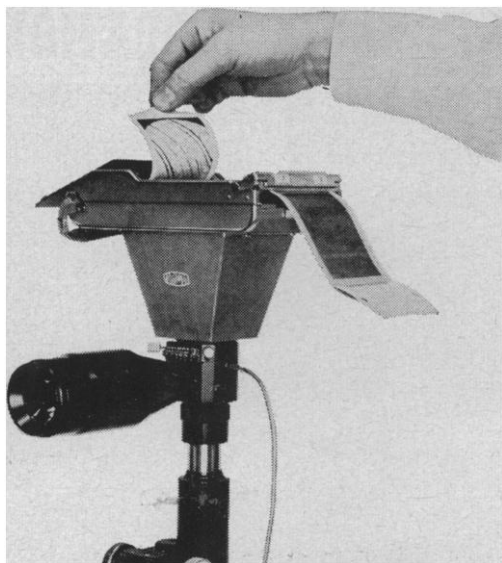


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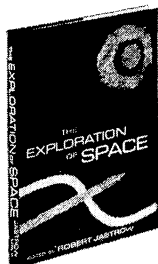


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J. KENNETH DONAHUE

Department of Biology,
Utica College of Syracuse University,
Utica, New York

Obesity and Steroid Hormones

In the 5 June 1959 issue of *Science* [129, 1546 (1959)] there appeared a report on "Storage of steroid hormones by adipose tissue in two experimental obesities," by Zomzely, Asti, and Mayer.

This otherwise admirable article contains an inaccuracy in its reference to the studies of Gallagher, Fukushima, Barry, and Dobriner [*Recent Progr. in Hormone Research* 6, 131 (1951)]. In the last three sentences of the article by Zomzely *et al.* it is stated that a large amount of fat in obese individuals may favor retention of their own steroid hormones, and that storage of administered hormones in fat depots might have therapeutic significance. The work of Gallagher *et al.* is cited in connection with this statement.

I did not detect any reference to this point of view in my examination of the article by Gallagher *et al.* However, an explicit prediction of the findings contained in the *Science* article, and of the probable importance of this in the control of obese patients, was adumbrated by S. G. Margolin in a communication to me in 1953.

With Margolin's permission, his hypothesis was summarized in a chapter of a book in the editing of which I collaborated at about that time [E. D. Wittkower and R. A. Cleghorn, Eds., *Recent Developments in Psychosomatic Medicine* (Lippincott, Philadelphia, 1954)]. It may be of some importance to draw attention to this, particularly because of one suggestion contained therein—namely, that in the dieting of obese patients, a reinforcement of the biological instinctual appetite to eat may occur with the release of steroid hormones as the patient reduces weight. No attention seems to have been paid to this point in the literature, and it is a suggestion of sufficient interest to be entertained.

ROBERT A. CLEGHORN

Allan Memorial Institute of
Psychiatry, Montreal, Canada