

Opinion

Pills can't replace pain in Americans' fight to be thin

America is the fattest nation on the face of the earth. Ironically, its citizens are the most obsessed with being thin.



Paula Vogrin

Having a slim trim body along with eating ice cream and french fries is an American obsession. Americans spend \$10 billion a year fighting the battle of the bulge. Unfortunately not all of the money is spent on safe, proven diet plans and exercise equipment.

In their quest for the body beautiful, many Americans aren't willing to give up their favorite pastas, pies and pizzas. They want to be thin. They want to be thin fast. They want to be thin without exercising. And they don't want to change any of their eating habits.

These are the people who fall under the spell of "miracle medical breakthroughs," "amazing diet pills," "fat burning capsules" and "lose 50 lbs. without dieting diets."

The Food and Drug Administration has approved only two drugs,

phenylpropanolamine and benzocaine with caffeine, for use in non-prescription diet aids. Most of the ingredients in "miracle" diet pills and the like are not recognized by the FDA as effective agents for weight loss. Ingredients in pills offered through the mail and in health food stores range from herbal blends to diuretics (fluid eliminators) to freeze-dried cow brains. Some ingredients are questionable to say the least.

Aimed primarily at women and the less educated members of the American public, advertisements for these types of diet aides populate the back pages of most women's magazines, fashion magazines and rags like the National Enquirer and the Star.

The following are excerpts from ads in the last few issues of Cosmopolitan.

• **NEW MEDICAL BREAKTHROUGH — LOSE UP TO 50 LBS. WITHOUT DIETING!** In a major medical breakthrough the scientific community has AT LAST developed a POWERFUL, FAST-ACTING, weight loss compound that virtually ELIMINATES DIETING, ELIMINATES STRENUOUS EXERCISE, and most IMPORTANTLY, ELIMINATES

FAT, FLAB, AND CELLULITE FOREVER!

Incredible but true facts:

- Eat all your favorite foods and still lose weight!

- Your weight loss is automatic. Just take Cal-Ban 3000 every day and you'll automatically lose weight!

- Millions of fat cells will begin to shrink within 24 hours as your body goes on a fat burning spree!

- Cal-Ban 3000 is absolutely safe. No harmful side effects have been reported. (*I think reported is the key word in this incredible but true fact.*)

• **THE AMAZING JAPANESE SUPER PILL — OVER 400,000 SATISFIED CUSTOMERS** but the government says the company needs more proof. **NO EXERCISE, NO DIET!** Try it **ABSOLUTELY FREE FOR 45 DAYS.** The North American distributor of the Japanese Super Pill is taking a bold and historic step in the fight against government red tape and orthodox medical opinionism. You Can Prove The Japanese Super Pill really works.

• **NEW MIRACLE! THE SCANDINAVIAN FAT BLOCKER! EAT TILL YOUR HEART'S**

CONTENT! NO DIET! NO EXERCISE! PERMANENT WEIGHT LOSS! ONLY TOTAL STARVATION WORKS FASTER!

• **Thousands of Women Get Back Girlish Figures on Incredible Super Diet!** The **QUIKTRIM II DIET PLAN.** IN JUST HOURS after you begin the **QUIKTRIM II DIET PLAN,** your body will begin to **BURN OFF YEARS OF BUILT-UP FAT.**

• **TAP THE SLIMMING POWERS ALREADY WITHIN YOU!** Lose weight naturally through subliminal stimulation. Used with your present weight loss plan, the results will be **NOTHING SHORT OF SENSATIONAL!** Three subliminal cassette tapes are all you need to reprogram your subconscious eating habits. You'll hear waves breaking on the shoreline, **BUT** your subconscious hears more! **TOTALLY RESHAPES YOUR ATTITUDE TOWARDS EATING.**

• **THE COMBINED GRAPEFRUIT-HERBAL DIET!** The most sensational, powerful, quick weight loss plan **EVER DISCOVERED! NO EXERCISE!** The clinically proven formula is the **ULTIMATE FAT DESTROYER!** It **ACTUALLY PULLS**

EXCESS FAT AWAY from hard to reach areas such as waist, hips, thighs and buttocks. **YEARS OF FAT BUILDUP WILL DISAPPEAR WITHIN WEEKS.** With this proven two-way method you will lose fat and fluids at the unheard of rate of up to:

- 3 LBS. THE VERY FIRST DAY
- 9 LBS. THE FIRST TWO DAYS
- 16 LBS. THE VERY FIRST WEEK

NOTHING WORKS AS FAST, NOTHING IS AS SAFE, NOTHING CAN HELP YOU LOSE MORE WEIGHT!

Nothing is more unbelievable! Come on folks, doctors have been telling us years that balanced, sensible diets and exercise are the only reliable methods of weight loss. If these miracle diet pills actually did "burn ugly body fat" while you sleep, "permanently" and "without exercise" and still let you "eat till your heart's content" all for the "unbelievable" price of \$29.99, \$39.99, \$49.99, "Jane Fonda and all of her exercise clones wouldn't be making millions on aerobics videos. Nike wouldn't sell any jogging shoes and Blue Bell ice cream wouldn't be part of every meal.

Paula Vogrin is a senior journalism major and a columnist for The Battalion.

Being a reel sport

One recent Saturday morning, I was searching through the vast caverns of cable television looking for something I could watch to kill an hour or so.



Lewis Grizzard

I came upon Jimmy Swaggart begging for money. I hate to see a grown man beg, so I moved on, through cartoons, one of those nature shows that tells all that you never wanted to know about the duckbill platypus, and a dozen or so aerobic classes of the air.

I finally stopped when I came to one of those fishing shows. I'm not sure why, but at least nobody was begging me for money or telling me to do odd things with my body that could result in six weeks of traction.

Ever watched a fishing show? They're all the same. Two guys are out in the boat and they're catching all sorts of fish and delivering clever commentary.

For example:

"Hot dang! I've got me a fish!"

"Dad burn if you ain't! That's a nice fish, too."

"That is a nice fish."

"Don't lose him, Earl, that's a nice fish."

"Look at this fish. How much you think this fish weighs, Carl?"

"This fish right here? This fish must weigh 10 pounds."

"Aw, this fish weighs more than that. This fish probably goes 12 pounds."

"What are we gonna do now?"

"Let's throw this fish back and catch us another fish."

Throwing a fish back isn't all that humanitarian when you think about it.

Carl and Earl had this fish out of the water 15 minutes.

I'm sure the fish appreciated all the nice things that were said, but being out of the water that long probably caused brain damage, and when the fish got back into the drink, it couldn't warn the other fish about the two fools in the boat.

And you know sometimes these television fishermen go out and don't catch any fish. I have no idea how many times I've been fishing in my life, but I know that more times than not, the only things biting were the mosquitoes.

I think they should throw in a couple of episodes on those fishing shows when Carl and Earl aren't getting a nibble.

At least that would break up the monotony of "Ain't this a nice fish?"

How about this:

"Gettin' anything, Carl?"

"Nothing, Earl. I told you there weren't any fish in this lake."

"Don't blame it on me, Carl. Maybe we're using the wrong kind of bait."

"Bait's butt. You got me up at four o'clock to come out here and talk to frogs, and we can't even drink beer because we're on television."

"Wait a minute, Carl. I think I got something."

"Hot dang, Earl! That looks like a nice fish."

"It is a nice fish."

"Hey, that ain't no fish."

"What is it?"

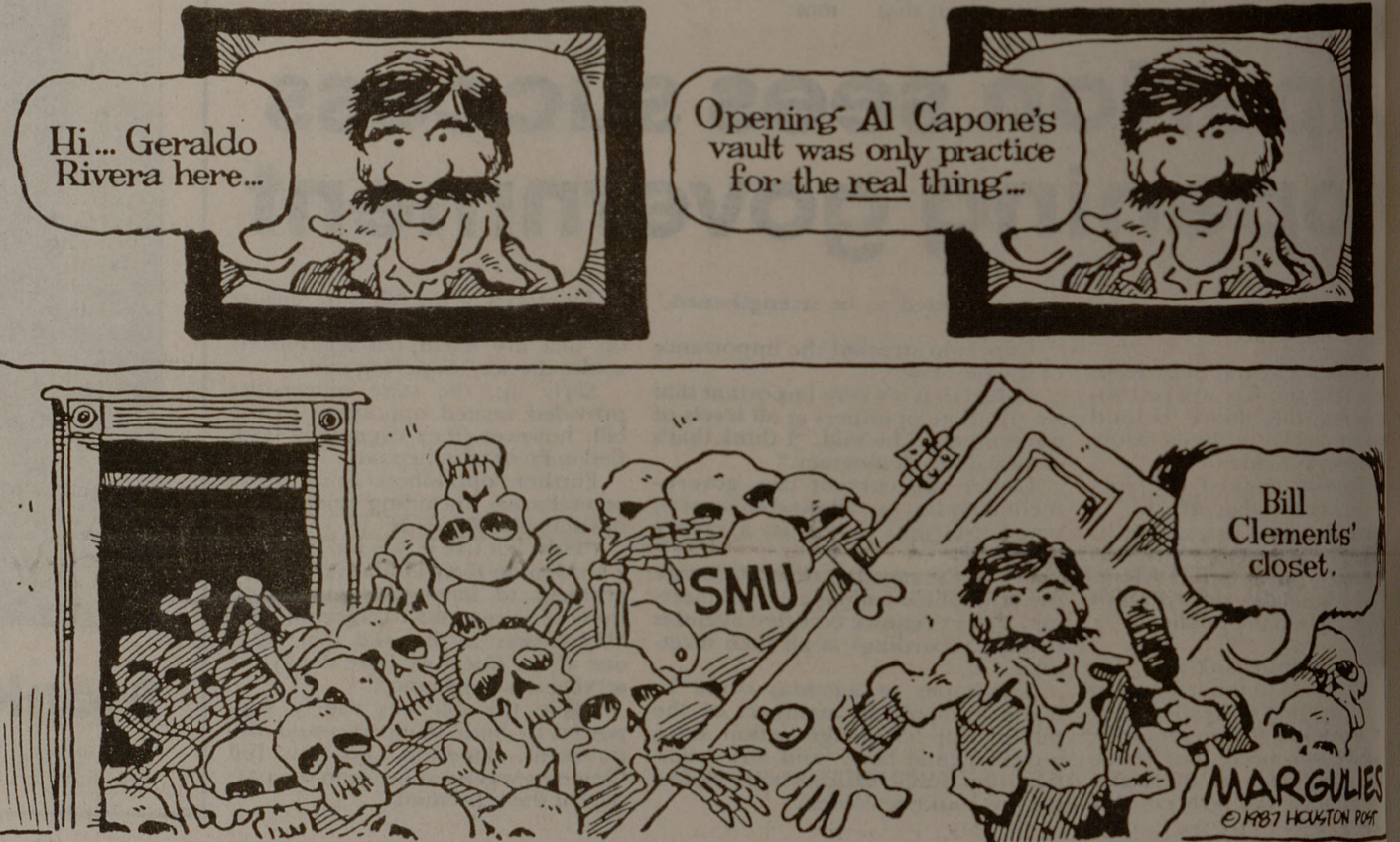
"Looks like a duckbill platypus to me."

"But it's a nice duckbill platypus."

I eventually tired of the fishing show and turned back to Jimmy Swaggart. He was still begging.

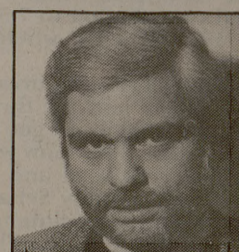
Somebody mail him a carp.

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Republican anger coming a little late in Iran affair

Ollie North has at last committed an unpardonable sin: He's let down Sen. Orrin G. Hatch. The Utah Republican up to now has stood fast with North and his Merry Band of Constitution Manglers. But the other day there came testimony so awful, so terrible, so damning, that Hatch had no choice. He expressed his "feeling of being let down." North had tried to cover up that he had accepted a free security system for his home.



Richard Cohen

To Hatch, this was too much. Like some other Republicans on the committee investigating the Iran-contra affair, he had been unmoved by what he's learned so far: The President lied about trading arms to Iran in exchange for American hostages in Lebanon and about the role of a "third country" (Israel); he signed a law (the Boland Amendment) and then circumvented it; he misled Congress about his intention for Nicaragua and has showed himself serene about revelations that his subordinates franchised American foreign policy and were reaping the benefits of their entrepreneurial skills.

Hatch is tone deaf to sounds that prompt others to yell bloody murder. Elliott Abrams, an assistant secretary of state and the so-called "point man" for the anti-Sandinista effort, misled Congress about the secret funding of the contras in general and about a \$10 million gift by the sultan of Brunei in particular. The former national security adviser, Robert McFarlane, had been a

virtual smoke machine of lies and cutesy statements. At one time he told the House Intelligence Committee, "There is no official or unofficial relationship with any member of the NSC staff regarding fund-raising for the Nicaragua democratic opposition." To all this Hatch and others registered indifference.

Hatch's sudden letdown comes a bit late in the game. But it is in consonance with the ethic de jour of certain conservatives who, it turns out, are hardly conservative at all when it comes to law and the Constitution. For their cause — for anti-communism in all its myriad forms and fantasies — they countenance with equanimity example after example of the law being flouted or ignored.

The other day, for instance, conservatives convened to memorialize William J. Casey, the former director of the CIA. From available evidence, it was Casey who masterminded the secret funding of the contras. He was Daddy Warbucks to Little Orphan Ollie. The Casey crowd hardly paused to consider the damage their hero has done to the agency he headed or to the Constitution to which he swore fealty. If he thought he was right — and they agreed — neither law nor honesty could stay his course. At the event, that lovely lemming, Fawn Hall, was cheered for blindly following North to the shredder.

Law and honesty matter. They are the bricks by which democracy is made. The Constitution does not mention sincerity of purpose as an excuse for breaking the law. It does not matter that Reagan is sincere in his anti-communism, that he thinks Marxist

Nicaragua is a real, if congressionally unrecognized, menace. He still had an obligation, both ethical and constitutional, to tell Congress and the people what he was up to, and to do so publicly — not secretly — challenge laws with which he disagrees. No matter what he might think, no matter how lofty his purpose, the President is not above the law.

As for North, what's the big deal about covering up the acceptance of a gift? He had already, in fact or spirit, broken so many laws, what did a mere security system matter? Doesn't Hatch understand? The security system was part of the cause, installed in the name of the cause, turned on and off to advance the cause.

The law says a federal official is forbidden from accepting gifts from private citizens. But North had already shredded the law, not to mention a record of his activities. In this, he was cheered on by some of the committee members investigating him. The entire anti-communist victory — would it be worth the means.

Maybe North's security system set a symbolic purpose. By having it erected, North has forced some politicians to understand that fences what this scandal is all about. The ancient sages advocated building "a fence" around religious law — to be meticulous in observance lest, through erosion, the law itself was broken. Some time ago, the Reagan administration smashed through that fence and stepped on the law itself. Now, maybe North's more prosaic fence illustrates the damage done. It enhanced his security, but at the cost of our own.

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Mail Call

Kemp deserves attention

EDITOR:

Overlooked in your June 26 article on the LULAC convention in Corpus Christi was the real story of the event: the fact that of the nine presidential candidates who addressed the meeting only one, Jack Kemp, is a Republican.

That occurrence was just another example proving that Kemp is the only Republican candidate who has not written off the minority vote. Yet what he said to the delegates was different from what the Democrats said. He did not promise more spending, affirmative action or tariffs. Rather, he called for creation of economic opportunity through free enterprise zones, tax incentives for businesses that locate in poor urban areas, and less government regulation but with continued enforcement of existing civil rights laws. The convention will never endorse him for 1988 due to his conservative views on other issues.

But he definitely gave them new issues to think about and set the stage for a new debate on how best to alleviate the poverty that grips the nation's minorities.

Jack Kemp is the candidate of new ideas in 1988. He is the only Republican candidate seeking to broaden the base of the party so that it is no longer the "country club boys" that leave minorities and the poor out in the cold. Whether you eventually agree with him or not one thing is sure: he and his agenda deserve every voter's consideration and examination.

Scot Kibbe '90