What the Health a documentary about the effects that diet has on health. It looks into the effects of industry, politics, pharmaceutical, and health organizations role in the health crisis that we are facing in the world today. He starts out by talking about his family history of diseases like cancer and heart disease and starts to research some of the causes of these diseases and links it to the diet.

The producers are Kip Anderson and Keegan Kuhn. From everything that I have researched neither of them have any kind of nutritional background or any background in health other than, What Kip says in the beginning of the documentary, “whatever I read on on WebM.D.”. The two also produced a documentary call “Cowspiracy” that was also a documentary with a really heavy leaning bias towards vegetarianism/veganism, so right out of the gate it makes me that there will also be a lot of bias in this documentary as well.

One idea that the documentary is saying that differs from our textbooks is that there is no way for carbohydrates to be stored as fat inside the body and that they are either stored as glycogen in the liver and in the muscles or that it is just burned as calories. Which is a super ridiculous idea because you have a very limited amount of storage capacity for glycogen in both the muscles and the liver so once you reach that capacity in both places you will store it as the one thing that your body has a limitless storage potential for WHICH IS FAT. Excess calories will be stored as fat no matter what macromolecule it is coming from.
They are also pushing a very skewed version of how Type 2 Diabetes is caused that is
different than the textbook as well. They are saying that it is caused from a buildup of fat
around cells that doesn’t allow insulin to transport glucose into cells when really that isn’t the
correct physiology behind Type 2 Diabetes. When you constantly are eating carbohydrates it
raises your blood glucose levels telling your pancreas to secrete insulin and transport the
glucose from your blood into the cells. If you aren’t very active (like most people with Type 2
diabetes aren’t) your cells don’t have any need for this extreme amount of glucose that you are
constantly giving them and when this continues for years and years your body finally says
enough is enough and it down regulates the amount of insulin receptors that are present on
cells. After years of this your Pancreatic Beta cells will stop producing insulin at all and that is
where the issue comes from.

They are also claiming that dementia comes from bacteria on meat that then gets into
the brain and damages the blood vessels in the brain and while I don’t know a ton about this
but the Blood Brain Barrier is extremely selective and if it is allowing foreign bacteria into the
brain then I would believe there is something a lot more serious going wrong with your body
than eating meat.

The documentary is only a year old so it is still relevant and not necessarily outdated but
I believe that this documentary is extremely biased and doesn’t do a good job at all of correctly
portraying their “facts”. They leave out a lot of information that seems very suspect to me. One
being calling the receptionists for companies like the American Heart Association and asking a
very specific question then going “he couldn’t answer my question”. He does this multiple times
like it is proving some point. Well no shit they can’t answer your question that’s not that’s not a
part of their job. The receptionist shouldn’t be expected to know that, his job is to pass you onto someone who does know the answer. And if you notice he never says “they never got back to me” or ever talks about what answers he receives from the people that are fit to be giving those answers which also seems very shady. I believe this documentary is super biased and is used to manipulate facts and studies to push a vegetarian/vegan agenda, specifically to people who don’t have an understanding of anatomy, physiology or cell biology. On the other hand, I do think they make a good point on a few issues. They point out the problems with factory farming, the politics that go into research and the way these associations take money from private corporations, and the fact that the pharmaceutical companies can also benefit from the health problems that are caused by poor diet.

So while I don’t like a lot of the dietary recommendations they are making and disagree with the fact that meat and other animal products cause cancer and other diseases I do believe they show some of the dirt that goes on behind the scenes in health.

Reflection

I have taken a lot of courses at SLCC that helped me a lot with this class. There are a lot of similar ideas being talked about in this class as we talked about in some of my anatomy, physiology, and cell biology, they just take a different view point on the topics. Like in this class we look a lot at how nutrient deficiencies effect the body where as in my physiology class deficiencies are more of a side note and we focus more on how the body functions normally.
I feel like before this class I had a pretty good view of nutrition and the idea of a well-rounded diet that isn’t cutting anything out but limits certain things that aren’t as good for you as other things but this class gives you a really good depth in the nutrients that you actually need, where to find them naturally and what role they actually play in your body. While I feel like I had a good general understanding but lacked the depth of why certain vitamins and minerals are important and what foods contain them. This was really clarified for me by doing the micronutrient chart. I feel like that did a really good job at making me learn the information by looking it up and having to write it all down. It teaches you about the micronutrients that are needed, how much of them you need, what foods you can get them from, and the symptoms of deficiency and toxicity.