

In Defense of Food

by Michael Pollan

Eat food, Not too Much, Mostly plants. This is the “eater’s manifesto” that Michael Pollan covers in his book *In Defense of Food*. What we eat has become very complicated. There is no other mammal that seeks professional help in deciding what it should eat. The culture of food is now changing more than once in a generation.

What is driving the change in the American diet?

The thirty-two-billion dollar food-marketing industry thrives on change and it has made an impact on how we buy food. Also, scientists within the nutrition science field either give us new knowledge about diet and health or simply change their minds when they discover that their past preaching was flawed. To top it all off we have the food manufacturers who stand to make lots of money on our buying choices.

In his book, Pollan covers the changes in history that have influenced our diet choices and habits. This meticulously researched book is Pollan’s way of taking a stand for food and defending against nutrition science and the food industry by helping us become more aware of the tactics that are influencing what we put into our mouths. Pollan states, “We are becoming a nation of orthorexics: people with an unhealthy obsession with healthy eating.” He points out the needless complications that these organizations have fostered.

The subject of the first part of the book is “The Age of Nutritionism.” This covers the story of how the most basic questions about what to eat have gotten so complicated. The second part of the book discusses the changes in the western diet and how chronic diseases can be traced back to the industrialization of our food. The third and last section of *In Defense of Food* proposes a couple dozen personal “rules” of eating that are conducive not only to better health, but also to greater pleasure in eating. Most of these suggestions are strategies for escaping the Western diet.

“By gaining a firmer grasp on the nature of the Western diet--trying to understand it not only physiologically but also historically and ecologically--we can begin to develop a different way of thinking about food that might point a path out of our predicament.” This **must read book** “...is an eater’s manifesto, an invitation to join the movement that is renovating our food system in the name of health.”

