

OPINION PACKAGES

Our VIEW

Fare well As the year ends, goodbye, good luck

With one deep, collective breath, students across campus are rolling up their sleeves, putting their noses to the grindstone and digging in.

Welcome to finals week 1997.

A week of hats and sweats and circles under your eyes.

A week of the final truths.

A week you sometimes wish would just go away.

It's a time of reckoning and discovery and pulling it out in the end.

Lots of coffee, Mountain Dew and late-night pizza.

Outside of our apartments and rooms, the campus landscape slowly alters, morphing to fit the changing demands of summer.

Campus population begins to dwindle as each finals day drags by. One by one, friends part, words of future reunions echoing behind them as they race full speed toward their summer destinations.

Parking Services always seems to lighten up a bit as school-year residents begin loading up their cars and heading for home.

On Friday, the finals will be over and parts of campus will start to shut down. The residence halls start getting things in order for students and summer camps full of hopeful athletes, journalists and future leaders.

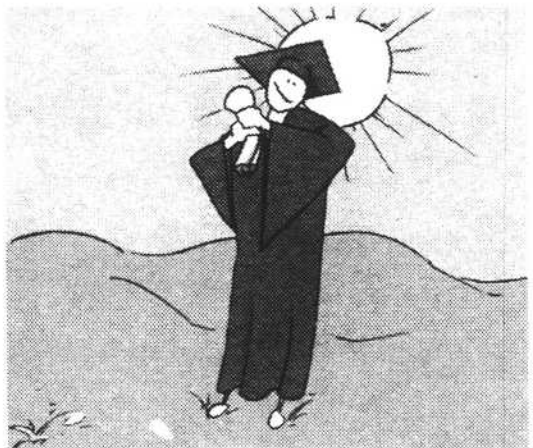
That evening there are little bursts of activity around campus. A few friends coming together to say goodbye — to the stress of classes, the frenzy of finals and a semester of camaraderie.

By Saturday, it's time for the ultimate goodbyes when graduates don cap and gowns. As they walk across campus to Devaney, they walk as students. As they leave, they walk as alumni.

The Daily Nebraskan wishes the graduating seniors the best of luck. It's been four (or five) interesting years, full of highs and lows. Wherever you go, remember, Nebraska is always your home away from home.

To our peers departing for the summer: have a good break. Work hard, play hard and we'll see you in the fall.

To everyone who will be with us over the summer: stay cool. Good luck with classes, work and relaxing — we'll see you around.



EDITOR
Paula Lavigne

OPINION
EDITOR
Jessica Kennedy

EDITORIAL
BOARD
Erin Gibson
Joshua Gillin
Antone Oseka
Julie Sobczyk
Ryan Soderlin

EDITORIAL POLICY

Unsigned editorials are the opinions of the Spring 1997 Daily Nebraskan. They do not necessarily reflect the views of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, its employees, its student body or the University of Nebraska Board of Regents. A column is solely the opinion of its author. The Board of Regents serves as publisher of the Daily Nebraskan; policy is set by the Daily Nebraskan Editorial Board. The UNL Publications Board, established by the regents, supervises the production of the paper. According to policy set by the regents, responsibility for the editorial content of the newspaper lies solely in the hands of its student employees.

LETTER POLICY

The Daily Nebraskan welcomes brief letters to the editor and guest columns, but does not guarantee their publication. The Daily Nebraskan retains the right to edit or reject any material submitted. Submitted material becomes the property of the Daily Nebraskan and cannot be returned. Anonymous submissions will not be published. Those who submit letters must identify themselves by name, year in school, major and/or group affiliation, if any. Submit material to: Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 1400 R St. Lincoln, Neb. 68588-0448. E-mail: letters@unlinfo.unl.edu.

Haney's VIEW



Doug
KOUMA

Closing a chapter UNL needs more patience, cooperation

Call it one of the few perks of this job: I'm giving myself the last word this year.

For the past nine months, rarely has a day passed that I didn't spend some amount of time discussing a story, photo, graphic or what-have-you with a concerned reader.

And rarely has a day passed when I haven't felt some frustration because of that.

Don't get me wrong. Feedback to what we do here — any feedback — is appreciated. I mean that in all sincerity.

Nine out of 10 times, though, that feedback has been negative, and readers' allegations have left me nothing short of dumbfounded.

But I've listened. I haven't always agreed, and I haven't always liked what I've heard, but I've listened.

That seems to be a rare occurrence these days.

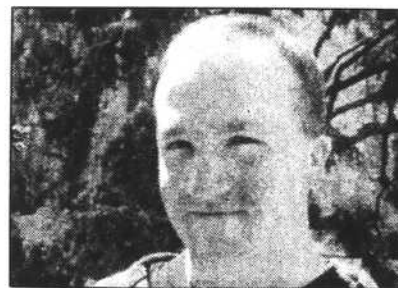
No one listens anymore. No one reads anymore. Everyone has their own viewpoint, their own cause, and whoever is not for them is against them.

As I write this, someone has come into the office with a letter to the editor, and then rudely walked out upon being told there MIGHT not be space in this, our final issue of the year, for her letter.

I've received complaints this year that we're biased. I've been told we're unfair. I've been accused of being sensationalistic.

It's not the complaints themselves that frustrate me. It's that they're often unfounded, and they share no common thread.

Case in point: Early this semester, I received two complaints within an hour of each other. The first was from a fairly outspoken professor on women's issues on campus who told me the Daily Nebraskan, and one reporter in particular, were anti-feminist and anti-woman. The man who made the second complaint told me the DN had a "radical feminist



agenda" and that one columnist in particular was a "radical feminist."

Both readers are certainly entitled to their opinions, but it surprises me how willing they were to level those allegations without making sure they had a leg to stand on.

The professor, for instance, said the reporter was sloppy and couldn't get her facts straight. But when I went back and looked at the particular stories she brought to my attention, I found they were actually written by two different reporters who happen to share the same first name. And upon doing some further fact-checking, I found it was actually the professor who didn't have her facts straight — not the reporter. The professor was wrong, but she didn't let that stop her from getting mad.

When I questioned the man who came to talk to me later that afternoon, he admitted that he had not read a single other piece of that columnist's writing. That didn't stop him from classifying her and the entire paper in that way. Even after I — knowing the writer's true political leanings — told the man he was off base, he would not be deterred.

That was all in just one afternoon. The sad thing is that it wasn't all that out of the ordinary.

On other afternoons, we're too conservative, or we're too liberal. We don't cover enough diversity-related issues, or we cater to minorities. We're unfair to the greek system, or we're too friendly to it. We don't do enough for residence hall students, or we do too much. We fault ASUN where we shouldn't, or

we give it credit where none is deserved.

In short, we're for everything, we're against everything, and no matter what we do, someone is going to get upset. That's the key.

In reality, the problem doesn't lie with the Daily Nebraskan. As the most visible outlet for news and opinion on campus, we probably take the brunt of the criticism. But this attitude — "whoever is not for me is against me" — seems to have taken hold everywhere at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

This undercurrent of tension at UNL has been brewing for some time, and it's started coming to a head this year. Perhaps summer can't come soon enough.

That's sad.

We should consider ourselves lucky to be in a place with such a wealth of ideas, such a variety of viewpoints. We should appreciate that we're able to express those opinions on campus — whatever they may be — through the DN and other means.

We don't need to agree, but we should never let UNL turn into a place where we don't listen to each other and don't respect each other. We need not embrace our opponents, but we must not turn a deaf ear (or a loud mouth) to their ideas. For to fully understand your opponent's argument is to fully understand your own.

As I finish this column, the young woman who came in earlier with a letter to the editor and left upset, has returned — this time with a shorter letter, a sincere smile and a "thank you."

A little more of that could sure go a long way on this campus.

Kouma is a graduating news-editorial major and was the 1996-97 Daily Nebraskan editor. We think he did a good job.