

The World Is Fat
The Fads, Trends, Policies, And Products That Are Fattening The Human
Race

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By Barry Popkin
Distinguished Professor of Global Nutrition at the University of North
Carolina

“The world has become fat in just a few decades.”

“Ultimately, widespread obesity and the chronic diseases that contribute to the bulk of deaths in the world are less a result of poor individual dietary choices than the consequences of a high-tech, interconnected world in which governments and multinational corporations have extraordinary power to shape our everyday lives.”

“Man ate and drank in the healthiest manner possible during the Upper Paleolithic period [beginning about 40,000 years ago], when humans were nomadic hunter-gatherers.” “About 50%-80% of food came from plants and 20%-50% from animals.” “People living at this time consumed no grains, and no dairy products other than breast milk.”

Today, subsidies up to \$50 billion per year are allocated for the production of cheap corn, soybeans, meat and poultry products. “The farmers would lose a great deal of money if they took acreage out of production to grow vegetables and fruits. Our food system was shaped so that these Iowa farmers could grow just two crops [corn and soybeans]—which produce much of the caloric sweetener and 80% of the vegetable oil used in our country. Furthermore, cheap corn, wheat, and soybeans constitute the engine that drives the beef and poultry industries—all of this a major focus of the US government.”

“US soybean and corn farmers have been selling their crops for less than what it costs to produce them” and that affects the cost of chicken, pork, and beef. “Given the role of fructose corn syrup as a sweetener, this means that by extension, sweets and soft drinks have been subsidized.”

“So, on one hand, we have much cheaper beef, poultry, corn, soybeans, and sugar. But on the other, this has occurred at the expense of healthy plant foods—particularly fruits and vegetables, whose relative cost is great compared to [subsidized] fats, sugars, and meats in today’s marketplaces. The results for all of us—not only American but around the globe—have been devastating.”

“Today, we’re awash in highly refined sugar and grains.”

“Nothing has contributed more to our weight gain than the clash between our drinking habits and our biology.” “We drink a lot of our calories, but we don’t cut our food intake as a result.” “The average American gets over 450 calories a day from beverages.”

It takes a lot of exercise to work off a piece of pie. If a piece of pie contains 500 calories, it would take 1.5 hours of running, several hours of fast biking, or an hour of the most vigorous aerobics to offset those calories. “Many of the meals at a fast-food restaurant—be it a hamburger, pizza, or taco—contain 1,000 to 2,000 calories.” “It’s much easier to cut 10 to 100 calories from one’s diet than it is to burn off the equivalent amount of calories through exercise.”

“Around the world, there has been a big change in the fats used for cooking and food processing.” “Today, the principle vegetable oils are soybean, sunflower, rapeseed, palm and peanut oil [all omega-6s].” Global vegetable oil consumption tripled from 1961 to 1990, with soybean oil being the most consumed worldwide. “Some of the newer oils are highly pathogenic [trans fats].”

“Diet, inactivity, and energy imbalance are what kill us.” “The shift to calorically sweetened beverages, larger portion sizes, more eating occasions, and the increased availability of sweeter and fattier foods—which are a result of technological and economic changes—are causing the obesity epidemic, not genes per se. Today we are eating, drinking, and moving in ways unprecedented in human history.”

“The American Dietetic Association is funded by many food companies and, I [Popkin] argue, views nutrition through the lens of the food industry.”

American schoolchildren of all ages should drink only water—without flavoring, additives, or carbonation.

“My [Popkin] favorite way to help people lose weight is to look at what they drink over the course of a typical day.” “A shift to only noncaloric beverages will do it for most of us. The top 40% of caloric beverage drinkers in the US consume over 760 calories a day from beverages.” “It would be difficult for a person to be heavy if he or she drank only water, consumed a small amount of added sugar in foods, ate lots of fruits and vegetables, and ate no fried foods. Of course, one needs also to be physically active.”

“Most well-respected nutrition researchers have stated that we should drink at most 4 ounces of fruit juice a day.” “Even when there is no added sugar, fruit juice contains as many calories as a soft drink.”

The consumption of diet sweeteners may get us to consume more calories in general.