

# What's food got to do with it?

## Consider these passages from Roxane Gay's "Hunger."

"If you watch enough daytime television, particularly on "women's networks," you are treated to an endless parade of commercials about weight-loss products and diet foods—means of disciplining the body that will also fatten the coffers of one corporation or another. These commercials drive me crazy. They encourage self-loathing. They tell us, most of us, that we aren't good enough in our bodies as they are."

"I taste the idea of grocery shopping without strangers taking food they disapprove of out of my cart or offering me unsolicited nutrition advice."

"Of course, I cannot help but wonder when basic meals became problems rather than meals, complicated ordeals rather than daily, sustaining rituals. I love food, but it is so difficult to enjoy food. It is so difficult to believe I am allowed to enjoy food. Mostly, food is a constant reminder of my body, my lack of willpower, my biggest flaws."

"I cannot enjoy food around my family, but to be fair, food is not something I can enjoy around most people. To be seen while I am eating feels like being on trial. When we do eat together, my family watches me. Or I feel like they are watching me because I am hyper-self-conscious, because they are concerned. Or, more accurately, my family used to intently watch me eating, monitor me, try to control and fix me. Now, though they have largely resigned themselves to this state of my body, I will forever feel like they are watching me and looking right through me. They still want to help even as they hurt me."