

SAMPLE

Fast Food: Personal Choice or Societal Epidemic?

An Annotated Bibliography

Bittman, Mark. "Is Junk Food Really Cheaper?" *Sunday Review*. The New York Times, 2011.

Web. 11 Feb. 2015. <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/25/opinion/sunday/is-junk-food-really-cheaper.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0>.

Mark Bittman is an accomplished author and publisher for The New York Times, covering anything from policy and health to agriculture. He is also seen regularly on the Today Show and his cookbooks found in most commercial bookstores around the country. In 2011, Bittman wrote an article stating from the get-go that fast food was more expensive than going to the grocery store and purchasing ingredients for a home cooked meal. Along with his own research and mathematical calculations, Bittman makes it a point to acknowledge that most Americans view cooking as work and points out that low-income families may not want to continue on with their day at home. While Bittman has empathy towards the small percentage of individuals who are truly in a bind for food, his overall opinion on the matter is very obvious with his statement, "If you can drive to McDonald's you can drive to Safeway". Though his article was very well thought out and cites information from various sources, there was an unquestionable bias laced throughout the text. Nevertheless, Bittman showcases key points regarding spending and the truth behind what is affordable and what is not, validating his argument.

Drewnowski, Adam. "Poverty and obesity: the role of energy density and energy costs." *The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. American Society for Clinical Nutrition, 2004.

Web. 6 Feb. 2015. <<http://ajcn.nutrition.org/content/79/1/6.full>>.

Published by The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition and authored by an Oxford graduate, Adam Drewnowski's article looks at the link between the socioeconomic variables and obesity when the factors of cost, palatability, and energy density are used. Though it is evident that Drewnowski blames obesity on a number of different elements, he is able to say with certainty that a basic trait shared among those of lower income families and those who suffer from obesity is lack of education. With their lack of education comes a level of financial insecurity found common among these particular groups, leading to a lower monthly expenditure put towards groceries. Without having a healthy array of foods in the house, people gravitate towards fast food, which is energy efficient, cheap, and appeals to the sense of taste. This particular piece of literature does an exceptional job of illustrating economic concerns as well as highlights the reasoning behind families who partake in the excessive consumption of junk food. The author is clearly well versed in this area of concern and shows great attention to detail when explaining his reasoning, appealing very strongly to the logos of his audience.

Hyman, Mark. "Why Eating Quick, Cheap Food is Actually More Expensive." *Dr. Mark Hyman*. Dr. Mark Hyman, 2014. Web. 11 Feb. 2015.

<http://drhyman.com/blog/2010/08/13/why-eating-quick-cheap-food-is-actually-more-expensive/#close>.

Eight-time New York Times bestselling author and director of the Cleveland Clinic Center for Functional Medicine, Mark Hyman, MD, has a seemingly endless list of accolades. Being a regular medical contributor on popular shows such as CBS This Morning, CNN and The Today Show, it would only make sense for Dr. Hyman to have his own website where he is able to freely post about different concerns pertaining to the

medical field. In his article titled “Why Eating Quick, Cheap Food is Actually More Expensive”, Hyman explains that fast food is produced mainly from corn and soy which are both subsidized by the government, resulting in foods low cost. However, he also goes into a counter-argument that despite the low sticker price, the actual cost of consuming healthy meals is far less expensive than the Big Mac in the long run when you factor in potential medical expenses. Hyman states that roughly 12% of total healthcare expenditures are related to obesity and close to 7% of lost productivity in regard to sick leave is due to health concerns associated with obesity. Looking at his statistics, it is clear that Hyman feels very strongly against the decision to opt out of fresh produce for a man-made meal. While he incorporates plenty of logos into his argument there is still a strong sense of bias, likely coming from his medical training, expressing his total discontent with the choice of a person picking up a happy meal over a carrot.

“Toxic Food Environment.” *Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health*. The President and Fellows of Harvard College, 2015. Web. 16 Feb. 2015.

<<http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/obesity-prevention-source/obesity-causes/food-environment-and-obesity/>>

Nestled in Cambridge, Massachusetts stands a proud school with a reputation for excellence. Harvard University is known throughout the world as being one of the most rigorous Universities to have ever existed. Within the T.H. Chan School of Public Health archives are a plethora of articles pertaining to different areas of health and wellbeing, one in particular being “Toxic Food Environment”. In this article, the University goes through a number of different ways in which the environment that we live contributes to our decision to partake in the consumption of unhealthy foods. Though the article is

lacking in visual analysis, it does cite information from many places and covers a broad range of scenarios as to why our world encourages such eating habits. It is clear that the author feels our society is the leading contributor to obesity found among our lower-income populations. Even with its obvious bias, this article does a great job relaying information and playing well to the logos of its readers.

Tuttle, Brad. "News Flash: A Healthy Home-Cooked Meal Costs Less Than Fast Food." *Time*. Time Inc., 2015. Web. 16 Feb. 2015. <<http://business.time.com/2011/09/26/news-flash-a-healthy-home-cooked-meal-costs-less-than-fast-food/>>

A national leader in the broadcasting of groundbreaking news, Time reports on anything and everything from U.S. coalitions to the latest techniques in effective parenting. The company who runs Time also happens to own People, Fortune, Entertainment Weekly, and many other popular contributors. In 2011, columnist Brad Tuttle wrote a piece for Time discussing the unfortunate habits of many Americans and their basic addiction to fast food restaurants. Throughout Tuttle's brief analysis he quotes Mark Bittman, a publisher for the New York Times, explaining that by changing the mind set of cooking being a chore, many Americans could get out of the habit of indulging in an unhealthy lifestyle. Tuttle also elaborates on the idea that political action is necessary to bringing corporate justice; by forcing the fast food companies to pay the actual cost of production and have governments cut subsidies, there would likely be a dramatic decrease in junk food intake. There are not a lot of strong, original ideas within this argument, however Tuttle does get to the point and states what he feels is some sort of solution to the current problem of overconsumption.

“Why Low-Income and Food Insecure People are Vulnerable to Overweight and Obesity.”

Food Research and Action Center. Food Research and Action Center, 2010. Web. 7 Feb. 2015. <<http://frac.org/initiatives/hunger-and-obesity/why-are-low-income-and-food-insecure-people-vulnerable-to-obesity/>>.

The Food Research and Action Center, also known as FRAC, is one of the leading national nonprofit organizations in the country and works primarily to eradicate hunger in the United States. With supporters such as Congress Daily and Philanthropedia standing firmly behind FRAC, the organization is able to pull valuable information from multiple government conducted surveys as well as cite information from different research groups, thus allowing them to study the effects of intrastate connections between poverty and obesity. The general consensus put forth by FRAC is that due to a lack or in some cases complete absence of full service grocery stores in low-income areas, fast food or convenience store food becomes the most readily available, thus resulting in a poor diet. FRAC also add that a lack of physical activity in many low-income neighborhoods help contribute to a greater sedentary life. This phenomenon is due largely to higher crime rates and by effect creates an atmosphere that invites less exercise on account of general safety concerns. By collecting information from multiple sources such as Zenk et al., 2006 and the Institute of Medicine, 2006, FRAC gives a well-rounded explanation of the varying reasons behind why families in low-income neighborhoods succumb to food insecurity, i.e., lack of consistent meals and obesity. They convey such ideas by providing their readers with statistics, graphs, and the break down of larger topics into multiple bulleted points that make the information more palpable for the audience. Within this article the author plays strongly to the ethos of its audience by providing large

amounts of data along evidence of social disconnect in relation of concern for the lower class. FRAC makes a great effort to give their findings prestige by citing numerous authors and credible institutes throughout their work. By providing substantial factual evidence to support their claims, FRAC presents their case in an effective and professional manner.