



# Immersion Health

Oncology | Nutrition | Primary Care

## From Maria's Bookshelf...

I recently read a book by Gyorgy Scrinis called *Nutritionism: The Science and Politics of Dietary Advice*. Scrinis is not a doctor nor a practitioner, but much like Michael Pollan, he lectures on food and nutrition politics, illuminating the "how did we get here?" question that so many of us ask when it comes to eating.

The book is thorough in describing the various paths of policy that have prevailed for the last 60 to 70 years and have so strongly influenced dietary shifts, and for some it may seem like a tedious trek. However, I think the profound take-away is in our understanding that food, and eating, is more than just the sum of its parts. In other words, eating an orange should be about more than just its potential vitamin C content. There is the quality of the orange to take into consideration - the juiciness, purity and texture of the product that brings pleasure to the act of eating it. And the benefits that pleasure brings to the brain which then enhances the body's ability to utilize the nutrients available.

A salient point is that we've moved away from having a "culture" around food - including all the traditions and wisdom that come with that - to following only the "science" of food. The issue is when this science is then used by food marketers to promote certain foods as healthy and good for you when that may be the farthest thing from the truth. Scrinis' book details the policies and politics that ushered in the shift in how we choose what we eat, and challenges us to re-think these choices from the context of knowing how we got here.

Written By Maria Zilka, NTP

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