

Yesterday, in a phone interview, Pohl said that some among the 45 Harvard students are encouraging medical students elsewhere to turn back gifts from drug companies. Pohl, whose co-leader is Andrew Binder of Boston, said that such action already is contemplated by students at other Boston area medical schools.

Pohl also said that the decision to return the gifts, which he estimated have a retail value of \$35 per student, had two primary catalysts: the Western Reserve precedent and a recent series of lectures by drug industry critics.

STANDARD PRACTICE

The gifts were made by Eli Lilly and Co., of Indianapolis, but Pohl emphasized that the choice of Lilly had no special significance because gifts to medical students are standard industry practice.

The letter to Lilly said that a year ago the students had "invited" gifts of instruments, but that "we now feel we made a mistake." They also said their own profession is "largely responsible" for the "unhealthy relationship" because it has failed to maintain the "proper distance from the industry . . . essential for the doctors' objectivity" in writing prescriptions.

Medical students who accept gifts acquire "a sense of familiarity and gratitude" toward the donors that can undermine objectivity, the letter said.

[From the New York Times, Feb. 2, 1969]

STUDENTS SEND BACK DRUG MAKER'S GIFTS

One-third of the first-year medical students at Columbia University's College of Physicians and Surgeons said yesterday that their "dissatisfaction with the exploitative pricing and promotional practices of the American drug industry" had compelled them to return gift stethoscopes to Eli Lilly & Co.

This follows a similar move announced Friday by 45 second-year students at Harvard Medical School. The Harvard students, returned to the Lilly company a black bag and kit of diagnostic instruments—including a stethoscope.

Robert S. Pynoos, spokesman for the protesting Columbia students, said his group had written a letter to Lilly in which they had expressed disapproval with "the motivation behind these gifts."

The letter said in part: "Promotional programs of this sort are obviously intended to initiate the establishment of close ties between physician and pharmaceutical house, for mutual benefit."

"Such a relationship," the letter continued, "relegates the needs of the patient to a role of secondary importance."

Henry F. DeBoest, vice president of corporate affairs for Lilly, said yesterday that the medical instruments "have been offered with the prior approval of the medical schools." The gifts were "a mark of appreciation for their [the students] willingness to undertake the long, difficult road of an education as a physician."

[From the Sunday Herald Traveler, Feb. 2, 1969]

DRUG FIRM GIFTS SHUNNED—MEDICAL STUDENTS FEAR "UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIP"

(By Bruce McCabe)

Two students who persuaded 45 others at Harvard Medical School to return gift kits of medical instruments to a national drug manufacturer hope students at other Greater Boston medical schools will follow their lead.

Richard L. Pohl, 23, of Lynbrook, N.Y., and Andrew Binder, 23, of Boston, both second-year students at HMS, said the gesture dramatizes their belief that there is an "unhealthy relationship" between the drug industry and the medical profession.

The kits, worth an estimated \$40, were supplied by Eli Lilly and Company of Indianapolis, to second-year students on request. They include a stethoscope, a black bag, a tuning fork, a percussion hammer and a tape measure. There are 125 second-year students at HMS.

Pohl said there were three "catalysts" for the movement.