

Writer relays food experiments

Billy Walters

& Culture Editor

partial solution to the threat of global warming may be found in vegetarianism. Writer Trista Cornelius, who serves as an instructor for the fish department at Clackamas, spoke inside room 220 of Roger Hall on Thursday, April



CORNELIUS

Her talk was aptly titled "The Planet One Bite at a Time" and is just one of the many talks planned for this spring at the college's Sustainability Center. The series of nine segments, Cornelius gave the audience an overview of her explorations in food and explained how our choices affect the planet.

Apples and Oranges Life

Cornelius began by asking

attendees several questions for them to ponder during the discussion.

- How conscious are you of what you eat?
- What have you eaten so far today?
- In what manner did you eat it?
- How does it make you feel?

Following these questions, Cornelius relayed how a trip to the grocery store several years ago opened her eyes to foods — mainly fruits and vegetables — she did not know about or had not yet tried.

This realization was brought on when she saw some sort of spiky melon.

It made her think, "How could I be so limited in my ideas of food?" She found herself wanting to explore the concept further, and fulfill the inkling that she had always had about wanting to be a vegetarian.

2. Meatless March

Cornelius started small, by deciding to — along with her husband — go one month without consuming meat of any kind.

"My biggest initial discovery was butternut squash," she said.

That was just one of the many new foods she sampled that month, but she stuck with her to this day as a favorite.

"I rediscovered foods that I thought I didn't like," she said, mentioning brussel sprouts, which are commonly hated by children.

A goal resulted from her first "Meatless March": she began trying to buy organic produce and grains.

3. There's a Worm in My Plum

Another point of realization for Cornelius was a couple of years later, when she was cutting up a plum and discovered a worm inside.

She said that, prior to that time, finding a bug in her fruit would have disgusted her, but at this moment, it actually made her feel good that the worm had been naturally attracted to her organic food — rather than the normal produce that is sold in stores, which she described as then seeming "waxy" to her.

Cornelius' whole sense of food had changed.

4. One Less Food Group

Cornelius described a day, just before coming to work at Clackamas, when she felt sluggish and had recurring headaches. As an experiment, she decided to try cutting dairy out of her diet for two weeks, as she had heard that it was sometimes linked to those types of problems.

Only two days later, Cornelius saw that the outcome was excellent, and has not reintroduced dairy since — even though it used to be her favorite food group — because of how much healthier she feels without it.

5. Hurricane Katrina and a Veganish Lifestyle

A few years ago, Cornelius said, she noticed when her husband was gone on a trip that her eating habits had completely reverted back to her bachelorette days: to a lot of unhealthy and fast food.

With another imminent trip approaching, Cornelius resolved to make a plan she would stick to, and decided to eat vegan

for the 10 days that she would be alone. She ended up liking aspects of it so much that she has continued doing it, to a certain degree.

6. Eating Sunshine

Cornelius found that her diet of eating mostly plants gave her life new revitalization — it was like consuming warmth and energy.

This side effect to the lifestyle change is something that made her stay on the course she chose.

7. Jack and the Beanstalk

Volunteering at a food bank also gave Cornelius an opportunity to learn and think up ideas as to a further approach to meals.

She noted that the foods individuals were getting at the food bank were beautiful and edible, and the quality of everything made everybody light up.

It helped bring to her attention what she dubbed "edible landscaping." It was the ideal situation of having the surrounding trees, bushes and so on not simply exist for decorative purposes, but produce substances that people could consume.

Also, she started container-gardening inside her house, with sufficient success, which she recommended to the audience as a way of supporting oneself cheaply and healthily, even in the overly-rainy Oregon weather.

8. Worms Under the Sink

One beneficial part of the notion of a plant-centered environment is that it reduces a significant quantity of waste from the wrapping and packaging

done to most items located at a regular grocery store.

Since she made the switch to vegetarianism, Cornelius has found enjoyment in creating a smaller amount of garbage, and what little food waste her family does generate is usually easily thrown out to compost, to be processed by worms back into the soil.

9. Cows Versus Cars

Perhaps the most interesting part of Cornelius' entire talk was the conclusion, during which she shared some surprising statistics from a story she came across in *The Oregonian* about a year ago.

Almost one-fifth of all emissions released into the atmosphere, the article stated, come from raising livestock for food, which is more than the portion created by the entire world's use of automobiles.

The methane gas from the animals' manure was pinpointed as one of the major parts of the issue.

In addition, the public may be interested to hear that, according to the article, they can make more of a positive impact on the environment when they "move to prevent global warming by turning vegetarian rather than switching to a Toyota Prius."

The Prius is thought to be one of the best hybrid cars out there — and it is expensive.

It seems it is pretty safe to say that investing in extra helpings of good ol' fruits and veggies is a smarter choice.

For more information, or to be given resources for eating healthily and locally, e-mail Cornelius at tristac@clackamas.edu.

Clackamas student plays guitar for local alternative band

Sheppard

Clackamas Print

members of the Portland-based Amaretta describe their music as indie, which guitarist and Clackamas student Chris Young explains as "a blend of blues and eras."

Amaretta is a fairly new ensemble, having formed in October of 2007.

At the beginning, it was merely Young with his friend, and the group's name, Jon Cotton.

While itching to play with some people, Young said, "so I got Jon to come with me."

One day Cotton just happened to meet an acquaintance of his, Kara, a bass guitarist.

"Why the hell haven't you met Kara before?" was Young's reaction.

She was soon added to Amaretta's

lineup and loved it," Scott recalled. "I met Kara and brought it, and he (Young) was good."

After Young ran into then-girlfriend Kara Dishman in their guitar Rock class.

"I've known Kara since seventh grade," Young said. "It seemed like she was always

with Kara as lead singer, the band's name Amaretta was originally chosen by Young.

"I just threw it up there when we were on MySpace page," he said. "We didn't go with it."

Young admits that he had been drinking amaretto cappuccinos at the time.

Amaretta has already played in several locations around the Portland area, including the Hawthorne Theatre, the Artistry and the Ash Street Saloon.

The saloon proved to be an interesting experience when the woman who booked their performance realized that Cotton, Dishman, Scott and Young were all underage.

"None of us are actually legal to be inside," Young said. "They kept us quarantined in the back."

Fortunately, they still performed well and were invited to play at the saloon again.

"We were relieved not to burn a bridge there," Young said.

Besides playing gigs, Amaretta has finished its first CD, "Esque."

It "started out possibly going to be titled 'Esque,' as in fill in the blank with any word we deemed appropriate," Young said in an e-mail. "But when we failed to find anything that really worked with that, we started just calling it Esque, and it stuck. I think the word also represents how we musically and lyrically don't seem to stick to one thing. We do all sorts of things."



Contributed Photo
From left to right: drummer Jon Cotton, bass guitarist Andrew Scott, guitarist Chris Young and lead singer Kara Dishman.

Self-written and produced, the album features seven original songs, recorded by the members themselves.

"It's pretty amazing what you can do with a few decent mics and a laptop," Young said.

Songwriting, for Amaretta, is a group process.

"We start with a jam," Scott said. "Then, Kara and Chris go over with the harmonies."

At live shows, the band mainly performs its own songs.

"We do a few cover songs ... but for the most part, it's stuff we've written," Scott said.

With the CD finished, the plan is to send it to some small labels.

Scott doesn't deny that the dream to "make it big someday" is always tempting.

"That would be fantastic," Young agreed.

However, both men also concurred that they will be equally happy if that doesn't happen.

"I just enjoy going out and playing music," Scott said. "I wouldn't do this if I didn't like it."

Scott added, "It's been one of the greatest experiences I've ever done."

To hear Amaretta's music, visit their MySpace page at www.myspace.com/amaretta-music.