Fast food has made its way into American families since the 1950’s. Back in the fifties, it was a treat to go out with the family and create an experience of ordering burgers and fries, spending a few dollars to treat the family, and take a ride to explore what the new items were on the menu. Since then, this country has changed drastically, not only to do with technology, but food itself has changed the most. Fast food has weaved its way into culture just as much as today’s iPhone has done. It has changed the way society thinks; it has changed the way people take care of themselves and most of all it has changed culture.

Fast food used to only be burger joints here and there. Now today there are multiple restaurants such as Wendy’s, McDonalds, Burger King, Sonic, Nathans, etc. They are all billion dollar corporations that are now not only around the corner, they are in malls, shopping centers, recreational parks, theme parks and they all promise the same things. They promise fast food at a great price and a great taste. This long-form feature writing will focus on the history of fast food, the theology behind menu’s services, the economic boom in the fast food industry, scandalous events in fast food, fast food today/menu’s today and where fast food is going.

Chapter One: History of Fast Food

There are so many advantages today that we have and may take for granted, one being fast food and its nature to be quick and affordable. Having been a treat nearly 50 years ago, today it has become a monotonous behavior. Eric Schlosser author of the book Fast Food Nation, The Dark Side of the All-American Meal, talks about the routine experience that is behind ordering fast food. “Pull open the glass door, feel the rush of cool air, walk in, get on line, study the backlit color photographs above the counter, place your order, hand over a few dollars,
watch teenagers in uniforms pushing various buttons, and moments later take hold of a plastic tray full of food wrapped in colored paper and cardboard. The whole experience of buying fast food has become so routine, so thoroughly unexceptional and mundane, that it is now taken for granted, like brushing your teeth or stopping for a red light. It has become a social custom as American as a small, rectangular, hand-held, frozen, and reheated apple pie.”

As unfortunate as this sounds, fast food started out more as a fulfilling American treat, rather than a commodity being taken for granted. As many of us know who Ronald McDonald is without even blinking an eye; I’m sure no one would know who Carl N. Karcher is. Karcher was born on a farm in 1917. His family was German-American, and he had six brothers and a sister. Growing up back then in Ohio was less about education, and more about tending to farm work and helping your family. Karcher did just that. He dropped out of school after only completing eighth grade and devoted his childhood to the life of farm work.

Years later, Karcher received a phone call from his uncle Ben Karcher asking him to come and work in Anaheim, California. For a twenty-year old, Carl, who had never been past the border of Ohio, this decision was tough, but he took it. Ben Karcher owned a Feed and Seed store in Anaheim. There he worked almost eighty hours a week. One day he came across a woman named Margaret Heinz. She worked for her family in the Heinz building, where she had always seen Carl outside of her job, and then soon after they became acquainted. Later, Carl had left his uncle’s store to work for a bakery in Los Angeles, and not long after, he and Margaret married in 1939. When Carl became a delivery driver for the new bakery, he began to notice on his delivery route all of the hot dog trucks along his delivery route.
In seeing this, he had the idea to start his own business, which his wife opposed in fear of not being able to retrieve the money to start a business. Carl bought his first hot dog cart. Not long after he had made this life changing purchase, World War II happened. Life in southern California had started to change abruptly, due to highways being built, an increase in population, and a drastic change in the way families and the working man were living their lives. This all gave Carl enough money to fund another hot dog truck.

Not only was Carl’s business growing, so were others. He had heard of McDonalds famous hamburgers not too far from him. They were becoming well known and very high quality in taste. Richard and Maurice McDonald had opened a drive-thru restaurant and had many car hops. Sales were good, but they weren’t great. Schlosser says, “They were tired of constantly looking for new carhops, and short order cooks, who were in great demand as the old ones left for higher paying jobs elsewhere. They were tired of replacing dishes glassware, and silverware their teenage customers constantly broke or ripped off. And they were tired of their teenage customers. The brothers thought about selling their restaurant. Instead, they tried something new.”

When you think of restaurants, you think of chefs, glasses, silverware and ambiance. The McDonald brothers had that; however, they began a new life changing alternative to having a restaurant. They took anything off the menu that you had to eat with knives and forks, and replaced the menu with items such as burgers and fries. They replaced anything breakable, such things as drinking glasses and plates with plastic cups and plates. They used grills and deep fryers to increase speed and productivity and took away ovens.
There were no need for chefs anymore, every item on the menu had the same ingredients and was easy enough for cheap labor to come in and make these items.

With every new and fast idea these brothers had started to create, the one that went down in history today was creating a logo that would catch the attention of those traveling from far away. They opened a drive through and created the logo with the “M” symbol that we all know today. This was built high enough for those to see from the highway, giving them more business then imagined. The drive through opened a gateway for fast service, minimum wages, eye catching logos and food brought to the customer fast and affordable.

Let’s not forget about Carl Karcher. He had gone to San Bernardino, California to visit McDonalds. He was curious to explore and see what the fuss was all about. After visiting this new American take on restaurants, Carl returned home to Anaheim where he opened the first Carl’s Jr. in 1956. Not long after that, William Rosenberg dropped out of school and opened the first donut shop called Dunkin’ Donuts. Following that, Glen W. Bell Jr. who was a veteran from World War Two, loved the fast food idea that McDonalds had proved successful, so Bell took away the burgers and fries turning the menu into Mexican food and then adapting the name of Taco Bell.

Dave Thomas, who had lived in Columbus, Ohio, opened up Wendy’s Old Fashioned Hamburgers. Many new ideas were flourishing now in America. Whether it was donuts, burgers, chicken etc. these foods were no longer mere items to be bought and made into a household meal; they were also being sold as logos for the American dreamer to make millions.
Colonel Sanders, the hit logo for Kentucky Fried Chicken, is what most Americans think of when they eat fried chicken; The “M” symbol or “Golden Arches,” is what we perceive as McDonalds. Similarly, Wendy’s is the daughter of Dave Thomas, so we trust his “good old fashioned burgers,” because his logo is his little red-headed daughter. Who better to trust than a child? It goes on and on, and those logos have become a household memorabilia to every individual not only in America anymore, but around the world.

Southern California had become the birthplace of fast food. Like any thing in life it started competition. Competitors from all over started different food chains. Car hops were being diminished little by little, and new ways of the future fast food ideals were being born. Fast food chains had taken off. Schlosser says, “Between 1960 and 1973, the number of McDonald’s restaurants grew from roughly 250 to 3,000. Carl’s Jr. had become an overnight success. Years later, where his wife Margaret Heinz used to live on her family’s farm in Anaheim, Carl built Carl Karcher Enterprises corporate headquarters.

Today, Schlosser explains where there were once orange groves and lemon trees and farms as far as the eye can see in Anaheim, there are now buildings, commercial businesses and fast food restaurants. The population according to Schlosser is thirty times what it was when Carl had taken the leap to leave Ohio and move to Anaheim in the thirties.

Carl Karcher a name unfamiliar to most people in today’s day and age turns out to have been a name that has changed our society and the way we eat.
Unfortunately, it is easy to take things for granted in this life, one of them being food. We eat food, order food, leave our homes to go spend a few dollars on food, but we never stop to think what led to this way of us eating and purchasing food. Schlosser says, “The first Kentucky Fried Chicken restaurant opened in 1952, near salt lake City, Utah. Lacking money to promote the new chain, Colonel Sanders a.k.a Harland Sanders, dressed up like a Kentucky colonel, sporting a white suit and a black string tie. By the early 1960's, Kentucky Fried Chicken was the largest restaurant chain in the United States, and Colonel Sanders was a household name.”

As these fellow Americans dressed up to make a name for themselves, chasing their dreams to become successful and doing whatever it took to do so, we as Americans chase our dreams as well, ordering food, driving through drive thru’s, and having no concern how we get this food they created as long as we get it, that’s all that matters.

**Chapter Two: The Theology behind Menu’s Services**

Fast food menus are constantly changing. They go from burgers, to chicken, chicken to fish and fish to salads. For generations now, we have seen the menu’s change along with the society, and with what direction society is going in. Fast food restaurants want to follow the lead of the customers, and go in the same direction with them for one reason, to make a profit. Places such as McDonalds, Wendy’s, and Taco Bell, are constantly working at their menus to gain the approval of society.
Back in the 1950’s and up until the early nineties, fast food was an option to take hold of without even considering preservatives, diabetes, childhood obesity and much more. Not until the early 2000’s did the United States starting seeing billboards about obesity or hear about ingredients within foods involving Genetically Modified Food (GMO’S). Television commercials about these statistics started appearing more and more; therefore, society started to become frightened as a whole, and the issue of natural and organic foods began to become more of an issue within these food chains. All of these factors took away from the fun of the “All American” fast food experience.

Deborah Enos, CN, MyHealthNewsDaily Columnist and writer of the article, “Is There Such Thing as Healthy Fast Food”? says, “And for those "healthy" fast food chains, a study published this week in the American Journal of Preventative Medicine found that there have been only marginal improvements in the nutritional quality of fast food menu items over the past 14 years. The researchers rated food items on a 100-point scale. On average, fast food restaurants were rated a 45 in 1997-1998, and that score crept up to 48 in 2009-2010.” You as the consumer should not always agree or trust what the menus are proposing are in the items. Do your own investigation and taking responsibility for what you are eating is better than just not doing any research.

So how do these fast food restaurants keep up with all of this research being put out about their products?
They hire marketing people that are extremely good at their jobs to convince us that their products are worth buying, that they are cheap and that they are as healthy as a salad. Enos says, “Researchers at UCLA released the results of a study this week that found that teens who purchase Subway meals consumed nearly as many calories as those who purchased meals from McDonald's. One staggering fact, that even surprised me, was the sodium content of the Subway meals. Researchers found that the nutrient profile at Subway was slightly healthier than at McDonald's, but the foods still had about three times the amount of salt recommended by the Institute of Medicine.”

Researchers and Journalists are seeing that even foods claiming that they are healthy still hold as much sodium as a hamburger piled high with all the fixings. It is a shock even to me that Subway and their items are carrying just as many calories as McDonalds. It’s scary and disturbing that it has to be this way. So why does a fast food restaurant choose these menu items? The economy has a lot to do with it. In the past four years, our economy has suffered with things such as rising gas prices, rising food prices, loss of jobs, and unemployment; it’s a very tough world to live in and fast food restaurants have all felt and skinned their knees on this decline too. Let’s take the dollar menu for example.

You as the customer can get the same items individually for only one dollar without paying almost eight to nine dollars for the full number one meal. This has hurt most fast food places in an extreme way. Bob Ciura, writer of the article “Are New Menu Items Enough to Boost Fast Food Sales?” says, “Fast-food companies such as McDonalds are scrambling to introduce new products and adjust pricing policies to accommodate rapidly changing consumer preferences.
Since the U.S. economy continues to improve at such a frustratingly slow pace, consumers are still keeping a lid on discretionary spending. When they purchase fast food, they're increasingly selecting from the dollar menu. This has hurt fast-food chains, which reap much higher margins from combo meals. To get in front of this, earlier this year Wendy's changed its low-price offerings to what it now calls its 'Right Price Right Size' menu. In addition, Wendy's introduced its Pretzel Bacon Cheeseburger, which has been a huge success.”

This menu choice has given Wendy’s a 15% growth in profit according to Ciura, and continues to put Wendy’s on a higher market scale than McDonalds. McDonalds over this period of time has seen all of these changes around them with other fast food companies. They know their old-fashioned hamburger original and their quickness and style like back in the days of Carl Karcher, is coming to an end. They know they have to branch out and fiercely find new items to lure in their eager and hungry customers.

Chicken has been a huge food success within our society today. It’s cheap, everyone knows what it is, and how it tastes before buying it; so therefore it’s familiar, and in everyone’s comfort zone of eating. On top of that it can be prepared in many different ways. Ciura says, “McDonald's has aggressively branched out into coffee and other specialty drinks, which are higher-margin products helping boost profits. And, more recently, McDonald's announced plans to introduce the new Mighty Wings, hoping to take a slice of the massive chicken consumption in the United States. Americans consumed an average of 82 pounds of chicken per capita in 2012, and through its new Mighty Wings, in addition to its current Chicken McWraps and its already-successful Chicken McNuggets, you can see why McDonald's is eager to take advantage of this trend.”
Meanwhile, in order to keep up with their rivals, Burger King is planning on creating new menu items for the fall. Ciura also says, “Burger King's global comparable sales inched up 0.6% in the second quarter, with adjusted EBITDA increasing 2.7% in the same period, year over year.”

In this unpublished article I had written below, it has to do with fast food choices within the college area, and what students think about these foods in actuality.

**Fast Food Frenzy, Why or Why Not?**

No matter where you travel to, every college campus has at least a dozen fast food joints lurking around. From McDonalds, Wendy’s, Taco Bell and even Dunkin Donuts these establishments are taking over the stovetops and microwaves of today’s college student. At Western Connecticut State University, I have been to their cafeteria numerous times. Within those times I have seen a wide variety of choices on their menu such as turkey wraps, chicken wraps, baked chips, apple chips, an assortment of fruit and many different types of juices. They even offer hummus now that comes with flat pretzels to dip into. However, when I stand on line, I see dozens of students still buying the grilled foods such as fries, fried chicken and burgers.

There are days I witness students with Taco Bell and McDonalds bags. It makes me wonder why choose these foods when the school does offer better choices? Missy Southmayd, a WCSU student states, “Healthy food gives me an extra boost to get through my day. When I eat greasy fatty foods, it makes me tired. Substituting an apple or mixed nuts over a bag of chips gives me the extra energy that I need.”
I have talked to students, some saying that they order fries and burgers because it is cheap and affordable and they want more than a salad. On the other hand others have stated that these fast food places are now offering such a wide variety of healthy foods, that the wraps and salads they now offer are just as good.

There are so many ways that students can eliminate fast food from their diet and/or bring snacks with them to classes that are better for them. Southmayd also states that, “I changed my snacking options. Instead of regular potato chips I buy sweet potato chips, banana chips, pita chips etc. I eliminated anything bad for me in the kitchen. For snacks in class I bring almonds and pita chips.” Eating healthy is important especially while living on campus because it really does energize you.” In talking to so many students it is good to see that fast food is not always an option amongst the decisions of today’s student.

I too have switched my diet; I used to go to McDonalds for a quick bite and buy a snack wrap and fries. I knew that this was not always a smart choice, so I have learned the health benefits of changing up my decisions. Such benefits are having more energy, maintaining a healthy weight, learning how to read labels and understand what to consume, and what is not healthy. I have also learned through this process, that there are so many other choices in and around town that are affordable, fast and much different than a snack wrap.

For instance, Terra Brasilis Restaurant located on 58 Main street in Danbury, offers a wide variety of fresh meats, salads and fruits daily and is all prepared right there in house. You can run in and chose from their buffet style, weigh your food, pay and go.
Their menu changes daily and is freshly prepared. There are so many other affordable options right under your noses. Instead of choosing the fast everyday unhealthy way, make a choice that will not only benefit your wellbeing, giving you stable energy which makes a big difference in your school day, but it will also open your eyes to a variety of new foods too.

Fast food is diversifying their menu choices according to society and the economic pressures that fall upon us. We see how they chose their items and why. We see how college students feel about these foods and what their daily choices are, and how those choices are affecting the fast food industries menu choices. But most of all, we see that just because their businesses are saying one thing, what will the other be?

We have to be cautious about them weaving their way around the truth to advertise healthy and affordable. The fast food industry knows college students, struggling families etc. have to sometimes depend on their establishment to feed them because they are so cheap and fast; therefore, they know that they can sometimes get away with their menu options and that is the reason they promote the ways that they do.

Chapter Three: The Economic Boom in the Fast Food Industry

Our country has been through many economic crises ever since the 1950s. World War 11 had many people worried about the economy at that time. Despite the worry, the war produced just the opposite. It brought jobs to the people along with an increase in production within factories. The war had taken this country out of the Great Depression and into a new direction.
The U.S. economy had recovered from the brief recession from 1946-1947, making the country the richest in the world. America at that time was unstoppable.

The Gross National Product (GNP) doubled from the 1950’s, onto the 60s. Families were all working their way into the middle class, owning their own homes, televisions, cars etc. This was a massive achievement due to the fact that, 30 years earlier less than half of American families were not achieving this convenience at all. During the 1950s and 60s, wartime assembly and unparalleled defense spending fueled the economic boom. Because of the war, Germany, France and Great Britain were being bombed. This meant that their industries that were producing products which were helping their economy to thrive were being destroyed as well.

All of these downfalls for those countries, kept America on top of the world. American industries were thriving and producing more jobs than ever. America could not be touched by any other. Federal dollars in the 1950s and 60s, along with the budget being passed by the Congress kept those American factories running strong all throughout the Cold War. Gas prices were very low, and President Eisenhower had then passed the Federal Highway Act in 1956. White Collar Jobs were increasing within the American average family. However this, during the 1960s, not only was the economy changing so was the agriculture. Farmers were untouchable in the 1950s. They produced food for the country and had the best paying jobs. Then a major change comes to arise when corporations started to expand throughout the 1960s.
The country had started to see a drastic transformation when the number of blue collar workers was being taken over by white collar workers for the first time ever. Because of this hasty change, labor unions were becoming smaller.

The Post War had created the “Baby-Boom” generation. Later in the 1960s, population was thriving. Government was spending more on large corporations, such as airlines, and the car industries. All of the population increase led to the extreme growth in the suburban life. Many new housing projects were being built, the highway brought out new businesses such as malls, shopping centers, and fast food restaurants. Consumer goods were becoming cheaper by the minute, and this paved the way for the culture to be named the label of, “The Consumer Culture.”

Bill Ganzel writer of an article on fast food from livinghistoryfarm.org says, “The predominance of fast food restaurants changed the food supply chain all the way down to the farmer. McDonald's quickly became the single largest buyer of beef, pork, potatoes and apples in the U.S. That gave them tremendous economic clout. The fast food system is all about standardization, and so when the companies went looking for someone to supply their meat, they choose to deal with their large, corporate counterparts in the packing industry. IBP began to produce "boxed beef," where the final cuts of beef, including hamburger, were produced at the processing plant rather than the local grocery. IBP (Iowa Beef Processors, Inc.) became the largest supplier of hamburger meat to the fast food industry.” Ganzel also goes on to write that, “Because consumers with busy lifestyles needed food fast, the chains needed raw materials in standardized packages. So, meat packers needed a consistent supply of standardized animals to produce their meat.
They couldn't afford to deal with the uncertainty of many, small family farms. So, livestock producers became bigger and bigger. McDonald’s and other chains have also been accused of using their huge buying power to keep farm produce prices artificially low.”

This all relates to the farmers mentioned in the beginning of this chapter. The economy was becoming so fast paced. People were looking for quicker ways to live, eat and work. Because of these big industries such as McDonalds, Ganzel explains that, “Because consumers with busy lifestyles needed food fast, the chains needed raw materials in standardized packages. So, meat packers needed a consistent supply of standardized animals to produce their meat. They couldn't afford to deal with the uncertainty of many, small family farms. So, livestock producers became bigger and bigger.

When McDonald's expanded into international marketplaces beginning in 1971, McDonald's both adapted to local conditions and forced local farmers to adapt to them. For instance, beef is not the lead meat item offered in countries that have cultural taboos or food preferences for other types of meat. However, the company has been accused of changing food preferences and exporting American culture around the world along with its propensity for obesity.

McDonald's and other fast food chains have affected farmers wherever new restaurants open. In 1990, McDonald's opened their first outlet in Russia.
When they realized that they couldn't guarantee a high quality, reliable supply of meat and other food products, they opened their own farms, controlling the supply chain at every step.

The economic boom within the American culture at that time had become so drastic that it forced corporations such as McDonalds in Ganzel’s article to start buying and producing farms. This comes as a surprise to me only because I did not know this was even the case. McDonalds, was forcing farmers to abide by their rules, and even taking the jobs of those farmers by starting their own ways of production. This is an absolute shock. It shows that with changes in society, with the economy roaring and the population increasing, fast food weaves its sticky ways into changing the society, and converting those farmers into doing only what they want them to do.

**The Effect of Fast Food Internationally**

Besides America going through the economic boom and the commodities that follow, let’s talk about China. With their population nearly quadrupled that of America, “What we are seeing in developing countries, which are undergoing rapid economic transition is under nutrition, over nutrition and infections and chronic diseases coexisting over long periods of time,” Gina Kennedy, of the Food and Agriculture Organization said. Like America and the way their economy changed from fast food, China’s situation is quite similar.

According to Michelle FlorCruz from IBTimes.Com, writer of the article “Effects of a Rapid-Growth Economy: China's Booming Fast Food Culture Takes Its Toll on Health,” Fast food was only introduced in China in 1987, with the opening of the first KFC. Predominantly protein diets, heavy in fat, sugar and salt, are relatively new for the Chinese.
But eating at fast food restaurants, Western brands in particular, is considered something to aspire to. “Eating in food restaurants … McDonald’s, Pizza Hut and Starbucks, where food is particularly high in fats and sugar -- is becoming very attractive and considered a symbol of status,”

The Chinese economy is taking a high liking to the fast food development. FlorCruz is saying that fast food has become a symbol of social status within their economy. Whereas in America it is given really no status at all, besides the fact of poor dieting, China praises fast food and as seen in FlorCruz’s article, this is cause as to why their country is booming with the use of artificial fillers. China is said by FlorCruz to now be in the top five highest consumers of fast food restaurants.

America since World War Two, the Cold War, and up until today, has drastically been affected by the economic boom. Because of those events, America’s economy has witnessed many changes. Changes that changed the workforce, changes that changed the American family, changes that produced a fast paced economy into creating larger corporations, and changes that led farmers out of the scene of American production. These changes all led up to fast food playing a huge role on our economy’s thriving ways.

Not only did America feel the effect of that change from the 1950s until now, China has played a role in the severe change as well. Hong Kong is now adapting their eating habits to conform to the new life of fast food that has even changed their cultural mindset.
A McWedding held in Hong Kong on Valentine’s Day back in 2011
How it All Started
The Original “Golden Arches” in the 1950s
McDonalds in Beijing
**Fast food is the major source of eating-out calories for U.S. adults and children**

**Adults age 20 and older**
- Fast food: 13%
- Restaurant: 10%
- Other away from home: 9%
- Home: 69%

**Children age 2-19**
- Fast food: 14%
- Restaurant: 5%
- Other away from home: 7%
- School: 7%
- Home: 67%


**Picture Credit:**

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**Fast Food Takes Over**
According to Michelle FlorCruz they are combining fast food and weddings, yes I dare say it. Weddings called, “McWeddings” are merging their “McIdeas” into the culture of Hong Kong. How’s all that for the fast food effects on our and their economic boom.

**Chapter Four: Scandalous Events in Fast Food**

In the 1950’s, the food ads and promotions showed honesty and integrity. They showed young men and women, families gathering together all going out and enjoying the prosperity and fun that fast food restaurants proposed. However this, is fast food prosperous? Do these companies propose integrity? What are their secrets, and why are these secrets being kept from the consumers.

For example, genetically modified foods are coming more and more out in the open. These foods are grown genetically in green houses and the government is now trying to convince people that there are no facts leading up to any health issues from these foods. Also, let’s present junk food being served in most elementary schools as becoming an issue. Fast food may have more to tell us than we think.

This is a rendition of a speech about junk food that I had written:

Why do students become crabby, tired, irritable and unfocused in class? This might be caused by the type of meals they take. In almost every elementary school, there is the lack of healthy and tasty school lunch selections which has become a recent problem in both middle and high schools across the nation. In most instances, various schools sell junk foods to students and of course, according to me, this isn't right.
There are various reasons why junk foods should be removed from school lunch menus. Junk foods should be banned from school lunch menus due to the fact that they affect both the body and the mind negatively. To begin with, junk food is the main cause of obesity among young people who are still learning. Research shows that around 33% of youths in high schools are unhealthy and overweight, and nearly 75% are unfit. This is contributed to by the bad food being served in public schools. A single 12-ounce can of soda has as much as 14 teaspoonful of sugar in the form of fructose corn syrup.

Many of these sodas, burgers, pizzas, chips and cookies are full of sugary and fatty contents that are unhealthy to the body. It is important to fill vending machines and cafeterias with foods that are healthy which in turn will likely create a dent in the childhood obesity rates. Secondly, the reason why there is need for the school cafeterias to serve healthy food is that junk food does not provide the students with the energy required for them to stay focused in classes (basically the afternoon classes).

These kinds of foods (junk food) being served in schools does not give the pupils the energy and power to participate in games and gym classes, and this laziness leads to most of the kids to suffer from obesity. In addition, junk food lowers the energy level thus affecting pupil's physical activities.

Now let’s look away from the term fast food for just a second. In this speech, we are able to see that junk food, in general, is very similar to fast food and in causing a great deal of health issues among children.
So in this case of scandalous events, junk food does not provide energy for students but healthy food does. How has a society let so much unhealthy food into the lives of children? Why are these foods being served to them knowing the consequences of their intake?

Arielle Loren from Frugivoremag.com writer of the article, Is fast Food the New Crack? says, “For many families, fast food is not a luxury or a simple once-a-month treat. Instead, it’s a quick breakfast, daily lunch, or makeshift dinner for adults and children. As fast food becomes a lifestyle, there’s certainly much to fear.” Yes, there is much to fear. This is why some schools depend on these foods. They are cheap, and are of no concern to those making a profit off of them. These children are being subjected into eating these foods without knowing the proper consequences. The same goes for our society. Most of those who consume fast food do not know the problems that these foods cause, and if they do, they can’t afford to make their way out of these restaurants to buy food that is more expensive.

Loren states, “Fast food is a concoction of real food. Processed, ground, and slogged into something edible, it’s made for quicker distribution to millions of restaurants across the nation. Similar to crack, a concoction of cocaine, the breakdown of the real product still satisfies a need. Fast food is to hungry (budgeting) community members as crack is to (broke) drug abusers. But the real question remains: Why don’t more people recognize fast food’s detrimental impact”?
This question will weave itself into the issue of GMO’s. Most people have already found out about these genetically modified foods. As said in the beginning, McDonalds in the past and still has taken over farms and put people out of business, so that they can take over the farmland and do it their way, that includes GMO foods.

Genetically Modified Foods are crops such as fruits, vegetables and grains that have been altered, using molecular biology techniques and developing definite resources of the plant that are seen as beneficial for the growth and development of the plant. This includes resistance to toxic herbicides, or bettering the crop’s ability to resist rotting during shipping or producing pesticides inside the plant itself.

There are so many websites and books protecting the value of GMO’S, that this research is often believed to be written by the creators of GMO foods. With more and more research being witnessed and learned about by the public, the dangers are being recognized about these enhanced foods. However, there are little facts to be found on how GMOs are hurting or causing cancer to humans.

As a consumer, sometimes it is very hard to understand or really know what to believe, especially from the internet or even books. With so much information and videos to be seen and watched, it can be overwhelming to really figure out and judge the long-term effects of GMOs.
Why do we want to avoid these foods, is a good question to ask ourselves? GMOs are a process that is not natural; and works against the plant and foods natural growth and flow of genetic movement. Because it is going against the natural grain of how plants and foods should be dealt with, this may end up becoming problematic towards humans and their development. There are now many cases showing the damaging effects of genetically-modified plants on animals in testing. Tom Philpott writer of an article from called, Researchers: GM Crops Are Killing Monarch Butterflies After All, from Motherjones.com discusses examples of this study on GMO crops showing that corn pollen was distressing monarch butterfly caterpillars, causing higher mortality rates in the butterflies that had eaten the GM pollen.

Genetically modified foods are also created to ward off pesticides in the way that are designed. The plants designed are cross bred; this is now passing on its new gene and spreading itself to other roots and plants. Because of this, genetically modified crops may be creating what scientists call “superweeds.” This will now take over crop land leading to food shortage globally. This interbreeding also affects the bees and birds that pollenate the plant.

Presenting these new modified genes into the natural aspects of our human lifestyle, may lead to health problems down the road. The University of Aberdeen did a study on how the digestive system of rats and how they reacted to the intake of potatoes that were GMOs. The study portrayed harmful problems in the digestive tract of the rats and their gut tissue suffered some damaging effects. The rats that ate non GMO foods did not have the problems in their intestines or gut tissue. This information worries some scientists how much GMOs are we consuming daily without knowing it, and what effects has it been causing on humans and our insides?
There are many ways to avoid these foods and some are, eating organic foods which can be purchased at any supermarket and legally can’t contain GMOs. Although in some cases some cross contamination may get into these organic foods. However this is the best way to avoid GMO’s. Eating less dairy and meat products is good because they usually are high in genetically modified ingredients. This is because most livestock are eating the grains and corn from the farms that participate in GMOs and they are carrying the genes from these altered organisms.

Avoiding foods that are processed or mainly sold at fast food restaurants are key. These foods contain large amounts of preservatives, GMO products and contain no nutrients or benefits for the human body.

These facts are only a few to help one to understand what we are consuming and how to consume what’s best for us, especially for our offspring. If we can learn and avoid these harmful products, then maybe we can avoid certain cancers from forming.

According to Jill Ettinger writer of the article, “Which Fast Food Menu Items DON’T Contain GMOs” says, soups, even the healthy sounding ones at Au Bon Pain and Panera are laden with all sorts of unsavory ingredients, and all of them include GMOs”.

She goes on to say, “None of the French fries we reviewed are GMO-free, but you'll have a new appreciation for Wendy's plain baked potato as that's your only tuber option.” More scandalous than fries just having GMOs are what the GMOs include in McDonalds fries. Editor of preventdisease.com wrote an article about “The 17 Foul Ingredients in McDonalds French Fries Including GMOs.”
The editor says, “Mario Dupuis, a production manager at McCain Foods in New Brunswick, discussed where the potatoes are washed, peeled and cut. They are also blanched to “remove natural sugars” that would cause color variations, then soaked in dextrose for an even color. There’s also an ingredient to prevent greying, drying to remove excess moisture and a quick-fry for 45 to 60 seconds before the fries are frozen for shipping.” The editor goes on to include the ingredients; Potatoes, canola oil, hydrogenated soybean oil, safflower oil, natural flavor (vegetable source), dextrose, sodium acid pyrophosphate (maintain colour), citric acid (preservative), dimethylpolysiloxane (antifoaming agent) and cooked in vegetable oil (Canola oil, corn oil, soybean oil, hydrogenated soybean oil with THBQ, citric acid and dimethylpolysiloxane) and salt (silicoaluminate, dextrose, potassium iodide).

In taking a look at these facts, these ingredients are very bad for human consumption. The other ingredients that are genetically modified are the genetically modified (canola oil, corn oil, soybean oil), hydrogenated (soybean oil), chemically preserved and antifoaming (THBQ, citric acid, dimethylpolysiloxane), and artificially colored (sodium acid pyrophosphate).

Major scandals happen every day, now more than ever with social media. However this; fast foods, junk foods and GMOs are only a few scandals that are occurring within our country, our schools, and even being grown on our once prosperous and honest soil.

**Chapter Five: Fast Food Today and Where Fast Food is Going**

We have all eaten fast food on many points in our lives. Whether we are out running errands on our only day off or shopping at the mall, we are bound to buy a quick snack to hold us over for the day.
What we don’t know about these quick snacks is how bad they are for our health when eaten excessively. Typically when we mention fast food to the average American, they normally refer to fast food as the all American food. Quoted by one of my Professors Mark Langlois who teaches the class Advertising, Copywriting and Promotion, he says, “Fast food is America.”

Fast food has become so intertwined with America, that in some cases it is known as America. From the 1950s up until now, fast food has become a staple in our lives whether we like it or not. Back in the 1950s, their ingredients may not have been as excessive as it is now. First it was TV dinners, canned foods and then came fast food. Those products were, and still are, adding more and more ingredients that some of us cannot even pronounce. Since then, technology has changed greatly, chemical preservation in foods is in everything, and going from farm fresh market foods to fresh milk on your doorstep is no longer an option. Whether you were rich or poor back in the fifties, your food was fresh and organic, that cannot be said for the most, part today.

There have been many controversies about how bad fast food is and where it stands today. Fast food is high in transfat or partially hydrogenated oils. Most fast food restaurants are now trying not to incorporate transfat into their products, making it a little better than before, but is still not the best of choices when choosing what to eat. Transfat’s increase the risk of heart disease, insulin resistance, diabetes and many other health conditions and disorders. To some, it may be so hard to keep up with these harmful ingredients in these foods, especially with all of the online controversies with what is true or false.
Today is faster paced than it was in the 1950s. People are literally eating their lunch while running to their jobs. Even with all of the social media and information right at our finger tips, society still is failing to educate themselves about the long-term effects that these foods have on them. The advertising industry doesn’t make it any easier to avoid these matters today. Today, the majority of fast food ads are geared towards children with their characters getting their attention. Happy Meals at McDonald’s and kids meals at other fast food establishments have toys in them, most of which come from cartoons that they know the children would love.

These unfortunate issues make it difficult for parents today to not go to fast food places. Not only are fast food chains everywhere and are open 24 hours, they are very affordable, and large families can eat out for under 30 dollars. These are only some of the reasons todays families can’t resist fast food. Years ago, there was no such thing as the supersize menu, or the dollar menu. Not only has obesity taken a toll in today’s society, so has anything supersized. But this may not always be the better deal.

Advertising has promoted bigger items at almost the same cost of regular items from the menu. Since many issues have come about because of the supersize menus, they are quickly fading and healthier options are appearing now on all fast food menus. Many new healthier items being offered on these menus are milk, apple and orange slices, side salads instead of fries, grilled chicken and unsweetened ice teas rather than soda. This may seem to be somewhat healthy, but in the long run, even the healthy foods at these restaurants are not what you think.

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There were many great films from the 1950s up until the early 2000s, but none like the movie Supersize Me. Before this film, there weren’t really movies about the dangers of your typical everyday hamburger. This film changed not only the fast food industry, but the advertising agencies working for them and the society as a whole.

Filmmaker, Morgan Spurlock, came up with the movie Supersize Me. The film was based around him consuming McDonald's three times a day for thirty days while showing the effects of eating this food. In those thirty days, he gained 25 pounds, had severe fatigue, headaches, elevated blood sugar and cholesterol, and his blood pressure was rising continually. Even though most people thought the way he went about the movie was a bit over the top, because the movie was easy to comprehend to not only adults but children, most people are now aware of fast food and have modified their ways of eating because of the film.

The work force back in the fifties compared to today is a major part of the problem. Farm work was very common to everybody back then. If you weren’t working long hours on the farm (man, woman or child), then you were working long hours in labor intensive factories, or maintaining your home. Today is different. Many office jobs don’t require much exercise, there hours are long and most are sitting all day. Children don’t get out much anymore to play. Most are thrown in front of the television or playing video games for hours and most kids are not even required by their parents to help out around the house.

Part of the problem today is that most Americans are not as active as they should be. This fast paced society may be playing into the role of consuming fast food, probably because many of them only get 30 minutes for a lunch break and work a nine to ten hour day.
Today the American society bases most of their lives around calories. Because they are becoming more familiar with the effects of fast food, everyone is now counting calories. It amazes me the calorie intake with most products off the fast food menus: McDonald's Double Quarter Pounder with Cheese - 770 calories, 47 grams of fat, 39 grams of carbs; 1440 mg of sodium Burger King's Double Whopper with Cheese - 1417 calories, 69 grams of fat, 53 grams of carbs; 1548 mg of sodium Wendy's Big Bacon Classic - 580 calories, 22 grams of fat, 45 grams of carbs; 1430 mg of sodium Wendy's Biggie Fries - 2590 calories, 29 grams of fat, 570 mg of sodium.

The average diet is based upon a 2000 calorie intake. So if you were to go and order a Big Mac with fries off of the menu, which is pretty popular among choices, in one meal you’re consuming 3000 calories. That is over a day’s worth in one sitting. Everyone is different, different body weight, body mass, height genetics, so most people intake about 1200 to 2200 calories a day whether they are working out or have an active life. However, if you eat more than once a day at a fast food place, you’re consuming over 6000 calories and well over 1000 milligrams of salt. These are the reasons obesity has become so huge in the last twenty years, which has been a drastic change since the 1950s.

It can be overwhelming today to choose the proper items on a fast food menu. Choose broiled or baked over fried foods. For starters choose non-cream soups, broiled or baked over crispy, do not supersize anything, drink water instead of soda, and try ordering salads with vinaigrettes instead of fries. In the 50s, 60s and up until the 90s, there were rarely these ideals to choose healthy from fast food menus.
You never saw ads about obesity, ads about how to choose healthy items from fast food menus. These ideals were of no big concern. Social media didn’t exist and people knew that fried foods were bad for them, but the long-term effects and ingredients were not yet showing their faces.

According to Sara Reischman writer of the article “Fast Food and Society,” she says, “Fast food has been a part of American culture for nearly 70 years. What started out as a hot dog stand and a dream has grown to become an ugly monster that has taken over our society. Working in a carhop is only a faint memory for some and a non-reality for most. Jobs in the fast food industry are usually reserved for the uneducated, the young and immigrants. The food served in them is usually of the poorest quality and the standards are lowered to insure company profit. The animals are treated poorly in the meat plants, because the industry requires a low-cost method.”

As people eat outside the home more they consume more calories, less fiber and more fat (Schlosser). Schlosser he discussed a number of attempts to introduce healthy foods were no successful. If a child develops a liking to salty foods and fat at a young age, they will most likely be geared towards it as adults.

Today, the lives of most Americans are rushed more than other countries. As sad as it is, most family’s today no longer sit down together to discuss their day over a homemade meal. Eating fast food today is so much easier than making meals from scratch and spending time with the family. Fast Food menus today gear themselves towards all income statuses. There are healthy foods, along with all natural Angus burgers. Something has been lost. We are no longer simply the land of the free and the home of the brave.
The Old fashioned Way of Making Promises
The Comfort of Your Decisions
Promoting fast Food in Today’s Society
The Results of Our Decisions
Fast Food has shown to be ever changing in the many ways of the American people. Since the beginning when Carl Karcher came into the picture up until now, fast food has proven to be one of the reasons our society is where it is. The land of the free and home of the brave is now the land where people depend on the media to do their research for them. As a society, we have to be cautious of what we are eating and where these foods are coming from. It’s not simply a burger and malt shake anymore, unfortunately, it’s ingredients and calorie counting.

Through the history, the theology, behind the menus services, the economic boom, the scandalous events, fast food within our culture, fast food today and where these restaurants plan on going, fast food has clearly impacted this country in more ways than one. It’s not only just about food anymore; it’s about how these places all started, why, and for what reasons they are the way they are.

“We are indeed much more than what we eat, but what we eat can nevertheless help us to be much more than what we are.”

~ Adelle Davis

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Abstract For the Final Thesis

12, December 2013

This paper is about fast food and how it has evolved from the 1950s until today. The paper discusses the history of fast food, the theology behind the menus, the economic boom in the fast food industry, scandalous events in fast food and fast food today, and where fast food may possibly be going. These topics were so important for me to discuss only because food is such an ideal part of our lives. It is so important to understand such an important topic as fast food due to the fast that it has become part of our society in so many ways.