

Prokop article, homophile book similar

A recent column submitted to the Daily Nebraskan and the Douglas County Gazette has yet to fly safely from the spin of a political merry-go-round.

Just as discussion about NU Regent Robert J. Prokop's column on homosexuality appeared to end, a new concern has arisen.

Every paragraph in Prokop's column except the first and last, is similar to portions of the first 16 pages of a book, "Homosexuality: Disease or Way of Life." In his column, Prokop did not mention the book or its author, Edmund Bergler, M.D.

Prokop, in response to first semester Daily Nebraskan Editor Gary Seacrest's request to write a "Guest Opinion" column offered an article in reaction to a four-part series, "Gay Life in Lincoln," which had appeared in the campus paper earlier in the semester.

When the Daily Nebraskan didn't run the column, it was given to Anne Batchelder, publisher-editor of the Douglas County Gazette. She printed it, calling the Daily Nebraskan's failure to do so, "discrimination at its finest by a paper that professes freedom of the press."

When approached Wednesday afternoon about similarities in his column and the book, Prokop called them "most interesting."

"I don't know the book, and I don't know the authority," Prokop said. And since he'd had "only half an hour" on homosexuality in medical school, Prokop said, he'd "gone back to somebody who's an authority."

Prokop called the Daily Nebraskan Wednesday

night and said, upon looking over his notes, he discovered he had used Bergler's book as a reference.

In the earlier interview, he said, specifically, he had borrowed 10-15 books from the NU Medical Center library. He later said one of them may have been Bergler's book because "one of the books I took out was published in New York"—as was Bergler's.

He also said Bergler may have been quoted in the textbooks he'd taken from the library.

"I went through five or six copies," Prokop said as he described how he wrote the column.

"You don't just sit down and write the manuscript right away," he said. "It's just too touchy."

Prokop said his intent in writing the column was to show a view of homosexuality he said he felt the series left out. He said he felt the series and other Daily Nebraskan articles have been "very strongly pro-gay liberation."

"And what I wrote I consider to be my best opinion of the subject," he said.

A University of Nebraska Associate Professor of psychology, James K. Cole, said Wednesday Prokop picked "the worst possible depiction of homosexuality one can find."

Cole said what he finds most surprising in Bergler's theories is the contention—after he calls gays "exquisite injustice collectors" and "psychic masochists"—that homosexuality is "a curable disease."

Cole said psychoanalysts may have a vested professional interest in mental illness, in that the more illnesses they determine need curing, the more patients they gain.



NU Regent Robert Prokop

Bergler's book is old, Cole said, for books on homosexuality. Most research on gay people has been done since the book was published in 1957, he said.

He stressed that Bergler's relationship to homosexuality was "almost totally with patients. He dealt only with disturbed people."

Cole said "there are many well-adjusted, highly productive homosexuals in our society—bankers, ministers, insurance executives, etc. But they're not very visible to society."

He said he didn't know if most psychologists agree with him or Bergler. There are many on both sides, he noted.

Seacrest said Prokop's column did not appear first semester because, "I received the article late in the semester and had many letters to the editor and other guest columns to run."

The article was passed on to the current Daily Nebraskan editor Barry Pilger, Seacrest said, who expressed his intent to use it.

"I told Regent Prokop that I'd print it (the article) but that I wanted to talk to him first," Pilger said.

He said he felt "a new column, rather than a runoff from last semester" would be best. In any case, he said, he felt the writing in the homosexuality column would have to be improved before he could run it.

Exerpts from the column and the book are listed below.

From Prokop's column in the Douglas County Gazette:

"Every homosexual is an exquisite injustice collector and a psychic masochist (sic): a neurotic who constantly creates by means of his own unconscious provocations, situations in which he finds himself behind the eight-ball. . .

"Without being an alarmist, I believe that a serious social problem, so far totally mishandled exists and that there is an urgent need for public clarification. Homosexuality is a cureable disease."

From Bergler's book, *Homosexuality: Disease or Way of Life*:

"Every homosexual is an exquisite injustice collector, and consequently a psychic masochist. The psychic masochist is a neurotic who constantly creates, by means of his own unconscious provocations, situations in which he finds himself 'behind the eight-ball' . . .

"Without being an alarmist, or sounding the alarm, I believe that a serious social problem, so far totally mishandled, exists, and that there is an urgent need for public clarification of it."

Foreign study includes more than language

Editor's note—This is the second of two articles dealing with the opportunities for foreign study available to UNL students.

by Sara Schwieder

When most students think of foreign study, they think of language study, but an increasing number of programs in other subject areas have opened up.

For instance, the architecture department sponsors a semester in London every year from January to June, with May left free for independent travel. This year the emphasis is on architectural history and urban problems.

The sociology department also had a program in London second semester, so the two departments had some interdisciplinary courses. Both groups lived in the same part of London and had informal seminars combining sociology with architecture for an urban studies experience.

"It was a terrific experience," said Mark Reinmiller, a senior who participated in the program last year. "It was a good experience to live in a different culture and really be a part of it. . . to live

under socialism and get a different viewpoint of America's political processes."

Although the architecture program is limited to architecture majors, the sociology section was open to any student taking sociology courses.

"A Heritage of Fashion" course is offered by the home economics department each summer during the first summer school session. It includes five and a half weeks in Europe centered on fashion. Students visit design houses, couture shops, talk to designers and preview new designer lines. The tour costs about \$1,900 including room, board and transportation costs.

The European fashion course alternates every year with a \$350 New York City version. This year the group goes to New York.

The course is open to non-majors who have had at least 12 hours in the textiles, clothing and design department.

Many interim courses were offered this year,

including an English theater course in London, an education course studying British schools and "British Government and Comparative Politics" through the political science department.

The architecture department offered a course in London entitled "The Philosophy and Development of English Architecture."

Another architecture group went to Mexico City to study Mexican architecture, then went to rural Mexico and Yucatan to study ancient Mayan and Aztec ruins.

Sixteen business administration students also began an interim study tour in Mexico City, but continued to El Salvador and Costa Rica. They earned six hours credit under the course title "Marketing in Selected Foreign Countries." The group had seminars from October to February to orient themselves to business problems they encountered on the field trip.

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'A terrific experience'. . . UNL students roam the streets of London.