

CHRISTY'S

CORNER

CHRISTY
KIMBALL
News Editor

There is yet more controversy surrounding obesity in the United States. One school of thought is pushing for bills that would add taxes for soft drinks, require calorie counts on restaurant menus and ban foods of "minimal nutritional value" in public schools.

The other school of thought insists that consumption of food and exercise habits are personal choices, so restaurants and food companies should not be held accountable for one's individual lifestyle choices. This school promotes legislation such as "The Commonsense Consumption Act" and "The Personal Responsibility in Food Consumption Bill", which prohibits lawsuits against

Should the government regulate your weight?

restaurants and food companies for causing obesity, such as the McDonald's lawsuit.

There are continuous attempts to regulate obesity in children. The Arkansas board of Education mandated a weight report card to be sent home. Arkansas joins local school districts in Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Oregon and California in this mandate. The other main player in children's lives is television; the media is almost always a target.

There has been discussion about banning commercials which feature items of minimal nutritional value such as sugary cereals. Groups that oppose these commercials feel that cute, appealing characters encourage children to consume unhealthy food, thereby contributing to childhood obesity. Children

might want the item the cute character is promoting. However, parents are responsible for purchasing food for their children.

It is easier to blame corporations than it is to take responsibility for your own actions. Weight is routinely measured and noticeable unlike other health problems such as lung cancer. If you routinely eat a Big Mac for lunch and you notice that everytime you go to the doctor, your weight increases and your favorite pants no longer fit, something is wrong. Eliminate a variable to figure out what is causing the weight gain. I do not believe the food industry should be held accountable for people's personal choices.

I am often skeptical of corporate America, but this time I do not believe it is entirely at fault. Educating

children about food is important because they are not innately familiar with the dynamics of nutrition.

Regarding 'junk' food in school, it is a complicated situation. Fatty foods and soft drinks are much cheaper than 'healthier' food. Additionally, soft drink companies give schools money to provide their products. Public school budgets are often fickle, ergo supplementary income is sometimes necessary.

The other side to this argument proposes that if children only have fatty foods and soft drinks available, how can they eat healthier? The parents must be involved in this conundrum. It is not so easy to blame the parents, for every family has different circumstances. If the parent or parents responsible have a full time job, it is rather hard to pack a nutritious

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lunch in lieu of giving the child money to buy food at school. Also, some children are provided with school lunches due to welfare programs. It is inappropriate to ban certain items from schools without providing alternative products and supplementary income.

Regulation of factors believed to contribute to obesity is not a "cure" to the problem. Items can be taxed, banned and a surplus of information can be provided, however, this is not a 'quick fix'. Banning commercials is not the answer either. Many adorable characters were around before obesity was an epidemic, so one cannot blame the media. Education is most likely the best solution. It will not be so much a cure, but a preventative measure.

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White Iris Ball

WHEN: NOVEMBER 14, 2003

TIME: 9pm-1am

Raleigh Convention Center

TICKET SALES:

NOVEMBER 10TH THRU NOVEMBER 14TH
Cate Center and Dining Hall

PRICE:

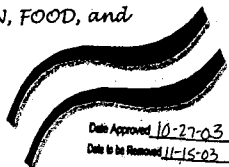
\$38 per couple
\$28 for single

T-SHIRTS:

Long Sleeve or Short Sleeve
\$12

Ticket Sales end at 11am on
FRIDAY, the 14th!

Join MEA in a night of FUN, FOOD, and
DANCING!



Date Approved 10-27-03
Date to be Rescinded 11-15-03

Campus Calendar

Guest Piano Recital on Wednesday, November 12 at 8 p.m. in Carswell Concert Hall. Mayron K. Tsong, pianist, will be performing.

Forensic Science Lecture on Thursday, November 13 at 4 p.m. in SMB 262. Lisa Schiermeier will be presenting her knowledge of forensic science. A reception precedes the speech at 3:30 p.m.

Meredith Dance Theatre in Concert, beginning Thursday, November 13 through Saturday, November 15 at 8 p.m. each night. Students, faculty and guests will be presenting.

Community Calendar

Chicago-the Musical runs through November 16 at the BTI Center in Raleigh. Tickets are \$24.50-\$58. Call Ticketmaster for tickets and more information.

Atlanta Thrashers at Carolina Hurricanes at the RBC Center on Thursday, November 13 at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$12-\$125. Call Ticketmaster for tickets and more information.

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