

Berlin University to offer class on Diana

BERLIN (CPS) --When two academics at Berlin's Free University planned a new lecture course on Princess Diana, they never imagined they'd create a media frenzy themselves, they say. But at the first lecture in early November, reporters outnumbered students in the 164-seat auditorium.

The lecture series, called "Myths and Politicians: Diana, From the Princess of Wales to the Queen of Hearts," takes the questions about Diana's Aug. 31 death and the intense media attention that followed it to the classroom, say its creators, professors Sabine Berghahn and Sigrid Koch-Baumgarten.

"The university in particular seemed to be the appropriate place to reflect on current events that affect the public," stated the two women in a press release.

Diana, explained the professors, was portrayed at various times as "Diana the modern Mary figure, the saint of women, the priestess of the victim culture," so "how did it come about that Diana yielded so many contrary identities and projects?"

To find out, lectures will compare Diana to other figures, such as Eva Peron and the Virgin Mary, and explore how the Diana myth was exploited politically and led to the public backlash against the paparazzi and press.

SUNY President refuses to quit over sex conference

NEW PALTZ, N.Y. (CPS) --The president of the State University of New York at New Paltz refuses to resign because his campus sponsored a sex conference that included workshops on sex toys and sadomasochism.

Roger Bowen, New Paltz's president, told the Associated Press he would not turn the president's office into "a board of censorship." He added that if he submitted his resignation, it would "give in to phillistines."

The furor erupted when New York Gov. George Pataki ordered an inquiry into the conference, called "Revolutionary Behavior: The Challenges of Women's Sexual Freedom." The forum, sponsored by the university's women's studies program, included panels such as "Safe, Sane and Consensual S/M" and "How To Get What You Want In Bed."

Some state officials were infuriated when they learned the university had helped pay for the forum. Several SUNY trustees have asked SUNY's chancellor to fire Bowen.

But Bowen says a democratic society must allow people to express different or unpopular views without punishment.

"Billy clubs are not used today to prevent free speech, but what still does happen on occasion is the intervention of authorities who seek to curb speech with the argument that speech loses its protection if it occurs in public-supported arenas and if its content is offensive to the champions of political correctness," Bowen was quoted by as saying by the AP.

Sigma Chi sues University of Miami over sanctions

By Frances Robles
Knight-Ridder/Tribune News Services

MIAMI-- Claiming it's a victim of a land grab, a fraternity has sued the University of Miami for putting it on ice last month because of a drunken party.

Sigma Chi came under fire last year after two 18-year-old women freshmen who attended a party at the campus fraternity house told police they were sexually assaulted and possibly drugged. The claim led to sexual assault charges against two fraternity brothers.

Michael Schoepner later pleaded guilty to false imprisonment and was expelled. Charges were dropped against co-defendant Lucas Folsie.

When the criminal investigation ended, the university suspended Sigma Chi for a year. The case's 1,500 pages of depositions revealed a myriad of school alcohol violations: underage drinking, underage bartenders, hard liquor and punch in open containers. School leaders sanctioned the fraternity last month, suspending it from recruiting or holding social events for a year.

For fraternity members, it was a death sentence.

The fraternity house has room for 34 students. Twenty-four live there now-

13 of whom will graduate this year. With 11 remaining fraternity brothers and no one taking their place or picking up their rent payments, the fraternity would be seven students short of the amount needed to make the \$100,000 mortgage payments, the lawsuit says.

The 55-year-old chapter spent \$100,000 on renovations this summer because university officials had previously told the fraternity they would be allowed to recruit new members, the suit alleges.

The lawsuit argues that the punishment is part of a master plan to take over the 16-bedroom fraternity property. The valuable frat house reverts to UM if the club ceases to exist.

Pat Whitely, UM's vice president for student affairs, said the university has no plans to take over Sigma Chi's house.

"That is not in any of our strategic plans," Whitely said. "We have a rich 55-year history with Sigma Chi. Some of that in fact most is very positive. We look forward to welcoming them back in the fall of '98."

She said the past good relationship was one of the factors considered in meting out the punishment: suspension until May 1998; the requirement of three community service projects; and creation of a risk

management program for Greek officers.

"The university thoroughly and thoughtfully investigated this matter, and we took appropriate action," Whitely said. "We interviewed over 62 people and read 1,500 pages of depositions. We stand by our position that the fraternity violated our strict alcoholic beverage policy."

Sigma Chi attorney Curt Carlson contends the university did not follow its own rules. The fraternity never received written notice of formal charges, a hearing or a chance to appeal, he said.

"I'm not asking for money to make up our mortgage," he said. "I'm saying: 'Give us our rights we are entitled to. Let us have the procedure and then we'll take whatever punishment and pain we're due.' I'm shocked that an institution of higher learning that teaches respect for such rights would violate these rights."

The suit alleges that the university side-stepped procedure because UM President Edward "Tad" Foote wanted to appear pro-active in light of a scheduled Miami Herald editorial. The suspension came three days before the opinion piece ran.

"It was no coincidence," Carlson said.

But Whitely says that's exactly what it was: happenstance.

Breaks await students in new tax law

By Wendy E. Mahoud, CPA
The Northern Star
Northern Illinois University

Students get some breaks in the new tax law. All of these are effective for the 1998 tax year but should be considered now as part of your educational financial planning.

Two tax credits are available for qualifying individuals for tuition expenses. The HOPE scholarship credit provides a maximum tax credit of \$1,500 per student for each of the first two years of college. More specifically, it allows for a 100 percent credit per student for the

credit of \$1,000) until the year 2003 when the amount eligible for the credit increases to \$10,000 (maximum credit of \$2,000). The maximum allowed is calculated per taxpayer, not student. So an individual that is paying college expenses for several children that are eligible for the Lifetime Learning Credit can currently take a maximum credit of only \$1,000.

The Lifetime Learning Credit is available for an unlimited number of years and is available for undergraduate, graduate and professional degree expenses. It may also be claimed for any course

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The HOPE credit can only be elected for two tax years with respect to one student. It is available for tuition expenses in an academic period beginning during the same tax year or commencing within three months of the beginning of the following year. Note that the credit may be elected for two tax years. So, if an individual enrolls as a freshman in August of 1998, his first two years of college will span three tax years. To get the most of the credit, he may wish to pay the second semester tuition of his freshman year (which would be spring of 1999) in December of 1998 and do the same thing with his second semester sophomore tuition of 1999. He would use the credit for the years 1998 and 1999. The credit amount is calculated per student. So a family with a freshman and sophomore in college could use the HOPE scholarship credit for each child for a total credit of \$3,000 per year.

In order to claim the HOPE credit, a student must be enrolled in a degree or certificate program and carry at least half of the normal full-time course load for at least one semester during the year. The student may take less than one-half load for the other semester.

The Lifetime Learning Credit allows a credit of 20 percent of qualified tuition expenses paid by an individual for any year the HOPE credit is not claimed for a student. This credit is available for the first \$5,000 of tuition paid (maximum

at an eligible institution that helps an individual acquire or improve job skills. So, continuing education expenses and professional seminars qualify for this credit as long as they do not qualify as business deductions.

Both of these credits are subject to income limitations. The amount of the credit that is allowed is reduced for most taxpayers when their modified adjusted gross income (AGI) reaches \$40,000 for single filers and \$80,000 for joint filers. The credits are not allowed if their AGI is over \$50,000 for single filers and \$100,000 for joint filers. Both credits are available to the taxpayer for amounts paid for himself, his spouse or dependents.

If you receive loans to pay for your education, you are still eligible for the credit in the year in which the tuition is paid. However, you may not use the credit for tuition that is paid with scholarships or grants.

Also, beginning in 1998, interest paid on education loans will be deductible. In 1998, the maximum interest deduction will be \$1,000. This amount will be increased by \$500 per year until the year 2001 when the maximum amount of interest deductible will be \$2,500. These amounts will not be indexed for inflation, and the deduction will be reduced for single filers with an AGI over \$40,000 and married filers with an AGI over \$60,000. Virtually any loan that a student receives will be eligible for this deduction except for loans made by family members. A taxpayer does not have to itemize deductions to claim this deduction.

earned 251 Ph.D.'s; Mexican Americans, 282; and other Hispanics, 417.

White Americans earned slightly fewer Ph.D.'s in 1996 -- 23,956 down from 23,920 in 1995. The same was true of Asian Americans, who received 1,091 doctorates last year, compared with 1,140 in 1995.

Women also earned more doctorates. Women accounted for about 40 percent of the degrees awarded in 1996, earning 16,945 degrees, up from 16,414 in 1995.

Women earning doctorates outnumbered men in education and in the social sciences. In the humanities, women earned nearly as many Ph.D.'s as men: 2,544 women

compared with 2,572 men.

Men dominated in engineering, the physical sciences and life sciences. Men, for example, earned 5,529 Ph.D.'s in engineering, while women received 776.

The National Research Council's final report, "Summary Report 1996: Doctorate Recipients from United States Universities," will be available in late December or early January. Copies of the report will be available at no charge from the Doctorate Records Project, Office of Scientific and Engineering Personnel, National Research Council, 2101 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Room TJ 2006, Washington, D.C. 20418; or by e-mail at phdsurvey@nas.edu.

A virtual Thanksgiving

Internet recipes aid holiday tradition

(CPS) -- If you're spending Thanksgiving without Mom's home cooking, don't despair.

You'll find tips on preparing the perfect Thanksgiving meal, including turkey and all the trimmings, on the Internet.

Here are a few sites to help prepare you for the coming holiday:

- * Enroll in a crash course on turkey cooking at Butterball University. The Butterball Turkey website at www.butterball.com offers a seven-week course on how to prepare the bird of your dreams. By Thanksgiving, you'll have the

lowdown on thawing, stuffing, roasting, garnishing, carving and preparing leftovers. Since this is a non-credit course, for once the only cramming you'll may need to do will involve finding space for a 20-pound bird in your refrigerator.

- * Who better to turn to than domestic goddess Martha Stewart for a few tasteful tips on how to decorate your Thanksgiving table. In fact, Martha, who launched her own home page this fall, can show you how to make a table runner from little more than grosgrain ribbons, glue and oak leaves. Not only will the runner class up your table, but time spent making it should provide the perfect excuse to avoid studying. You'll find the Martha's site at www.marthastewart.com.

- * Face it. Hardly anyone's family mirrors "Leave It To Beaver" TV-land perfection. Your mom's not June Cleaver, and it's good thing, too, because that 'd make you the Beav'. So if the family starts getting to you this holiday, try visiting the Kaplan Thanksgiving page, found at www.kaplan.com/holiday/turkey.html. The site adopts a mirthful attitude about family bickering. It also has a Spin the Turkey game if you're looking for a distraction.

- * After gorging on turkey and stuffing, Americans turn to football. Keep up the tradition by checking out the recommendations of ESPN's SportsZone NFL site on the Net. You'll find it at www.espn.com/sportszone/nfl/.

- * If you're one of those rare birds who think there's more to Thanksgiving than turkey and football, then why not spend some time reading through the oral histories of American immigrant families at www.aristotle.net/thanksgiving/thanks.htm. The site contains a touching selection of stories from people about how their families came to America.

Czechs rally against racism after student's murder

Czech leaders join citizens in demonstration

Reuter

PRAGUE, Czech Republic -- Czech leaders joined several thousand demonstrators Monday to condemn the apparent racially motivated murder of a Sudanese student as the government struggled with growing concerns over racism.

In the televised rally outside Prague's Economics University, politicians called for tolerance and solidarity with minorities and foreign residents and tougher sanctions against racist groups, including neo-Nazi skinheads.

"It's high time to outlaw organizations which are connected to racism," Senate chairman Petr Pithart told the rally.

Hassan Elamin Abdelradi, an economics student, was stabbed to death on his way from a nightclub early Saturday by an 18-year-old skinhead who chased him and a Sudanese colleague into a dormitory at the Economics University, police said.

The skinhead was arrested and charged with a racially motivated murder. Hassan's colleague was slightly injured.

President Vaclav Havel, who has

been hospitalized with pneumonia, issued a statement saying that the attack showed "the state executive has not solved problems sufficiently."

This and other murders did not have to happen," said the Havel statement, read at the rally.

Last month Havel called on Czechs to fight against "latent" racism in Czech society.

The latest attack came as the government tries to respond to the exodus of hundreds of Czech gypsies who sought political asylum in Canada and Britain, claiming discrimination against them and fearing attacks by skinheads.

The wave resulted in a reimposition of visa requirements for Czechs going to Canada.

Neither Britain nor Canada has granted asylum to the gypsies, saying the applicants were not able to prove institutional discrimination. Many have returned home.

The leaders of the Czech lower house and the Senate called for a legal ban on the so-called "skinhead movement" which would prohibit groups founded on racist principles from organizing meetings and assembling.

"It is not possible any more to approach organized violence with any kind of appeasement. Let this event be a challenge to us," Deputy Prime Minister Jiri Skalicky told the rally.

Minorities receive more doctorates

CPS

WASHINGTON (CPS) --A record number of minority students earned doctorates at American universities, according to a new study by the National Research Council.

Black, Hispanic, Asian and American Indian students received 3,542 Ph.D.'s in 1996, up from 3,517 in 1995. The number of doctoral degrees awarded to American minority students rose in each ethnic group, except for Asian Americans.

Black Americans received 1,315 doctorates last year, while American Indians earned 186. Puerto Ricans