

## Eric Schlosser

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Description Eric Schlosser is an *Atlantic Monthly* correspondent and author of two books, *Fast Food Nation* (2001) and *Reefer Madness* (2003). As a non-fiction writer who longed to create plays and novels, Schlosser's texts are distinguished by their marriage of exhaustive research with evocative, human-centred prose. While *Reefer Madness* is a compelling, meticulously documented analysis of the so-called black market American industries of marijuana, migrant labour, and pornography, Schlosser's reputation as socio-cultural critic (and whistle-blower) rests largely with his earlier, best-selling *Fast Food Nation*. The book exposes the multiple dangers of the junk food industry/culture of North America in order to argue that the policies of fast food marketing, processing, distribution, consumption, and disposal are inseparable from the general homogenization, standardization, and dilution of contemporary Western culture. In *Fast Food Nation*, the reader encounters not just the disturbing facts of food-borne pathogens, grossly unsafe working conditions in meat-packing facilities, and the general corporatization of agriculture, but also the intimate stories of the numerous citizens, workers, and activists directly involved with, and sometimes tragically affected by, these issues. *Fast Food Nation* maintains that — from the teenager forced to work at McDonald's in unsafe conditions and for laughably low pay to the pre-school kids being ballooned on high-fat, high-calorie, low-nutrient food — the current corporate lust for "through-put" is unashamedly dependent on the manipulation and exploitation of youth and the working class. The fast food crisis is not confined to North America. With Western agribusiness firms actively promoting the international trade of processed food products and franchises around the globe, "fast food nation" can easily become "fast food planet." Schlosser's book is thus more than an indictment of globalization, it is also a forceful confrontation of the ideology of excess.