

# Secrets and lies

Columnist takes opportunity to answer letter writers' lingering questions



**STEVE WILLEY is a senior news-editorial major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.**

Well, it's that time of the semester again. Time to openly respond to some of the letters and e-mails I've gotten throughout the year.

Thanks for all of them, by the way.

They're always a hoot to read, especially when they are from my father, and he consistently misspells the phrase, "Yew suc!"

But rather than dance around with boring introductions, let me get right into some of the more interesting letters.

All of these, by the way, are actual letters or e-mails I have received this semester from students.

(Of course the names have been changed, partly to protect the authors, but mostly to help conceal the fact that the letters are all from me.)

And by the looks of them, I'm not the only idiot out there.

"Mr. Willey,

A few months ago, you wrote a column about El Niño. In that column, you wrote, "When I find out who this El Niño fellow is, I'm gonna kick his Mexican ass!" I want you to know that I was extremely offended by this and was wondering why - oh why - you are purposely campaigning to get all Mexicans beaten by garden hoses? You, sir, are a bigot!

An angry Mexican-American."

Dear angry,

You have no idea how much mail I received about his column. I had no idea it would generate such a ruckus. All I was trying to do was play off of my stupidity. I was trying to convey the idea that I actually thought El Niño was a real Mexican person who leapt from state to state spewing horrible weather on folks. Of course, I know now that El Niño is not a real person, but in fact, a Basset hound from San Salvador.

As far as the column is concerned, I wish I had it to do over. I would definitely make the joke more evident. Or perhaps I could have worded it in such a manner that would NOT have set back the struggle of minorities by several decades. Sorry.

"Dear Steve,

After reading your columns for three years, I really feel like I know you. Consequently, I feel like you're the only guy I could possibly confess this to. You see, when I was 6, I used to wear my parents' bed sheets like a big diaper. And they never made a fuss about it; that is, until I insisted on wearing their bed sheets to my sister's wedding 15 years later. Have you ever done something like this?

M.D. Lewandowski

Dear M.D.,

Err, no. Well, I take that back. Once, back in my diaper days, I used to have to wear my pet cat, Speedy, as underwear because my father drank all my "pamper funds." I was too young to remember, but my mom says that every time she would run the electric can opener, I would instantly become "such a happy little Stevie." And when mom would turn off the can opener, I would begin to threaten her with the business end of a plunger until she clicked it on again. I'm kind

of kinky that way.

"Steve-o,

A horrible rumor has been circulating through the company I work for. I heard that you were recently in a terrible auto accident last Tuesday. Is this true? Are you dead? Can I have your bed sheets?

M.D. Skiblando

Dear M.D. (again)

I'm sad to say the rumor is true. It was snowing while I was on the way to Omaha to meet my boss. I was going way to fast and after passing a semi, I lost control of my truck and quickly found myself comfortably sliding down the interstate sideways. I swear this is true!

I guess I was still doing about 70 mph, and I firmly believe that I could have shut my truck off and slid the next 20 miles into Omaha unimpeded. Seriously, I thought I would never stop, but fortunately for me, I was assisted by another semi traveling the opposite direction. I wasn't too banged up; however, when paramedics arrived, they instantly shot my truck. By the way, I was issued a speeding ticket for doing 163 in a 75 when I got hit by the truck.

The tooth fairy, who I later found out at the hospital was actually a highway patrolman, said it was the only speeding ticket he had ever given to a vehicle that was traveling end-over-end.

Mr. Willey,

You don't know me, but I have a couple of classes with one of your roommates, who swears you are in love with Bailey from the TV show "Party of Five." Are you aware that Bailey is a guy?

Sarah Noşine

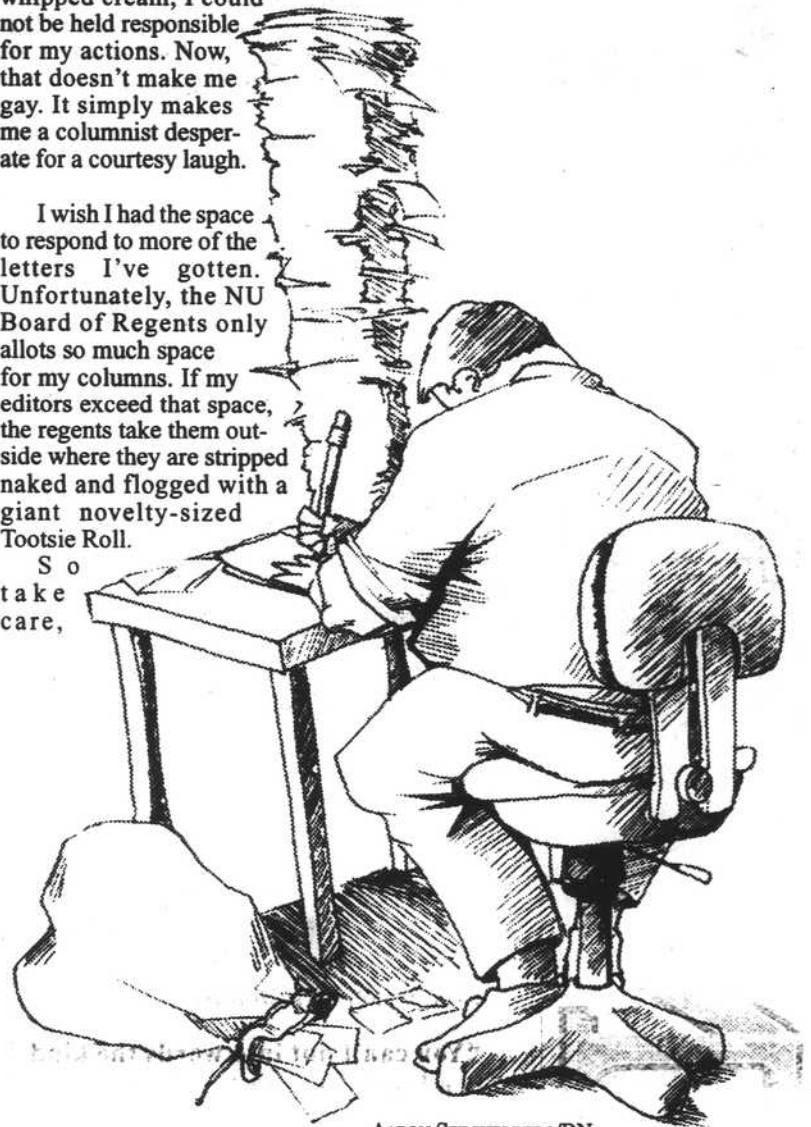
Dearest Sarah,

Of course, I'm aware that Bailey

Salinger is a guy, but you see, I'm confident enough in my sexuality that I can openly express whether or not I find another man attractive. In Bailey's case, not only am I confident enough to say that I find him gorgeous, but I'm also confident enough to state that if I were ever left alone in a room with Bailey and some whipped cream, I could not be held responsible for my actions. Now, that doesn't make me gay. It simply makes me a columnist desperate for a courtesy laugh.

I wish I had the space to respond to more of the letters I've gotten. Unfortunately, the NU Board of Regents only allots so much space for my columns. If my editors exceed that space, the regents take them outside where they are stripped naked and flogged with a giant novelty-sized Tootsie Roll.

So take care,



AARON STECKELBERG/DN

## Suicidal tendencies

Ending it all is no solution to holiday blues



**CLIFF HICKS is a news-editorial and English major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.**

Don't do it.

Believe me, I know that someone somewhere is thinking about it, but suicide is not an option.

Trust someone who knows.

Oh, I might not know your specific problems, friend, but believe me, I have walked down a similar road - the way is hard for a lot of us. You aren't the only one who has considered the idea.

Around the holidays, suicide becomes a tempting option to many of us. It's an easy way out of a lot of problems, it's a rest from all the hardships - these are the things we tell ourselves while we're thinking about it.

Lies.

It's a cheap way out.

Holiday times can be tough on a lot of us. Sure, it's supposed to be the joyous season where everyone is happy, everything goes right and our lives are so much brighter.

But for a lot of people, it simply doesn't work that way.

During the holidays, some peo-

ple spend a lot of time alone, and let me tell you that it's no fun, because I too have been there. I've spent those long days looking at the television set, trying to find solace in the two-dimensional figures that banter endlessly at me.

They offer no support.

This and Valentine's Day are the two holidays I hate the most for various reasons: Christmas because it looms like a shadow over next year, and the week following will set the pace for the next year. Valentine's Day I just hate on principle because I'm single and am working on beating Genghis Khan's record for "attractive to the least amount of people in a lifetime."

What can I say, it's a tough world.

Christmas, however, reminds a lot of people that they really don't have a place to go home to, or people to help them endure the rough weather. While some people are spending the holiday with family and loved ones, they don't feel like they really have a place to go where they fit in.

My brothers and sisters, I too have shared the sentiment.

It's a hard holiday on the forlorn and discontented.

Despite that, though, to say that you aren't loved enough to merit your own death is simply an empty statement.

Most of the people who write this kind of thing, urging people not to take their own life during this time of year, have never had these kinds of problems. They've never really felt the pangs of depression weighing

down their soul. They've never felt like there was no other way out.

Sometimes they'll tell you that God will help you escape from your problems, or that if you look into yourself, the answer will be revealed. They tell you that suicide is a cowardly thing to do.

They tell you that they understand.

Well, understanding and knowing are two entirely different things.

They understand - I know.

I have thought about suicide before and probably will again. It's not like it's something you can easily dispel. Life is problematic; such is its nature. I've walked down the dark path of life, striving to find a foothold as nearly everything fell out from under me.

Believe me, I know.

Each time I think about it, I talk myself down. There are a lot of reasons why, most of which apply to each and every one of you. The first reason is your friends.

You're going to say you don't have friends, or don't have good friends.

I've felt the same way too. But stop and think how many people would show up to your funeral if you killed yourself. Think of how many people whose life you have influenced one way or another. Think of how many of them would miss you.

Just a few days ago, I was rather frustrated as I was preparing to leave work. A friend of mine asked me if I was going home. I told her I might go home or I might just drive my truck off a bluff - it was something

said in frustration really, I haven't been suicidal for a while. But her reaction was what struck me.

"Hey now, that wouldn't be kosher."

I started thinking about all of my friends who would be angry, hurt and confused by my death. My life has been centered on trying to help people do better in their life, in the hope that I'll find the way to help myself. I thought about all the people who would never really understand what I'd be trying to say.

Believe me, everyone you know knows about you. Just because they don't hang out with you, don't call you and don't check up on you doesn't mean they don't care. A lot goes on behind people's backs, and people check up on one another through the network of friends.

The friend who said that to me doesn't call, doesn't visit, doesn't hang out with me, and on days I'm hard-pressed to even be able to use the term to apply to her; but that's what she is, I'd like to think.

Take a long step back and look at the problems that you're having and they'll seem small in perspective. No matter how big they are, they can be beat, or they can be run from, or they can be corrected.

The only thing irreversible is death.

I'm telling you right now, from one depressed person to another, suicide may seem tempting at times, but it isn't the way. You can't change your mind, there's no turning back, and there are always going to be at least a few good times ahead.

everybody, and Merry Christmas. Unless, of course, you're the driver of the semi truck - parts of which are still embedded in my spleen.

If you're him, piss off!