

---

## How Fast Foods Are Related to Poor Nutrition As Depicted in Morgan Spurlock's Movie *Supersize Me*

In the film, *SuperSize Me*, director, and star of the film Morgan Spurlock, explores the world of fast food to prove that it encourages poor nutrition for its own profit. Spurlock decides to eat McDonald's food for 30 days, 3 meals a day and he must supersize the meal if he was asked. Some ethical reasonings used to discuss the issue in the fast food industry, were virtue ethics, prima facie moral obligations, utilitarianism, and egoism.

The idea of consequentialism, an action being good or bad depending on the intended or actual outcome of the action, was trying to be shown throughout the film, it was shown through the ethical reasoning of egoism. Egoism in this film is shown through the fast food companies, the fast food companies are people who come together and think they don't owe other people any particular help or assistance. So in this case, the fast food companies are just concerned about making money and not about the fact that their food is causing a high rate of obesity in the country. Spurlock shows the conclusion that the fast food industries are making bad moral decisions due to the outcome of obesity.

Consequentialism is also shown through utilitarianism, humans are part of communities so decisions need to take into account their affect on all people affected by them. Spurlock is trying to use his power of being a director to get people together to see how bad fast food industries are. Spurlock shows that the fast food companies do not make morally good decisions because the benefit the company and not the consumers, which is the greater number of people than those who are just working in the company. Spurlock Shows with his month of eating, that not only did he gain a lot of weight, he was also started to lose energy and become depressed, so not only is the company causing obesity but also leading towards depression. This is not trying for the greater number of those affected by the action.

Virtue Ethics is that the key of ethics is the practice of virtue, as opposed to specific universal guidelines. Virtue ethics suggest that all people have goals, like money, family, fame, etc. all trying to get towards overflowing happiness, or Eudaimonia which is what the Greeks call it. It is kind of like Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, where you have goals in life you need to achieve to get to happiness, or as Maslow would call it, self-actualization. Spurlock explores this idea to show that McDonald's is just encouraging their unhealthy food options, just for the profit of their company. McDonald's sees their opportunity for money and fame by offering cheap, convenient food options, but they are a big cause of obesity, and they are only seeing their goals of money and success. McDonald's is trying to reach Eudaimonia, when they should also have the concerns of others in their minds.

In connection to virtue ethics, the prima facie moral obligations discusses the idea that we have multiple duties, such as telling the truth, or defending life, or they have duties to other, like family and customers, and these come into conflict and could sometimes be unable to fully fulfill them all. McDonald's and other fast food industries are not obliging to these duties; they are not defending life because their food can cause obesity, which can lead to heart diseases and cause death. These fast food industries are not concerned about that factor. These companies also are not meeting their moral duties to others, meaning their consumers; they are not

---

concerned about the fact of their food causing these issues. Luckily, after the film released, 6 weeks later, McDonald's discontinued the option to supersize a meal.

Spurlock put himself through 30 days of continuously eating McDonald's, it is probably not expected from McDonald's that people will eat their food for every meal for a long period of time, but some people don't have another option. It took Spurlock over a year to lose the 30 plus pounds he gained from eating McDonald's along with the mental drains he went through. The conclusion he comes to is that these fast food industries are just out to make money and they are using their cheap menus to encourage poor nutrition for their own profit.

eduzaurus.com