

OPINION PACKAGES

OUR VIEW

Get the drift? As snow piles up, drivers out of luck

Two weeks ago, the City of Lincoln published a full-page map and a step-by-step explanation of the city's snow removal plan in the Daily Nebraskan. This week, ice sheets coating Lincoln's streets reminded students there would be many days ahead of wishing for snow days that just don't happen.

As the weather grows colder, more and more students will be inclined to drive to campus, but when the snow starts falling, fewer and fewer parking spaces will be available as streets are closed for clearing. Still the university maintains its position: Come heck or high snow drifts, school must go on.

If the university wants its students to follow the policies it sets forth, administrative policies should jibe with other rules students are expected to follow.

Here's two that don't jibe: the city's snow-removal parking ban and the snow-day policies (or lack thereof).

UNL has been criticized for having no solid snow-day policy. Administrators huddle together in a warm room close to their reserved parking spots and make a "judgment call" on whether or not to hold classes. In the last two winters, the only class cancellation was a late start — a two-hour delay. School officials have always checked with the UNL police and weather services in order to make a final call.

Perhaps administrators would be wise to check first with city officials who enforce the parking bans for their snow removal program. Parking bans creep onto the UNL campus from all sides, from Ninth to 17th streets and Holdrege to R streets.

Yet, on days when there's enough snow to plow, students are still expected to come to school. One catch: there's nowhere to park. Compounded by the closing of a commuter parking lot by Memorial Stadium, parking will be outrageously difficult on days when it has snowed and half of the city's parking spaces are shut down for plowing.

There is no immediate answer to where students can find more parking (unless administrators take a bit of their own advice, give up their red lots and take the bus in the morning).

If the snow is so bad that it needs to be plowed, it may be dangerous for students to come to class anyway. If UNL ever does decide to adopt a clear snow-day policy, parking bans enforced by the City of Lincoln with threat to tow should have something to do with it.

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MEHSLING'S VIEW



GUEST VIEW

In the now

The student life is no life at all

Editor's note: This column appeared in *The Yale Daily News* and is reprinted here courtesy of U-Wire.

A wise classmate of mine once said: "When you have one foot in the past and one in the future, you're bound to piss on the present." A magazine my roommate once received corroborated: "Going to college is like placing a bet that you'll be alive to live later."

Last month during the rosy days of Parents Weekend, I accompanied my parents to a panel on "Education at Yale." Both President Levin and Dean Brodhead presided on the dusty stage of Woolsey Hall, flanked by well-respected and well-spoken professors. A microphone was in the aisle so inquiring parents could ask the "experts" questions about any minutiae of Yale existence.

The questions were what you would expect: "...affects my son's chances at getting into law school?" "Is it true that Yale Med School accepts a lower percentage of ...?" "... but wouldn't that lower little Susie's probability of going to a good grad school?"

I cringed behind my Parents Weekend brochures full of beaming students as parent after parent tried to determine how best to shuttle their little genius into grad school. No parents asked how to help their children to best relish their time at Yale.

Last week my best friend at Stanford sent out a despairing letter: What happened to spontaneity? I don't want to walk this carefully manicured path from here to power mini-skirts on Wall Street. I don't want precision. I don't want to take this class because it may prove useful later on, I want to take this class because I actually wonder about the life cycles of invertebrates. I want to throw a picnic for a pal and not grow paler in the computer cluster.

We dictate our lives here in pursuit of the sensible and the prudent. "Oh, I guess I'll major in Econ, at least it's useful." Anything interesting — be it a class, an event, or even a person — is sooner or later

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What are we doing anyway? I have never been the paragon of Carpe Diem. The best part of my day is squandered on daydreaming about what hip city I'll be living in after graduation with which hip cats and remembering a time when I had a life and less flab. The present doesn't have the fortune of being seen through a film of nostalgia or through the selective glasses of wishful thinking.

I thought I was the only one sleepwalking through Yale. What a pity that girl doesn't get out more — maybe this summer I will. What a shame that girl was studying on a Saturday night — but I used to be the life of the party. But then I see acquaintances vowing that they would, if only they could.

Maybe I move in more dour circles than most, but when I stop to lift my head from my computer, I see a lot of miserable people — not depressed, perhaps, from the clinical psychiatrist's standpoint, but not particularly alive either. I see a lot of people wandering through a collegiate Gothic limbo, a textbook clutched in one hand, a law school application clenched in the other, wishing they had time to see the play that just went up at the Yale Repertory Theater — whether or not they were railroaded into bursar billing a

Student Pass. Last fall I only went to one play at the Yale Rep, because I had more pressing engagements, like sitting petrified in front of the latest term paper for half a day.

The pain we put ourselves through seems laughable in the context of the decades of life we have left. Had a mental breakdown because of a Chem lab? The stress is not any less because of our circumstances — just more frustrating because it stems from our artificial but necessary constructions of GPAs, career tracks and resumes.

A roommate laments: "I don't read books for pleasure anymore." A friend apologizes: "I just don't see people much anymore." No one seems to have the time to do anything now. Next week. Next semester. Next lifetime.

A classmate laughs: "I was walking down the street when I overheard two New Haven residents talking about how much they would hate to go to Yale. 'They're such robots.'"

The way I see it, we have two choices. Either we quit college and all it entails in pursuit of living in the present, or we stop ordering our lives by what an imagined interviewer would approve of five years down the road. Stay at Yale. Be a student — but resist governing each second by what you ought to do. You are not living for the 30-year-old executive success a decade down the road.

So, take that rumba class at the gym. Start writing the first half of your first book. Put down this week's (or last week's) history reading and surprise your freshman-year roommate for the first time this side of Labor Day. Stop hiding behind the catch-all response of "I just don't have time." The only time to spend, waste, or lavish is now.

Of course, one shouldn't shrug off all responsibilities and classes and plans for the instant gratification of playing hooky. If worst comes to worst, you can always tell your T.A. that the reason you ended up at a Brazilian kick-boxing workshop instead of section was the subliminal message in this column.

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