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“The End of Food”

Food, it's the substance that gives many people comfort, allows us to thrive and gives us the energy we need for life. It easily consumes many people's days. Breakfast, lunch and dinner, it seems to be all we have time for, but, what is it about really? I find myself asking that question more and more these days. Recently, in 2014, the article “The End of Food” by Lizzie Widdicombe was released. This article brings forth the issue of the importance of food, whether it is just purely a burden that can be solved by a simple solution of a thick shake, or whether it has an emotional and satisfying connection to it. The article introduces the idea of Soylent, which is a drink invented by Rob Rhinehart. Soylent contains all the necessary nutrients for life and would act as a possible alternative to eating regular meals. It could allow many people to eliminate loss of time from eating meals, and almost industrialize food as a utility rather than an enjoyable concept. Soylent is also rather inexpensive in comparison to other foods you may have to consume to reach all the essential nutrients Soylent contains. The downfall, though, is the loss of any emotional connection or pleasure some receive from the variety of food and favorite recipes they possess. It also takes away from many social interactions you receive while sharing meals with family, friends and acquaintances. Business meetings held at restaurants would occur far less often and college friends gathering for wing night at their favorite restaurant would begin to fade out. This loss of interaction could mean for a step back in communication skills and

overall happiness for many individuals. While Soylent may provide more time and make it easier to receive essential nutrients, it should not eliminate food because food gives us pleasure and satisfaction; it inhibits social interactions and provides us with countless memories.

Take a minute, think about the concept of food, think about the satisfaction you get from taking a bite of a favorite meal, or first sip from a good drink. In an instant, that could all be gone. Rob Rhinehart's idea of Soylent would take away all pleasure in taking that first bite of an enjoyable meal—the taste may not be terrible, but it is certainly not as fulfilling as an elaborate meal. In Widdicombe's article, she mentions many people's take on the taste of Soylent, "People tend to find the taste of Soylent to be familiar: the predominant sensation is one of doughiness. The liquid is smooth but grainy in your mouth, and it has a yeasty, comforting blandness about it. I've heard tasters compare it to Cream of Wheat, and 'my grandpa's Metamucil'" (Widdicombe 7). Widdicombe is merely giving a statement about how most individuals find the taste of Soylent. Although it is tolerable, it is still described as bland and grainy and it has even been compared to Metamucil, a daily stool softener. While this may sound okay for some, eventually the taste will become redundant and you will be searching for something more. With food, you have options to explore. There are so many different meals to satisfy your taste buds and bring happiness to your stomach.

Everyone has a few meals that they just cannot turn down when it gets offered to them, the meals that provide comfort. Whether it's a batch of pancakes or a beautifully grilled burger, there is something about certain foods that we cannot just turn down. These foods provide us with the ultimate satisfaction we cannot find anywhere else. If Soylent becomes our only source of food, what would we do to find that satisfaction? Many people would not be as happy as they used to be with their simple meal fix. So many people will lose the comfort they find so easily

when gravitating toward the food that brings them pleasure and comfort, and for what purpose? Why should we set aside happiness for some goopy drink? In my favorite meal essay, I talk about the joy I get from taking that first bite of food, “when you take that first bite of eggs, you are completely content and know the rest of the day is going to be a good one” (Moura 2). My favorite meal provides me with an amazing start to my day. It provides me with a unique kind of comfort, one you would never imagine food can give, but it does. Without these perfect meals, we could never be fully satisfied so easily or brought to a certain level of happiness that only food can bring.

Not only does food bring us pleasure and comfort, it also provides us with a way to be social and an excuse to be with those we find important to us. This could go hand in hand with time. There is only so much time in a day, a month, a year and a life, what you decide to do with that time is what can define how your life is spent. Some want more time and others feel they have too much time. Soylent could provide the world with more time in their everyday life, but it would also take away quality time you get with wide ranges of people.