

Editor's Note

Evan Nickel's profile demonstrates how even an everyday occurrence such as buying lunch can yield unexpected avenues of exploration and analysis. The essay explains how his life and the lives of others have been affected by their ongoing relationships with a person who prepares their food. Consider how you feel when someone carefully prepares food especially for you. Does this essay evoke a similar emotion?

Through this essay, the audience gains a close look at Maggie Keller through her medium: sandwich making. What else do we find out about her? Does the ironic nature of the discussion make the analysis too "lite"? Are readers left wanting more? Do we need more "meat"?

The discussion clearly reflects passion for both the food and the sandwich maker as the author uses language usually associated with love and romance and a title that prepares the audience for a serious topic. What rhetorical effect results from the use of such elevated diction to discuss what is primarily a business transaction? How does tone affect the author's *ethos*? After reading the essay, do you agree with the writer's choice of title?

The Life-Changing Factory

Evan Nickel

I'm standing here in complete excitement. All of my troubles and problems have been forgotten. Everything I have been thinking about for the past five minutes is gone. The only thing that matters to me at this point is when Margret Keller is going to command me to have a great day and hand me a soft cold package over the counter. Then it happens. The parcel, a warm smile, and a comment about how thrilled I look are all given to me from Maggie, the current love of my life. Maggie made my day with the sandwich that she just crafted for me; I feel like the happiest guy on campus right now. Sandwich Factory employees like Maggie are changing lives, like mine, every day.

Maggie Keller is a Sandwich Factory employee who impacts my life much more than anyone else who contributes to the Cal Poly campus. This idea is what eventually left me sitting across a table from her asking about her role as a sandwich maker. Maggie is a student at Cal Poly who originally just needed a job and didn't want to work off campus, so she ended up at the Sandwich Factory. What she found there was a group of amazing people and a job more satisfying than anything she could have imagined. "Sandwich Factory has happy people," Maggie tells me. They blast

out Daft Punk during working hours and have crazy dance parties while making sandwiches. It was this atmosphere that kept Maggie working at the Factory.

Unlike most of the employees of Cal Poly, Sandwich Factory employees actually have souls. This may be surprising, but it's true. These employees are affected by the same array of emotions any normal student can feel, and these emotions are reflected in the sandwiches that they make. For example, if a customer is really friendly, the sandwich that that customer might receive might have a little more meat on it. If the customer is really hungry or having a rough day, that person might just get a "stacked" sandwich as Maggie calls it, as well. One of Maggie's pet peeves when it comes to her job is when people talk on their cell phones while she's trying to make their sandwich. She calls these people "Phone Talkers" and usually makes them average sandwiches. She feels that she can't communicate with them about what they want on their sandwich, they can't have any kind of friendly conversation, and Maggie thinks it's just plain rude. This method of making sandwiches by what the employee feels like was a surprise to me; I always suspected that it happened, but never actually thought I'd find out for sure. It's because of this system that Maggie is able to reach people's emotions through sandwiches.

Maggie told me fantastical stories of Anna and the way that Maggie touched her life. Anna walked into the Sandwich Factory one day without a meal plan as she was recently accepted as an RA and Cal Poly had not processed it yet. Anna was having a bad day and was visibly hungry. Maggie took Anna under her wing and made her the best "two-hummus, every-veggie on a pita" sandwich ever. On her way out, Anna yelled out, "I love you Maggie!" Later that day Anna added Maggie as a friend on Facebook to make it an official friendship. Anna had Maggie make her sandwich every time after that, no exceptions. Maggie remains friends with Anna to this day, and it all started with a sandwich. No doubt that Maggie changed Anna's life, possibly forever.

Maggie states that she makes a lot of people's days with the sandwiches that she makes. Every sandwich that she makes is made intentionally to make someone's day, with the exception of the "Phone Talkers." Maggie says that she is "solving world hunger, one hungry college student at a time." At first this statement sounds illogical and impossible, but on a deeper analysis: everyone has to start somewhere. She really is solving world hunger; she just can't get past the college students because they always keep coming back. The sandwich factory has more impact on people than one might think. Even the employee's lives are changed. Maggie now has a new respect for people in customer service. She now makes an extra effort to be nice to these people and even tip the people that work hard a little more. Maggie has a good day because of work and the people she works with.

Maggie knows that she has made lifelong friends from working at the Sandwich Factory, especially in the case of the “BLT Club guys.” One day these two guys walked in and wanted Maggie to make them a BLT Club sandwich. Maggie, still somewhat new to the Sandwich Factory, didn’t even know what that was. It was on this day that Maggie learned how to make the Club... the wrong way. Instead of doing the normal BLT Club, (which is turkey on one side, bacon, lettuce, and tomato on the other) she put turkey and bacon on both sides of the bread. The guys were so happy with their sandwiches that they came back to her all the time and fought over which one of the guys’ Club she was going to make. Maggie, being the awesome person that she is, would make both of their sandwiches. These two guys still keep in touch with Maggie, and they were all brought together by the power of the Sandwich Factory.

When I asked Maggie if she agrees with the statement that “the way to a man’s heart is through his stomach,” she responded: “Oh yes! I don’t know how you can’t love the person that makes you a sandwich, man or woman.” I find this to be very true: I really do love the people that make food for me. There is a certain bond created between the sandwich maker and the sandwich eater. Maybe it brings us back to the good old days when our moms would make us a sandwich for lunch and all we had to do was tell her what we wanted and she would make it. Maybe subconsciously it makes the customer happy and more talkative, and because of this the sandwich maker is happy.

“A good sandwich stays in memory forever,” says Maggie. It’s because of this effect that the Sandwich Factory changes lives. Whether we know it not, the Sandwich Factory impacts everyone. Employees are happy which transfers to making the students happy, which makes the professors and Cal Poly staff happy. It’s all thanks to the awesome people that work at the Sandwich Factory; Maggie is just one of them. The sandwich maker to Cal Poly student relationship is a special one. I can never really tell what keeps me going back to the Sandwich Factory day after day. It could be the delicious sandwiches that I receive, or the friendly and fun atmosphere, or it could be the experience and knowledge that the building that I am standing in is the source of contented, high spirited Cal Poly students just waiting for the love of their lives to be hand them the package that will change their life, possibly forever.

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