



# **The Yo-Yo Must Be An American Invention**

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**FLYMF April 2004, The Zygote Issue, Volume 1 Issue 2**

If the average American and the average European were to meet on a teeter-totter, the average European would end up launched into a neighboring sandbox. The average American can't run a mile and has the body composition of a baby seal. Where did it all go wrong?

The fact of the matter is that America's obesity problem doesn't result from laziness, or lack of exercise, or any of the other reasons commonly given, but is rather a conspiracy engineered by the weight loss industry. The weight loss industry rakes it in helping Americans lose weight, but they are as business savvy as the executives of Enron. They know if dieters lose weight and keep it off, all of America will be thin, meaning the executives will have to figure out how to post resumes on Monster.com.

So the giants—Weight Watchers, Jenny Craig, Nutra System, and Slim Fast—are all in it together. They help dieters drop a few pounds, thereby allowing a momentary feeling of triumph. But like casinos that pay out ten dollar jackpots only to see gamblers spend a hundred more trying to recreate the feeling, the weight loss industry has to make sure the dieter gains it all back.

Tobacco companies run ads condemning cigarette smoking and urging people to quit. If the weight loss industry plays by the same rules, they must be responsible for developing all of the delicious foods that individually contain enough calories to power an hour ride on the Goodyear blimp.

Take, for example, the deep fried Twinkie. It started at a county fair when someone decided 150 calories was not nearly enough to invest in three bites of dessert. Why not batter it and dip it in hot oil? After all, the Twinkie already looks like a yellow cleaning sponge—let's see how much fattening goo it can soak up.

Needless to say, put a food on a stick and it will sell. Fair booth operators have already branched out to deep fried candy bars on a stick. What's next? Deep fried double cheeseburger on a stick? How far can it go? Deep fried margarine bar on a stick?

Weight Watchers developed the point system to give dieters an easy way to count calories, and claim it enables dieters to eat whatever they want. There is even a whole book devoted to the points of entrees served in fast food restaurants.

Now this is a cruel joke. Dottie the Dieter will consult the book and see that the Chicken Soft Taco at Taco Bell is only two points, but putting a hungry, fat starved dieter in the vicinity of a sour cream gun is a recipe for disaster. If Dottie hasn't had a sniff of hot oil in months, the airborne grease particles will make her as crazed as a shark in a feeding frenzy. By the time it is Dottie Dieter's turn in line, she has calculated the precise way to spend the entire contents

of her wallet on Taco Bell food. Keep in mind, ten dollars at Taco Bell can feed a small African country for three weeks.

Dottie consumes the food like a goldfish whose owner accidentally emptied the entire food bottle into the tank. Once she regains consciousness, dusts the bits of fried tortilla shell out of her hair, and wipes the streak of refried beans off the side of her face, she realizes that she has consumed three days worth of points in two minutes, but not tasted a thing. Dottie is only thankful to have run out of food before bursting like an overfed goldfish.

Now Dottie has to go to a meeting where she is publicly weighed and booed when the scale shows the pound gained in one misguided afternoon. Dottie hangs her head in shame as the other members show their scorn by pelting her with rice cakes. The mentor tells Dottie that in order for her to make up for the transgression, calories must be further reduced, and the cycle begins again.

Cold Stone Creamery is the newest invention in diet foils. Cold Stone has found the answer to the question: cake or ice cream? Their answer: smash the two together and have both. How has no one thought of this before? Why have one dessert when you can have two? Patrons can have just about anything smashed into ice cream: fruit (clearly only an amateur would order this), nuts (to allow for dessert under the guise of being protein friendly), cookies (where would ice cream be without the Oreo?), brownies (which are made at Cold Stone and therefore laced with an addictive substance strong enough to rival nicotine), or any candy bar on the market.

Recently Cold Stone has unveiled a no fat, no sugar ice cream that they call Sinless. This Sinless ice cream is ingenious. Dottie the Dieter is thrilled to have something she can eat at Cold Stone. She will go into the shop to order the sinless, tasteless ice cream and figure with so many calories being saved, why not order three candy bars to be smashed in?

There are so many desserts available all of the time, but the one true diet spoiler is only available once a year—Girl Scout cookies. Girl Scouts are the Special Forces unit of desserts. Dressed up in their mini Green Beret uniforms and applying top secret military tactics, these cookie hawkers invade the exterior of grocery stores yearly to sabotage diets. They take no prisoners. As dieters try to run past, pushing carts filled with healthful selections, the Girl Scouts deploy.

Dieters are forced to cower behind the scant cover of a stalk of broccoli or try to fight back using only a banana as a sword. Mini carrots are lobbed like grenades. Under duress, Dottie Dieter finally surrenders, hands over four dollars for a box of Taglongs, and eats the entire box by the time she gets to the car because she hasn't been near a sugar molecule for three weeks, well except for that sinless Cold Stone ice cream. Five Girl Scout standoffs later, it's time for

summer and Dottie has to scramble to find a new weight loss program to get ready for bathing suit season.

Bookstores have shelves lined with weight loss books. There is the South Beach diet, the Macrobiotic diet, an eat-by-color plan, but the most popular and controversial one is currently the Atkins diet. Unfortunately, our primal carnivore instincts stop reading after seeing the words high protein and decide that details like counting calories or balancing nutrients aren't important. All that matters is, suddenly, steak is healthier than wheat bread. Now people shun apples and reach for bacon, not caring that with every bite their carotid arteries are becoming as tight as last year's spandex pants.

But maybe there is something to this plan. After all, when was the last time the Discovery channel had a special featuring overweight cheetahs or pumas? The vegetarians on the other hand are represented by the elephant and hippopotamus. Nothing against these large herbivores, but when was the last time a woman said to her husband, "These pants make me look like a tiger."

On the other hand, the meat being consumed by jaguars is not fried and congealing in grease like the Burger King high protein Whopper, or coated in creamy dressing like the Atkins friendly Subway wraps. To do it right, maybe steak tartar should be the next sushi?

There are a few drawbacks to the Atkins plan. Unfortunately, the dreaded carbohydrate is the only nutrient able to cross the blood brain barrier and feed the brain. But, who would choose thinking over being skinny? After all, it is only necessary to consume enough carbohydrates to allow the brain to decipher a size six from a size nine. A credit card can always be attached to a shoelace around the neck to eliminate any requirement of dexterity to pay the bill.

If all diets have failed, Dottie the Dieter can pay \$15,000 to have her stomach stapled down to the size of a Dixie cup. Sadly, the stomach is made of a stretchy muscle that can get bigger over time, especially if Dottie goes to great lengths to fit double cheeseburgers into her Dixie cup after the surgery.

This seems like a whole lot of trouble to go to when having a tape worm would be so much easier and more cost effective. There are so many advantages to a tape worm. Suddenly every buffet is two for one. Not to mention the tape worm would be a fun new pet that can be taken anywhere, but does not need a leash. With a tape worm, Dottie Dieter could set up camp at 7-11 with her head under the Slurpie machine and only her tape worm would get fatter. True, it may be difficult to absorb nutrients required to live, and the tape worm might be hard to get rid of when the diet is over, but why think about that when you could look like a member of the Friends cast?

The perfect example of Hollywood's skewed sense of size came with the production of *Bridget Jones's Diary*. Bridget's character represents the average woman who spends her life stressing about her weight, but rather than hoping to avoid paying for two airline seats, Bridget has a real problem—her size six pants are tight. Renee Zellweger was praised for packing on the pounds, but found no magazines would feature her on their cover until she dropped the weight. Dieters around the country were outraged. They cried out with injustice that they would not be able to have a pin up of Renee to throw forks at whenever there was an interview where Renee talked about how hard it was to get up to the same weight the dieter had been trying to get back down to since high school.

With all of the temptations and easy outs it is hard to live a healthy life in America. Maybe we have no hope of ever being a fit society, but at least we have the bombs. If any other country has the nerve to call us fat or comment on our thunder thighs, we don't even have to get up. All we have to do is hit a button. And who do you think is going to survive nuclear winter? The skinny French or petite Chinese? Don't think so. It will be the roly-poly Americans who already have decades of experience eating foods with double-digit shelf lives. Twinkies may be our salvation after all.