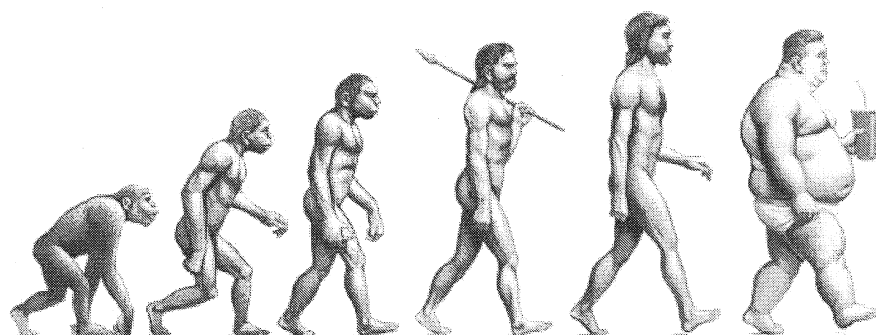


Medical History and Bioethics/History of Science 668
 FAT AND THIN: A History of American Bodies
 Fall 2008

Susan E. Lederer
 Robert Turell Professor of Medical History and Bioethics
selederer@wisc.edu 608.262.4195
 Office: MSC 1440, 1300 University Ave.
 Office Hours: Mon, Wed, 11- 12

Mon Wed Fri, 9:55- 10:45 am, 115 Van Hise



America is currently experiencing an “epidemic” of obesity. In the last two decades, the number of Americans identified as overweight or obese has ballooned. (Not just people, even American pets are apparently at risk for obesity.) At the same time, an increasing number of Americans—men, women, teenagers, and children as young as six—report that they are dieting to lose weight. This course considers the history of the search for the healthy body in the United States over the past two centuries. It explores the changes in the American diet that resulted from technologies of food production. It also examines the development of medical knowledge about diet, nutrition, eating disorders, and medical and surgical efforts to reduce body size. Topics include food faddism, the moral dimensions of diet and body size, and the cultural norms of the ideal bodies of men and women.

Course Organization:

Generally, there will be two short lectures and one discussion section each week. However, all sessions will involve some discussion, questions and answers, comments, etc. It is important that students read the assigned material thoroughly before attending class.

Course Requirements and Evaluation:

Class participation (attendance is required)	20%
Mid-term exam	25%
Short Paper	20%
Research Paper or Take-home exam	35%

There will be an in-class midterm, covering material to date in the syllabus and the class. This will take place on October 13.

Students will write a short paper (5 pages, double-spaced) on a primary source relating to a treatment for obesity. The primary source may come from a newspaper, medical journal, articles, etc. Students will be expected to place the primary source in a larger historical context. This will be due November 10.

Students will have the option to write a research paper (10-12 pages, double-spaced) OR they may choose to take the take-home final examination. If you choose to write the research paper, you must discuss your topic with me and with Micaela Sullivan-Fowler, the medical history librarian at the Ebling Health Sciences Library.

All students are expected to familiarize themselves with the UW policies on plagiarism and to assume responsibility for honesty in all course work.

In compliance with the American with Disabilities Act, I urge any student in this course with a disability to inform me as soon as possible, so that I may make any necessary accommodation to ensure full participation and facilitate your educational opportunities. All such requests are confidential.

Readings

Readers may be purchased at the History of Science office, Social Science Building Room 7143

The following books are on order at the University Bookstore:

Upton Sinclair, *The Jungle* (Norton Critical Edition)

Sheila and David Rothman, *The Pursuit of Perfection: the Promise and Perils of Medical Enhancement*

Joan J. Brumberg, *Fasting Girls: a History of Anorexia Nervosa*

Course Meetings:

September 3 Introduction and Expectations

September 5 Coming to America

Readings:

Observations by Master George Percy, 1607

Trudy Eden, "Food, Assimilation, and the Malleability of the Human Body in Early Virginia," in Lindman and Tarter, eds., *A Centre of Wonders*

September 8 Experimental Inquiries

Readings:

John R. Young, *An Experimental Inquiry into the Principles of Nutrition*, M.D. thesis, University of Pennsylvania (1803)
John C. Gunn, Food," in *Gunn's Domestic Medicine* (1830)

September 10 Experiments and Observations

Readings:

William Beaumont, M.D. *Experiments and Observations on the Gastric Juice and the Physiology of Digestion* (1833)

September 12 Library Assignment

September 15 Sylvester Graham and Health Reform

Readings:

James C. Whorton, "Christian Physiology," in *Crusaders for Fitness* (1982)
Letter to Sylvester Graham.

September 17 Care and Feeding of Slaves

Readings:

"Food," from *Advice among Masters: The Ideal in Slave Management in the Old South*, ed. James O. Breeden (1980)
Jacques Henry and Alicia Kwong, "Why is Geophagy treated like Dirt?" *Deviant Behavior*, (2003).

September 19 Good Creature of God: Drinking in Early America

Reading:

Mark E. Lender and J. K. Martin, chapter 1, *Drinking in America* (1982).

September 22 American Appetites

Reading:

Ronald L. Numbers, "Sex, Science, and Salvation: The Sexual Advice of Ellen G. White and John Harvey Kellogg," in *Right Living: An Anglo-American Tradition of Self-Help Medicine and Hygiene* (2003).

September 24 Library Session with Micaela Sullivan-Fowler

The class will meet in the Atrium in Room 1222, Health Sciences Learning Center at 750 Highland Ave.

September 26 Cornflakes, Crusaders, and Calories

Readings:

J. H. Kellogg, *Shall We Slay to Eat?* (1902).

Readings for upcoming week:

Upton Sinclair, *The Jungle* (chapters I-XVII)

September 29 through October 3 American Meat

October 6 through October 10 Pure Food

Readings:

Upton Sinclair, *The Jungle* (chapters XVIII-XXXI))

October 13 Midterm examination

October 15 The Newer Sciences of Nutrition

Readings:

Alfred Hess and Lester Unger, "The Diet of the Negro Mother in New York City," *Journal of the American Medical Association*, (1918).

Elizabeth Chacko, "Understanding the Geography of Pellagra in the United States: the role of social and place-based identities," *Gender, Place and Culture*, (2005).

October 17 Diet and Disease

Readings:

Howard Markel, "'When It Rains it Pours': Endemic Goiter, Iodized Salt, and David Murray Cowie, MD," *American Journal of Public Health*, (1987).

October 20 Counting the Calorie

Readings:

Francis Benedict, "The Influence of Mental and Muscular Work on Nutritive Processes," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 1910

Nick Cullaher, "The Foreign Policy of the Calorie," *American Historical Review*, 2007, 337-364.

October 22 Baby Fat

Readings:

Jeffrey P. Brosco, "Weight Charts and Well Child Care: When the Pediatrician Became the Expert in Child Care," *Archives Pediatric Adolescent Medicine*, (2001.)

Jacqueline Wolf, "Don't Kill Your Baby': Feeding Infants in Chicago, 1903—1924," *Journal of the History of Medicine*, (1998).

Amy Bentley, "Inventing Baby Food: Gerber and the Discourse of Infancy in America," in Belasco and Scranton, *Food Nations* (2002).

October 24 Boys to Men

Readings:

R. Marie Griffith, "Apostles of Abstinence: Fasting and Masculinity during the Progressive Era," *American Quarterly* (2000).

October 27 Molding the Male Body

Readings:

Jesse Berrett, "Feeding the Organization Man: Diet and Masculinity in Postwar America," *Journal of Social History* (1997).

Rothman and Rothman, "Borrowed Manhood" and "the Price of Growth," in *The Pursuit of Perfection*.

October 29 Fasting Girls

Readings:

Joan Brumberg, *Fasting Girls*, Introduction, chapters 1-3

October 31 Anorexia Nervosa

Readings:

Joan Brumberg, *Fasting Girls*, chapters 6-9

November 3 The Search for a Scientific Ration

Readings:

Draftee No. 357, "What We Eat," from *In the National Army Hopper*, (1917).

Susan Okie, "Glimpses of Guantanamo—Medical Ethics and the War on Terror," *New England Journal of Medicine* (2005).

November 5 Starving for Science

Readings:

Ancel Keys et al, *The Biology of Human Starvation*, chapters 1 (the History of Starvation), and Chapter 4 (General Features of the Minnesota Experiment).

November 7 Starvation Solutions

Readings:

Warren Belasco, "Algae Burgers for a Hungry World? The Rise and Fall of Chlorella Cuisine," *Technology and Culture* (1997).

November 10 From Fatness to Obesity

Readings:

"What causes obesity?" *Journal of the American Medical Association*, (1924).

Lulu Graves, "Coping with Overweight by Means of Diet Therapy," *The Modern Hospital*, (1929).

Marlene Schwartz et al, "Weight Bias among Health Professionals Specializing in Obesity," *Obesity Research*, (2003).

***Short papers due.

November 12

Surgical Solutions

Readings:

Lindsay Peters, "Resection of the pendulous, fat abdominal wall in cases of extreme obesity," *Annals of Surgery* (1909).

Sheila and David Rothman, "The Body as Turf," in *The Pursuit of Perfection: the Promise and Perils of Medical Enhancement*.

R. Steinbrook, "Surgery for Severe Obesity," *New England Journal of Medicine* (2004).

November 14

Magic Bullets and Wonder Pills

Readings:

A.E. Wiggam, "Blindness, Death Follow Reducing by Poison Drugs, *Physical Culture*, (1937).

Eric Colman, "Anorectics on Trial: A Half Century of Federal Regulation of Prescription Appetite Suppressants," *Annals of Internal Medicine* (2005).

H. Blanck et al, "Prescription weight loss pill use among Americans: patterns of pill use and lessons learned from the fen-phen market withdrawal," *Preventive Medicine* (2004).

November 17

Food in the Forties and Fifties

Readings:

Grivetti et al, "Chicken: Cold War and Social Upheaval: Through the Atomic Age and Vietnam to the American Bicentennial (1945-1976)," *Nutrition Today*, (2007).

Grivetti et al, "Potatoes: World War II: Home Front and Abroad, 1941-45," *Nutrition Today* (2006).

November 19

Feeding Fast

Readings:

Josephson, "The Ocean's Hot Dog: the Development of the Fishstick," *Technology and Culture* (2008).

November 21

Better Living through Chemistry

Readings :

Jordan Sand, "A Short History of MSG," *Gastronomica* (2005).

Alan I. Marcus, "Sweets for the Sweet: Saccharin, Knowledge and the Contemporary Regulatory Nexus," *Journal of Policy History* (1996).

Gretchen Ann Reilly, "Not a So-called Democracy: Anti-Fluoridationists and the Fight over Drinking Water," in Robert Johnston, *The Politics of Healing* (2004).

November 24-26

“Thanksgiving”

December 1 Safe Food

Readings:

Marion Nestle, "The Future of Food Safety: Public Health versus Bioterrorism," from *Safe Food* (2003).

December 3 Food Therapy

Readings:

Susan E. Lederer, "Treat with Meat: Protein, Palatability and Pernicious Anemia in the 1920s and 1930s," in Cantor, ed. *Meat, Medicine and Human Health in the Twentieth Century* (forthcoming).

E.A. Applegate and L. Grivetti, "Search for the Competitive Edge: A History of Dietary Fads and Supplements," *J. Nutrition* (1997).

C. Shortt, "The probiotic century: historical and current perspectives," *Trends in Food Science and Technology* (1999).

December 5 Fat?So! The Fat Acceptance Movement

Readings:

April Herndon, "Disparate But Disabled: Fat Embodiment and Disability Studies," *NWSA Journal*, (2002).

December 8 Whose Responsibility?

Readings:

Michelle Mello, Rice Rimm, and David Studdert, "The McLawsuit: The Fast Food Industry and Legal Accountability for Obesity," *Health Affairs* (2003).

Michelle Mello, David Studdert, and Troyen Brennan, "Obesity —The New Frontier of Public Health Law," *New England Journal of Medicine* (2006).

December 10 the Politics of Pounds and Ounces

Readings:

J. Eric Oliver, "The Politics of Pathology: how obesity became an epidemic disease," *Perspectives in Biology and Medicine*, (2006).

December 12 Conclusions