



The Society for Creative Anachronisms relived the days of old Friday in a mock battle on the HUB Lawn. The group promotes the culture and the practices of the Middle Ages. Photo by Jeanne Vitale

Moonies conference

Professor surprised at straight-forward approach

By MIKE AQUILINA
Collegian Staff Writer

When Gary Alexander, assistant professor of religious studies, went to the Conference on Unification Theology in Madeira, Portugal, he had some pre-conceived notions of what the conference would be like. He was surprised.

Alexander said he went expecting to be "thrown in with a lot of members of the Unification Church," who would then pressure him into accepting their beliefs.

"It turned out to be an ordinary academics conference," he said. The conference, which took place this summer, was sponsored by Rev. Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church, and hosted more than 200 professors of religion from around the world.

"The purpose of this conference was to present their thoughts to us," Alexander said. "Their hope was that we would go away more sympathetic to the movement than when we came."

Alexander said the group listened and responded to morning lectures on Unification theology and then met in small discussion groups.

Among the people representing the church were doctoral candidates from Harvard, Yale, and Vanderbilt universities, along with the president of the church's seminary.

"They talked about several things: deception in fund-raising and deception in bringing in new members," Alexander said. "The mass marriage issue deserved a lot of explanation."

Members of the church admitted they had made mistakes, but attributed them to the zeal of new converts, he said.

"In any religion there will be young people who resort to any method, to present their truth," Alexander said. "They say that that's not given official approval. In that respect, they're saying that they're just like any other religion."

He said arranged marriages, which outraged many people in the United States, are a result of the movement's Korean origins.

"The idea of an arranged marriage is quite common in the Asian perspective. They have a right to reject the engagement, but they feel that he (Moon) has the ability to put people together."

While the academics "left with a better feeling" about the church than when they arrived, they reacted negatively to a theology they found vague and confusing, Alexander said.

"It's a very complicated system. It's unique, eccentric. It's based on the idea that Jesus failed," he said. Alexander said the movement was established in Korea and Japan and is about 30 years old. It has become an issue in the U.S. only recently.

Church, has taken up the mission. Alexander, who teaches a course on sects and cults, said the conference was a valuable experience.

"I don't like to teach about things that I don't have contact with. I had the opportunity to talk with them and size them up for myself, and that's what I did."

He said the followers of Moon should be accepted because their plight can be compared to those of the early Christian and Mormon churches.

"I've been teaching about this for three years now and I've always issued pleas for tolerance and understanding. I've had one friend and student who have left (the Unification Church) by their own choice. Those who have voluntarily left present a very good picture compared to the picture you get in the papers involving violence and de-programming."

As a professor of religious studies, Alexander has a particular interest in the Unification Church. "Are we observing the development of a religious movement that will survive or just another aberration that will go down the tubes?" he said.

Alexander said the movement was established in Korea and Japan and is about 30 years old. It has become an issue in the U.S. only recently.

Risky lifestyle reduces longevity

Professor creates survey to uncover and to tackle health hazards

By TIM EYSTER
Collegian Staff Writer

With the help of a University professor of rural sociology, people with unhealthy lifestyles may have a chance to live longer.

Charles O. Crawford, working through the University's cooperative extension service, has designed a program to assess a person's individual risks or health hazards.

"I'm inclined to believe that people are more likely to take an interest in their health and take action on inappropriate health behavior if they know the nature and number of their own personal health risks."

— Charles O. Crawford, University professor

the next 10 years, derived by taking the individual's present health risks in consideration. It also lists a medical scientist's opinions on the individual's state of health.

Crawford said some experts believe the personalized printout is a better motivator than any general admonition about what an individual must do to reduce his or her chances of dying prematurely.

"The majority of people who have participated in the program are people who have a high interest in their health, he said. As a result, not many people who do have high-risk lifestyles have participated in the program and only a small percentage of those high-risk people have tried to do something about their lifestyles, he said.

Dr. Richard St. Pierre, health education department head said, the mere act of completing a health risk appraisal is an educational value.

"We found from our use of health risk appraisals in our department that it enhances motivation for behavioral change," St. Pierre said.

Dr. Annette Ezell, head of the department of nursing, called Crawford's appraisal "a fine survey instrument."

"He is making a major contribution in the field of community health assessment," she said.

To develop life-long skills, Crawford said an individual should get to know his body, take care of it and listen to it.

A personalized risk profile, including a person's risk age, which Crawford defined as the age a person is likely to die. For example, a 37-year-old who takes many risks might have a risk age of 50.

"It's based on the fact that the more risks you have, the greater your chances of dying," Crawford said.

"A person who has many risks, say, doesn't wear seat belts, is overweight, doesn't get much exercise, has uncontrolled high blood pressure, and smokes a lot might have a risk age equal to that of someone 20 years older."

Also on the printout are average risk figures for an individual of a certain sex, race and age, and figures that cite his chances of dying within

Program energizes sagging coal market

By ANITA J. KATZ
Collegian Staff Writer

The Southeastern Development Association of the Centre Region Council of Governments has developed a program to stimulate interest in Pennsylvania's slumping coal market, which was once the state's most profitable industry.

Paul Shaw, SEDA-COG energy coordinator, said the council has provided technical assistance to clients conducting feasibility studies regarding coal conversion, since the fall of 1981. The program provides clients with up to \$6,500 in funds.

In the 1960s and early 1970s, many schools in the Centre region used coal-powered heating systems. However, as a result of inexpensive electric rates and special promotional deals from utility companies, many schools were built with electric heaters. Other buildings continued to use fuel oil, natural gas or combination systems for heating.

As the cost for electricity, natural gas and fuel oil increases, many schools are searching for alternative heating methods.

SEDA-COG, in conjunction with the Governor's Energy Council, the Appalachian Regional Commission and

the Anthracite Industry Association, prepared a coal conversion analysis report on the Northumberland County Area Vocational-Technical School in Shamokin, Northumberland County.

It was determined that 70 to 85 percent of the school building's heating system could be converted from an electric heating system to a hydrocarbon system using coal. However, because the school now pays low electric rates, a conversion at this time would not be feasible, according to the report.

Studies of the schools in the State College Area School District had similar conclusions.

Merrill A. Sweitzer Jr., director of physical plant for the State College Area School District, said the schools were converted from coal heat to other heating systems during the 1960s. A study conducted in September 1980 showed that a conversion to a partially coal-based system would not be cost-effective.

Sweitzer said the natural gas, fuel oil, electrical, and combination systems in use throughout the district are cleaner, less expensive and easier to maintain than coal systems.

"If a building is energy efficient, that's our goal," Sweitzer said.

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