

In with the new

1996 promises new surprises, adventures

I know it's difficult to trudge through this first week of classes. Frankly, I don't think anyone would blame you if you suddenly "lost it" and began striking people in the union with a croquet mallet.

If the pressure seems too much, try to remember all the good things of 1995, and what is to come in '96.

For me, this past year was perhaps one of the best ever. Sure, it was not without its pitfalls, but what period of life is?

I failed chemistry for the — this is not a typo — third time in a row, but wisely, I expected the inevitable and didn't really upset anybody.

The wonderful news is that I finally did well enough in my other classes to obtain a 2.5 cumulative average. This ultimately means I can finally get into the journalism coLodge.

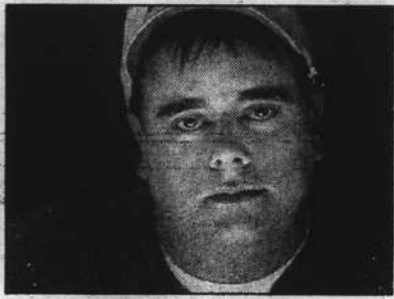
I have waited an entire year to reach this pinnacle, and now, I can finally fulfill my dreams of failing courses in my major.

Another happening, which could be seen as good or bad depending on whether or not you are me, involved my love life.

I attempted to ignite a fire with an old flame by writing her a love letter. She has yet to respond, which I can only assume means she is no longer a heterosexual.

At least that is what I'm telling my friends. All things considered, it was for the best. I was able to say some things that have been on my mind since the day we broke up.

She also taught me the invaluable lesson of never "losing it" and striking people in her apartment complex with a croquet mallet.



Steve Willey

"Remember, only you have the potential to make them date the same sex."

And the best news of 1995? I gained only 42 pounds. That happens to be my lowest total since the year after my birth. With any luck, I will defy all doctors' predictions and never reach my leveling weight of 961 pounds.

1995 was not just a glorious year for me, but for the state of Nebraska as well. Nebraska defeated Florida in the Fiesta Bowl to lay its claim to a second consecutive national title.

Last year, when we won the championship, I was in Mississippi. I spent a good portion of that evening rejoicing in my front yard, clad only in (Please STOP reading if revolting thoughts disgust you -ED) tighty-whities and red socks.

This year, however, I was blessed enough to be able to enjoy the game in a downtown Lincoln bar. You have NOT lived until you have danced with a thousand

people on O street. Can any of you think of another event that causes grown, shirtless men to jump around and repeatedly grope each other?

(By the way, we really should do this more often. The next time a professor returns a test, regardless of the grade, take your shirt off and grope them.)

Even with extremely unexpected news, you wouldn't get those kinds of results. I should know. I conducted an experiment of my own to prove this theory.

I approached one of the "regulars" in the union and threw him a shocker.

"Hey buddy," I whispered. "Did ya read the papers? Hillary Clinton is really a 51-year-old black man!"

He slapped my hands a couple of times and began chanting "U-S-A", but at no time did he remove his shirt and attempt to hug me.

Oddly, he did mention several times that he would like to remove his "drawers" but couldn't because "Governor Nelson is watching."

1995 was a wonderful year, and I have no reason to believe '96 will be any different.

Do your part to make it great. Realize your dreams, and start failing the necessary courses. Write that "one" love and tell her how you feel.

Remember, only you have the potential to make them date the same sex.

And yes, even your professors long for the occasional grope.

If 1996 is anything close to what 1995 was, it should be a magical year.

Willey is a junior ag-journalism major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

Calvin and Hobbes get a fond farewell

It's taken a couple of days, but reality has finally grabbed a hold of me. No more Calvin and Hobbes in the paper. Ever. Never again. Kaput. Good-bye and so long. My life, and I suspect the lives of many others, have slightly less meaning this new year.

No longer will I be able to gaze into the Transmogripher, spend an afternoon with the G.R.O.S.S. (Get Rid Of Slimy girlS) club, or be dazzled with Spaceman Spiff's intergalactic feats. No, a little bit of magic was taken from our lives when Bill Watterson published his last piece on December 31st.

Now, I understand that in the grand design, this isn't the worst thing that has happened. When you think about the state of the world, the departure of Calvin is small potatoes. Regardless, I still wish I wouldn't have lost him. I turned to Calvin and Hobbes every day. Even though it's funny to say, they were like friends. They made me laugh. When the strip was really good, it made me think. For a comic, it covered a lot of important issues, ranging from death to the environment, but was never preachy. Above all, though, it was fun. Sometimes, I thought it was the only worthwhile thing in the paper.

Even though the end of Calvin bothers me, I do admire Watterson. He left while his work was on top. He didn't stick around and put out a sub-par product just because of demand, like so many artists/performers do these days. I mean, do we really need another Ernest movie?

That guy should have done us all a favor and let it go when we all thought he was just that "Hey Vern" guy on the dairy commercials.

Watterson didn't bore us with tirades about every cause that came down the path. He used his miniature soap box, a 6-year-old named Calvin, to make small but important points about our daily lives. He used a wonderful imaginary tiger to entertain us and to make us laugh at the simplicity of it all, thus bringing some fun to us each day.

He also knew when it was time to hang up the pen and move on. It's a bummer, but that is a necessity in life. The only constant we can count on is change.

I guess I have tried to look at it from his point of view. Just imagine how hard it would be to come up with fresh, funny ideas every day. I can barely pick research paper topics most days.

A perfect example of what could have happened if he would have kept going is Berke Breathed and Bloom County. He got rid of the more interesting characters, renamed it and said boom!, it's different. The only



Jody Burke

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problem is that Outland isn't any different from its predecessor. It is just a newer, lesser version.

I guess I don't understand some people's fascination with continuity. What is the problem with only having one movie, or book? Why do we have to see good ideas beat to death before we let them go? Do we really need another Star Trek or Freddy movie? It isn't like the sequels have really developed anything new. I certainly don't see a whole lot of character development going on. Is the only reason to keep an idea alive because we can make a lot of dough?

American society is obsessed with continuity. We are scared to let our idols and heroes go, as if having them around forever will increase the quality of our lives. A perfect example of this is the Deadhead who could barely make it when Jerry Garcia died. I'll miss Jerry too, but life goes on. I'm not happy about it, but those are the rules.

In a way, I'm glad Bill Watterson ended it when he did. I would rather have a fond recollection of his work than a negative one. I can't see Calvin as a 20-year-old, hanging out with his stuffed tiger. It would tend to lose some of its charm. That's why it needed to end. The idea had run its course. There was nowhere left for Calvin to go. The strip said all it could, and so it made a graceful exit.

Burke is a senior English major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

Fresh start

New Year's resolutions are overrated

This Monday, surprisingly there were many busy people at Selleck's computer lab, considering that after the first day of the semester, hardly anyone should have homework to do.

Lines were huge in both bookstores and every Stairmaster at the rec center was occupied. At the cafeteria, vegetables and skim milk were clearly more popular than they were before the Christmas break.

What was going on? Thousands of people were starting a new semester and, more importantly, a new life.

Beginnings are fun, and so is the concept of new life. That's why the academic year is so much better than the calendar year. The academic year gives us two possibilities to start all over again.

I had a good time on New Year's Eve. There were 10 or 12 of us together, feeling so happy forgetting everything that was unpleasant or unsatisfying about last year and looking forward to a new start.

Our resolutions were typical, to say the least. All women were determined to lose weight, and those of us who smoked promised to quit. In addition, we agreed to study/work hard, vacuum our apartments at least once a week, and be kind to our boy/girl friends.

There was, however, one exception — one person whose only resolution was to "examine the geography of Northern Europe, including Lapland and the Faeroe Islands." I admired and envied this person and his indisputable peace of mind. To me, it seemed that he had realized something valuable and important, something that I have always suspected but never been able to admit to myself before.

Through his resolution, it finally became crystal clear: New lives are useless and dangerous.

Now I have that knowledge, but does it affect me? I doubt it. I can't help taking good notes and keeping up the required course readings

Veera Supinen
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during the next couple of weeks. And yes, I also go to the gym, wash dishes after each meal, write to my friends regularly, use contacts no more than eight hours a day and watch the TV considerably less than I did a month ago.

But how long is this going to last? Not until February is my best guess, and I'll be glad when my new life is over.

Who has ever heard of a successful new life? I haven't, and that's why wish I could ignore the whole thing. It's hard to pretend to be better than you are, even for a while. New beginnings consume too much energy and make people tired and angry. They blame themselves for not succeeding with their new lives and make weak promises to start it all over again come fall semester. Summer gives them barely enough time to recover from self-hatred.

A friend of mine is now stuck in New York and extremely upset because the recent snowstorm may prevent him from attending the first week's classes. His teachers are not going to drop him from courses and he probably won't miss anything indispensable. But he feels that the storm spoiled his new life that was supposed to start on Monday.

Another friend of mine has decided to work out four times a

week, starting, of course, on Monday. Unfortunately she caught a cold during the weekend and was forced to postpone her plans. Now she's having serious doubts whether to go at all. And guess why — because she couldn't start on Monday.

Why do we feel it is now or never? Why do we feel that if we fail this time, the next chance doesn't come until August? Why do we feel that if we eat chocolate just once, we have to give up the whole diet? What is it that makes it so much easier to start a new life on Mondays instead of Tuesdays?

The idea of new life is dangerous because it makes us believe that it is not better late than never. It makes us feel that our life and well-being depend on the time of the year, month or week, and that we can't control and improve them except on those random dates.

This semester lasts for 17 weeks, which is a terribly long time.

Nobody should start it in a sprint. We should pace ourselves. It's too bad we're not taught to take it easy while we still have energy. Half of this energy will be wasted during the first month's brave start, the rest will go with our self-respect when we notice that we haven't reached our unachievable goals. That's the problem with Protestant ethics and women's magazines' irresponsible fitness issues.

By the end of the semester, there will be thousands of miserable and disappointed students who, in the middle of their finals, can't concentrate on anything but feeling guilty.

This semester, I'll refuse to feel guilty every time I'm not doing something I think I should. I suggest you try the same. Get out of the libraries and go to the movies. Be perfect slackers for a while.

You'll thank yourselves in May.

Supinen, a visiting student from Finland, is a history major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

BE OUR GUEST

The Daily Nebraskan will present a guest columnist each Monday. Writers from the university and community are welcome. Contact Doug Peters c/o the Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 1400 R St., Lincoln, NE 68588, or by phone at (402) 472-1782.

