

Consequences of Belonging to the "Clean Plate Club"

How does encouraging a child to "clean" his or her plate influence their eating behavior away from home?

Our studies at preschools show children coming from "clean your plate" families display less self-control - they ate 35% more fruit loops - when given food options away from home, where parental controls do not exist. These findings suggest the importance of guiding, but not forcing, food decisions of children. An alternative approach to consider would be to provide moderate portions and smaller bowls, and to encourage the child to taste all foods at a meal and then determine whether they want additional servings (Forthcoming in *Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine*).



Mike Huckabee Visits the Lab!

On April 15th, former Arkansas Governor, Presidential candidate, and long-time friend, Mike Huckabee, paid a special visit to our lab! An ultimate healthy lifestyle advocate, Huckabee shares our interest in fostering a happier, healthier America. In 2005, Huckabee teamed up with our own Dr. Brian Wansink to write "De-Marketing Obesity," a paper in which they present "win-win" ways the food industry can help focus "de-market obesity" and market a healthier diet (in *California Management Review*, 2005). We felt honored to have him with us and look forward to future collaborative efforts!



Mike Huckabee and Pam Staub during his visit to the Lab.

Eating Behavior and Obesity at Chinese Restaurants

How does BMI influence patrons at All-You-Can-Eat buffets?

Obesity has been linked to a greater prevalence of affordable, easily accessible, and large portions food. To investigate whether the eating behaviors of people at all-you-can-eat Chinese buffets differs depending upon their body mass, 22 trained observers in our team recorded the height, weight, gender, age and behavior of 213 patrons in Chinese buffets throughout the United States. Patrons with higher levels of BMI were more likely to be associated with using larger plates vs. smaller plates and seating facing the buffet vs. on the side or the back. Conversely, they were less likely associated with using chopsticks vs. forks, or browsing the buffet before eating vs. serving themselves immediately. Patrons with lower BMIs left more food on their plates and chewed more per bite of food. These findings reinforce the idea that small changes in one's environment may lessen one's tendency to overeat (forthcoming in *Obesity*).



Dr. Wansink Named Member of the Fit 50 List

Our director, Dr. Wansink (who is on leave from Cornell and the Executive Director of the Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion at USDA in Washington DC) is being featured on the first-ever **Fit 50** List by the editors of *FITNESS* magazine. The article recognizes his work on developing the 100-calorie packs back in 1995. The list is created to "recognize the hurdle-jumpers and ground-breakers who have literally changed what matters to women on a daily basis", Dr Wansink is accompanied in this group by "top doctors, lawmakers, athletes, activists and others who affected real change in women's health and fitness this year." The Fit 50 List will appear in the November/December issue of *FITNESS* magazine.



Mindless Eating: The 200 Daily Food Decisions We Overlook

How aware are we of the food related decisions we make?

Not much if at all! In a recent study we found that people underestimate the number of food related decisions they make on a daily basis by an average of more than 221 decisions! On another related study we enlisted 379 individuals half of whom (192) were given "larger size packages, bowls and plates." On average, 73% of those who got the "larger size" containers thought they ate as much as they normally would, when in actuality, they ate 31% more than individuals eating from regular sized packages, plates and bowls. When asked why, only 4% believed it was due to the environmental cue - larger size containers (in *Environment and Behavior*, 2007).



Check out our Website!

www.MindlessEating.org

The screenshot shows the website's navigation menu with links to: THE BOOK, STORE, NATIONAL MINDLESS EATING CHALLENGE, CORPORATE TRAINING, CERTIFIED FACILITATORS, FORUMS, AUTHORS' BLOG, BEHIND-THE-SCENES, ABOUT AUTHOR/US, TEACHING TOOLBOX, and THE 'FREAKONOMICS' OF FOOD. It also features a 'Click Here to Check Your Mindless Eating Meter' button and a 'The Republic' logo.

First Year of RWJF grant completed

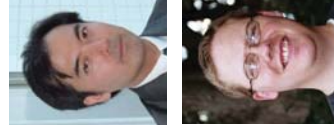
We have successfully completed the research activities planned for the first year of the project "Changing the Incentives of Daycare Snacks and Meals" funded with a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Over 200 children (3-5 years old) and their families participated in the studies. We are enormously grateful to the Head Start Program of Tompkins County, NY and the Franciska Racker Center in Cortland for their enthusiastic support and collaboration of our project.



Mindless Eating is a Game

Cell phones are one of the best ways to access today's pre and early teen populations. We have teamed up with the Human Computer Interaction group at Cornell to deliver our Mindless Eating tips in a game format to youth aged 12-14 years via their cell phones. Titled "Mindless Eating Challenge: Persuasive Mechanisms in Mobile Health Games", this 2-year project has just received funding from the Health Games Research Program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Welcome to Mitsuru – Farewell to Collin!



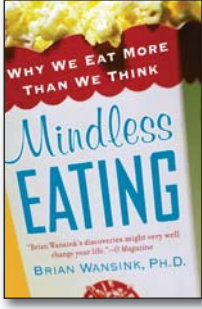
Dr. Mitsuru Shimizu has joined our group as a postdoctoral associate. He just completed his PhD program in Social Psychology at SUNY Buffalo where his research has been focused on how our social cognition and motivation influence our health. We are very excited to have him on board!

Dr. Collin Payne, who joined us as a postdoctoral associate in June of 2005 has accepted a position as a Marketing Professor at the University of New Mexico in Las Cruces. We wish him all the best in his new job!

Stay Tuned for the Small Plate Movement!

Our next mission for the Lab is to ignite the Small Plate Movement among consumers, restaurants, and plate manufacturers. We'll keep you posted, and you can watch the progress at www.SmallPlateMovement.org.

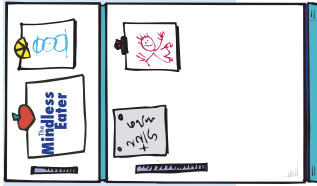
Our Mission: To discover Why, What, When, and How Much People Eat!



Intel Inside:

- Consequences of the "Clean Plate Club"
- 200 Daily Food Decisions We Overlook
- Eating Behavior and Obesity at Chinese Restaurants

Refrigerator Research:
 Tear-out tips for your fridge



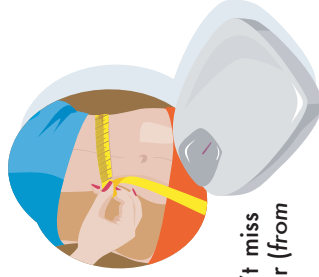
Eat to Your Enjoyment

That first nibble of ice cream: sweet, creamy, mind-altering, indulgence. The bite that comes at the bottom of the carton, after half-an-hour of sitcom re-runs: Eh, kind of like the last, similar to the next. The first two bites of a dessert are truly the most enjoyable part! If you want a dessert, enjoy your two bites and find someone to share the rest with (from *Mindless Eating* p.108).



Your Mind Won't Miss It, But Your Middle Will

Our lab has identified a "mindless margin" of about 100 calories where the body doesn't detect a difference in consumption. Drink one less soda (143 cal), use one less tablespoon of butter (97 cal) or one less slice of cheese (113 cal.) each day for one year. Your mind won't miss the calories, but you will be 10-14pounds lighter (from *Mindless Eating* p. 31).



Make Serving Sizes Official

We have found that the grocery shopper of a household, fondly termed the "Nutritional Gatekeeper," makes decisions about breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snacks that influence eating behavior both inside and outside the home. Give your family foods in pre-packed portions, such as a baggie of pretzels, a pre-wrapped 2" brownie square, or a Tupperware container of fresh fruit to designate official serving sizes



For more tips and information visit:
www.MindlessEating.org
 109-111 Warren Hall, Cornell University
 Ithaca, NY 14853-7801; (607) 254-4960 or (607) 254-6302
foodandbrandlab@cornell.edu
FoodPsychology.cornell.edu