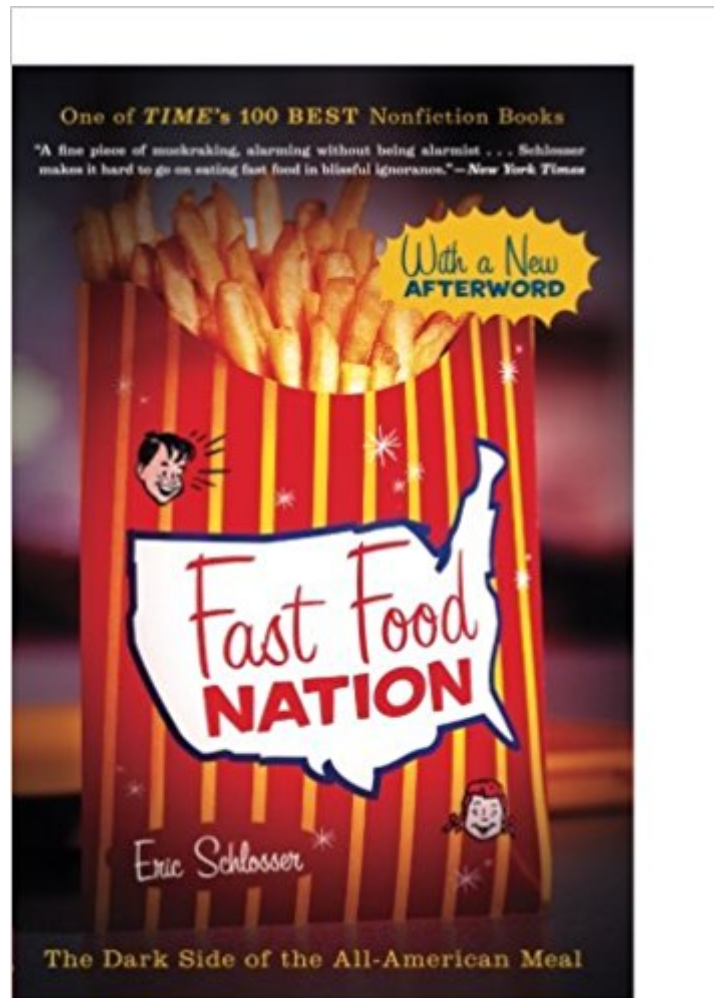




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# Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side Of The All-American Meal



## Synopsis

New York Times Bestseller “Schlosser has a flair for dazzling scene-setting and an arsenal of startling facts . . . Fast Food Nation points the way but, to resurrect an old fast food slogan, the choice is yours.” •Los Angeles Times In 2001, Fast Food Nation was published to critical acclaim and became an international bestseller. Eric Schlosser’s exposé revealed how the fast food industry has altered the landscape of America, widened the gap between rich and poor, fueled an epidemic of obesity, and transformed food production throughout the world. The book changed the way millions of people think about what they eat and helped to launch today’s food movement. In a new afterword for this edition, Schlosser discusses the growing interest in local and organic food, the continued exploitation of poor workers by the food industry, and the need to ensure that every American has access to good, healthy, affordable food. Fast Food Nation is as relevant today as it was a decade ago. The book inspires readers to look beneath the surface of our food system, consider its impact on society and, most of all, think for themselves. “As disturbing as it is irresistible . . . Exhaustively researched, frighteningly convincing . . . channeling the spirits of Upton Sinclair and Rachel Carson.” •San Francisco Chronicle “Schlosser shows how the fast food industry conquered both appetite and landscape.” •The New Yorker Eric Schlosser is a contributing editor for the Atlantic and the author of Fast Food Nation, Reefer Madness, and Chew on This (with Charles Wilson).

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

On any given day, one out of four Americans opts for a quick and cheap meal at a fast-food restaurant, without giving either its speed or its thriftiness a second thought. Fast food is so ubiquitous that it now seems as American, and harmless, as apple pie. But the industry's drive for consolidation, homogenization, and speed has radically transformed America's diet, landscape, economy, and workforce, often in insidiously destructive ways. Eric Schlosser, an award-winning journalist, opens his ambitious and ultimately devastating exposé with an introduction to the iconoclasts and high school dropouts, such as Harlan Sanders and the McDonald brothers, who first applied the principles of a factory assembly line to a commercial kitchen. Quickly, however, he moves behind the counter with the overworked and underpaid teenage workers, onto the factory farms where the potatoes and beef are grown, and into the slaughterhouses run by giant meatpacking corporations. Schlosser wants you to know why those French fries taste so good (with a visit to the world's largest flavor company) and "what really lurks between those sesame-seed buns." Eater beware: forget your concerns about cholesterol, there is--literally--feces in your meat. Schlosser's investigation reaches its frightening peak in the meatpacking plants as he reveals the almost complete lack of federal oversight of a seemingly lawless industry. His searing portrayal of the industry is disturbingly similar to Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle*, written in 1906: nightmare working conditions, union busting, and unsanitary practices that introduce *E. coli* and other pathogens into restaurants, public schools, and homes. Almost as disturbing is his description of how the industry "both feeds and feeds off the young," insinuating itself into all aspects of children's lives, even the pages of their school books, while leaving them prone to obesity and disease. Fortunately, Schlosser offers some eminently practical remedies. "Eating in the United States should no longer be a form of high-risk behavior," he writes. Where to begin? Ask yourself, is the true cost of having it "your way" really worth it? --Lesley Reed --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Schlosser's incisive history of the development of American fast food indicts the industry for some shocking crimes against humanity, including systematically destroying the American diet and landscape, and undermining our values and our economy. The first part of the book details the postwar ascendance of fast food from Southern California, assessing the impact on people in the West in general. The second half looks at the product itself: where it is manufactured (in a handful of enormous factories), what goes into it (chemicals, feces) and who is responsible (monopolistic corporate executives). In harrowing detail, the book explains the process of beef slaughter and confirms almost every urban myth about what in fact "lurks between those sesame seed buns."

Given the estimate that the typical American eats three hamburgers and four orders of french fries each week, and one in eight will work for McDonald's in the course of their lives, few are exempt from the insidious impact of fast food. Throughout, Schlosser fires these and a dozen other hair-raising statistical bullets into the heart of the matter. While cataloguing assorted evils with the tenacity and sharp eye of the best investigative journalist, he uncovers a cynical, dismissive attitude to food safety in the fast food industry and widespread circumvention of the government's efforts at regulation enacted after Upton Sinclair's similarly scathing novel exposed the meat-packing industry 100 years ago. By systematically dismantling the industry's various aspects, Schlosser establishes a seminal argument for true wrongs at the core of modern America. (Jan.) Forecast: This book will find a healthy, young audience; it's notable that the Rolling Stone article on which this book was based generated more reader mail than any other piece the magazine ran in the 1990s. Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

The reason I chose this book because it uncovers the horrors behind fast food besides the obvious health implications fast food has on people. I also chose it because it can relate to health class. I can talk my students about how easy it is for E-coli to develop and spread. All it takes is one time of not cleaning you knives or cutting board to get it. I can also talk to them about the importance of finding foods that are home grown by a farmer and doesn't have any pesticides in it. Fresh meat, vegetables and fruits are healthier than processed food. This book relates so well with health implications because if other countries are gaining weight because of our fast food than fast food is the problem. We should try to stay away from it as much as possible if we want to live long and healthy lives.

Fast food nation took an in depth look at the fast food culture that has been on the rise over the last 5-10 years. Unlike most books on fast food restaurants in the United States, Eric Schlosser focus his attention on the behind the scenes look at fast food. Schlosser brings up a valid argument about the trap business that fast food restaurants create. These restaurants are lead by business men and women who are willing to sell anything as long as they are profiting off of it. They are hiring young kids, teenagers, and illegal immigrants who are desperate for money. They operate their employees as disposable assets, making the job easy to find, yet hard to maintain. These major fast food companies, like McDonalds and many more are all utilizing this method of business. They are taking advantage of the people who mostly wouldn't have a job

anywhere else because they are either too young or unqualified. Schlosser referred to the fast food employees as the “batteries of the restaurant” because they are used to produce high quantities of low quality products and disposed when they are no longer needed. I thought this was an interesting point that Schlosser made. Another point that Schlosser touched on was the quality of food that is being served in the fast food restaurants. Majority of the meat served in fast food restaurants come from slaughterhouses around the nation. Some of the slaughterhouses provide meat nationwide. When slaughterhouses only income is from fast food chains, they are more willing to mass produce meats and process them to increase their profits. The fast food giants want the biggest profit possible, therefore, the cheaper the supplies, the greater the income. This is another example of how fast food giants are taking advantage of people with no other option for work. Throughout this book, Schlosser does not bash the businessmen behind the fast food nation. Instead, he paints a clear picture as to why fast food has become such a power house today. It is offering jobs for those who have nowhere else to go, it is cheap and affordable, quick service, and there are large profits that come with mass processed food. Unlike other books or articles that point at fast food as the number one cause for obesity, Schlosser goes behind the scenes and explains why fast food is such a growing industry. He also points out the target market for these restaurants being the youth. There are so many people to blame for this epidemic and Schlosser did a fantastic job dissecting each level of the industry to make us better understand why it has become so popular and why it will keep growing.

Garbage is garbage. People don't go to MacDonald's in search of nutrition. They do, however, expect their food to be devoid of feces and bacteria and viruses and human body parts--it's not asking much. Fast Food Nation is a much-needed update to The Jungle. Schlosser documents his book nearly every step of the way, and the times when he appears to stray, one senses that he's not far off. I won't quote any of the extraordinary facts from the book. Please read it for yourself. In the first part of the book, you'll get to know the history of the fast food industry as well as the commercialization of the United States in general. Then, you'll find out how the food you most often eat is made, processed, and grown. The book should anger and frustrate you and compel you to write to your local and state congressional members. One complaint I have about the book concerns its distractedness. In extended efforts to tie seemingly unrelated ideas--for example, the complex relationship between General Motors, fast food, California, and the interstate and highway systems--Schlosser sometimes leaves his ideas for far too long and returns to them out of breath and laboring to rally the point. All in all, there's no reason why I should not recommend this book. It's

the truth about Happy Meals and most of the food that people in this country consume.

It doesn't matter what your diet is, you should still know how food stuff gets made in America. I have intentionally not eaten hamburgers or hot dogs made outside of the home before this book and don't intend to have anything with ground beef that I haven't ground up myself. This book wasn't as graphic as I expected (yes, I am disappointed.) I have heard stories about cereal factories and tomato sauce plants so I know that basically rats are everywhere and UNWRAPPED on The Food Network won't be showing you that stuff. I didn't really zip through it and the writing style didn't charm me so my recommendation is about the information - if you know all about meat processing in America and already are turned off and wary, then you do not need to spend money on this book. I recommend this book because everyone needs to know but I thought this book would have been better with more details. The best thing I got out of this book was the Lasater Grassfed Beef recommendation.

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