

# Europeans differ in drinking habits — professor

By Jeanne Mohatt

Europeans have different drinking habits and attitudes than Americans do, says a UNL assistant professor of psychology.

Gary Lawson, 36, teaches a weekend course for people who work with alcoholics or in alcoholism-related fields. The study of cultural differences in drinking habits is only one part of the course.

Lawson has worked for 10 years with those suffering from alcoholism. At one

time he was the director of an in-patient clinic in Carbondale, Ill.

### Work as interns

Most of the 12 people taking the course, which began Saturday and will end June 29, work part-time as interns in agencies across the state, Lawson said. Some of those agencies are the United Catholic Services and the Immanuel Medical Center Alcoholism Treatment Center, both of Omaha, the Independent Center of Lincoln, and the Washington County Alcoholism Program of Blair.

Lawson said the course is an examination of community issues, national, state and local alcoholism agencies, legal issues, cultural attitudes, referral techniques, and service planning.

"We spend half a day on abnormal psychology—issues involving the complications of alcoholism," he said. "Not everybody who is an alcoholic has other complications."

But some alcoholics can have problems ranging from "a simple neurosis to a pretty heavy psychosis," he said.

### Cultural differences

Lawson, who has a doctoral degree in counselor training, said he was stationed in Europe for about five years during the Vietnam conflict. There, he had a chance to view firsthand the cultural differences between the European and American drinking habits.

"The English pub is a great deal different from the American cocktail bar," he said.

The pubs serve lunch from 11 to 2, and then close until 6 p.m. Then they reopen for about four hours.

The pubs have both a lounge and a bar, he said. The bar is for the working class people, while the lounge is where men take their wives to sit and talk.

Americans have abused drinking because "as a country, we're puritanical in our background and approach to drinking," he said.

Americans think they are doing what is outside of the accepted norms of several religions.

Lawson said he will teach another course entitled "Treatment Methods and Modalities" beginning July 12. The three-credit-hour class will meet on three consecutive weekends from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Lawson said anyone wishing to attend the course can register at 9 a.m. July 12 in Room 111 Burnett Hall.

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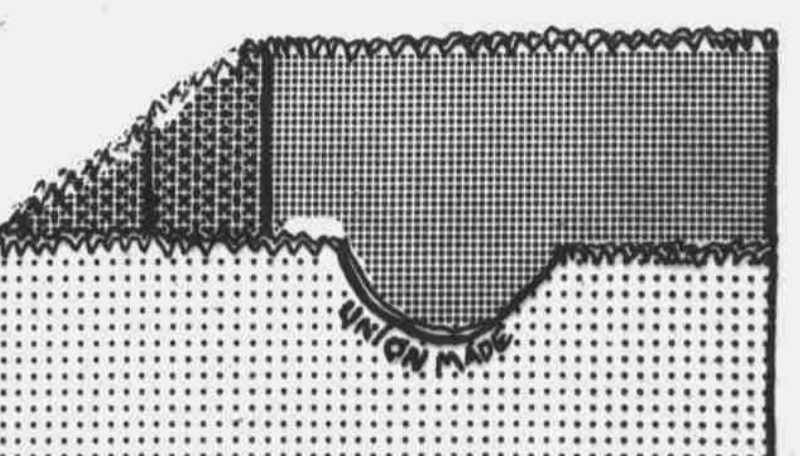
  
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