

The movie super size me

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The movie Super Size Me, is an in your face way of making people realize how the fast food industry is negatively affecting our nation. The surgeon general has declared the increasing rates of obesity an "epidemic". In this documentary movie, Morgan Spurlock conducts an experiment, to investigate if indeed, fast food is the correlation to our nations obesity epidemic. The movie has several bonus features such as an interview with Eric Schlosser, the author of Fast Food Nation, and an interview with Phil Lawler about the PE 4 Life program. As well as, The Smoking Fry, an interesting experiment looking at the decomposition of food. The movie Super Size Me, and all of its bonus features, revolves around two main components, the importance of nutrition and physical activity.

I. Fast Food Nation

The interview between Morgan Spurlock and Eric Schlosser discusses how fast food is processed and flavored, the unhealthy agricultural settings, obesity trends and how both the government and the people need to make a change for the better. I was appalled by the information provided in the interview, I had a basic idea of all the concepts but did not realize how extreme they were. I can easily say that after knowing how fast food is made I have no interest at all in eating it. The fact that while in feed lots, cattle are pilled in fecal matter which can make it into the hamburgers that we eat, and that is why there is a higher increase in poisoning and disease from eating fast food. I think that is absolutely disgusting and it should not be allowed. I definitely will read the book Fast Food Nation, if this short interview opened my eyes this much; I am very interested to see how the book will make me feel.

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II. PE4LIFE

Phil Lawler pointed out that, Illinois is the only state that enforces mandatory physical education k-12. During his interview talked about the PE4Life program, how it refocuses testing based on a healthy zone, that physical activity is the “ fertilizer” for the brain, and the importance of creating a pattern and habit of exercising. PE4Life departs from the traditional approach to physical education by not focusing on traditional sports, but rather physical activities that assures every child is active. Testing in the PE4Life program assesses results on whether the students “ does it well enough that he/she is considered healthy. While the traditional program assesses testing based on what percentile the student falls into compared to their peers.

If the State of Michigan were to adopt a serious daily approach to physical education, such as the PE4Life program the outcome would be extremely beneficial to the students overall health. We discussed in class how students in Michigan do not meet the set goal of exercising five times a week for thirty minutes at a time. Also, how forty percent of children in MI are currently overweight. The end of the Super Size Me video made it a point to state that Detroit is now the fattest city in the United States. Obviously something needs to be done to change these trends, implementing mandatory physical education k-12; using a PE4Life philosophy may be exactly what Michigan students need.

III. The Smoking Fry

The Smoking Fry was an experiment conducted by Morgan Spurlock to examine how different McDonalds food items and less artificially enhanced food items would decompose after periods of time. I thought that all of the different food items would start to mold after about a week, and they all would get worse as more time went by. I just assumed that food that wasn't frozen or at least refrigerated started to mold after a period of time. My reaction to the results was disgust; it made me wonder what kind of crazy chemicals are in those fries that they do not show any signs of molding after ten weeks.

I think that as our bodies decompose food we ingest from fast food chains it is exposed to the many chemicals preservatives put in the food, and does not receive the proper nutrients. I would also assume that the same logic would apply from the experiment, to our bodies, meaning that it is more difficult for the body to decompose fast food as opposed to more natural foods. My mother eats mostly all organic food whenever possible, so when my birthday came she was going to make a cake from scratch like usual. I told her that I would rather have a funfetti box cake instead; begrudgingly she made the cake for me.

Not without going on and on about how bad it is for you, and how many chemicals, and ingredients you can't even pronounce and in it and that not even like eating a real cake. What was interesting and supports the results from the Smoking Fry is that, she pointed out to me that after a month of sitting in the tupperware not a speck of mold was on it. Processed foods contain so many preservatives that they may never mold, for instance a

Twinkie has no expiration date, I think that is absolutely crazy. The fact that processed foods are filled with so many chemicals to they have a longer shelf life should be a good indication as to how bad they are for your body.

IV. Movie Super Size Me

The movie Super Size Me is a documentary by Morgan Spurlock. In this movie Spurlock undertakes eating nothing but McDonalds for thirty days, to determine if fast food is the fast track to becoming obese and if its unreasonably dangerous. Spurlock had a set of rules for the month; can only super size when asked, can only eat food from McDonalds water included, has to eat everything on the menu at least once, and he must eat three meals a day, lastly limit the amount of steps per day.

Before the experiment Spurlock consulted with a cardiologist, gastrologist, and a general practitioner, all three doctors concluded that he was currently physically healthy. The doctors said that increased cholesterol and triglyceride levels, weight gain, and an increased risk for heart disease were expected outcomes of this experiment. The actual end results of the experiment where much more serous than expected.

Spurlock gained twenty four and a half pounds, the liver had basically turned to fat, cholesterol shot up sixty five points, body fat percentage increased seven percent, he doubled his risk for heart disease and failure, felt exhausted and depressed, experience rapid mood swings, had a non existent sex life, and developed an addiction, he craved more and more and had headaches when he did not eat the food. There was a point where he

considered stopping short of the thirty days because his health being seriously affected.

The movie addressed the lack of regards to the state of our nations physical education programs. Again it was stated that Illinois is the only state that makes physical education mandatory k-12. Brian Philips a physical education teacher stated that students in his elementary school only receive physical education one day a week for forty-five minutes. According to the surgeon general, a person needs to be physical active thirty minutes a day, every day to maintain your weight and a healthy well-being.

The Nations schools are not close to implementing these standards, and its only getting worse. In 2001 while President Bush was in office he created the No Child Left Behind reform. Due to this reform schools cut recess time, health, nutrition, and physical education classes back to allow for more time to prepare for the more "academic" classes. Naperville, Illinois setting the standards for the model program of physical education because they are creating an awareness in the community about the importance of physical activity, and in turn receiving the support to make the PE4Life program possible.

In my opinion other states are not pushing to adopt this model due to the No Child Left Behind reform, lack of effort, fear of change, and the financial expenses. Physical education should be of the utmost importance for individuals making decisions about education in Michigan. Detroit is heaviest city in the United States. From class lecture we no that in Michigan forty percent of children are over weight compared to thirteen to fourteen percent

Nationally. It can no longer be ignored; it must be addressed by the school systems, to stop this growing epidemic of obesity.

This movie had an impact on how I view fast food. I do not consume fast food on a regular basis, but occasionally when I am starving and I do not have time, or am not around to cook something, I will eat it. That is definitely going to change, after watching this how could you eat fast food, its disgusting. When I have children of my own, I will not allow them to eat fast food, except on very rare occasions. I grew up with a mother that always cooks dinner, buys organic food, and has always been very conscious on the making sure I eat a balanced diet. I plan to use the same nutritional approach with my own children.

V. Conclusions

After viewing Supper Size Me, my position of consuming fast food still stands, as it not being a healthy choice. Proper nutrition directly related to a persons health, and with a sufficient amount of physical activity a person is at their optimal level of overall health. After watching Super Size Me, and its bonus features, it opened my eyes wider to both the importance of nutrition and physical activity, and how the Nation is in a fight against obesity epidemic. I do now think that eating fast food is truly the fast track to obesity. I now will make a more conscious decision about the things I am eating. My periodic fast food visits will be eliminated, and I will try to stay away from all process foods, anything with artificial flavoring, and definitely increase my eating of organic foods.