

Garbology

By Lorraine Barber

Our trash tells the story of human existence on planet Earth. When I look in my stainless-steel trash can at the end of my granite kitchen island, I see what my day consisted of, an empty box of hair coloring, a beer bottle from last night, moldy ham, and a can of sparkling water. Garbology is the study of society by analyzing the trash it produces.

I failed to mention the crumpled candy wrapper of Trader Joe's dark chocolate. The taste of chocolate improves with secrecy. I confess I am ruining my health by eating candy and processed foods. If you dig through the trash of an average American, you will discover sugar as a primary ingredient in the food consumed. (Manufacturers add salt and preservatives for longer shelf life for food products.) It takes a lot of willpower not to eat food made with processed sugar or carbohydrates. Dieticians warn about the dangers of overeating sugar and carbohydrates, which are known to be addictive. The health consequences of eating substantial amounts of sugar and carbohydrates are increasing in our society. Doctors warn of an increase in obesity, diabetes, and heart attacks.

Several of my family members suffer from adult diabetes from consuming too much sugar and carbohydrates. My sister-in-law, who is in her mid-sixties, recently suffered a stroke from diabetes. She appeared healthy and lived a vibrant life but never monitored her diet, which was high in sugar, fat, salt, and carbohydrates. Today, she is recovering from a stroke and lost the mobility of her right arm.

My next-door neighbor stopped by to drop off some plants. He reminds me of an old Hippie who never grew past the 60's Era. He was adamant about telling me he is a vegetarian and takes care of himself. I was impressed that he had taken the initiative to be healthy. Later that evening, I took my trash can to the street corner. His trash can was sitting beside the road, ready for the trash service in the morning. I opened the lid of his trash can to look inside. There were a dozen empty boxes of TV dinners and old

containers of ice cream—an example of what my neighbor eats. Take a moment and peek into your neighbor's garbage can to see what they eat (or maybe not).

We can learn what not to eat and change the American diet by eliminating anything white or processed. Taking the initiative to eat healthier is a lifestyle change. Americans need to shift their eating habits to more natural, unrefined foods. To start a new routine takes 21 days; start by making one small change every day. Beginning a healthier practice takes time but is worth the effort. Start your healthier life today!

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