

Combine can replace Herbie

I have seen the light, fellow Cornhuskers. I have had a vision. An imposing new mascot — literally tons of rolling thunder — Herbie's replacement.

No, not a giant corn cob. Not a giant dollar bill, either, although it would be fitting, given the athletic department's recent record. And, no, not a tractor.

But close.

As anyone who's a product of rural Nebraska knows, the most menacing piece of farm machinery is not the tractor, but the mighty combination picker-sheller, known to most simply as the "combine."

Loud and menacing, the combine is as devastating as a group of drunken football players on O street on a Saturday night. It has, to quote Monty Python's "Holy Grail," "big, pointy teeth." It rolls over the land, chewing up everything in its path, then spitting out the remnants, much like our exalted Cornhuskers themselves.

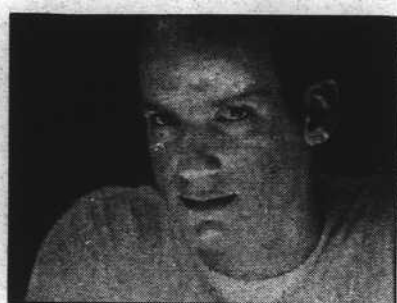
It is, obviously, the perfect mascot.

This flash of brilliance — this brief moment of lucidity — did not just happen by chance, my friends. On the contrary, my quest for a suitable Herbie Husker replacement has been long and torturous.

This stroke of genius is the product of long days and sleepless nights of agony. My thoughts, garbled as they have been by the shock of losing Herbie, have been focused only on the mascot problem.

The process began a few days after hearing the announcement that Herbie was gone. For about 48 hours, I could do nothing but grieve. Initially, I sat, huddled in my closet, knees clasped to my chest, rocking back and forth. I was mumbling something, but I no longer know what it was. The mind often works that way, protecting people from memories that are simply too painful to bear.

Then came the drinking. To cope,



Doug Peters

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at first. Later just to forget.

Finally, I realized that there was work to be done. I knew I couldn't depend on the athletic department to produce a new mascot I could adore as much as I had adored dear old Herbie, so I set about thinking of possible replacements.

Long nights at Denny's followed. Coffee and cigarettes became my locusts and honey. Sausages, my only link to the outside world.

Then I began to hallucinate (one night I spent 2 1/2 hours talking to a Belgian waffle, never realizing it was not responding — looking back, I should have known better. They speak French in Belgium — boy, do I feel stupid.)

But soon, a sort of nirvana set in. Things began to become clear; ideas started to flow.

"The Reaper" was one of my first picks. The personification of death, black robes flowing, eyes the piercing red of laser sights — it was perfect. But, to my disappointment, I remembered that Reapers worked

with wheat, not corn. Drat.

Anyway, just the other night, as I was sleeping (finally), I had the most incredible dream, no, vision. I had a vision.

I woke with a start, cold sweat pouring off me like grease from a fast-food hamburger. Everything was hazy and jumbled. And although I knew I had been the recipient of a profound vision, I couldn't remember quite what it had been.

Then I saw it.

The word "combine" spelled out in drool on my pillowcase. My quest was at an end.

Think of it — a corn huskin' demon from the pits of hell, rumbling onto the field; flames belching from an elaborate system of exhaust pipes. The "Cornhusker Combine" would make monster trucks look like Hot Wheels cars. From my dream to an opponent's nightmare.

What could be a better mascot — or, I should say "interim mascot."

Because, let's face it, Herbie's not dead, he's just resting. He will return, someday, stronger than ever.

Anytime a popular figure with a cult-like following is banned by authorities against the popular will, its followers go underground to regroup. Eventually, that figure is restored to power. Herbie and his closest advisers are probably sitting in a dark, smoky room somewhere right now, speaking in hushed tones and calling each other by code names. They are plotting the return of Herbie.

It will happen.

It happened for Hitler, Nelson Mandela and, of course, Disco. It will happen for Herbie.

Herbie will be restored to his rightful place, and the dreaded "Cornhusker Combine" will become another piece of Husker lore.

Or, better yet, maybe Herbie can drive.

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

A letter...from the FROSH Sexist shirts have no place in society



Adria Chilcote

"The reason Hooters is so extremely popular is because they have women with big breasts in tight clothing serving you hand and foot."

There are not many things that annoy me more than those Big Johnson and Hooters T-shirts.

Every time I see that scrawny little jerk on the back of those shirts, with those women hanging all over him, it makes me want to puke.

How could it be physically possible for any of those women to stand upright with such a skinny waist and such huge breasts? They would snap right in two.

And I'd like to see them breathe without busting at the seams. They'd have a hard time fitting all of her internal organs in there, much less inhaling. They're almost worse than Barbie, but that's a whole different story.

I can't change the fact that men have impossible sexual fantasies about inhumanly fashioned women subserviently fulfilling their every wish. But they don't have to display it on their clothing for the rest of the world to see.

I would rather men have fantasies about women that they can interact with on an equal level in all areas of life.

But I've come to believe that's one of my own impossible fantasies. It would be much harder to make crude jokes for stupid T-shirts if it were true. And I think our society has to evolve some more before it does become a reality.

If some white guy were to wear a T-shirt with a joke on it depicting an African-American in a slave-like position, it definitely would not be accepted.

He wouldn't get very far before getting yelled at or beaten up. Just because women take it more passively and generally don't resort to violence doesn't mean that it's any less wrong.

Why should subservient attitudes about women be accepted, and the same types of attitudes, when directed toward racial minorities, not be accepted?

I don't see how the feminist movement has made any substantial differences in people's view of women if the attitudes reflected in these shirts are still

accepted. Men still want women waiting on their every need and desire, sexual and otherwise.

The popularity of Hooters restaurants and their T-shirts is a great example of this. Women with huge breasts serving you your food. It's the chauvinist pig's dream.

When confronted, some Hooters-clad people try to defend themselves by making a comment about how it's just a family restaurant and the reason they go is because they have good food.

Does any sane person anywhere ever buy that?

The reason Hooters is so extremely popular is because they have women with big breasts in tight clothing serving you hand and foot.

These women are just seen as toys. They're just a bunch of pretty, fake, silicone stuffed dolls. I think that all these boys with their toys need to grow up and evolve with the rest of us.

But, after I say stuff such as, "The problem with men is they haven't evolved enough yet," I feel like I'm saying something rather hypocritical.

I should be mature enough to refrain from "male bashing" if I expect men to do the same.

Those stupid T-shirts just make me so mad. They make it really, really hard not to make comments about how the world would be such a better place if only women ruled everything.

I have seen other T-shirts meant to protest the Hooters shirts. They have the word "Cock's" on the front, along with a picture of a rooster's head.

When I first saw a Cock's T-shirt I thought it was great. But then I realized that if I'm going to complain about stuff like Hooters and Big Johnson, I can't wear a shirt that does the exact same thing.

If I think something is wrong when it's directed toward women, how could it possibly be made right when directed toward men?

What I do not understand at all is when women wear the same sexist shirts that make me so mad when I see them on men.

I feel like going up to the woman and asking her what possessed her to actually pay money to wear something like that.

Maybe they don't think that there's anything wrong with the shirts, and they think they're funny. But I don't think that I'll ever understand a woman who can wear a Big Johnson or Hooters shirt with a clear conscience.

Actually, I don't think that I will ever be able to understand anyone, male or female, who wears sexist T-shirts. It pisses me off to see them on anybody.

I wish I could be crazy enough to go around ripping off offensive clothing.

Just watch out, because I'm teetering on the deep end now, and I'm about to fall off.

Chilcote is a freshman women's studies major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

Trip home offers clear picture

As the first week of classes ended, I kept running into friends who wanted to know how my summer went. Most of these questions were thrown at me in passing and would elicit an automatic response that it was great.

But little did I talk about the insight I had gained and the personal growth that I had attained during this summer!

Nor did I talk about the tragedy of returning, only to realize that the house plants I had entrusted to a friend were dead — and there was stuff growing in my refrigerator, literally!

What a scenario to come back to — especially after a long awaited trip to visit my family in India! What an anti-climactic end to a much anticipated vacation!

But then again I've got to admit that the trip was, by itself, an anti-climax — kind of. You might be shocked to hear that, and probably feel sorry for me if you knew how long I had been planning for it. I had been saving money — penny by penny — for the trip ever since I got here.

I had wanted to go home so badly. Want? It was more like a need. A growing, gnawing need to touch base — to go back to my roots — even briefly.

The reason was family, sure — but in essence it was more than family. It was all the little things that make Madras home — the cool and fresh early morning breeze and the late night walk after a most delicious dinner.

It was the food; it was the air. It was all the different little things that stand for HOME.

I was longing for a slower pace. I was longing to lie on my back on the terrace and look at the stars. I was longing to do any of the many things that I could do only at home.

I suppose it was homesickness — pure and simple. During all the time



Vennila Ramalingam

"By going back, I have severed the umbilical cord that bound me to my country."

I waited to go home, my mental pictures of home grew clearer and sharper. Absence sure does make the heart grow fonder.

When I first came to the United States, I slowly grew disillusioned with the system here. As my disenchantment grew over time, it was easier to think of my country in better/worse terms in comparison with the U.S. — more better than worse as the year progressed.

Before I left home I considered myself a citizen of the world. And I had been quite critical of my country. But during my stay here — thanks to the disillusionment I experienced — I grew more tolerant and appreciative of India. In fact I would go a step further and glorify it.

This May, as I prepared for my trip home, people warned me of a counter-shock — that things might not be as they were in my memory. But they were. Only the mosquitoes seemed to bite harder, the heat to be more intense and the power-outs, more frequent.

While it was great to lie in the couch all day, to have food and snacks brought to me and do

nothing in particular — not even lift my little finger — one gets tired of being spoiled after awhile.

When I was not vegging out, watching MTV, I would get into long discussions with some of my friends with different political beliefs. And believe it or not, I was defending, or at the very least explaining, some of the U.S. attitudes/policies.

Going back home helped me see things more clearly: that no one country is perfect. Each has its pluses and minuses. Its own share of skeletons in the closet. But as human beings, we are all trying to improve — trying hard to achieve perfection.

By going back, I have severed the umbilical cord that bound me to my country. But that doesn't mean that I am any less patriotic. It just means that I can go back to being a citizen of the world.

Back to cleaning my fridge.

As I battled to get rid of the hateful stuff growing in my refrigerator, I mourned the loss of my rose-plant and my prized cactus — which I had bought during a trip through Arizona. They even gave me a little certificate to prove that I did not just go harvesting their barren landscape! My poor cactus — my friend must have tried real hard to kill it!

But then, look at the brighter side of life. This summer, I have come full circle. I have learnt my lessons.

The lessons from summer were: Never entrust your plants to a friend just because he is a friend — carefully evaluate the merits and the de-merits of the person before you do so.

Lesson numero dos was: Wipe your refrigerator clean — and I mean COMPLETELY clean — before you go.

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