

Erotica: Bookstore stocks sexy texts

By CAROLINE PETRICH
Of the Emerald

She looked disgusted.

The middle-aged woman wandered around the University Bookstore, looking for something to buy. Then she came to the erotic book section. She seemed irritated with the photograph of a woman's bottom on the cover of Helmut Newton's book "White Women". After glancing at the book collection, she shook her head and wandered toward the Psychology section.

Tucked away near the Parenting books and standing next to the Sex and Gay Lit sections, the Erotica book section lures customers away from the textbooks.

"The books are good sellers," says bookstore manager Tom Chambliss. Otherwise, they wouldn't be on the shelves. In fact, Erotica is one of the top selling sections of the bookstore.

"Sales vary from season to season," Chambliss says. "Of course, we sell a lot more in the spring."

Several types of books decorate Erotica shelves. One of the oldest is "The Pearl: A Journal of Voluptuous Reading. The Underground Magazine of Victorian England." It entertains the reader with risqué anecdotes, nursery rhymes and short stories.

The cover of "Eroticism in Western Art" by Edward Lucie Smith may mislead the browser. The photograph of a female mannequin on hands and knees, wearing only black boots, a black girdle and black elbow-length gloves, suggests kinky contents.

Instead, Smith analyzes erotic themes in Western art. The book is filled with informative tidbits — for instance, Leonardo da Vinci painted a nude version of the "Mona Lisa."

"My Secret Life," by an anonymous author, covers the sexual exploits of a young well-to-do English gentleman in Victorian times.

David Hamilton's photographs of young girls, lacking both clothes and experience, catch many eyes. The well-worn edges give away the book's popularity.

A series of books called, "Him," "Me" "You" and "Them," cause the most speculation. The books are novels of sexual passion written in the "voluptuous and earthy language of love." No author takes credit for writing them.



Photo by Keith Allen

The Erotica section was established three years ago. The bookstore had been selling erotic books for about seven years, but they were scattered in other sections, which offended some people, Chambliss says.

The section's clientele is not of the "dirty old man" stereotype. Couples often peruse the erotic literature, and timid shoppers browse clandestinely.

One shy salesclerk says, "They're (customers) too embarrassed to buy them, but they want to look at the books. It's kind of like a reading area for them to get new ideas and experiment."

Some buyers sneak over to another section to look at the books.

"Some are still embarrassed about sexuality," Chambliss says. "They'll pick up 'David Hamilton's Private Collection' and walk over to another section to read it."

Later, Chambliss or another staff member will have to comb the store for misplaced books.

The Erotica section sits across the aisle from the stock room, and salespeople often walk by the section. Chambliss says customers have complained about that arrangement, but the conspicuous placement is no coincidence. The sales staff can direct small children and their questions back to their parents.

Chambliss is proud of the section. "If the bookstore is to offer a wider range (of books) to the community, then we should offer these books," he says. "There are very few books over there that haven't sold."

The bookstore welcomes any requests or recommendations for new books. "We'll try one or two copies and if they sell, we'll reorder more," Chambliss says.

IFC axes sorority rush funds

The Incidental Fee Committee will no longer fund sorority rush, committee members decided Monday.

Using a rationale similar to last week's decision to kill fraternity rush funding, the IFC voted 4-2 against the budget goal item.

During the funding debate, Panhellenic board members Julie Rodway and Leslie Weaver described the difference between recruiting new students to the University and working solely to benefit the Greek system.

"Last year we had rush which was funded," Rodway said. "Of the 700 girls that rushed almost all pledged houses. Organized activities during rush brought in

high school visitation, with recruitment as the main idea — bringing students to the University. We're not doing it to tell them to go Greek, we're telling them that Oregon is the place to be."

But IFC member Jon Neiderbach objected. "We shouldn't be paying for advertising to fill your houses. How is that different than IFC funding advertising for private businesses?"

The Panhellenic board did score a victory when the IFC approved 4-2 a goal to allow a informational brochure to be included in the admissions packets sent to prospective students. Committee member Marm Stapke said, "The brochure would aid in attracting students who wouldn't normally

come. It should not, however be separately sent out (by the Greek houses)."

A request for a series of high-school visitation programs to advertise Greek living was voted down 5-1. Committee member Alan Contreras called the program an "attempt to get the bodies into the houses."

In other business, the IFC unanimously approved goals presented by William Farrell, director of the Gay People's Alliance.

Farrell presented a total request of \$2,837, an increase of 3 percent due to an increase in active membership.

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