

Intro

MY SISTER Laurie and I both have a deep fascination with food, which I think was largely due to our mom’s love of cultivating, cooking, and eating it. We were both lucky to grow up eating fresh, nourishing—and yes, healthy—food at a communal family table. But I also remember the excitement and pleasure of stealing away to my friend’s house (whose younger sister happened to be Laurie’s friend, too) to eat forbidden foods like bologna sandwiches and Pop-Tarts.

Laurie went on to solidify her understanding of what constituted a healthy diet through a B.S. in Food and Nutrition and a registered dietitian credential. Recently, I’ve had my own ideas about diet challenged through the Food Studies Master’s program at University of the Pacific.

For *How to Eat (?)*, I wanted to reconnect with my sister and explore how we—and many others—view health and diet, and how these views have and will shift over time. *How to Eat (?)* dives into the origins

of diet culture and the co-option of medical diets, food as the conduit through which our anxieties as a society are expressed, and the (many) complications of eating in a neoliberal consumer society.

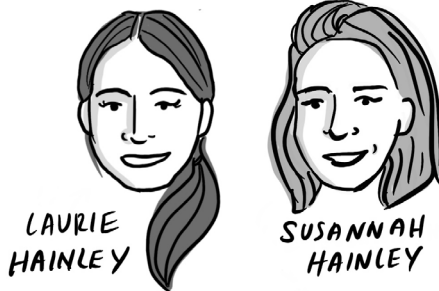
For me, “healthy” tastes like kale grown and prepared with love by a family member—and sometimes it tastes like a forbidden strawberry Pop-Tart shared with a friend. While we all have many guidelines, rules, institutions, and other people telling us how we *should* eat, I think it’s important to acknowledge that food and diet are also highly contextual, cultural, and individual.

So here’s to *your* health, reader, however it is defined.



SUSANNAH HAINLEY
Creator & Editor

We ♥ food



The creator with her sister, Laurie,
a registered dietitian and *How to Eat (?)*'s
featured guest. Find Laurie online:

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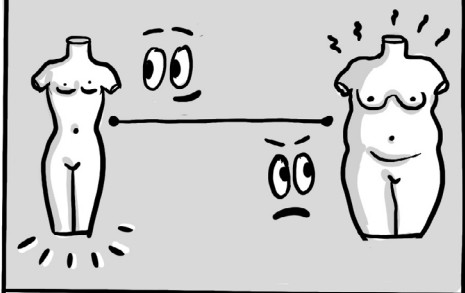
Western thought has historically separated the body (carnal, base) from the mind (rational, controlled.)



In the Victorian era, body management practices moved out of the religious sphere and into middle-class public life.



The body began to operate as a symbol of the "spiritual, moral, or emotional state of the individual."^{**}



In a society where an abundance of food is consistently available to those who can afford it, control is a virtue.



People are always looking for a quick, easy way to control body fat - the methods and language often shift over time.



Now, even diets intended to help people manage medical conditions are co-opted by fad diet culture.



* Susan Bordo, *Unbearable Weight*, 1993.

The KETO DIET



This is my sister, LAURIE—she's a registered dietitian (RD) and she's going to walk us through The keto diet.

"The keto diet was originally developed for patients with epilepsy. It was found that a diet low in carbs and high in fat helped prevent seizures."

There isn't a cure for seizures

Special diets can help people (especially kids) manage them



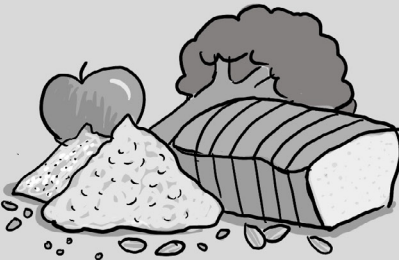
"Basically, your carb intake is so low that your body uses fat instead of sugar for energy—this process is called KETOSIS."



"people have started using this diet for quick weight loss, but it can cause issues because you're going against the body's natural order."



"Carbohydrates are a macronutrient REQUIRED by the body—carbs are our body's main energy source."



"Eliminating entire food groups voluntarily can be dangerous—you're taking essential nutrients away from the body."

MAYBE I SHOULD STOP EATING GLUTEN

OR STRAWBERRIES?

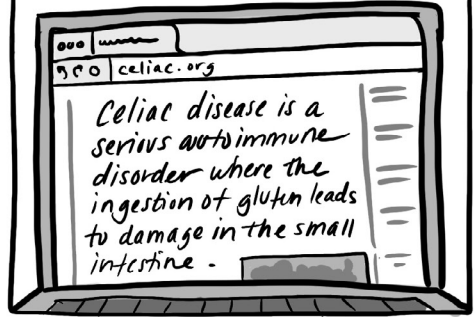
LOOKS LIKE YOU HAVE AN ALLERGY TO STONE FRUITS!

* Not a scientifically accurate diagram.

The ~~GLUTEN-FREE DIET~~

Like the keto diet, eating gluten-free has crossed over from the medical realm and into the fad diet realm.

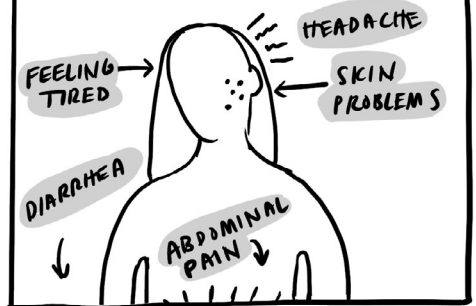
My sister Laurie was diagnosed with celiac disease in 2009.



People can also be sensitive to gluten, but sensitivity can't be confirmed by tests like celiac disease can.



gluten sensitivity's vague symptoms make it ripe for diet gurus and advertisers to abuse.



People now eliminate gluten from their diets to "feel better"... and to lose weight; one of the top symptoms of gluten sensitivity is **BLOATING**.



Restaurants can be especially tricky for people with celiac disease. Gluten isn't regulated and because of the diet fad, people like Laurie risk being served gluten accidentally.



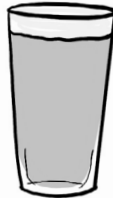
2015: LAURIE IS SERVED REGULAR PIZZA!

POP QUIZ

Which foods are gluten-free?



COUSCOUS



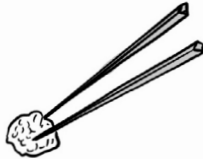
BEER



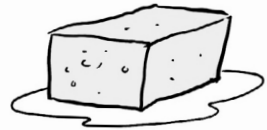
CORN TORTILLAS



SOY SAUCE



RICE



TOFU



SOURDOUGH



OATMEAL



FARRO

Answers: COUSCOUS: Not gluten-free. BEER: Not gluten-free. CORN TORTILLAS: Gluten-free (as long as they are 100% corn). SOY SAUCE: Not gluten-free. RICE: Gluten-free. TOFU: Gluten-free (as long as it is not flavored with soy sauce or wheat-based ingredients). SOURDOUGH: Not gluten-free (although some sensitive to gluten, like Elisabeth Prueitt of Tartine Bakery, claim that they don't react as much to wild/naturally fermented breads). Definitely a no-go for people with celiac disease. OATMEAL: Trick question! People with celiac disease can react to oats; the jury is still out on whether it's the oats themselves or the fact that oats are often grown and processed with wheat—it would be best to buy oats labeled "gluten-free." FARRO: Not gluten-free.

Eating Healthy

ON A STRICT DIET OF NEWS MEDIA

Is that WINE? I hope you're only going to have one glass per day. Any more than that and women put their long-term health at risk.

RED wine has reseravatrol which is good for you - it's BEER that you should steer clear of.

ACTUALLY there's a new study that beer is a great post-marathon recovery drink!

Alcohol just turns to sugar in your body. Haven't you heard that sugar is LITERALLY TOXIC?!

There are plenty of healthy sugars like fruit! You can have as much as you want. Except juice and dried fruit. THOSE are just concentrated sugar.

WHITE bread? What is this, 1950? You need to be eating WHOLE grains.

NOT all whole grain breads are healthy! American companies add sugar to everything these days. It's totally insidious - and it's making us FAT. You should check your tomato sauce and peanut butter, too...

Soy milk AND tofu?! Don't you know that soy is linked to breast cancer??

That only applies to PROCESSED soy. Fermented soy is great for you! Well... except soy sauce. Too much sodium.

Make sure to stir-fry in heart-healthy olive oil!

ACTUALLY olive oil produces free radicals at high heat which causes cell damage. Use coconut oil!



She only bought the bottle of water?

Maybe she's practicing intermittent fasting this week.

That's a TERRIBLE idea. She should be eating small meals every 4-6 hours!



HEY! Single-use plastic is killing the planet!

White Anxiety

A SOCIAL HISTORY OF TOAST

1880



"Is this bread white and pure enough—like me—to be safe to eat?"

1910



"Is this fermented, alcohol-producing food the source of all social ills?"

1940



"Does this have enough riboflavin to help me make America a superpower?"

1970



"Does this have enough organic sprouted grains to resist corporate agribusiness?"

1980



"Is this expensive artisanal levain an authentic French peasant recipe?"

2019



"Should I have put this \$13 towards my retirement?"

QUESTION

What constitutes a "healthy diet"?

MARION NESTLE



DON'T EAT TOO MUCH.
MAKE SURE YOU HAVE
VEGETABLES & DON'T
EAT TOO MUCH JUNK FOOD.

A DECOLONIZED DIET.
ANCESTRAL FOOD
IS POWERFUL MEDICINE.

CATRÍONA
RUEDA ESQUIBEL



LUZ CALVO



A BALANCE OF MULTIPLE
FOODS & BEVERAGES THAT
PROVIDE THE NUTRIENTS NEEDED
IN THE BODY, BUT ALSO PROVIDE
THE ENJOYMENT OF WELLNESS
TO THE INDIVIDUAL.

A SIMPLE DIET BASED ON
FRESH FRUITS, VEGETABLES,
BEANS & HEALTHY
GRAINS LIKE NIXTAMAL
(CORN, QUINOA, TAMARANTH).

LAURIE HAINLEY



DIETS OUTSIDE THE
AMERICAN MAINSTREAM
IDEAL... FOR THE WAYS
IN WHICH THEY CONTRIBUTE
TO ONE'S CULTURAL, SOCIAL
EMOTIONAL & PHYSICAL
WELL-BEING.

PSYCHE
WILLIAMS-FORSON



ROBIN DUNBAR



MAKING TIME FOR & JOINING
IN COMMUNAL MEALS IS PERHAPS
THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT
THING WE CAN DO BOTH FOR OUR
OWN HEALTH AND WELL BEING &
THAT OF THE WIDER COMMUNITY.

ALICE WONG

PLASTIC IS SEEN AS WASTEFUL &
HARFUL TO THE ENVIRONMENT.
[BUT] WITH MY NEURMUSCULAR
DISABILITY, PLASTIC STRAWS
ARE NECESSARY TOOLS FOR
MY HYDRATION & NUTRITION.



CHRISTINE



IT'S POSSIBLE TO EAT
A REASONABLY NUTRITIOUS
DIET ON FOOD STAMPS, BUT
IT TAKES TIME & CREATIVITY
& COMPROMISES. CHEAP,
NUTRITIOUS & CONVENIENT:
YOU HAVE TO PICK TWO.

KATE LEBILLON

"FRENCH FOOD RULES" AS I CALL THEM.
MODERATION, NOT DEPRIVATION, ALONG
WITH VIEWING FOOD AS A SOURCE OF
PLEASURE, A FUN FAMILY ADVENTURE.





Don't feel represented by the current food emojis? unicode.org/emoji/proposals.html

Inside

FEATURE STORY

The origins of contemporary diet culture and co-option of medical diets.

SHORT COMICS

Pop quiz: can you distinguish foods containing gluten from those without it?

A social history of toast— and anxiety.

What eating healthy strictly on the advice of news media might look like.

Opinions: what does a “healthy” diet really mean?