

Legislative bill could nail salons with rules

BY JESSICA FARGEN
Senior staff writer

Legislature



Many women can tell stories about dark fungus forming under their acrylic nails, paying \$25 for a meager nail job or even loss of a fingernail because the person who put on their false nails was not properly trained.

Omaha Sen. Deb Suttle is aiming to up the standards of nail technicians and salons through LB68. The bill would require nail technicians to take 600 hours of education on nail technician skills, such as applying acrylic nails.

Nebraska is one of four states that does not require licensing of nail salons or training of nail technicians. If the bill passes, all nail technicians and salons would have to be licensed by January 2000.

"People have come in and set up nail salons without any thought to health concerns and sanitation concerns," Suttle said.

Cut-rate salons can be very dangerous, several Lincoln nail technicians said, and it is about time Nebraska imposed some regulations.

Hana Van, manager of Unique Nails, 220 N. 66th St., said untrained nail technicians may not know what to do with clients who have fungus underneath their nails.

"Some technicians may keep going over (fungus) without treating it, which can, in the long run, be extremely unhealthy and damaging to the nails," Van said.

Fungus can get underneath a nail if the acrylic nail is loose or not adhered right, said Van, who has

been a nail technician for six years. Jessica Scott, a nail technician at Heavenly Nails, 1144 Belmont Ave., laid out more nasty consequences of inept nail technicians.

"If they don't sanitize their tools correctly, you could get certain blood diseases if there is a cut," Scott said. "You could go to a nail salon that has never been inspected, and they could be using improper products."

Scott also said some salons use cheap poisonous chemicals such as methyl methacrylate, known as MMA, to attach artificial nails. Once the chemical is applied to nails it gets so hard technicians must use an electric file to remove it, Scott said.

"The prolonged use of MMA products on your nail can actually cause the whole nail to come off," Scott said.

John Miner, consumer service supervisor for the Lincoln/Lancaster County Health Department, said nail salons were not the only places where regulation was lacking.

"There's a lot of things, like tattoos, nail care, false nails, sun-tanning - none of which are regulated by any governmental agency in the state or local government - but people keep wanting less government," Miner said. "But because they've got a consumer complaint, they expect government to step in and do something."

Complaints about fungus, damage to real nails and even false nails falling off in food top off the list of

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JESSICA SCOTT
nail technician

nail salon complaints the department hears.

Miner said the department was neutral on the bill.

Under the bill, nail technicians would be required to pay a licensing fee between \$10 and \$300. The appropriation bill for LB68 was advanced to Select File by senators Wednesday.

Suttle said the majority of nail salons were safe, but a few bad ones could really wreak havoc on someone's hands.

"Most of them are sanitary because you lose business if you kept a shoddy shop, but there's still no rules or regulations."

Although laws are one way to regulate nail salons, people also need to be smart consumers by asking questions and not taking "I don't know" as an answer from nail technicians, Scott said.

If consumers have any concerns, they should ask a lot of questions, he said, or find a new salon if they are not happy with what they are getting.

Lecture to examine minorities in writing

■ An English scholar will conduct discussions about representing women and other groups in writing.

BY VERONICA DAEHN
Staff writer

Authors writing about those different than themselves must be careful to paint an accurate picture of the characters in their stories, says a University of Michigan professor who will visit UNL today.

Ann Ruggles Gere, through her work in minority representation, wants to make sure minorities and women are portrayed accurately in literature and history.

Gere, chairwoman of the Joint doctorate program in English and Education at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, will address the problem in her lecture today at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Her presentation, titled "Consuming Voices: Perspectives on Representing Others," will be at 3:30 p.m. in the Andrews Hall Dudley Bailey Library, and is open to the public.

Gere feels particularly strong about the representation of women.

"It's important to educate people about women's studies issues because we keep losing the history of women," she said. "Where women and minorities are concerned, they are not usually the ones who get to tell their own stories."

Gere, who has written or edited about a dozen scholarly books and 30 articles, said she has seen representation become a continual problem.

"I saw this again and again in my book on women's clubs," she said. "The public statements about women's clubs were terrible distortions of what these

groups were actually doing." In her most recent book, "Intimate Practices: Literacy and Cultural Work in U.S. Women's Clubs 1880-1920," Gere said she focused on reading and writing among many groups of women.

Blacks, Mormons, Jewish Americans, American Indians, the working class and white middle-class Protestants are included, she said.

Gere, who is affiliated with the women's studies program at UM, said she is working on another book with her daughter.

The book, titled "Woman of the King Salmon: a Mother Daughter Memoir," has taken her in a new direction, Gere said.

"My current project is very different from anything I've ever written in that it is addressed to a more general audience, is co-written with my daughter, and is much more personal," she said.

Debbie Minter, assistant professor of English, played a large role in bringing Gere to UNL.

"I thought that given the challenges we face to build literacy, it would be useful for us and her to have her here," Minter said. "The research she's doing is compelling for a broad range of students and faculty."

Minter, who is involved with the women's studies program, said Gere's address will serve a necessary purpose.

"It's crucial to address representation," she said. "It matters how you represent someone else in your research."

There will also be a series of informal discussions led by Gere today and Friday, Minter said. Those interested in attending should contact Minter at (402) 472-1846.

"Now is a crucial time to use writing and reading as a way of engaging with our differences, as a way of building community," Minter said. "(Gere's) research is based on this."

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