



Dear Uncle Mike,
Before I begin let me say I enjoy your column very much. Your wit and wisdom has brightened many a day for me. Why are you not syndicated more widely? Is there no justice in the world.

My question concerns the recent discovery that 45% of Americans are overweight. I read somewhere that the Romans got fatter just before their empire fell. I'd love to hear your thoughts on what the fattening of America means. Will over weight women become the beauty norm. Will male paunches become a power symbol?
Slim in Portland, Oregon

Dear Slim,

Before Uncle Mike begins, let him say how much he enjoyed your letter. Your taste and sensibilities have brightened his day. Yes, there is justice in the world. What is right; all that it could be, given the conditions leading to it. Uncle Mike is, evidently, syndicated to the breaking point of the world's interest in his opinions. He's shocked things have gone as far as they have.

The plumping of America will come as no surprise to historians, of whom one of the more snotty will suggest the motto on our currency should have read, In Ourselves We Indulge. The plagues threatening, and snickering at, twentieth century America are self indulgence and its idiot twin, self-righteousness. Americans spend more on dieting than the United Nations spends on famine relief and throw away as much as the rest of humanity consumes. From this podium, we counsel the world on what it should do with its life.

We're fat for the same reasons we're overextended on credit: the people with something to sell have convinced us that self control, not to mention anything as drastic as good old fashioned restraint, are a sin against our national birthright. We feel we owe ourselves a luxury four wheel drive personal assault vehicle for the same reason we deserve meals that would feed third world families for a week: because we're number one. There's a fine, fatal line between freedom and license and our culture is hell bent on erasing it.

Will overweight women become the beauty norm? All things are possible, some are worth dying to prevent. Will male paunches become power symbols? Unless shedding blubber becomes tax deductible and moderation becomes a marketable virtue, probably yes.

Dear Uncle Mike,

I am a twelve year old girl. My teacher asked us to write about men and women, whether they're different or not and how much and what way and if they're equal. I asked a lot of people and read about it but could you tell me? If it was in your column I could get a better grade too.

Chris T., Seattle, Washington

Dear Chris,

As you and Uncle Mike both know, girls are different from boys; men and women even more so. This will be true if a female basketball player becomes a five time MVP in the NBA and the CEOs of the top five Fortune 500 corporations aren't men. The difference between men and women is biological. It's not just that women can bear children and men can't; it's that their body chemistries exist to fulfill one reproductive function or another. Body chemistry determines our thoughts and perceptions, our moods, our drives and, to a large extent, our individual destinies. Female hormones aren't male hormones and they never will be. It's said that society creates gender differences. Uncle Mike thinks gender differences create society. Rather than competing with each other, men and women should compliment each other's power. If for no other reason that that the universe functions that way. At the bottom of anything that happens, something is either emitted or absorbed. Emission is not better than absorption, or stronger or smarter. It's only different. And equal. After women understand what it means to be a woman and men understand what it means to be a man, we can all start learning what it means to be human. That's when the real fun starts.

Dear Uncle Mike,

Why do women start off wanting sex as much as the guy but always wind up not wanting it as much? I'm starting to think women use sex just to hook you.
Chad S., Beaverton, Oregon

Dear Chad,

Although any woman with the brains God gave a crowbar knows the sexual power she wields over men, especially men like you, only a woman without the brains God gave a crowbar would use it to 'hook' one, especially one like you. At the risk of wasting his energy or, as you'd put it, spitting into the wind, he'll try to explain it to you in words you can understand. Women, following the advice of their DNA, have sex (for the most part) with men who make them feel loved and secure. That they can be fooled explains why you have a sex life at all.

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The best indicator of a man's honesty isn't his income tax return. It's the zero adjustment on his bathroom scales. Arthur C. Clarke

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