

## Hungry: Avocado Toast, Instagram Influencers, and Our Search for Connection and Meaning

**Eve Turow-Paul**

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Tethered to their smartphones and overwhelmed by news and work, people are looking for what really matters. Eve Turow-Paul's terrific *Hungry* probes these and other aspects of modern life, including how people eat, shop, and commune, using data and expressive details to capture the world as it's seen on our screens and plates.

*Hungry* represents a fascinating convergence of topics, including psychology, food, social media, technology, and business. Its examinations of consumption probe how people find meaning, and how and whether they socialize. It observes trends along generational lines; the lifestyles of millennials and Gen Z are a topic of constant fascination. Maslow's work on human motivation is referenced throughout.

The text is conversational and balances data with stories from around the world. It observes grocery shopping in a groundbreaking Chinese store, where shoppers can scan to read the history of every food. It includes a visit with a beloved internet eating star in Korea—one of many new celebrities among lonely diners who can pay to enjoy her company online. Such examples show how habits are evolving, and how young people still want to indulge, but don't have the same financial opportunities that their elders took for granted.

In a fascinating turn, the text also addresses a decrease in religious observance, musing that organized religious communities have been replaced by communities at the gym or through exercises like vegan speed-dating. This subtopic, which is worthy of deeper exploration, suggests that beliefs and moral codes have changed along with shopping and dining habits.

*Hungry* is an excellent text about people's methods of adapting to modern life; it encompasses psychology, generational identities, and marketing in its considerations of contemporary society.

MEREDITH GRAHL COUNTS (July / August 2020)

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