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What if you were told you didn't have to go another day of your life worrying about having to eat a meal. This strange concept is shown in Lizzie Widdicombe's article, *The End of Food* published by *The New Yorker*. It talks about Rob Rhinehart's invention Soylent, which is a chemical powder drink engineered to have the nutritional equivalence of food. He created this in his apartment in two-thousand two while he was working on a cell phone tower in San Francisco. He found he was running out of money and time to have to worry about food. As stated in *The End of Food* by Rhinehart, "It just seemed like a system that's too complex and too expensive and too fragile."⁽¹⁾ Rhinehart then used his background in engineering to create a "gooey lemonade" made up of thirty-five chemicals that were required for human life according to the F.D.A, the U.S.D.A., and the Institute of Medicine. This paper brings up many interesting topics such as, how much more food is than its nutritional value. It leaves us pondering how good and fulfilling life would really be if all our meals were a gooey slurp that lasted two minutes. For myself this seems like an interesting invention, but it would never replace my meals.

The first thing we must consider is how important food is in our every day lives. On average in my own life I spend about an hour and fifteen minutes on a busy day just eating. This time is supplemented with scrolling through my phone's social media feeds, talking with friends or new acquaintances, and giving my brain a break for the work I previously completed. Most importantly though, it's the part of my day where I socialize and spend time with friends and family, if they are around. I even find myself looking forward to the next meal when I'm stuck in a long class or a hundred plus student lecture hall. Food to me is, as stated in my favorite food

essay about my favorite meal (being Montreal steak tips) is, “is served on special occasions such as birthdays, when we come home from long trips away from home for a while, or sometimes just as a comfort food when we want to eat something nice. Every bit of this meal for me brings back memories of family suppers and get together with family we no longer see or have passed. Hidden in the delicious taste of it all are some of the closest to heart, nostalgic feelings and memories of my childhood I have, but most important the feeling of love and family. This meal to me will never just be a supper I eat, but a connection to my past and in a way happiness its self.” Sitting down to eat a meal for me is not only to create new memories with the people I’m sharing it with, but also reminds me of past meals I’ve had with family and friends that are no longer here. So, in my opinion Soylent will never be a meal substitute for me and I will never live off it like Rob Rhinehart did, but on a busy day where I have lots of work to do it would not be a bad quick snack.

With Soylent not being an adequate replacement for meals, it might be an exceptional snack food. There are so many times in my day where I am rushed by time to finish my work or go to the next class where I simply don’t have time to eat. On a busy day this can sometimes happen twice a day where I miss breakfast and lunch because of classes and end up being hungry till supper. This then causes me to be distracted throughout the rest of my work thinking of when I can next eat and what I will eat. Then when I finally get to eat, I over eat and feel like crap for the rest of the evening because I over ate. However, if I had Soylent, I could drink a goopy mix that tastes like “Cream of Wheat” (Widdicombe 7), feel full after I drank it, and get proper nutrients from it for the remainder of the day. Rhineheart even mentioned this in Widdicombe’s paper saying, “Soylent isn’t coming for our Sunday potlucks. It’s coming for our frozen quesadillas”(3). I completely agree that if Soylent does ever succeed in the consumer market it will be replacing the protein shakes and microwave food.

A few thoughts do come to mind after reading Lizzie Widdicombe's article about Soylent. Is Soylent really as healthy for you as Rhinehart described, where the claims of health benefits just made up to help sell more of the product, and do we even know the long-term health implications of Soylent? To answer these questions, I would suggest that a long-term health study on the effects of eating Soylent would take place by the Food and Drug Administration to show us whether there are no health implications to eating it. The convenience of Soylent sounds almost too good to be true like many of the other chemical synthesized foods out there for sale. So, before I would decide to eat Soylent, like many other people out there, I would like to have an educated and trustworthy report on the health benefits and costs before I made the decision.

Soylent also seems to be lacking variety in the options that are being sold. As stated in Widdicombe's article, "If manufactured Soylent is a one-size-fits-all approach to nutrition." (13) What I mean by this is that everyone is very different and needs their own specialized diet. The normal Soylent recipe might not be adequate for the bodybuilder who needs double the daily amount of protein and not as many carbohydrates, while the marathon runner might need a large amount of carbohydrates for their run. Besides the nutritional aspect of Soylent, you have to consider the flavor of it. It could be sold as the somewhat flavorless mixture it is, but it would become much more popular if they gave it some appealing flavors. If these changes would be made, I feel like Soylent could stand a greater chance to compete against our meals and favorite foods.

If I ever see Soylent in a store, I'm sure I will pick up some to try as long as it's not too expensive. Soylent isn't without its flaws but what is? Hopefully there will be more variety in the options for Soylent. Whether that be different flavors or content types for the "quick snack" or loaded with protein for the body builders out there. It is a great idea that I feel has been thought about before but has never been monetized and I look forward to seeing how it evolves in the

consumer world. It will never replace my meals as stated before, however, it has it's place in kitchen cabinets and fridges for the occasional ready to go food.

Work Cited

Widdicombe, Lizzie. "The End of Food." *The New Yorker*, 12 May 2002, pp. 1-18.