

# Why is America's waistline expanding?

Submit a letter to  
the editor!

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**Little exercise and Biggie-sized fries combine for an increasingly unhealthy America while others around the world die waiting for their next meal.**

**JONI SMITH**  
Editor in Chief

This weekend I had the pleasure of going to Crabtree Valley Mall. I must admit, I enjoy people watching at the mall almost as much as I like shopping. I went with my grandmother, who, believe it or not, is even more opinionated than I am. My jaw almost dropped when we were sitting at one of the benches giving her aching hip a break when she said to me in the most casual way possible, "There sure are a bunch of fat people around here."

I was absolutely stunned for a few minutes and could not think of anything to say. But then I began to look around and I realized she was exactly right. Even

children are now overweight at a very young age. When they see their parents ordering a biggie sized combo all the time, it's no wonder that children today are almost 18 pounds heavier than 20 years ago.

If you put your pride aside, it's obvious that we all eat too much in this country. Everything is centered on food, from birthdays and anniversaries to Christmas and the Super Bowl. Drinking and eating seem to be America's favorite pastimes these days. How many times can you recall yourself saying to someone in the past couple of weeks, "Hey, let's go out to eat sometime," or "let's go out for drinks this weekend."

Perhaps this would not be so bad if we didn't eat the way we do. The fastest

growing industry in America is the fast food business, with its greasy hamburgers and cholesterol-filled French fries. It seems like the food pyramid we were taught in elementary school has somehow become inverted, with fats and sweets now being at the top.

I even noticed on my little brother's school lunch calendar that ketchup on hamburgers is actually considered a serving of a vegetable in his school district. Knowing this, I'm no longer surprised that my brother is 11 years old and weighs more than me. If kids think it's fine to eat hamburgers all the time, why should we even think that they will grow up to be adults with good eating habits?

Lack of exercise is something else that was evident

to me in the mall. Even if I wanted to get in an elevator, I would not have been able to because they were all filled with "twenty somethings" and teenagers. When did stairs become avoided like the plague? It wouldn't hurt to take the stairs after you gulp down a Whopper with cheese and a large order of fries

Has anyone seen those cooking shows with British and French chefs? Have you ever noticed how tiny their portion sizes seem? It's because we're used to piling our plates so high that food is falling off of it. Then, after we have eaten all this food, we retreat to another favorite American pastime-television-and our kids become zombies with their video games. In both of these activities, the thumb is the only body part

that gets any exercise, and that just isn't enough to keep that pepperoni lover's pizza from finding a place to latch onto our hips, stomachs or thighs.

I have heard several studies conducted by nutrition experts to discover why Americans are becoming increasingly obese. I'm no nutrition expert, and I've been known to eat too many M&Ms myself, but I just think we have too much food in this country. It's amazing to me that restaurants in the U.S. can have "all you can eat" buffets while some families in Africa, Central America, the Middle East and Asia never know when they will be able to eat a meal.

## Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

On Thursday, September 12, George W. Bush spoke to the United Nations General Assembly asking for the much-lacking international support of a United States' attack on Iraq. Saddam Hussein, a dangerous dictator who is suspected of building weapons of mass destruction, has ignored numerous UN resolutions, and has let his people suffer and die in poverty, so why isn't the international community proudly displaying their American support for the violent end of Hussein's regime? Fortunately, it is because they are smart and still appropriately skeptical of Bush's untenable fallacy.

Reason One for Skepticism: Nuclear warfare is a touchy international subject. It is important to remember that there is only one country that has ever used the atomic bomb, and it was used on 150,000 innocent, unsuspecting, common civilians like you and me. That one country is now trying to lecture and bully the rest of the world on the responsibilities of owning nuclear bombs.

Reason Two for Skepticism: Although several other countries such as Pakistan, Israel, and China also have nuclear weapons, the Bush administration is singling out Iraq.

Reason Three for Skepticism: Although Iraq has ignored the numerous UN resolutions, Israel's prime minister, Ariel Sharon, recently announced that his country will no longer abide by the 1993 Oslo Peace Accords, a UN document with the Palestinians. They also have ignored several UN Security Council resolutions, yet the United States gives them money and support while giving Iraq war.

Reason Four for Skepticism: The economic sanctions that cause Iraqi suffering are insisted upon by the US, no matter how little it is affecting Hussein.

Reason Five for Skepticism: War is a horrible, horrible thing. To find Saddam Hussein, American troops will have to go into Baghdad, a hugely populated city. Innocent civilians will die, women will be raped, children will be fighting as soldiers, and families will lose their loved ones. More people will starve and suffer. *Time* magazine recently reported that US troops "are ill equipped to wage war in cities" and an estimated 30% of "street-fighting" soldiers would result in casualties. If Iraq has the weapons that Bush so assuredly claims they have, clearly they will use them on our own soldiers.

Reason Six for Skepticism: Isolation no longer exists in the world today. If America starts this war, other countries will naturally get involved. Their people will die and economies suffer.

If the attacks on September 11 proved anything it is that our country is not all-powerful; we are not invincible. Saddam Hussein poses an international problem that needs to be dealt with, but it is too soon, and frankly deceitful, selfish, and malicious, to resort to war. We cannot solve this problem by ourselves. We need international support, but with our hypocritical foreign policy and lacking diplomacy, it is no wonder support is lacking as well.

These are just my opinions on the situation. As always, there is another side to the story. To learn more about the Iraqi situation, come to a panel tonight from 5:30-7:30 in Dogwood underneath Belk Dining Hall.

Lindsey Jones