

**Heather  
LAMPE**

# Summer's romance

## Saying goodbye to sunny season never easy

The swimming pool at my apartment complex was drained this morning, and as a result, I've had a minor emotional breakdown.



I tried to form my own one-woman protest against the draining, but I was subsequently shooed away when the manager hit me with the pool skimmer.

I have similar incidents like this every year as summer ends, because I just can't bear to see it go. The other three seasons are so-so, but I adore summer.

There are a great deal of people on this campus who share my love for sweltering humidity and inhumane temperatures. I see them donning tank tops and shorts on the occasional 50-degree day in February.

When May and June finally do roll around, my fellow sun lovers and I are the first to slather on coconut oil and broil our flesh. It doesn't matter that our skin will eventually resemble the cracked vinyl seats of a Pinto—we must bake. It doesn't matter that when we're 50 we will be able to play connect the melanoma spots, we are truly convinced that fat thighs look better in brown.

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There is no better place to lay out in Nebraska than your local lake. I prefer frolicking on the gravel covered beaches to actually getting in the water though. If you've ever been to one of Nebraska's small man-made lakes, you would understand.

Apparently, in the lakes that surround my hometown, it is acceptable by law for farmers to dump a certain percentage of bovine fecal matter into the lakes. When the percentage gets too high, they close the lake. It's much like when a hypodermic needle floats up on shore on beaches in California, and they close the beach. Only in Nebraska, it doesn't take a medical biohazard, it takes a cow pie.

I do have braver friends who actually put their heads in the water. I can't do it though. I can tolerate little kid pee at public swimming pools, but I can't take swimming in cow poop diluted with field runoff. I just think it's a really bad sign when your swimsuit turns brown in the water.

Due to unforeseen employment, I don't get to go to the lake like I used to. Still, I enjoy the other perks of summer, one being the state and county fairs. If you have never journeyed to State Fair Park at the end of August, you've missed a true cultural experience. Nothing compares to the intermingled smells of funnel cakes, corn dogs, cow manure and sweaty carnival workers.

I try to avoid the midway, because I always get harassed into throwing darts at balloons in some vain attempt to win a velvet portrait of Elvis. I don't ride the rides anymore either. Prejudiced as it may seem, somehow it doesn't comfort me to get on a rusty Tilt-a-whirl that's being run by a tattooed man with no teeth.

The animals and exhibitors' booths are my deal. If you're cheap and bored, that's the place to be. For a free sticker and pencil, Ben Nelson can have my vote. My favorite booths are the one's that offer free

stuff to those willing to fill out credit card applications. I don't actually want the credit cards, so I sort of fib on my applications. When I attend the fair, I am Lolita Love, a professional foot massager, currently unemployed. But for some reason, I never seem to get approved for a card.

My love for summer is linked also in large part to school phobias. In grade school and high school, June, July and August meant freedom from homework, detention, and the mystery meals in the cafeteria. I suppose that's why I still break into tears when I see back-to-school ads. The first sighting of lunch pails at Target overwhelms me.

But summer also has a way of making going back to school easier. It has a mysterious way of making people forget the horrors of last year. When I went back to school in ninth grade, nobody remembered the winter before. Nobody remembered me falling down in the crosswalk and dropping my book bag down the gutter as a whole school bus full of my classmates watched.

I hope this summer will do the same. If you saw me last year when I knocked my books into Broyhill fountain as I studied, just let summer wash that scene from your memory.

Let it fade like my tan. It's a new year.

**Lampe is a senior news-editorial and English major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.**

**Brent  
POPE**

# Tackling insanity

## Fanatics know no bounds, but they have goals

There is a rampant disease in our society going almost unnoticed. Lots of people are willing to sweep it

under the carpet, but not me. This terrible affliction can cause hysteria, obsession, constant mood swings and (gasp) high fives. The culprit: FOOTBALL.



That's right folks, the sport enjoyed by millions every year has a select few fans afflicted with the disease that doctors call "the pigskin plague." It has no known cure and no known causes. How serious is it? Take a look at this police transcript:

**FRAN:** He was entranced by the football game on TV. I screamed at him for several minutes. I yelled "Are you crazy? There's a giant turtle in the kitchen and he looks hungry!" But the only words he heard were "Are you hungry?" He replied that he was hungry and that he would go with me to get some food during halftime. I knew then that he was a goner.

**OFFICER:** Then what happened?  
**FRAN:** I escaped and went for help, but the turtle attacked him. By the time he knew what was happening, it was too late. He never made it out of the apartment—although technically he did break the plane of

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the goal line he painted by the front door.

What a tragic slice of Americana that was. Sadly, the next transcript is even more unfortunate:

**PETE:** He was OK during the first half, but at halftime he went crazy. He went into his bedroom and I could hear him giving himself a pep talk. He was repeating over and over, "What would Ditka do, what would Ditka do?" About 10 minutes later he came out dressed in his old high school football uniform. He lined up beside the TV and when the ball was snapped, he took off. He ran across the living room, out the patio door and onto the lawn. It was a beautiful fly pattern. Too bad we live on the third floor.

**OFFICER:** How badly was he injured?

**PETE:** Actually, he just hit his head and was knocked a little loopy. When the paramedics arrived he was still shouting, "I was wide open, man!"

I know you've probably heard enough already, but here's one more example to really hammer the point home:

**TERRY:** It started out as something to do on weekends, but I got hooked. I would watch football from noon until 10, and then rewind the tapes in my VCR and watch them again. When football season was over, I couldn't cope.

**OFFICER:** What did you do?  
**TERRY:** Every Sunday during the off season, I took the wife and kids out to Grandpa's farm. I made them play football in the full-size football stadium I built out of cow patties and alfalfa. Little Pattie looked just like Neil Smith when she would tackle my wife, Luella. And my boy Fred can run just like Barry Sanders. But when Grandpa got a concussion during quarterback sack drills, I figured I had a problem.

It's not just individuals who are being affected. Often football can

cause mass nuttiness. This Sunday, thousands of fans will enter Lambeau Field in Green Bay, Wis., wearing large hunks of cheese on their heads. What madness is this?

I just hope there's never a new team with nuclear waste as its mascot. I can see the story now:

*"Thousands arrived at Nuclear Stadium for the first home game of the Plutonium Leakages wearing nothing but a thick coat of uranium. Their bodies shined so brightly there was no need to use the stadium lights."*

This dilemma has no clear-cut solution, but here's what I suggest. If you have "the pigskin plague," try to be considerate of people who are "pigskinless." Every once in a while, tape the football game instead of watching it live. It won't kill you, and besides, that way you can watch it as many times as you want. If you have friends who live for football, don't try to get them to stop. You just can't quit being a football fan. It has a stronger grip than any addictive drug.

How do I know this? Because I am one of the biggest football freaks this earth has ever known. I'm a big part of "the pigskin plague" problem.

Problem? I don't have a problem!

**Pope is a senior broadcasting major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.**