

Book review: “The Crazy Makers”

Beginning with the Delaney Clause that was implemented to protect our food supply from potentially harmful ingredients and explaining its demise, Carol Simontacchi removes the wool that has been covering the eyes of the American public with regard to the role the food industry is playing in destroying our brains, and the emotional and mental health of our children. Over the course of 300 pages, Simontacchi’s book *The Crazy Makers* carefully illustrates the effect artificial products have on our brains in every stage of our lives.

In the chapters “Building the Infant Brain,” “Nourishing a Baby’s Brain” and “Feeding Your Child’s Brain,” Simontacchi begins with thorough attention placed on the most critical time of brain development, gestation. She explains how the diets of the mother and growing infant are of fundamental importance to the mental health of the child throughout his or her life. A list of specific nutrients is provided as well as discussion about the role processed foods play during this important brain development stage. Simontacchi reveals the effect breast milk and formulas have on the growing brain. An interesting section on the marketing of infant formulas provides insight as to why they are in widespread use. However, as Simontacchi explains, this widespread use may answer many questions regarding the poor emotional and mental health of our children as they age. Attention also is placed on the additives and pesticides that are found in traditional baby food. Simontacchi discusses dietary allergens and the role they play in the emotional well-being and cognitive function of children.

Adolescence presents parents with unique challenges. Nutrition that was once fully controlled by the parent now falls victim to marketing, school lunches, vending machines, fast-food restaurants and peer pressure. A parent might ask what effect a growing teen’s poor nutritional habits have on his or her mental and emotional health. In the chapter “Feeding the Adolescent Brain,” Simontacchi shows a direct relationship between a teen’s diet and the unruly behavior and emotional roller-coaster ride some teens face.

In the chapter “Feeding the Adult Brain,” special attention is placed on additives in the diet, caffeine and packaged meals. Simontacchi explains why consuming those items are not prudent as we approach our senior years and offers a solution to nourish our brains throughout all the stages of life. She includes a step-by-step guide to implementing changes in eating behaviors and provides recipes for every generation to enjoy.

The Crazy Makers provides individuals with the tools needed to confront and turn their backs on American consumer “foods.” This book is highly recommended for all those interested in obtaining accurate nutritional information on the negative effect such foods have on our mental health throughout all the stages of life.