

OPINION

The fork, spoon and knife scenario

COLUMN

Restaurants have always been a part of my life. I enjoy the experience of trying new tempting and tantalizing menu items. At the mere mention of their name manicotti, fettuccini



BY LENORA MOODY

OPINION EDITOR

alfredo or Swedish meatballs make my mouth water. However, the one thing I absolutely hate about some restaurants is the horrendous service.

My restaurant experience ranges from the local fast food McDonalds to the Swan Terrace. I have eaten everything from greasy cheeseburgers to scrambled eggs with chives. I have not found very many things I do not like to eat. Usually the opposite occurs and I end up eating too much.

Food is calming, an icebreaker, and a problem solver. The last thing I need is poor service taking away from my "sedative." I need a waiter, waitress, or cashier to be as prompt as they can, courteous, polite, and

understanding.

Recently I had the experience I like to call the fork, spoon and knife scenario. During "Spring Break," I traveled to Virginia Beach. While on this trip I visited many restaurants of varying classifications.



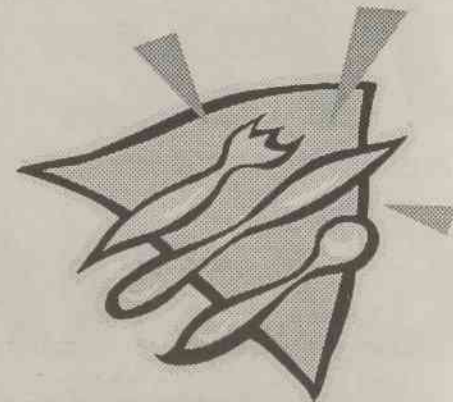
One restaurant may be referred to as the fork restaurant: "Swan Terrace." The service was excellent at this restaurant. The waiter or waitress consistently checked to see if my parents or I needed more water, the food warmed or extra food. The second day we ate at the restaurant, they remembered we had the buffet, my father had coffee and milk and my mother and I had water. They know how to "fork" the client's comfort and needs.



The "International House of Pancakes," however, is the spoon restaurant. This restaurant did not have bad food or atmosphere, but they got almost everybody's order wrong. My parents and I entered and ordered our food and drinks. The waitress brought two waters and one coffee. My father requested milk for his coffee. I do not

believe the waitress listened carefully, because she brought him a glass of milk to drink. A few minutes passed and the waitress brings out the order for the next table. This order included French toast, eggs, pancakes, hash browns and onion rings. The woman asked if the onion rings were an extra charge since they were a substitute. The waitress explained they were and the woman told her she didn't want them. I believe apology is good to keep the customers happy, but this establishment went overboard. The waitress explained about the onion rings two different times and apologized. The manager explained three different times and apologized. This tradition continued with other customers. The manager apologized two times to the booth behind ours and four times to the booth down from ours. Apologizing is a good business concept in order to keep the customers coming back. However, they are going to need a bigger spoon if they continue to overdose their customers with sugar coated words.

The knife restaurant is the first restaurant my parents and I visited over "Spring Break." This restaurant is more com-



monly known as "The Western Steer." This establishment did not care about providing any service: whether we ordered or not, if there was food on the bar, if we had anything to drink or if our table was clean. I believe the only thing the employees of this establishment cared about was discussing the latest fashions and best clubs. This "knife" restaurant really knows where to stab a person to make them feel un-welcome.

I realize every waiter or waitress has bad days, where they do not want to serve another screaming and demanding customer. I know. I have dealt with these types of customers. However, I believe every knife and spoon restaurant in existence has the ability to become a fork. All the waiter or waitress has to remember is to treat people how they would want to be treated. Plus, remember someday when they meet that same demanding customer in their work environment they can "tip" them their just dessert.

Spring break jealousy

Dear Harlan,

My girlfriend and I have been going out for six months and I'm starting to get the feeling she isn't happy with me. She always tells me that I'm perfect, but sometimes I don't believe her.

She is taking a trip to Florida with some friends and all her friends have their mates going with them but her

and another guy. I think she has had a relationship with this guy before and I am worried that when they go down there them two will get it on and not tell me.

Why do I feel this way? Should I worry about that happening?

At home and worried

Dear Worried:

HELP ME HARLAN

Spring is mating season and spring break is the official break of the mating season. At least you'll be able to keep tabs on her during MTV's spring break coverage.

If you continue thinking like this the next break between you and you're girlfriend will be your break-up. If you can't trust her then you can't continue dating her. I don't know what she does to make you

uncertain of her feelings, but jealousy and distrust are poison to a dating.

Talk to her. Look her in the eyes. Decide if you can trust her and stop thinking this way. You have the ability to control what you want to think. If you can't trust her you're going to think yourself into a jealous place that will only lead to the end of something that could be "perfect."

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