players. After labeling the drawings "Nebraska Cornhuskers, 1994 National Champions," the boy sells 500,000 copies at five dollars each. The windfall provides a healthy nest egg for the boy and his family, even after medical expenses for an acute case of writer's cramp.

● O.J. Simpson will win the Pulitzer Prize for fiction for his book "I Want to Tell You."

● Former President Clinton will buy a McDonald's franchise in Little Rock, Ark., but is forced to

plead bankruptcy after a late-night "Big Mac Attack" eating binge forces him out of business.

● The United States Postal Service will issue an Oliver North commemorative stamp, which will be promptly scrapped after patrons complain of difficulty in licking and aligning all 100 strips.

● In Chicago, a 4-month-old boy will break into a hospital maternity ward and shoot a newborn to death. The next day, the 4-month-old will be found dead in his playpen, shot twice in the back of the head "execution style." Police will take a 6-month-old playmate into custody, calling the events "a tragic example of gang violence."

● Greedy major-league baseball players and owners will fail to reach an agreement. The 1995 baseball season is cancelled. Nobody cares.

● Ted Turner will cash in as CNN broadcasts live coverage of the U.S. invasion of Aruba more than six hours before it even takes place.

In related news, Turner announces plans to buy the rights to all major motion pictures made in the last 30 years and de-colorize them.

● A major textbook manufacturer will bail out the U.S. government, paying off all of the nation's \$5 trillion debt. The company's president will be quoted as saying, "Hell, it's the least we could do. It's not like this'll break us or anything — look at our prices."

There you have it. The muse has spoken, and the result is my 15 fearless picks. The year that lies before us will see many other interesting developments as well, but due to the limitations of space, you're just going to have to take them as they come.

Peters is a graduate student and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.



Ed Gamble