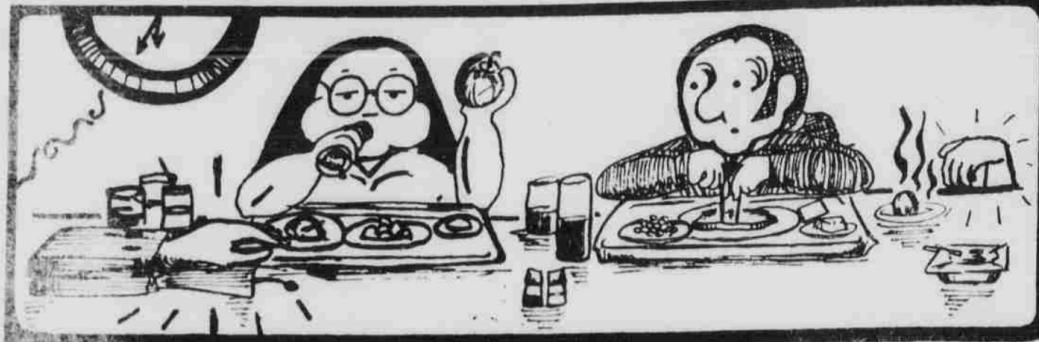


Plans to halt food sharing are thwarted



No one anticipated that a plan to cut back illegal food sharing in dormitory cafeterias would be termed a fire hazard, Douglas Rix, assistant director of housing-foods service, said Friday.

According to Rix, a lunchroom gate in Selleck Cafeteria was reopened last week after the state fire marshal declared the closed gate unsafe.

The gate had been closed to study how illegal food sharing in residence hall cafeterias might be controlled, Rix said.

Campus food service loses anywhere from \$5,000 to \$40,000 a year because students take extra food for those who don't live in the dorms or don't buy meal tickets, he said.

During the Selleck experiment, which lasted less than a week, only one lunchroom gate was open. No student without a lunch ticket was allowed to enter the lunch room and once a student left the cafeteria after a meal, he was not allowed to return, Rix said.

The food service staff planned to study if food sharing decreased under the new system, by comparing the average cost of food per student at Selleck with that in non-regulated cafeterias, Rix said.

"We wanted to see if food costs would drop enough to justify remodeling the entrances and exits in all residence hall cafeterias," he said.

"However, the study antagonized students so much, they asked Ed Simpson (UNL environmental health engineer) to call in the state fire marshal. He said having only one cafeteria exit was a fire hazard, so we reopened the second gate that day."

Students were antagonized by the experiment because they were not aware of its goals Rix said.

"We wanted to communicate our purpose to the students before beginning," Rix said. "Apparently there were misunderstandings at some levels of communication, and the students weren't told what was happening."

In addition to notifying the state fire marshal, the students asked Rix to explain at a special meeting why the cafeteria was being regulated.

"Students seemed to come out of the meeting with a positive feeling toward the food service staff,"

he said. "I think the experiment would have flown if we had done a good job of communicating our objectives to them beforehand."

Students complained that the regulated cafeteria had an "aloof, cold atmosphere," he said. "They weren't allowed to bring in friends without meal tickets, and they couldn't return to the cafeteria once they'd left."

"A lot of dorm residents also use the cafeteria during meal times for meetings with outsiders. The new plan didn't allow for that," Rix added.

The problem of illegal food sharing in the cafeterias will go on for an eternity, he said.

"However, we just did a horrible public relations stunt with the students, and the issue is far too sensitive to reopen immediately."

"We're going to have to speak to the problem in the long-run though," he said. It's only fair to those students who aren't trying to beat the system."

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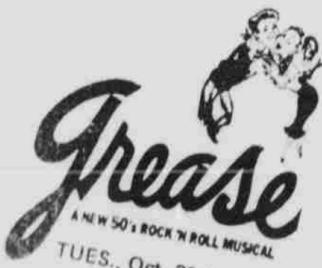
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African seminars begin

Norman Bennett, history professor at Boston University, will present two seminars on African history today.

Bennett, editor of the *International Journal of African History Studies*, is to speak on editing a journal of African history at 3:30 p.m. and Arab-European Rivalry in East Africa at 8 p.m. in Oldfather 607.

Leslie Duly, UNL history professor, said Bennett is the best known scholar of East African History and has published several books on it.

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