

“Fast Food Nation”



Author: Eric Schlosser
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Synopsis:

On January 16, 1945 the first fast food restaurant opened in California. 60 years later, the American fast food industry has grown into a worldwide colossus, changing what we eat more in the last forty years than has changed in the last forty thousand, but not for the better.

But behind this “rags to riches” story is another story of greed, corruption and gross apathy by the fast food industry toward both the American worker and consumer. Eric Schlosser gives us an exhaustively researched book that will equally amaze and anger all who read it.

Strengths:

1. The research into this book is truly second to none and we get a vivid picture of the “behind the scenes” actions of the fast food industry:
 - Their continued opposition to increasing the minimum wage (p. 73)
 - The violent atmosphere at fast food restaurants (where more restaurant workers are murdered each year on the job than police officers – p. 83)
 - Their unfair treatment of farmers (for every \$1.50 spent on a large order of fries in a restaurant, 2 cents goes to the farmer who grew the potatoes – p. 117)
 - The continued work by the industry, mostly through the Republican Party (pp. 206, 210, 214) on keeping safety and sanitation inspections to a minimum, endangering workers and putting their lives in danger (p. 185)
 - The work of the meatpacking industry to continually block microbial testing in the federal meat inspection program (p. 205)
2. The unbelievably lenient rules for the meatpacking industry. Today, the U.S. government can demand the nationwide recall of defective softball bats, sneakers, stuffed animals, and foam-rubber today. But it cannot order a meatpacking company to remove contaminated, potentially lethal ground beef from fast food kitchens and supermarket shelves (p. 196).

Weaknesses:

No fault can be found with a book as exhaustively researched as this one, providing information with nothing but the welfare of every hard-working American in mind.

Overall Impression:

Along with *The Fluoride Deception* and *The Truth About Drug Companies*, another book that ranks tremendously high on the shock, anger and disgust scale.

This book is more than just a call to stop eating fast food because of the health risks. It’s a call to stop the greed, corruption and apathy that is destroying the country and perpetuating the growing chasm between the “haves” and the “have-nots” in the United States.