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Daily Nebraskan

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Ad expert unveils myths, links alcohol to unreality

By Joe Dejka Staff Reporter

Alcohol advertisers promote the "mythology of alcohol" by linking alcohol use with positive images and values in society, said a nationally recognized media expert.

As part of UNL's Wellness Week, Jean Kilbourne spoke to a crowd of about 1,100 people in the Nebraska Union ballroom Monday night. Her speech was titled "Under the Influence — The Pushing of Alcohol via Advertising."

Kilbourne said advertisers create ads that suggest that desire for power, sexual gratification, acceptance and happiness can be fulfilled by using alcohol.

In reality, the images advertisers associate with their products often are opposite to the true effects of drinking, she said.

For example, some advertisers use sexual imagery to sell liquor, but alcohol can cause sexual dysfunction in men and women and can cause birth defects, Kilbourne said.

Images of happy people in happy homes that appear in alcohol advertising are deceiving because alcohol commonly is linked to violence, divorce and broken homes, she said. Children are lead to believe that to be "grown up" means to drink alcohol, she said.

Alcohol producers hire campus representatives to reach the college drinkers Kilbourne said. Twenty five percent more college students drink today than a generation ago, she said.

Demographic and psychographic information on the public is available to advertisers, who then use the information to more accurately target the population, she said.

"We are the product. We are sold to the advertiser," she said.

Kilbourne said the disease of alcoholism can affect anyone, so people must become aware of the content in advertisements and of the disease itself.

She said it is impossible to get accurate information from the media because it has a direct interest in keeping accounts with alcohol advertisers.

Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity, Delta Gamma sorority and the Lincoln Council on Alcoholism and Drugs co-sponsored Kilbourne's presentation as part of "Do It Sober III," an annual alcohol awareness function. The function included free non-alcoholic daiquiris. It was sponsored by the UNL Panhellenic Association.

University Magazine converts documentary to mini-segments

By Jen Deselms Staff Reporter

University Magazine, a 30-minute TV program, has been on the air for five years — but this season the format has changed, said Joe Rowson, UNL director of public affairs and the show's executive producer.

In the past, the program was a documentary with a 15-minute feature.

This season the show presents a four- or fiveminute feature with smaller segments in other areas.

The weekly program has information about Wellness, home tips, parenting, fitness and a showcase on a campus project.

The program's \$23,000 budget is split among the five information offices at UNL, UNO and NU

Medical Center. The program's main cost was for Nebraska Educational TV studio rental.

Rowson said the program's purpose is to keep Nebraskans informed about the university. Since the university is tax supported, he said the public has a right to know what is happening on the campuses.

Rowson said 19 regular editions are planned, and as many as five live call-in programs could be scheduled.

Next week, University Magazine will give tips for viewing Halley's comet, and discuss heart disease, heat pumps for home heating and cooling, running as part of a fitness program and the UNL Wick Alumni Center.

University Magazine is shown Monday at 9:30 p.m. on Nebraska Educational TV.

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