



WEIGHT LOSS MADNESS

Three signs from the media motivate this writer to ponder body issues, weight, Starbucks, SkinnyGurl and hate mongering aimed at fat.

Thank you, computer, radio, and television for reminding me that Western society is so obsessed with weight loss. I received three epic signs from the media to write about this, and each was more ridiculous than the last.

The first sign I received was a link to a short video rant by Jessica Valenti, feminist writer and author of *Why Have Kids*. Basically, a major magazine rejected a pitch for an article she wanted to write, and countered with their own brilliant idea. They asked her to write a personal story of how she lost her own baby weight, and mentioned that women like Jessica Simpson really struggled with this issue after birth.

Yes, it's idiotic. Let's rehash something written about Jessica Simpson using the "I" pronoun, because it really makes the story crazy anecdotal.

It's not just idiotic. Jessica Valenti really *lucked out* when it was time to lose her baby weight. She gave birth to a two-pound baby three months early. The terrifying experience of having a premature baby was at least brightened by the positive effect it had on her figure. Thanks for that.

Second, came a bizarre radio announcement. A local radio DJ caught my attention with this news-breaking story. Christine Hall, a 66-year-old woman from Virginia, lost 76 lbs by eating nothing but food from Starbucks for 2 years. Oh man. What part of that sentence really strikes you the hardest? Is it the first part? For me, I look at that and all I can see repeating in my head is, "nothing but food from Starbucks for two years... food from Starbucks for two years... food from Starbucks for two years... Starbucks for two years."

Nutritionists caution against getting all of your food from one restaurant, saying that one might not get all of the necessary nutrients from one menu. Really? What if that menu is sugar, coffee, and Italian grilled cheeses? It's expensive and gives me ideas. I can't wait to announce the success of my Plaid Pantry diet. Just eat "Funions" and drink 40's. You won't even need laxatives.

The final sign came from an Internet headline. "Kate Upton branded a 'Cannibal' by SkinnyGossip..." This comment, made by a thin-propaganda website, was meant to shame Kate Upton after she appeared in a Carl's Jr. ad eating a hamburger. The article demeaned her, and cited a statistic stating that cows are 80 percent genetically similar to humans. I'm confused by the slander, because SkinnyGossip doesn't seem to be against the eating of meat. The blogger, who chooses to write anonymously as "Skinnygurl" has an entire website devoted to pro-anorexic garbage. The site claims not to be pro-anorexic, but after spending some painful time

browsing, I feel comfortable claiming it. She has temporarily removed her "Starving Tips of The Day", but plans to restore it in the future.

Personally, I can't wait. In fact, maybe SkinnyGurl should be our next write-in presidential candidate. Yeah, we can officially change the name of food stamps to fat stamps, pass a censorship law that puts a fuzzy blob over anyone on television not ridiculously skinny, and do away with the military, because I have a feeling that SkinnyGurl could find a way to shame any of our country's enemies into a self-loathing dark hole into which we can toss "Starving Tips of The Day" written on fortune cookie paper. Winner.

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Many of us struggle staying body positive. Personally, I've always been fat-positive, and have a lot of fat-positive friends. They maintain as I do that skinny isn't necessarily healthy or unhealthy, and neither is fat. If you need a dose of body positivity, and want to meet some awesome ladies with fierce attitudes, I recommend visiting my good friends Annie and Carlee at Fat Fancy in downtown Portland. You can get fabulous vintage and modern plus-sized digs, menswear, and there's even an ally section.

Most importantly, we need to speak up when we witness this kind of hate mongering. I love the fact that queer culture is often open to and accepting to all people shapes. Ultimately, the media is created by and for us, and we are accountable for its messages. We have more power than we know. §

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