

The Dread Tomato Addiction

by Mark Clifton

92.4% of juvenile delinquents have eaten tomatoes.

87.1% of the adult criminals in penitentiaries throughout the United States have eaten tomatoes.

Informers reliably inform that of all known American communists, 92.3% have eaten tomatoes.

84% of all people killed in automobile accidents during the year 2006 had eaten tomatoes.

Those who object to singling out specific groups for statistical proofs require measurement within a total. Of those people born before the year 1850, regardless of race, color, or creed and known to have eaten tomatoes, there has been 100% mortality!

In spite of their dread addiction, a few tomato eaters born between 1920 and 1940 still manage to survive, but the clinical picture is poor -- their bones are brittle, their movements feeble, their skin seamed and wrinkled, their eyesight failing, hair falling, and frequently they have lost all their teeth.

Those born between 1940 and 1970 number somewhat more survivors, but the overt signs of the addiction's dread effects differ not in kind, but only in degree of deterioration.

Prognostication is not hopeful.

Exhaustive experiment shows that when tomatoes are withheld from an addict, invariably his cravings will cause him to turn to substitutes -- such as oranges, or steak and potatoes. If both tomatoes and all substitutes are persistently withheld, death invariably results within a short time!

The skeptic of apocryphal statistics, or the stubborn non-conformist who will not accept the clearly proved conclusions of others, may conduct his own experiment.

Obtain two dozen tomatoes -- they may actually be purchased within a block of some high schools, or discovered growing in a respected neighbors back yard! Crush them to a pulp in exactly the state they would have if introduced into the stomach, pour the vile juice and pulp into a bowl, and place a goldfish therein. Within minutes the goldfish will be dead!

Those who argue that what affects a goldfish might not apply to a human being may, at their own choice, wish to conduct a direct experiment by fully immersing a live human head into the mixture for a full five minutes...

Note: First published in 1958, in *Analog* magazine, the dates have been adjusted.

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1. What is the author's purpose of this article?

2. What type of persuasion is being used in this article: Ethos, Pathos, Logos or a mix of them? Cite examples.

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3. If a person previously knew nothing about tomatoes, they could be persuaded to believe that tomatoes are bad. What makes this article believable? Cite examples.

[illegible]

