

# Summary response paper



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Marissa Elliott Hamill 05 October A Summary Response Paper to “ The Rich get Thinner, The Poor get Fatter” Sabin explores the relationship between the choice of food and health. He quotes the Center for Disease Control and Prevention figures which indicate that the rate of obesity among southerners is as high as 30% (102) and has only happened recently and notes that this is an interesting development considering that the southern states are poorer than the rest of the USA. He attributes this development to the skyrocketing prices of previously cheap healthy foods in comparison to calorie-rich ones. The reason for this is the apparent elevation of traditionally southern fresh produce to “...the preserve of the elites, available in gourmet-food shops at inflated prices” (103). The result is that the general southern populations eat unhealthy foods in a region that is still much agriculturally productive; large scale production and technology have taken over agriculture and the produce is exported elsewhere since it is now a luxury to the poor southerners. Hence, the rich eat healthy and get thinner while the poor eat unhealthy meals and become obese.

I contend that Sabin raises a critical observation and that mass production of fresh foods for export may be killing the ability of the poor to access these foods forcing them to eat fast foods. I have found it cheaper to visit fast food stores than make a purchase at gourmet eating places which are now the reserve of the high-end markets. I however would argue that the activities of large scale producers should not hinder organic farmers; a policy of not competing with them would be important. If all small scale farmers practiced their traditional production, there would still be enough fresh produce for the local markets.

Summary Response to “ Confessions of a Carnivore”

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Stanley articulates the issue of our uncontrolled consumerism and disregard for the plants and animals and even the earth in our efforts to satisfy our guts. He argues that the production process is concealed from the market to civilize the same form of savagery practiced in the jungle. We really are just as bad as wild animals; "...Man is such a hypocrite: I often watched these documentaries in fascinated horror while casually chomping a chicken breast sandwich on my couch". The production process remains hidden from the consumer with the packaging and marketing concealing the cruel sourcing (112). Stanley argues that it is quite difficult for someone raised on meat to transform into a vegetarian and states that we should mind how we treat the living sources of food to compensate for our dependence on them (115). The ignorance of the consumer on the production process of food as brought out by Stanley is an opinion I find quite insightful. I have never sought any information on the production systems of food and it has never appeared to me that as a consumer I should be at the frontline of seeking more transparency from the producers. These duties are relegated to the concerned authorities and legislation and it does not occur to consumers that they have a right to information. Since most of us would find it difficult to quit an omnivorous diet we ought to ensure that the production process is as humane as possible.

#### Works Cited

Sabin, Warwick. *The Rich get Thinner, the Poor get Fatter*. USA: Oxford American, 2010.

Stanley, Brian J. *Confessions of a Carnivore*. *The North American Review*, 2009.