

CAMPUS LIFE

Internationals Deplore American Diet, Miss Home Cooking

By John Kostet
Decree Staff Writer

Fat, greasy, cheesy, fried and too sweet—the international students do not hesitate to criticize their cafeteria and the American food culture in general. The new diet has made for a difficult transition for most of Wesleyan's foreign students, who all seem to be used to lighter and healthier food. But the new culinary experience has not only been negative.

Amanda Frimpong, a freshman originally from Ghana, describes the food back home to be healthier and usually much fresher. "Everything is grown naturally, nothing is genetically modified and more often than not there is no preservation or concentrates," Frimpong said.

Emelie Lundgren, a freshman, says that in the school cafeteria she finds it difficult to get the healthy nutrition provided in her native Sweden. "Most frustrating is the lack of protein," Lundgren said. "Several of the entrees served in the cafeteria include only carbs."

Lundgren has discovered that fresh fish, a very rich source for protein, to be much more common back home.

Lundgren likes the idea of different food stations in the cafeteria and admits many of the entrees to be all right. But what she doesn't like is the way the entrees are made. "Vegetarian lasagna for example, a perfect healthy dish—they simply ruin by putting on way too much cheese," she said.

Dominic Forsdike, a sophomore from England, admits that his country isn't known for its food culture, but still thinks there is way too much fast

food served over here. "Nothing is plain in America. Everything needs to come with something. The vegetables are drained in dripping oil or butter and the pasta is never served without the cheese," Forsdike said.

Many may think that the northern neighbors of Canada have similar eating habits as the Americans, but Courtney Jamieson, a sophomore from London, Ontario, assures us that they eat a lot more healthfully. "The fruits and vegetables sections in our grocery stores are usually bigger than the snacks and candy sections," Jamieson said.

More healthy alternatives and smaller portions at the fast food restaurants are other examples of a different food culture in Canada. "Our small drinks are the size of a kids drink here in U.S.," Jamieson said.

Many international students seem to struggle with adjusting to fast food, even though most countries have American fast-food chains like McDonalds and Burger King. Darren Lau, a freshman from Malaysia, thought American food was going to be all about burgers and fries. "After being here for a while, I can say that I was right," Lau said.

It seems to be a widely held perception, as Antti Saari, a sophomore from Finland, thought the same before coming here. "I knew Americans like to eat fast food, like burgers and fries. But I was still surprised at how much unhealthy food they actually eat."

In Malaysia, as well as in most parts of Eastern Asia, rice and noodles are usually the main ingredients in every

meal. "I'm used to having rice and noodles almost every day back home, so I really miss it," Lau said. The Malay kitchen has a lot of Indian influences and that's something Lau would love to see more of here in Rocky Mount.

Freshman Linh Nguyen from Vietnam said his favorite dish in the cafeteria is fried rice and tofu. Nguyen

gives the cafeteria soups a fair grade but says they still aren't comparable to the soups in his home country. "We have another variety of fruits and vegetables in Vietnam, so I miss the soups made with them," Nguyen said.

Freshman Otis Madison from New Zealand says he simply misses eating a healthy diet. Lamb is something of a

national dish, with New Zealand being one of the leading exporters in the world. Besides lamb, Madison says he misses eating seafood, which has been very rare on the cafeteria's menu.

Someone else who misses lamb is sophomore Marcelo Prata from Brazil. Prata said that the food culture in Brazil differs a lot from region to region, just like in the United States. But in his hometown, the capitol city Brasilia, meat and black beans are very common. The favorite dish is picanha, rump cover in English, which is considered to be the best cut of beef.

Prata said he is far from impressed with American food. "There's got to be something wrong when almost everyone is overweight," Prata said. "My hometown has about three million citizens, and I would not be surprised if Rocky Mount had even more fast food restaurants."

But not all internationals dislike the American food. For example, Nguyen has become a huge fan of french fries. "We got French fries in Vietnam too," he said, "but they don't taste the same and are usually bigger."

Saari admits that the burgers here in the United States are way better than those served in Finland, especially the ones served at Cook Out. The fast food culture has been spread all over the world, but in Finland such restaurants are far from as popular as here in U.S., Saari said.

Emmoth said that the breakfast has become his favorite meal in the cafeteria. "In Sweden people generally don't eat as much for breakfast," he said. "We'll have a sandwich, maybe a bowl of oatmeal if we got the time to make it. We definitely have a cup of coffee and then we're off to school or work."

He expressed surprise at the emphasis Americans place on breakfast, saying "It is more of a real meal with scrambled eggs, fried potatoes and bacon."

Thefts Hit Campus Hard

Decree Staff Writers

Wesleyan honors student Jacob Strickland said he had accumulated extensive research on preventing crime at Wesleyan, but then lost his work when his laptop was stolen earlier this semester.

Strickland is one of several students whose electronics and other valuables were taken during a rash of thefts that hit not only dorm rooms but common areas such as the Dunn Center.

One freshman, a Nash Hall resident, has been expelled as a result of the thefts, according to Dean of Students Randy Williams, who said that six major thefts have been reported during the past two months. Measures have been taken to strengthen security, while the investigation is ongoing.

Strickland's \$1,500 HP computer—the second of his laptops stolen on campus in two years—was playing music for the campus Haunted Trail event in the Garner lobby. Nash and Petteway dorms and student vehicles have been hit hardest by the thefts. Other items stolen include textbooks, cell phones, iPods and an undisclosed amount of cash.

"There hasn't been a stereotypical victim," Williams said, adding that many thefts resulted "from carelessness." He called many of the thefts "crimes of opportunity," with thieves entering rooms through unlocked doors.

Like Strickland, senior William Boyd lost a computer. He was in the gym, he said, when the theft occurred in his room. "The fact that my laptop was stolen made me feel like my life was stolen," he said. "It had all my personal information and email accounts, passwords, and Social Security number."

Noting that his roommate's computer was taken as well, Boyd complained that it took a long time for security to respond to the incident, saying that the detail is "short-staffed and busy with other incidents on campus." Boyd said that the college should be more aggressive in pursuing suspects.

Petteway resident Drew Cousby echoed Boyd's comments, saying, "I think the college administration should do a better job of following up on leads from reliable sources."

Cousby said he intends to leave Wesleyan as a result of the recent crime on campus. "I came to a private college so I wouldn't get lost in the crowd and escape from the nonsense of bigger schools. After this, though, I plan on leaving."

Since the thefts have occurred, the administration has taken steps to prevent future incidents. Williams said the college has educated the com-

munity through emails, hall meetings, and individual conferences on crime prevention. At the same time, the college has stepped up the presence of Rocky Mount police, which has increased patrols on campus, both in the parking lots and inside buildings. Williams said the police and campus security presence are to "both curb criminal activity as well as create a sense of safety." He said the measures have helped in recent weeks, citing a decrease in criminal activity.

Strickland, the SGA president, said the college should do still more. Because it's a private college, he said, he feels that Wesleyan should increase searches of student rooms, a move, he said, that Dean Williams has been reluctant to make.

Noting the findings of his honors project research, Strickland recommends that the college install video cameras in the dorms and other buildings, repair the many faulty screens in the first-floor windows, and implement a card system—rather than keys—for entering and exiting the dormitories. "It's cheaper to replace cards," he said, "plus cards keep an electronic record of comings and goings."

Cousby thinks crime victims should be compensated by the college, explaining that "this would put more pressure on administration to find out who is doing it."

(This story was reported by Meghan Herd and Gregory Spence.)

Renovations To Begin in Dorm Bathrooms

By Rodney Holley
Decree Staff Writer

The college will renovate one of the bathrooms in Petteway Hall as part of a planned refurbishing of the dormitories.

Petteway was chosen as the starting point for the project because it receives the most use, according to Residence Life Director Davon Davis. The project will be conducted this summer.

Students have long complained about the condition of campus bathrooms in the older dormitories, but were not heeded until President James Gray and Dean of Students Randy Williams saw the bathrooms first hand. College officials have acknowledged that the shabby condition of the dorms hurts the college in both attracting new students and retention of existing ones.

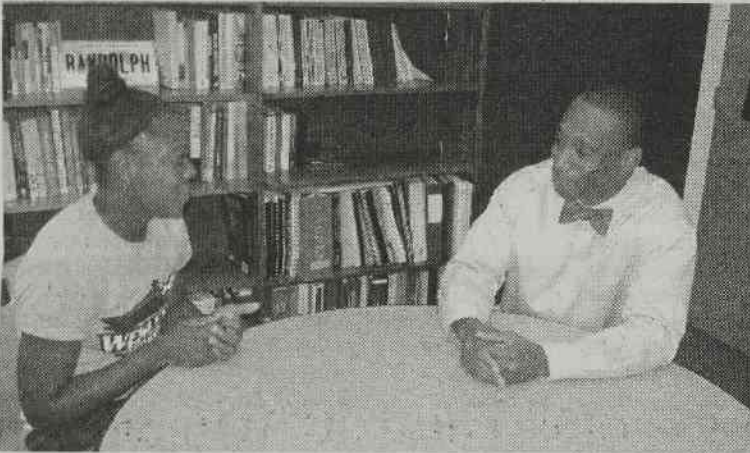
Sharrod Croom, a Petteway resident, is pleased that the renovations will

be made. He cited the condition of the third floor bathroom in his dorm, noting the dirty appearance and the fact that the "middle showers splatters and spurts hard, so much" that residents avoid using them. He added that only one of the toilet stalls has a lock. "Nobody wants to use the other ones," he said.

The president obtained funding in excess of \$25,000 for the renovation projects from the Reynolds Foundation and Mims Foundation.

Davis said that even though renovating a bathroom may seem like a small task, it shows that the college is committed to the students and their needs. He added that the renovations show Gray's commitment to bettering the college.

After the college finishes the bathrooms in Petteway, it plans to move on to Edgecombe Hall and then Nash and Collins.



Randy Williams, seen here with freshman Bristy Parker, started his tenure as dean of students this school year. You'll learn more about Dean Williams' goals for student life and the story behind his signature bow tie in an upcoming issue of The Decree. Photo by C. Thomas

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Wesleyan's two-year-old ROTC outfit led a Veterans Day memorial in November at the college library. From left: Chaplain Barry Drum, Jacob Strickland, Juanisha Gibbs, NCWC Alumni Association President Michael Pratt ('66), Director of Alumni Relations Joshua Cain, Charles Haley, and Major Todd Jackson. Stormy weather forced the event inside from the campus tennis courts, dedicated to alumni who fought in the Vietnam War; according to Cain, one of Pratt's Wesleyan roommates was killed in that conflict. PR photos