

Student Essay on Why I Considered Being a Vegetarian

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Essay

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"The sheer brutality of his death was horrifying.(200)" She was admitted to the hospital on Christmas Eve, suffered terrible pain, had three heart attacks, and died in her mother's arms on December 28, 1992. She was six years old (198-99). The pathogen is now the leading cause of kidney failure among children in the United States (200). In the USDA study 78.6 percent of the ground beef contained microbes that are spread primarily by fecal matter. There is shit in the meat (197). As an American citizen I was outraged when I read this, the greed of American corporations and the lack of government concern is costing the lives of our children. Freedom stops when it infringes upon the rights of other citizens. When the corporations sell tainted meat and have no concern for the quality of what it sells and American children die as a result, their freedom needs to be regulated.

Our government is meant to protect the people and instead it is being bought by the people who are harming American citizens, the meatpacking industry and the fast food industry. Both have been major financial supporters of the Republican right wing. Among the top twenty-five House recipients of restaurant industry funds, only four were Democrats (210). This is outrageous, and must be stopped. How can we let our children suffer for nothing more than politics. This must end before they reach a level of power that cannot be stopped. Not only are the government standards for meat and policies on recalling the meat unacceptable, the way they are feeding our children is appalling.

The worst meat produced by the meatpacking companies is bought by the USDA and distributed to school cafeterias throughout the country (218). An eleven-year-old boy became seriously ill in April of 1998 after eating a hamburger at his elementary school. After the meat was tested it confirmed the presence of E. coli 0157:H7. The plant where the government purchased it was later said to produce meat, "unfit for human consumption (219). Our government is hurting our children so the politicians can profit from campaign donations. We, as American citizens, need to make a change. We need to press our government officials to regulate the meatpacking companies and we need to hold them responsible for what they are feeding to our children.