

Unhealthy condiments won't replace the spices in my heart



KIRK
ZEMBAL

"Get your average retiree to make you a meal and they'll bust out the herbs and spices and cook you up a nice tasty meal. Get your average student to cook you a meal and they'll try and see how many sauces they can put on it. You'll be lucky if they even own salt and pepper, let alone a spice rack."

Did you know that just a single tablespoon of ranch dressing typically contains close to 15 per cent of your daily intake of fat? Now think about how much ranch is required to dress a salad, douse a chicken wing, or properly immerse a slice of pizza. Really, this now-common act of dipping pizza into ranch dressing—known lovingly as "arterial suicide"—ranks right up there in gut-busting infamy with Montreal's legendary after-pub delicacy "poutine sur le hot-dog"—which I'm sure has caused plenty of *crise cardiaques* in its day.

Now, with even the renowned and respected glutton Homer J Simpson trumpeting ranch dip as his food of choice over donuts, it's clear that we're in the midst of a culinary revolution. Lately, I've seen gastronomic horrors ranging from cream cheese on hotdogs to side orders of McChicken sauce to sit-down restaurants offering sauces to dip sandwiches and burgers into—and even ketchup on poutine.

I'm hardly one to talk, as I will often refuse to indulge my lovers' mildly creepy *9 1/2 Weeks* fantasies without the addition of some kind of delicious condiment. And yes, I do agree that greasy foods often

need a little extra fat to make them palatable, but the overriding fact is that condiments are killing the kids. Members of what I dub the "Ranch Dip Generation"—which includes us—have been brought up to suckle the delicious elixirs from the teat of moguls such as Kraft and Heinz without any regard as to the negative effects that they're having on our health.

Though this may sound like I'm being alarmist, and you might think that we've been eating condiments forever without any ill-effects, this ignores the fact that I'm right and you're wrong.

Fat-bombs like ranch haven't been around forever. First sold commercially as packets of seasoning to be mixed with buttermilk in 1954 on—you guessed it—a ranch near Santa Barbara, California, ranch dressing didn't take off until 1983 when Clorox, the maker of bleach and Pine-Sol, engineered a formula that enabled it to be shelf-stable.

By 1992, it had become the most popular dressing in both Canada and the US. And I don't think it's any coincidence that the rising obesity rates over the past 20 years nicely coincide with the rise in ranch dressing production.

Get your average retiree to make you a meal, and they'll bust out the herbs and spices and cook you up a nice tasty meal. Get your average student to cook you a meal, and they'll try and see how many sauces they can put on it. You'll be lucky if they even own salt and pepper, let alone a spice rack.

We've collectively lost the ability to choose and cook with a multitude of spices and have lazily substituted condiments in their stead.

And if you look in the average bachelor's fridge, chances are, beer and condiments are all you get. Eating out is, if possible, even worse when you're trying to eat healthy, as even Subway salads come with a packet of dressing that contains close to 50 per cent of your body's daily fat requirements.

Though it may seem hopeless, we can make a difference. It's as simple as only putting one kind of sauce on your sub, adding a few spices to meals, remembering that pizza still tasted good before it came with a plethora of dipping sauces, and just generally eating meals without all the saucy drama. Or at the very least switch to the low-fat ranch dip if you feel the need to spice up your love life.

LETTERS • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

It's disappointing to see that the *Gateway's* journalists ignore facts in order to promote their own brand of truth.

Almost as egregious is Bates' completely rosy-eyed view of boxing. Make no mistake about it, boxing is a brutal sport—all combat sports generally are. Bates can't make the argument that MMA is a brutal bloodbath and then turn around to say that boxing is a "fantastic sport."

The "sweet science" moniker and my love for the competition aside, boxing is a dangerous and sometimes fatal sport that involves slamming your fists into someone's skull for up to twelve rounds in an effort to render your opponent unconscious (ironically enough, Bates goes on to bemoan that "glorifying and rewarding the best way to make someone else bleed or faint is a complete departure from what martial arts are all about" while simultaneously praising boxing and ignoring the obvious contradictions in his own argument).

Finally, I hate to break it to you Derek, but physical endurance, strategy, and months training are elements found in most combat sports (including MMA). They aren't exclusive to pugilism, and anyone who has ever trained in either sport could tell you that.

And while I found the postulation that "just a strong arm" is needed to be successful in MMA humorous (it certainly could be helpful, I mean, who wouldn't want a strong arm?), I'd challenge anyone to find a successful mixed martial artist who possessed only that quality. Please stop writing about things you know nothing about.

BARRY LOUITT
Sciences IV

Sudoku solutions prove to be elusive

Me and my friends spent three hours trying to figure out the 15 January edition's sudoku puzzles.

We got really confused, and we wanted to find the solution to the puzzle. However, when we went to the website advertised, www.sudoku.com to find the solution, the *Gateway* wasn't there in the list of publications. We would really, really, really like to find the answer to the puzzle because, frankly, we spend a lot of time at school and it's kind of depressing, so this solution would be a ray of sunshine in our sad, sad lives.

JEN & AUDREY
Sudoku Enthusiasts I

Editors' note: when you go to the website to find the answer, choose Canadian University Press from the publications pull-down menu.

Letters to the editor should be sent to letters@gateway.ualberta.ca (no attachments, please).

The Gateway reserves the right to edit letters for length and clarity, and to refuse publication of any letter it deems racist, sexist, libellous, or otherwise hateful in nature. The Gateway also reserves the right to publish letters online.

Letters to the editor should be no longer than 350 words, and should include the author's name, program, year of study, and student identification number to be considered for publication.

Finally, stop putting words in all capitals for emphasis. If you are seven-exclamation-points excited, you need to lay off the joe for a little bit and calm the heck down.

THE BURLAP SACK

This sack-beating goes out to all of the individuals out there who insist on putting two spaces after a period when they type.

Unless you are clacking away on a typewriter in the 1930s talking about the rat-a-tat-tat of a tommy gun, there's absolutely no reason for you to do this, and your abuse of the spacebar is a waste of paper. And though it might be a stretch, I'm going to go ahead and blame you for deforestation.

I don't care if that's how you were taught to type; your teacher was fucking wrong, and it's time for you to leave the typographical stone age behind you.

And to all current and prospective teachers out there, if I catch word of you teaching your young, impressionable students such a useless technique, I'm going to confiscate your spacebar, replace it with a fucking "q," and then break your metre stick just for good measure (though I suppose you wouldn't really be able to do much measuring with it afterwards).

So into the sack with all of you, and while you're all crammed together, struggling to breathe, I hope you'll come to appreciate the luxury that is extra space.

CONAL PIERSE

The Burlap Sack is a semi-regular feature where a person or group who needs to be put in a sack and beaten is ridiculed in print. No sack beatings are actually administered.

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