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College Admission Essay

In today's society, people are quick to follow social norms, and going outside of these popular beliefs can be challenging. From the time I was young, I was big on my belief in equality for every living thing, including animals. I've always felt this special connection with animals. [I wanted to be the voice they couldn't have.] I can't think of a time when I didn't feel the need to help them. Animals are so innocent; they don't know what is happening. How they are treated in the food industry is inhumane and heartbreaking. As Gandhi said, "The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated." For these reasons, I am a vegetarian.

Most children love animals. They tend to have animal-themed items and toys. However, I never outgrew that animal-loving stage. Over the years my love for animals has only grown deeper. People are quick to tell me that my being a vegetarian won't change anything, and they like to remind me that the animal is already dead, so eating it won't make a difference. I tell people that while my abstaining will not bring the animal back to life, I hope that in some small way, my actions will help facilitate a discussion and encourage people to think of their food and our shared planet in a new way.

I've always had to deal with people putting me down or making fun of me for being a vegetarian. I've been one since seventh grade, and even though it can be very difficult, I don't plan to change. People can spend their whole life telling me how ridiculous I am being, but I am proud of what I'm doing and am always open to share my story.

While I myself have chosen not to eat meat, I understand why people do. I haven't been a vegetarian my whole life, so I do understand that meat tastes good and that it can be healthy for you. People tend to ask me if they can eat meat in front of me. My answer is always yes. I understand that eating meat is a very normal thing to do, and I wouldn't make someone who doesn't share my belief have to accommodate me. Even at work, I am constantly making food with meat in it, but it doesn't bother me because I understand that people like it. Just because I'm a vegetarian doesn't mean I expect everyone else to be. Where would I get my credibility if I cannot be open and accepting of everyone else?

Being a vegetarian isn't easy. We live in a meat-eating world. It's hard to go to restaurants and having to explain to someone why you cannot eat the food they made. I also happen to be the only vegetarian in my family. While it can be challenging, it is very much worth it. [To most people the animal is just a meal, but to the animal, it's their life.] An animal doesn't have to die for me to live.

Everyone has a different stance on this subject, but that is what's so great about our diverse culture. It makes all of us different and gives people the opportunity to stand up for what they believe in, while learning to respect and appreciate our differences.

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