

Globesity: A planet out of control?

By Francis Delpeuch, Bernard Maire, Emmanuel Monnier and Michelle Holdsworth

Reviewed by Michalis Hadjimarcou, Cyprus

For someone interested in learning about obesity, *Globesity: A planet out of control?* is an excellent book to start with and, unless preparing for a doctorate thesis, possibly to finish with. The authors analyse obesity using a variety of approaches to give a detailed account of this frequently misunderstood phenomenon, which has in the past few decades affected people all over the world at an alarming rate.

Anybody can benefit from reading *Globesity*. The book is ideal for individuals who seek a trustworthy source to satisfy their curiosity about the subject, because the information it contains is based on numerous peer-reviewed publications. Teachers from any discipline wishing to gather obesity-related material for use in their classroom will also find the book valuable. *Globesity* covers not only the characteristics of and potential hazards associated with obesity, but also the socio-cultural, physical, psychological, medical and even economic factors involved in its appearance. The only thing that may limit the usefulness of the book is the complexity of the language. The use of extensive vocabulary may make the book difficult to understand for readers who are not fluent in English.

Assuming that the book can be easily understood, it will have unlimited

use in both the science and non-science classroom for a wide range of ages. Biology teachers, for example, can focus on the authors' discussion about how bad nutritional habits and possibly genetic factors can lead to obesity. Biology students will find the book a useful resource for projects linking obesity to diseases such as diabetes, or, surprisingly, to climate change – or to report on attempts to develop drugs and other methods to fight obesity.

Economics teachers and students may concentrate on how multinational companies employed in the production, distribution and sale of food have an important role in the way our body is shaped. Alternatively, they can investigate the potential economic value to employers of investing in reducing the prevalence of obesity among their employees.

Obesity is an ideal topic for interdisciplinary lessons linking biology, chemistry, physical education, human geography, economics and sociology to debate various 'hot' issues, such as whether fast food is responsible for obesity, or whether prevention is better than cure (weight loss).

On a more practical note, the authors discuss specific solutions to the obesity problem that can be found through action taken at both an individual and a national level, and

provide examples of strategies that have already worked.

Details

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Resources

For ideas on a teaching project about obesity, based on a science article published in *Science in School*, see: Krottschek F (2010) Using cutting-edge science within the curriculum: balancing body weight. *Science in School* 16: 19-26. www.scienceinschool.org/2010/issue16/obesity

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