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Main content

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The Fat Flush Plan

by Ann Louise Gittleman

McGraw-Hill, January 2002, 288 pp, hardcover, ISBN 0-07-138383-2

\$21.95 -- order through Barnes & Noble, www.amazon.com or by calling 800-888-4353

Let's not mince words: Ann Louise Gittleman's new book *The Fat Flush Plan* is a superb book. It belongs in the company of the half dozen best how-to books on diet written in the past decade. Diet books are always a paradox -- if the public loves it the academics will rarely take it seriously. Ann Louise has written a book that should satisfy both camps -- it should have huge appeal for a mass audience while at the same time contains enough solid info and documentation to warrant a spot on many professionals short list of "must haves."

To paraphrase Barry Sears in the intro to this book, few things have the power to generate visceral responses like nutrition and politics. And like politics, nutrition has both "left wing" and "right wing" factions and is almost never politically neutral. On the one side is the American Dietetic Association and their apologists. The other side -- (full disclosure: the side on which my feet are firmly planted) -- includes Gittleman, Barry Sears, Jesse Hanley, Diana Schwarzbein, Jeffrey Bland, Robert Crayhon, Sidney Baker, Sandra Cabot and a few other notables who are working valiantly to bring a comprehensive, functional medicine outlook to the field of nutrition and weight loss and take it beyond the calorie counting, supplement-bashing fundamentalism of the dietitians. In the land of the fundamentalists, calories are all that matter and people gain weight simply because they eat too much food. End of story. Any diet other than the food pyramid is "high protein" and "fadist" and a priori dangerous. (In nutri tion, like religion, true believers refuse to let a little thing like lack of evidence get in the way of their beliefs). While there is more than a grain of truth to the idea that people get fat because they eat too much food, it is so far from being the whole story that it virtually constitutes philosophical malpractice.

Anyone claiming to completely understand the whole story about weight gain, appetite, fat loss and diet right now is standing on a slippery slope -- there is just too much still unknown about how and why people lose weight successfully. There are, however, some factors we can say with a fair degree of certainty are big players on the field. Chief among them are intake of...

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