Outside the Wrapper and In Between the Bun: The Whole Truth About Fast Food

California Adolescent Nutrition and Fitness Program, 2002
Fast Food Quiz: True or False?

1. KFC no longer uses the word “chicken” because they serve meat from genetically engineered animals that cannot legally be called chickens.

2. The taste of McDonalds French fries is a chemically manufactured flavor.

3. Between four to five fast food workers are murdered on the job each month.

4. McDonald’s is the largest purchaser of cow eyeballs.

5. A high school student was suspended for wearing a Pepsi shirt instead of a Coke one.

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Frankenfood?

#1 is FALSE...

But #2 is TRUE!

KFC changed its name to sound less unhealthy, better describe its varied menu, and call itself by a trendy, shortened name.

However, a billion dollar flavor industry develops the tastes and smells of many processed fast foods. The taste of fast food is designed to have a flavor that consumers, particularly children, learn to recognize and desire.
Impact of Industrialization

The fast food industry demands specific types of potatoes, chicken, and cattle to produce uniform French fries, nuggets, and burgers. Advances in agricultural technology → fewer farmers. Consolidation of cattle industry → fewer ranchers. These changes have also increased the spread of disease.
Murder at McDonald’s?

#3 is TRUE.

The growth in workplace violence has coincided with the fast food industry’s expansion.

More restaurant workers than police officers are murdered on the job.

And it is the industry most frequently robbed by its own employees.
Exploited Employees

Workforce of adolescents and low-skilled workers:

- 80% are part-time
- 300% annual staff turnover
- Low wages, no overtime pay
- Unions difficult to organize
- Industry lobbies to keep minimum wage low and fight OSHA regulations

While it can be a positive and enjoyable experience for teenagers to work part-time, fast food jobs usually have a negative impact on their education because they are often too tired to study or drop out entirely.
Eating Eyeballs?

#4 is FALSE.

Although McDonald’s is the largest purchaser of BEEF, and technically the largest user of cows, it does not use cow parts such as eyeballs as meat filler.
Slaughterhouse Slaves

Most dangerous job in US:

• About 43,000 (1/3) report injuries

• Pressure to maximize profits → workers forced to work too fast, yet discouraged from reporting injuries

• Industry fights paying worker’s comp, OSHA and USDA

• Higher contamination because of production speeds

Workforce is composed of low-income immigrants in communities plagued by poverty, drug use, and crime.
Punished for Pepsi?

#5 is also TRUE!

A student at Greenbrier High School in Georgia wore a Pepsi t-shirt on Coke in Education Day.

By doing so, he ruined a panoramic photo of the students spelling out “Coke” in red and white attire.

He was suspended one day for his defiant act.
Marketing Masters

Strategies to instill “cradle to grave” brand loyalty:

• Spend $3 billion each year on TV ads
• Playgrounds, children’s clubs, promotional toys
• Alliances with Hollywood studios, sports leagues, and even Disneyland

The junk food industry recently began filling the financial voids of US school districts by providing teaching materials and a never-ending supply of fast food to a captive, young market.
BIG PIMPIN':

How Junk Food Marketing Makes You “Spend the Cheese”

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Test the Junk Food Industry’s P.Q. (Pimp Quotient)!

1) Shaquille O’Neal advertises for:
   a. which fast food chain?
   b. which food product?

2) Eddie the ________ is a spokesperson for __________.

3) “Yo quiero __________________.”

4) Who says, “We love to see you smile”?

5) Who says, “If it doesn’t get all over the place, it doesn’t belong in your face”?

6) Who says, “Think outside the bun”?

7) “Leggo my ________!”

8) “Silly Rabbit… ________ are for kids!”

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Big Pimpin’ (v.)


Actual Meaning As Used: Obtaining money, success, and/or pleasure from the misfortune or exploitation of others.

...You may be happy if you’re the one that’s pimpin’, but what if you’re the one that’s bein’ pimped?
How much does the food industry spend on marketing?

$10,000,000,000!*

They believe that kids are stupid and impressionable. It’s called the “cradle-to-grave” approach: catch them young and make them loyal to your brand and product, all the way to the grave! Well if you eat junk food as much as the advertisers want you to, that grave isn’t too far off!

*Compare to funding for 5-A-Day Fruit & Vegetable Campaign: just $2,000,000!
Lights, Camera, Action!

Burgers don’t look as good in real life as they do on camera; that’s because they use vaseline to make them look all juicy! (Source: http://www.zillions.org/)
I Scream, You Scream, We All Scream for...

Crisco?
Promotions

The most common gimmicks advertisers use are premiums (like “free” toys with your Happy Meal), sweepstakes (entering a contest to win a prize), and kids’ clubs.

** GREASE-LOVIN’ KIDS CLUB SPECIAL **

Join Joey, Jamal, and Juanita in the adventures of grease consumption and get a FREE useless toy today!

Now that’s wack!
Burger King’s Got Game...?

Cyber-pimpin’ at its worst
Aww...

Deconstruct This

Common Ground.

Their interests may not always be the same, but their taste is identical: Sweet, crunchy **Kellogg's** Frosted Flakes® cereal. The all-time, all-family favorite.

*They're Gr-r-reat!*
Notice a Trend?

"So when can he have a Happy Meal?"

She’s ready to teach her little brother all about happiness! The McDonald’s Hamburger Happy Meal for just $1.99 each, give kids the food they love at a price you’ll love. And they get a toy with that!

did somebody say McDonald’s?

Prices and participation may vary. Ask about a special Funie-Pep toddler toy for kids under 3.

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www.mcdonalds.com

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What’s In It for Them?

“BLING-BLING!”

That’s right, these companies are just out there to Hustle! Peep the salaries these CEOs made while ripping you off and paying teenagers minimum wage:

McDonald’s: $1.27 mil + $1.26 mil bonus
Burger King: $500K + $1 mil bonus

Just think- with that kind of money, why don’t they use marketing to promote healthy behaviors?
What’s In It For You?

Studies have shown that kids respond to the onslaught of junk food ads by eating it more frequently, and in larger quantities. About 13% of kids and teens in the US are now seriously overweight, which can lead to other complications such as diabetes and heart disease.

The government outlaws the selling of cancer-causing cigarettes to kids...

what about the selling of heart attack-causing foods? They’re straight “Clowning”!

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Don’t be pimped by the freaks of the fast food industry!

Spooed ad from www.adbusters.org

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In Between the Bun:
Things you might not know about your fast food burger.
Home, Home On The Feedlot

Your burger starts out as a cow at a dusty, dirty feedlot (not a green pasture) waiting to be slaughtered.

At the feedlot cows:

- are fed dead pigs, horses, poultry, sawdust, newspaper, liquid fat and protein; and
- they stand and lie in their own poop.

In a nutshell, feedlots are overcrowded and unclean, providing the perfect environment for your burger to be contaminated.
Poor Ol’ Bessie

¼ of the cattle used for ground beef are worn out, retired dairy cattle that are too sick or too old to produce milk.

McDonald’s is known for buying dairy cattle ground beef because it’s cheap.
Knocker, Sticker, Shackler; The Worst Jobs Ever

The Knocker

Shoots a metal bolt between each cow’s eyes, into their brains, making them brain dead.

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The Sticker

Slits each cow’s throat so they bleed to death.
The Shackler

Attaches chains to each cow’s rear legs and hangs them so that they can be transferred from station to station where they are skinned, gutted, butchered, ground and pressed into burger patties.

Then it’s off to your favorite fast food joint!
Got E Coli?

E Coli is a bacteria that can create toxins in your body that make you sick or kill you.

E Coli is found in dirt, poop, stomach content, and 50% of the nation’s feedlot cattle during the summer.
It’s Just Nasty

3 common ways your burger can be contaminated while at the slaughterhouse:

- Cows are smeared and covered in poop and dirt which often gets on the meat

- When cows are gutted, their stomach content splatters everywhere which can contaminate the meat

- Workers don’t always follow the safety guidelines. They use unclean knives, drop meat on the floor, and have been known to pee and poop in areas other than the bathroom.
What You Don’t Know Can Hurt You

At your favorite fast food place there are many things that can happen to your burger that you would never know about but can make you sick:

- your burger not being kept cold enough before being cooked
- your burger not being cooked hot enough to kill-off life threatening bacteria.
- your burger is handled by a worker who didn’t wash their hands
- your burger is dropped on the floor
Don’t Think It Can’t Happen To You

Each year about 1/4 of the total U.S. population get some sort of food-borne illness.

300,000 require hospitalization and 5,000 die.

Common symptoms of food borne illness:
• diarrhea
• stomach cramps
• fever, headache
• vomiting
• being tired

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Have It Your Way Really Means...

😊 You’re eating a burger that contains meat from dozens or even hundreds of different cattle.
😊 These cattle were probably exposed to a variety of bacteria that may still be in your burger.
😊 An underpaid worker might not have cooked your burger to the right temperature to kill off all that bad bacteria.
😊 Your burger could have been dropped on the floor or handled by a worker who didn’t wash his or her hands.
What You Can Do

- Stop buying fast food and junk food, or eat it less often
- Take a cooking class and learn how to make your own delicious snacks from fresh ingredients
- Learn more about the problems of the fast food industry and solutions like farmers’ markets
- Educate friends and family members
For More Info...

Books

*Fast Food Nation* by Eric Schlosser
*Food Politics* by Marion Nestle

Web Sites

[www.canfit.org](http://www.canfit.org)
[www.cspi.org](http://www.cspi.org)
[www.caprojectlean.org](http://www.caprojectlean.org)
[www.childrennow.org](http://www.childrennow.org)