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English 124 B1: Literary Analysis

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Essay Assignment: Outline

Thesis: The practices and goals of the Beef Export and Trade Syndicate and beef industry as described in Ruth Ozeki's book *My year of meats* and their use of antibiotics and hormones directly influences the drastic changes to the characters physically, sets the tone, and builds up relationships in the book in both their physical and emotional states.

The main characters in this book that undergo the most change are Jane Takagi-Little, and Akiko Ueno. Through the analysis of these characters, I hope to glean the physical, physiological, and emotional changes that occur due to their interaction with the ideals and drugs used by the industry.

I felt that this theme of character development as a result of the influence from the beef industry was interesting to me as I feel that the way that the changes occurred in some of the characters did reflect in me as I was reading the book, and I feel that due to this connection, I can better relate. The importance of the changes highlight the struggle that takes place in-between what we think is safe or not safe to eat. It was interesting to discover how Jane developed and learned so much about the beef industry, specifically relating to her own personal health "it didn'tt take me long to stumble across DES. It was a discovery that ultimately changed my relationship with meats and television. It also changed the course of my life" (Ozeki). When describing the resulting damage of the DES to her uterus, she referred to the ideal one looking like "head of a bull, with the fallopian tubes spreading and curling like noble horns", while as a result of the hormones before birth "[t]he left side of the bulls broad forehead was caved in, less triangular, as though my uterus had been coldcocked" (Ozeki). It is also a interesting the effects that Akiko feels as a result of the consumption of the meat, where it would begin "in her stomach, like an animal alive, and would climb its way back up her gullet, until it burst from the back of her throat" (Ozeki). When she had instead eaten the Australian lamb, she "went to the bathroom and waited, but the animal inside her was quiet" (Ozeki).

I will be focusing on the development of the characters through their physical descriptions, the way

that they interact with their authority figures, and the actions that they are taking.

Works Cited

Ozeki, Ruth. *My year of meats*. New York: Viking, 1998. Print.