

## State and Local

# Rutgers professor: Education working despite social barriers

By Stephen Masters  
Staff Writer

Cultivation of the mind is what makes the American education system work, no matter at what economic level a person originates, Dr. Sam Proctor, professor emeritus at Rutgers University, told educators and students at Texas A&M Thursday.

"Because we have found that minds can be cultivated, the finest thing that we can do to make a genuine community in America, to stop people from piling up in the prisons, to keep people from being dependent, to keep people from always looking for direction from some other source, is to accept the worth and dignity of every child of God and to prepare and cultivate every mind to its maximum," he said.

Also serving as pastor of Abyssinian Baptist Church in New York City, Proctor captivated the group of about 80 with several anecdotes during the 80-minute presentation, a part of the week-long seminar in intercultural education research.

Proctor also offered the question of what would occur if the American education system reached its goals.

"What would happen if, all of a sudden, education were to succeed," he asked. "Would all of us be good looking? Would all of us be rich? Would all of us be going to the opera? Would all of us be married longer? What on earth are we trying to do?"

"It sounds like a silly question, but for an educator, it's one of the most profound questions you can ask," he said.

To illustrate the problems, Proctor

spoke of a recent incident when a Rutgers student died of alcohol poisoning at a fraternity party, then, two weeks later, 39 students at Princeton were taken to the hospital after a similar incident.

"These are not poor folk, these are not hoodlums, these are not drug addicts," he said. "These are people being educated at schools where high SAT scores are required for admission. Schools that have great faculties and Nobel Prize winners on the faculty, and this is the kind of behavior exhibited."

Proctor reiterated that people can come from anywhere to be educated in America, and especially in Texas.

"You could be born in one of the poorest counties in Texas," he said, "but come out of high school with a high grade point (average) and get into a state university. You could graduate from there and go on to graduate school almost anywhere. All this with very limited resources."

Proctor also stressed values based in the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, and mentioned John Rawls' philosophy of the Original Position, a point where everyone begins on an equal basis.

"Unfortunately, everyone does not begin on an absolutely equal basis," he said. "Some begin above the Original Position, and some begin far below it. What we have to do is help to equal this out somewhat by helping those below it more than those above it."

"We can't give equal outcomes to everyone, just chances for equal opportunities," he said.



Photo by Sam B. Myers

Dr. Sam Proctor describes how education breaks down social barriers in an intercultural education research seminar at Rudder tower.

## Local Briefs

### Program profiles black A&M professor

A&M Professor Grace Chisolm will be the subject of the television show "Positively Black," an anthology of black achievers, which will air Sunday at 12:30 p.m. on Houston's KPRC.

The program focuses on her life and how she attained her goal of becoming a college professor, Chisolm said.

She said her current goal is to encourage minority high-school

students to attend college, especially at A&M.

She is coordinator of the University's Youth Opportunities Unlimited program. The program, which began last summer, helped 120 Texas high school students who were in danger of dropping out.

The students were able work, study and live on campus during the summer.

### Ceremony puts tattered flags to rest

Local residents will have a chance to dispose of faded, torn or tattered flags Tuesday at a flag ceremony in Tanglewood Park in Bryan.

The Flag Day ceremony will be conducted from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. by the Brazos Valley chapter of the National Sojourners, member Jack Keese said.

The retired flags brought to the ceremony will be burned in a charcoal fire after they are deemed unserviceable, he said.

This is the proper way to dispose of a flag according to the United States Flag Code, he said. The Sojourners perform the ceremony annually.

The members performing the ceremony will wear uniforms similar to those worn during the American Revolution, Keese said.

The Sojourners are Masons who are current or former officers or warrant officers in the United States uniformed services.

### Program explains benefit to employees

Texas A&M employees can learn more about new features in their benefits program during a series of meetings on campus next week.

Steve Hassel, assistant director for benefits programs administration, said the program will answer questions about the Tax Saver Plan, which will allow employees to subtract certain health care costs from their income before it is taxed.

The health care costs that will

be made tax-free are those that are not paid by an insurance company or health maintenance organization, he said. They include the cost of insurance premiums that are taxed by another employer, he said.

Medical premiums deducted from employees' A&M paychecks are already tax-free, he said.

A&M employees have until July 15 to enroll in the plan, he said, and the changes will go into effect Sept. 1.

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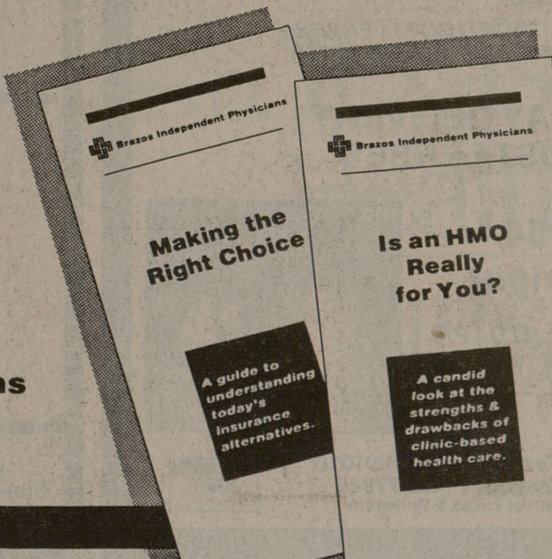
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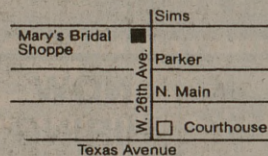


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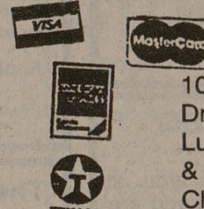


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