MARCH 1999

Spaceflight simulation (University of Bochum, Germany; University of Hull, UK; University of Manchester, UK): "The maintenance of crew performance during extended space missions has been a major concern because of the problems associated with prolonged isolation and confinement. Previous research has failed to address this problem by not using appropriate performance tests…Three Russian cosmonauts were tested on a PC-based simulation of a spacecraft's life support system during a 135-d simulation of a MIR spaceflight. A complex multiple-task environment was used to examine a comprehensive range of task management variables, including both primary and secondary task performance, control activity and information sampling behavior. Subjective state variables were also measured … The data suggested an overall successful adjustment to isolation and confinement, though some indications of temporary disruptions of some performance indicators were observed. Information sources were sampled less frequently with increasing mission length while system control activities showed a tendency to increase…Using well-designed computer simulations of complex task environments appears to be a promising approach for the evaluation of crew member performance."[1]

MARCH 1974

Pilots and alcohol (Naval Regional Medical Center, Long Beach, CA): "Alcoholism is defined as a disease and as the fourth most serious public health problem in the United States. The ambivalence which hampers the recognition and treatment of alcoholism is explored in terms of our moralistic heritage, our current drinking customs and the attitudes of both laymen and physicians. Case histories of pilots are cited to illustrate how the superiors and families of alcoholic pilots help them deny their illness until they have to be hospitalized, at which point the doctors are apt to 'help' the patient along by giving him a benign-sounding diagnosis which is often not changed to alcoholism until three hospitalizations later. The noble roots as well as the destructive effects of our tendency to under-diagnose are explored. The paper stresses the need for physicians to update their knowledge about alcoholism and thus bring better care earlier to the alcoholic aviator."[2]

MARCH 1949

The problem of leanness—and obesity (New Rochelle, NY): "The question of obesity and the control of inordinate appetite has been the subject of many studies. The opposite condition, leanness and loss of appetite, has received very little consideration. This is due to the fact that there are more than twice as many fat people in the United States as there are thin people. Yet, an important health problem is presented when 12.8 percent of all Americans are found to be underweight (**Fig. 1**). The earliest effects noted in the control of thyrotoxicosis by propylthiouracil are the sense of well-being and an increase in body weight. The latter occurs many weeks before the clinical or laboratory signs of the disease abate. As a result of such observations, it was considered worthwhile to study the effects of this drug on individuals who, primarily, were underweight …

"Results indicated that the great majority of patients suffering from leanness, irrespective of cause, could be benefited by the drug."[3]

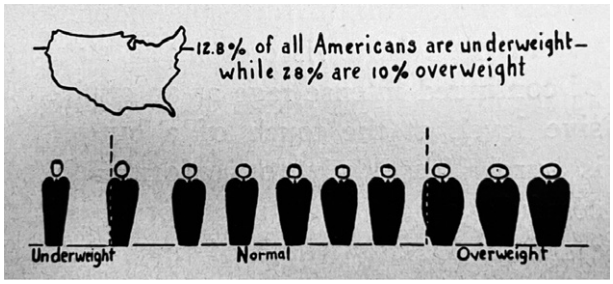

Fig. 1. Comparison of the percentage of lean people with the normal and obese population of the United States.[3]

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