



Diet And New Identity

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NEW IDENTITY

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Two aspects of the human relationship to food are stressed: the omnivorous nature of man and its multiple implications, and the process of incorporation and its associated representations. It is argued that omnivorousness implies a fundamental ambivalence and that "you are what you eat" not only organically, but in terms of beliefs and representations.

Food is central to our sense of identity. It is also central to individual identity, as any given individual is constructed, biologically, psychologically and socially by the food he/she chooses to incorporate.

A familiar saying that epitomizes the idea of food and identity is, "You are what you eat."

This expression addresses two of the questions considered in the research: What does the food on my plate signify? and How do food practices contribute to personal identity? These questions address the concept of food as a cultural signifier and encompass fields as diverse as literature, anthropology, sociology, and history. Research shows that the relationship between the foods people eat and how others perceive them and how they see themselves is remarkable.



Food is an important aspect of people's life. It is a part of the daily life, daily rituals and social engagement. Besides a way to keeping us alive, we use meals and food as an opportunity for social interaction. Spending time with family at dinner, drinking coffee with a co-worker or drinking with friends, we actually use food as an excuse to interact with others. It is always around. This important aspect of our lives is also expressed by the many options of food that we have nowadays.





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Eating and drinking are universal to all cultures; but, the beliefs and practices surrounding food and drink reflect the particular characteristics of cultures alongside the identities of the people who are part of those cultures.

► Identity Definition ◀

Identity refers to who we think we are, but also to who others think we are. Identities are closely tied to our values, attitudes, beliefs, preferences, behaviors and personality characteristics that distinguish us from others around us. However, none of us are unique in our values, beliefs or our characteristics, and our identities often reflect those of others. Our identities are inevitably shaped by the people we interact with, the environments in which we live, and the cultures that we encounter. Therefore, to best understand how identities emerge, it is important to consider the social and cultural contexts in which people live.



According to Barthes food is considered to be multidimensional, as something that shapes us, our identities, and our cultures and in the end, our society.

One study discusses the relationship of food to identity formation, arguing that it combines 2 different dimensions, 1 of which runs from the biological to the cultural (i.e., the nutritional function to the symbolic function), while the other links the individual to the collective (i.e., the psychological to the social).

Food is seen more than just a means of survival.