

Health foods

America's latest nutrition fad

By ANN PETERS

No matter whether we relish, savor, gobble or nibble our vittles, problems occur in trying to balance our diets. Nutritionists and health-food advocates agree that our society is one of constantly changing fads, especially in the foods we eat.

Processed foods, health foods, fast foods and natural foods comprise everyone's diet. However, in recent years, the trend has been toward eating natural or health foods.

"A whole movement is afoot towards using more basic (foods)...There are however a myriad of additives and preservatives." "If we did not preserve the foods, we would not have the array of foods (found today).

"Guidelines recently supported by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare and the Department of Agriculture publication (*Nutrition and Your Health - Dietary Guidelines for Americans*) suggest though the use of more foods in their natural state rather than processed.

"Misinformation and misconceptions (abound) about so-called natural foods," Kaufman said. The concept of natural foods is related primarily to vegetables and fruits that are grown without pesticides. "When blanket statements are made (about all preservatives and pesticides), (the issue) is not too rational," she said. "One should know which of the preservatives are less desirable, depending on their diet if restricted."

Health foods cannot be mass-produced, however, because no preservatives are added. Items which are usually available in a natural health food store include tiger's milk, soybeans, whole wheat, peanut flour, wheat germ, vegetables and fruits. Since the shelf life of these products tends to be shorter and production smaller, most health foods are more

expensive.

Nutrition and Your Health - Dietary Guidelines for Americans suggests that for a balanced diet a variety of foods should be eaten. They compare with those foods found in a health-food store or with others found in a grocery store, with slight modification.

The guidelines also suggest avoiding excessive amounts of all sugars. The category includes, in addition to white sugar, brown sugar, raw sugar, honey and syrups. How often you eat sugar is as important as how much sugar you eat.

Terms ranging from organically grown to natural health foods describe foodstuffs that are said to be in their primary states with as little processing as possible, said Tom Dean, owner of Harmony Natural Foods in Chapel Hill. Harmony has just celebrated its 10th anniversary, marking its status as the first natural health food store in the Southeast.

Since Dean has been with the store, he has seen a "tremendously definite increase each year (in the interest of health foods).

"In this time period it is unrealistic to think that everyone only will eat natural foods," said Ira Levin, owner of Makers Market Inc. in Carr Mill Mall. "I simply try to introduce (the customers) to foods that have been around for centuries. I'm not a natural food guru.

"Seven years ago I personally became involved in (health foods). I took classes, tried food diets and even invented one of my own," Levin said. "We should forget the hodgepodge (of necessarily only eating health foods) and go with our natural desires but with a balance."

Stephen Chaney, an associate professor in biochemistry and nutrition, agrees. Chaney believes that a message should be brought across to the general public that there is nothing necessarily 'wrong' with eating fast foods if at other meals you



Packaged health foods on display

compensate by eating things such as fresh fruits and vegetables.

"The problem is basically that processed foods by their very nature lose nutrients. Whether it's Tang instead of orange juice, or Egg Beaters instead of eggs, there is no way they can be nutritionally equivalent," he said. "We should be striving where possible to substitute fresh wholesome foods (in place) of processed foods."

Levin said the health-food business for a long time overemphasized vitamins as food substitutes. "All you would see were jars and bottles in the stores. That's not health food," he said. "This (past) year it has turned around. Food is more important in higher sales than vitamins. Food products are the way to go."

Both Chaney and Levin stress that consumers need to be more aware of what is in their foods.

"To increase education, especially at the grade school level, is another concern. (Consumers) need to learn to make critical judgements of the foods they buy," Chaney said.

Ann Peters is a staff writer for *The Daily Tar Heel*.

Novel uncovers trials of competition in law school

By DINITA JAMES

Katherine A. Davis Roome

The Letter of the Law

Some novels have the ability to make readers see the scenes unfolding and the action developing, and some rare novels put readers inside the plot or inside a single character. Katherine A. Davis Roome's *The Letter of the Law* does all of these.

Ixias Smith, the novel's protagonist, is a woman readers can feel a part of, and the

plot of the novel is one in which everyone can place himself to some degree.

After attending an Ivy League college, Ixias finds herself in law school—for a variety of complex reasons, most of them having to do with the three biggies: money, power and position. After her first year, Ixias finds herself in a tough spot. Having not made Law Review on grades, she must take part in the legendary writing competition to further her ambitions.

And ambition is something Ixias shares with her colleagues. Alicia, Ixias' roommate, opts out of the competition, not needing the extra advantage because of her minority (though of which minority Ixias is not sure) status. But Crackers, the sometimes-friend, sometimes-lover of both Ixias and Alicia, tackles the competition with a nonchalant but nevertheless fierce style.

The chaos begins forthwith, and cheating is rampant among all the competitors. Ixias seduces a rather crusty professor because he is an expert on her topic, but her efforts come to naught when she finds Alicia also trysting with him. And Ixias is victim of some foul play in the course of the competition, including having her paper-strewn desk devoured by flames, her carrel in the library overturned and herself attacked in the library stacks.

All the havoc points out the rigors of law school as experienced by the children of the idealistic '60s as they were pushed into the fiercely materialistic and acquisitive '70s.

The twist of the novel is that Ixias was not tortured by a fellow competitor, but by her ex-boyfriend from undergraduate days, Jeremy. Jeremy is a relic of the '60s, trying to persuade Ixias that she doesn't

need money or power to be happy, only peace, happiness and his love.

Roome is able to put such realism in her work because she has been in the same situation. In fact, she wrote the first draft of the novel in fulfillment of her third-year legal writing requirement at Cornell Law School, from which she graduated in 1977. She is now an associate in a Wall Street law firm.

Books

Roome's style is especially conducive to the emotional state of her central character. Written as a journal, readers can see Ixias avoiding the writing of her brief out of feelings of uncertainty, fear and self-doubt by dashing out her innermost thoughts in her diary. This introspection in the entries is what gives the novel its personal and realistic flavor and what brings home the vigorously competitive nature of law school and society itself.

One passage, though lengthy, seems to summarize all of what law school and life is to Ixias:

"When I was ten, all I wanted in life was a horse, and when I was thirteen, all I desired was K2 skis. When I was sixteen, I wasted my energy on acquiring a skinny, pimply star on the soccer team. By the time it became apparent that that desire too would pass, I was in college. Perhaps in college, for a time, achievement kept pace with desire. Jeremy and good grades

relieved to some degree the persistent restless dissatisfaction with my life. But the goals seemed to have slipped a year of me once again since that time. Now they are money, security, success."

She found herself, as so many people do, forever pursuing some far-off goal, and by the time she came near to reaching it, much to her dismay, there was a new goal ahead of her. The ultra-competitive world of law school is, fortunately, something through which most of us don't have to pass in our careers. But what makes this novel more than a preparatory lecture for prospective law students is its universal application. Everyone, no matter what his chosen occupation, has someone with which to compete, and as Ixias discovers, to take yourself out of combat is about the same thing as dying.

The minus points to this novel are many. Often, Ixias' thoughts rush pell-mell to nowhere, and readers get lost in the shuffle. Other times, the plot gets so far-fetched, with student after student pitching himself into the abyss adjacent to the campus and coincidences and romances intertwined somewhat like the lives of daytime-drama characters, that even undiscriminating readers roll their eyes. But the real meat of Roome's work prevails.

This is a novel about surviving, whether as a second-year law student or as an auto mechanic. It is about using all available energies and ending up at the point from which you started. And it is an extraordinary statement on nursing wounds and starting again, not for the job, but for the perseverance.

Dinita James is managing editor for *The Daily Tar Heel*.

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