Lit Review


This website, made by Cornell University talks about several students who conducted research in the field of food and the connection with psychology. For example, there is a page where studies were done to research the effects of comfort food. The site says, “About 86% of those surveyed say they seek out comfort foods while they are in a happy mood, as opposed to 36% who say they eat comfort foods when they were depressed.” It also talks about how when foods are labeled healthy, more people will buy them. This article says, “Marketers will be interested to know that the most effective food labeling design involves placing a short health claim on the front of a package and a longer health claim on the back.” There are many more studies that include Beating Mindless Eating, Smarter Lunchrooms, Grocery Shopping Psychology, Restaurant Confidential and Marketing Nutrition. This is definitely a helpful website that I go to for a lot of information.


This article talks a lot about food cravings, how and why they happen, how to prevent them and how they’re connected to the visualization of the brain. “Results of one study showed that the strength of participants' cravings was linked to how vividly they imagined the food.” It also talks about how food cravings can lead to binges and eventually obesity if they’re extreme and not kept under control. This article will be really helpful in bringing new information to the project.
This is an article that’s a short story on how a girl’s life was changed by food and her perception of it. As child, she was a picky eater but eventually her food horizon was broadened as she grew up. When she got to be a teenager though, she had an eating disorder that she eventually made her way out of through learning to love food, especially the comfort foods of her childhood that her dad loved and her grandma cooked. She also has a blog that could be useful in my research.


This is a great article because it’s written by an author of several books and a contributor to many websites, including Psychology Today. In this piece of writing, she explains the connections between comfort foods and the reactions in our brains. This is useful information for my project because I’d like to know more about what happens in the brains as we eat certain foods. “Sugar and starch spur serotonin, a neurotransmitter known to increase a sense of well-being. (It’s what makes Prozac work.)” The article also talks about salty foods and the comfort foods of others bringing to question if it’s our childhood that chooses our comfort foods or if our comfort foods choose us. She has many examples of comfort foods, their connections to our brain and how we treat food as a social surrogate. “When we feel endangered, unsung and/or lonesome, we eat.”

This article talks about how food can be presented so that we will eat more or less. “People who drink from short, fat glasses drink twice as much as those who use tall, slender glasses—even when the glasses hold the same volume.” There is also a study done to show that when a certain food was out of reach and people would have to get up to get some, they ate less. The closer the food is to the person, the more they’ll eat. Another study done with jelly beans showed that the bowl with six flavors of jelly beans had more people eating them than the bowl with only four flavors. “When multiple flavors of jelly beans were served in a single bowl, the illusion of greater diversity caused people to eat nearly twice as many as when the same beans were served in separate bowls.” This article would really help with the idea of food presentation and how it affects our eating habits.


The author of this article is a doctor who examines the presentation, decoration and menus in a restaurant that affect the time we spend in the restaurant, the food we order and how much we eat there. The article explains, “Red is considered an appetite stimulator, while blue and purple can make you lose your appetite, though blue is relaxing. The latter colors are too closely associated with toxins, food research shows. Yellow annoys people and gets people moving out much quicker. Fast food joints love yellow.” This article would help my research when it comes to looking into restaurants and their choices in decoration and such.

This article is from a clinic in Cleveland, supporting a healthier lifestyle. In order for people to become healthier, they’ve delved into food psychology. They’ve looked into what influences our eating habits: “cultural factors, evolutionary factors, social factors, familial factors, individual factors.” Treatment for weight management is more than telling the person what to eat and what not to eat. They tell the patient to think more positively about themselves. “Therapy focuses on identifying self-defeating thinking patterns that contribute to weight management problems.” They also want their patients to identify problems they have with eating habits and changing those to be beneficial. This article will be helpful because it looks into the psychology behind weight loss.


This is an extremely long article that explores many aspects of food and psychology. The topics are: The Myth of Nutrition, You Eat What You Are, Tables and Table Manners, Conspicuous Digestion: Eating on Ceremony, Eating In: Dining Settings and Styles, Food as Fashion, The Quest for the Holy Quail, Food as Seduction, Eating Out, Eating Out: Styles and Settings, The Holy Meal, and The Future of Food. The information presented in this writing varies widely, giving me a wide range that I can really work with and look into. A good quote is “Just as clothes indicate our trendiness, so does food.”