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# SEPTEMBER 2024



# POSITIVELY PRODUCED PUBLICATION

This is the second issue of our publication. It will receive an official title after input from our community including a poll. The magazine is owned and run by the Positively Produced Foundation, a nonprofit working to assist adults with autism achieve full community inclusion, in particular employability.

We hope that through their articles, they can lead more independent and fulfilling lives by connecting to the community as a whole. This connection will include greater understanding of the gifts and talents of said individuals and lead to opportunities within the business community for competitive employment.

The views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the nonprofit or those collectively involved in the publication.

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# A LIST OF THINGS SAID TO/ABOUT ME AS A CHILD

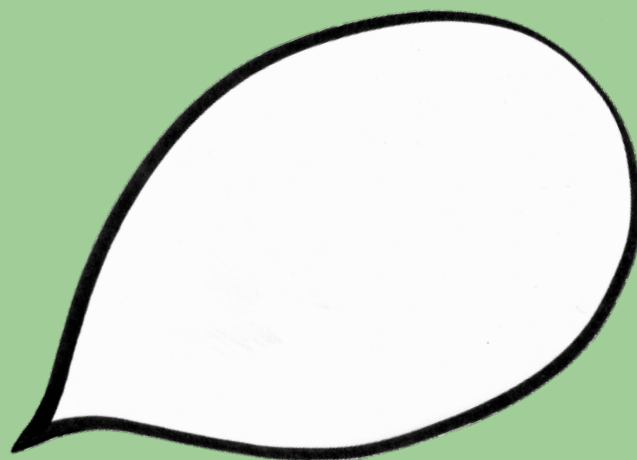
BY KAYLEE Q.

## A list of things said to/about me as a child

“God she’s such a brat.”  
“One day you’ll have a daughter just like you and see how difficult it is.”  
“We can’t play with you because we made an I Hate Kaylee Club.”  
“You’re just annoying.”  
“No one actually likes you we just keep you around because we feel bad.”  
“Maybe if you weren’t so weird there wouldn’t be an issue.”  
“Look at how yellow her teeth are!”  
“Kaylee can’t talk right!”  
“You ruined it for everyone.”  
“How do we get Kaylee to shut up.”  
“Ew your legs are so hairy they look like a man’s.”  
“No one cares.”  
“Why do you have to be like this?”  
“Go away.”  
“You’re so embarrassing.”  
“No one wants you to sit here.”  
“Are you just that stupid?”  
“Your suffering is all for a greater plan.”  
“God what do you want now.”

## A list of things I should've been told as a child

“This isn’t your fault.”  
“There is nothing wrong with you.”  
“You deserve to feel good about yourself.”  
“We support you.”  
“It sounds like that is really exciting to you!”  
“It is okay to make mistakes.”  
“You don’t need to be perfect.”  
“I appreciate you.”  
“I enjoy spending time with you.”  
“You don’t need to go through hardship to prove your worth. You are already who you need to be right now.”  
“I missed you.”  
“Let me explain this to you in a different way.”  
“You are a good person.”

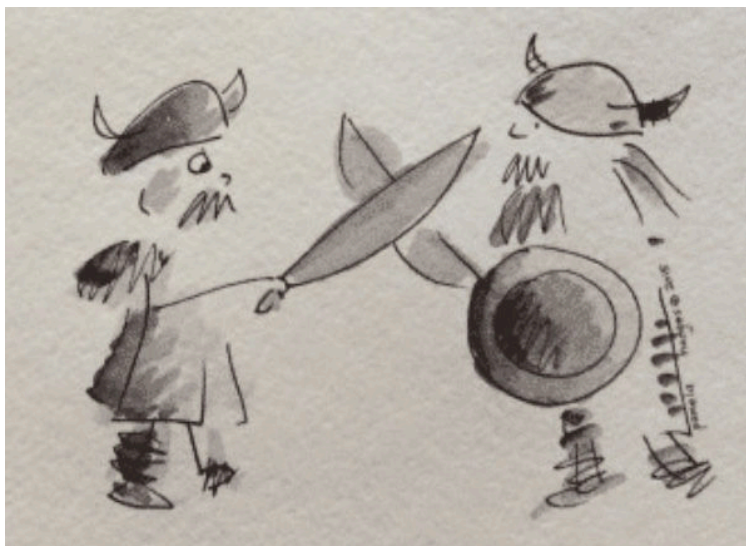


What people don’t realize is that those words you say to kids stick with them. We don’t just forget what you said about us or to us, we grow with it. So, remember that a split second to you could mean a lifetime of pain and insecurity for another. Ω



# HOW TO WRITE A STORY 101: CONFLICT

BY PAMELA F.



**Y**ou desperately want to write a story. You carry a pad of paper with you in case you get an idea. You can't decide if your main character should have short hair or long hair. But for now, put aside what your character looks like and think about what they want.

In this post, we're going to look at how to write a story by focusing on one of the most important elements of any story: conflict.

Every story has to have conflict. A story without conflict is boring. I don't want to read about how someone has it all together.

How do you write a good conflict of a story? What is conflict, anyway? And why do you even need it in your story? You probably hate fighting. So why would you want to write about it?

Please let me explain.

## What is conflict?

Conflict could be when your mother wants you to set the table and you

don't want to. Or conflict could be when you get your neck shaved and they want you to pay fifteen dollars and you only want to pay five dollars because they didn't shave your whole head.

Conflict brings together two opposing forces, the protagonist, one who struggles for, and the antagonist, one who struggles against, and then develops and resolves the struggles between these two forces.

## What do the protagonist and antagonist have to do with conflict?

I always thought the protagonist was the good guy, and the antagonist was the bad guy. But you could have two bad guys who are fighting. However, who is the good guy if, for example, both characters are bank robbers?

The protagonist is the person struggling for something, and the antagonist is struggling against something.

Hint: If you can remember the meaning of the prefix it might help you remember what the two words mean: Pro means in favor of. Anti means against.

## How to write a story: two different models

Good stories settle into two different models: the Accomplishment Story and the Decision Story. Depending on the type of story you're telling, the conflict in your story may look very different.

### 1. Accomplishment story

In an Accomplishment Story, the protagonist is trying to achieve some goal against great opposition. Here's an example of what an Accomplishment Story might look like: Perhaps you are trying to convince your interior designer to let you rip up the carpet in your formal living room and turn it into a painting studio. Your interior designer is the antagonist; they are against your idea.



You are the protagonist struggling to get your painting studio.

(P.S. I ripped up the carpet and made a painting studio.)

## 2. Decision story

In a Decision Story, the protagonist has a choice between two things, two courses of action, two sets of values.

Should the protagonist let her hair grow so she can donate it to make wigs for children with cancer, or should she shave off all of her hair and pay the fifteen dollars the hair salon was demanding when they shaved her neck? That is an example of a Decision Story.

### Four principles of fictional conflict

If you want to know how to write a story that sings, you need to focus on writing better conflict. These four storytelling principles will help.

**1.** Conflict must be of obvious importance to the characters involved. If your conflict is whether or not the protagonist eats green beans or broccoli for dinner, make sure it is obvious why this is important to the character.

**2.** The two opposing forces must be equal in strength. The conflict is developed and there will be suspense until the end. This kind of story drives me nuts (in a good way—mostly). I hate how you can never guess who will win. I want to know! Sometimes . . . well, most of the time . . . okay, all of the time, I peak ahead to see who wins the conflict. Then I go back and slowly finish the book.

**3.** Unity. Everything—conflict, char-

acter, theme, point of view—is functional, and related to the story's basic purpose. The conflict is logical in development.

**4.** Plausibility. Characters act and react to familiar principles of human behavior. The resolution of conflict must adhere to basic facts of existence. The people in your story can't regrow a leg if it gets cut off. (Unless your story's world follows its own rules, in which case you must go back to Principle #3 and make sure there's unity to those rules.)

### How to write a story that breaks the rules

If you want to add conflict that does not follow the principles or models above, don't feel like you have to follow all of the rules. Just because you read something in a "textbook" (or writing blog) doesn't mean it is the only way to write.

Principles are just that, principles. They are not laws. Principles are not the double line in the middle of the highway that you cannot legally cross.

If you break a rule about storytelling you won't go to jail or get a traffic ticket. What could happen? Sure, your story might not make sense, but on the other hand, you may have written a story that is convincing and effective without following the principles.

Writing a story is like making homemade soup: you follow the recipe, do everything you're "supposed" to do, and then add a dash of your own spices and ingredients, and make your story your own.

What will your story taste like when it's finished? Ω



What would you like to name this publication?

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# MICKEY MOUSE: THE RISE OF AN ALL-AMERICAN ICON

BY M. M.

Mickey Mouse may very well have the longest career of any Hollywood star. His career has been cyclical, not an arc. The Mouse may not have the draw he had at his height, but he always remains a star.

Walt was fond of saying, “It was all started by a Mouse”, but that’s not the whole truth. Disney’s empire may have started with Mickey, but Mickey was not the start of Disney’s career in animation. Before Mickey, Walt had found failure in Kansas City with his Laugh-O-Gram studio, and then success in Los Angeles with his live-action/animation hybrid *Alice in Cartoonland*, which featured a real child in an animated world, and, after his distributor told him to do something new, with another series starring the proto-Mickey Oswald *The Lucky Rabbit*. Then, at a meeting in New York with his distributors where he asked for a desperately needed raise, he was reduced to occasionally pawning his car to pay his staff, and they announced that they wouldn’t give him a raise. In fact, they were actually cutting his budget, threatened to hire away his staff, which they were already in the process of doing behind his back, and informed him Oswald was copyrighted in their names. Walt told them to take a hike, and he, his brother Roy, and Ub Iwerks, a friend and the only animator to stay with Walt, struck out on their own again. Walt later claimed he came up with Mickey on the train ride home after that fateful meeting, but David R. Smith, direc-

tor at the Disney archives, said that’s just publicity fodder. The truth is much more mundane.



Roy, Iwerks, and Disney knew they needed to make a replacement for their lost Oswald, so they had a brainstorming session. A cat was considered, but discarded due to a then-contemporary surfeit of animated felines, and what was ultimately agreed upon was a mouse. Mickey’s personality had traits taken from Oswald the Lucky Rabbit, vaudeville performers, Douglas Fairbanks, Charles Lindbergh, and the great silent star Charlie Chaplin. The original name was Mortimer, but Disney’s wife, Lilian, suggested Mickey instead. They decided to do a short riffing on Charles Lindbergh called *Plane Crazy* and completed a second, called *The Gallopin’ Gaucho*, before the first had even been sold. They found no takers for either, however.

What happened before Walt could sell the silent *Plane Crazy* was *The Jazz Singer*. The *Jazz Singer* was the first major talkie motion picture. It changed the world, and no one was sure how to proceed in this brave new world full of sound and fury. Walt seized the day, and Mickey’s third short contained integrated sound. Iwerks animated, Roy managed the money, and Disney provided Mickey’s soon-to-be signature falsetto, although he only spoke in squeaks and yells. *Steamboat Willie* was a hit.

At this point, Mickey, and Walt, were on top of the world. Fritz Lang was apparently a fan, as a Mickey Mouse cardboard cutout was “glimpsed in a pastry shop in Fritz Lang’s proto-noir masterpiece, *M*.” He is name-dropped in the Cole Porter song “You’re the Top”, alongside a long list of then-contemporary popular cultural references. Walt Disney was profiled in the *New Yorker*. Walt had struck gold, and everyone knew it.

Mickey’s and Walt’s overnight stardom came from being the first sound cartoon. A good many Disney cartoons of “the 1930s are built entirely around musical themes”, a trait rival animation studios eagerly adopted. The names alone tell the story: Disney’s own *Silly Symphonies*, *Merrie Melodies*, *Talktoons* and *Looney Tunes*. This probably reached its peak with Disney’s older rival, *Fleischer Studios*, creators of the *Popeye*, *Betty Boop*, and *Superman* cartoons. Their *Betty Boop*



shorts featured music provided by jazz artists Louis Armstrong and Cab Calloway. They also occasionally contained joking and copy-right-breaking cameos by a Mickey Mouse lookalike.

Of course, some of the best Mickey Mouse stories from this period were silent, featuring only the printed word and sound effects in the reader's head. The King's Feature syndicated comic strip, written and drawn by Floyd Gottfredson with input from Walt, features some of Mickey's greatest adventures. When it started as a gag-a-day strip drawn by Ub Iwerks, and later Win Smith, it achieved middling success. King Features eventually asked them to turn it into an adventure strip, and

the fun truly began.

Mickey fought gangsters, pirates, wild animals, air pirates, learned to fly an airplane, and in one unforgettable bit of black comedy, spent a week's worth of strips attempting suicide. This was not a rebellious artist letting the air out of the Mouse; the idea actually came directly from Walt himself. It culminated in the most Disney-esque suicide attempt ever, where Mickey was convinced not to hang himself by a gang of adorable woodland critters, and then proceeded to use the rope he was going to hang himself with as a swing while the happy animals frolicked around him.

It's hard to imagine the modern, straight-laced Mickey consider-

ing suicide. As Mickey's popularity grew, he gained respectability. Gone was the scrappy little figure from the 30s who never hesitated to brandish a pistol or a sword, and was often threatened with gruesome demises. He started growing up, and his more unpleasant traits were shifted onto his compatriots Donald Duck, and Goofy. In 1947 some employees "... at Disney's... (Said)... that the public's current preference for Donald over Mickey (the Gallup Audience Research Institute puts Donald first, Bugs Bunny second, and Mickey third) is a vote for human fallibility. As Walt himself pointed out, Mickey had staying power "The Mouse hasn't made a picture since the war. He was in one short released in '42.



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Five years off the screen and he still rates third! Is there any star in Hollywood with a public that loyal?”

As the 30s ended and WWII loomed on the horizon, Mickey still had star power. He starred in what is arguably his artistic height: The Sorcerer's Apprentice segment in Fantasia. The film that, while not a commercial triumph, ranks as one of Walt Disney's crowning achievement on artistic merit alone. However, Mickey found his triumphant return cut short when the second World War broke out. Animators were drafted, and the Disney studio

shifted into producing propaganda shorts for the United States Government.

That's not to say Mickey sat the big one out. In the eyes of both its enemies and its patriots, Mickey was synonymous with America. He was plastered everywhere the amateur artists in the United States Army could reach, from emblems to nosecones, and D-Day's codename was Mickey Mouse. Mickey Mouse appeared, completely unauthorized, in propaganda cartoons from Imperial Japan and Vichy France as a villain. The Mickey Mouse gas mask

was designed for children and several prototypes were manufactured, but it never saw large-scale production

After the war, the 50s saw both a winding down for Mickey Mouse and a new beginning. Mickey's last animated theatrical short was released in 1953, as the advent of television gradually killed the two films and the cartoon format of the film theatre. America had had enough of adventure, and just wanted peace and quiet. Mickey enjoyed a quite career as the host of The Mickey Mouse Club television program,



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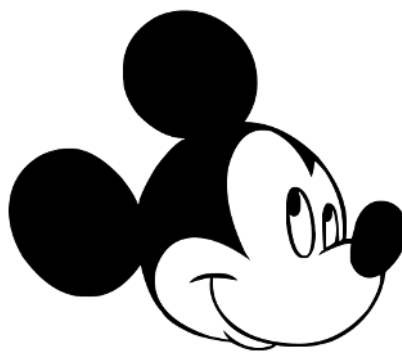




heir to the Mickey Mouse children's film clubs of the thirties, and as the affable host of the newly opened Disneyland. This peace would soon be shattered by the cultural freight train that was in the sixties.

The Walt Disney Company has been protective of Mickey's squeaky-clean image, but even the might of the Mouse's lawyers couldn't entirely resist the counterculture. While certain elements of the sixties rebellion hated Mickey with a passion, one letter to the editor in *Playboy* claimed that "If Fascism ever comes to America, it will be wearing Mouse Ears" the pop-art movement embraced Mickey Mouse, and Disney has mostly tolerated it. No mention of Keith Haring, who had several paintings containing Mickey Mouse, facing legal troubles is mentioned in Keith Haring: *Journey of the Radiant Baby*, and Andy Warhol's Mickey Mouse prints are still available for sale. Disney seems to have taken a live-and-let-live attitude towards this use, and has usually not taken legal actions unless someone does something stupid like having pornographic comix planted in the Disney boardroom before a meeting.

The self-styled *Air Pirates*, naming themselves after bad guys from a story in the Mickey Mouse comic strip, were the people dumb enough to do that in the 1970s, in one of the most darkly hilarious chapters in Mickey Mouse history. The *Air Pirates* were "...a group of underground cartoonists led by 'Odd Bodkins' creator Dan O'Neill... Their notoriety rested on the two issues of the *Air Pirates* underground comic that caused the entire group... to be sued by Walt Disney Productions for copyright infringement. (The)...



lead stories in each issue, written and drawn by Dan O'Neill,... depicted Mickey and Minnie Mouse having sex, getting high and smuggling drugs." The whole scheme was Dan O'Neill's idea, who had a strong self-destructive streak. Even his most fervent defenders admit O'Neill's career has been "mostly downward". After dropping out of College and becoming the youngest syndicated cartoonist in history at the tender age of 22, publishing his strip *Odd Bodkins* in The San Francisco Chronicle, he managed to get himself fired. Three times (TCJ Administrator). His motive for starting the *Air Pirates* and picking a fight with Disney was to "buck corporate thinking." By own of his own defender's admission, he was seeking nothing less than "the destruction of Walt Disney".

It was an open-and-shut case. Mickey Mouse was called Mickey Mouse, and was drawn 'on-model'. Mickey Mouse took his trademark shorts off, and performed unspeakable acts on a panel with Minnie. The covers looked enough like an official product, the first one was a copy-and-trace job, that, notwithstanding the easily overlooked *For Adults only* and saddlebags of dope, a parent mistakenly buying it for his child was a very real possibility. There was only one possible outcome.

Disney won. O'Neil appealed. Disney won again. They went through

this for quite a while, and O'Neil kept provoking Disney and aggravating the issue. Eventually, O'Neil was broke, and Disney told him if he'd just knock it off, he had never stopped publishing the comic in one form or another while the court case was going on, they'd stop dragging him back into court. The last word in the *air pirates'* case came from Bobby London's, one of the other *Air Pirates*, mother, who, upon being told by an excited O'Neil that they "had won" commented, "What did you win? The boobey prize?". While one cannot help but admire O'Neil's passion and zeal shown throughout his quixotic quest, he accomplished nothing noteworthy during his crusade.

Being turned into a lustful pot-smoking cad in an unauthorized comic was not the worst thing to happen to Mickey in the 1970s, though. That would be *Disco Mickey Mouse*, an album featuring disco covers of various Disney songs and an album cover sporting Mickey in a Travolta-esque suit, released at the tail-end of the disco era. The less said about this poorly-aging cultural relic, the better.

Mickey Mouse may not have dominated the dance floor in the seventies, but he ruled the clothing rack in the eighties. This was the work of "clothier Max Raab, who declared: "We figured any clothing that could handle a polo pony or an alligator could handle Mickey Mouse." Raab's "Mickey & Co." line, marketed by his apparel firm, J. G. Hook, helped plant the seed for the Disney Store global retail chain, which was launched in 1987."

On the small screen and the silver screen, Mickey remained fairly obscure. During the eighties, he



only appeared on film twice, once playing Bob Cratchett in *A Mickey Christmas Carol*, and the other as a brief cameo in *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?*, where, for the first time, he appeared alongside his long-time rival Bugs Bunny. In television, he was trapped in reruns of his classic cartoons. The eighties did, however, mark the first time Mickey appeared on a different sort of screen.

Mickey made his first appearance within an exciting new medium during the early eighties: video games. Video game scholarship, as an academic subject, is near nonexistent, and so the record of Mickey's history in video games remains spotty at best. He appeared on the then cutting-edge *Game and Watch*, a portable device that featured a single simple game. To get a different game, it was necessary to buy another one. Nintendo released 3 Mickey Mouse-themed ones. These were not exciting adventures, but exercises in button-mashing. The back packaging of one of the more, in the opinion of *Mickey Mouse Collectibles.Com*, interesting ones reads as follows: "MICKEY MOUSE is performing acrobatics while balancing on a ball in a circus. DONALD DUCK is watching his acrobatic feats."

By 1983, video games had moved beyond such sub-Pong shenanigans, and began to feature characters, music, and sometimes even stories. The first Mickey Mouse game of this new kind was Mickey's *Space Adventure*, where, on the order of aliens from the nearby planet Oran, Mickey visits all nine planets and reassembles a stolen space crystal. From this time forward, at least one Mickey Mouse videogame, and often more, were released a year up

until 1995, where there was a three-year hiatus, followed by disappointingly generic titles throughout the rest of the late 90s.

Mickey's next major role in video games was in 2002's *Kingdoms Hearts*, from the Japanese developer Square Enix, creator of *The Final Fantasy* series. The game's lore is too complicated to be explained without an entire essay, but it involves a Moorcockian, rather than Manichean, struggle between the three metaphysical forces of light, darkness, and nothingness, a mysterious location called *Kingdom Hearts*, a rampaging army of monsters who reproduce themselves by consuming the hearts of the living, thus turning their victim into one of them, and most of the game's locations are taken from Disney films. King Mickey, as he's called in this game, doesn't show up till the last five minutes, at least in the original. According to rumor, this was due to Disney's classic overprotectiveness of their beloved mascot, but the developers made this work. Being offscreen added a much-needed edge of danger and mysteriousness to the familiar Mouse. Still, while a major character in the ongoing *Kingdom Hearts* franchise, Mickey is only occasionally playable in a few games in the franchise.

In 2010, strange and exciting concept art began to surface on the internet. It was for a new project called *Epic Mickey* by *Deus Ex* creator Warren Spector. The game looked like nothing else ever produced. The art was terrifying, showing mechanical abominations combined with animatronic versions of Disney characters. Disney bought the rights to Oswald back from Universal in exchange for a flesh and blood sports broadcaster Al Michael. It

was going to be amazing.

It was okay, good but not great. The game was dark, but it wasn't the post-apocalypse horror show the concept art might have indicated. The gameplay was fun, but nothing truly groundbreaking. A lackluster sequel killed the franchise for good. For the foreseeable future, Mickey is stuck playing second banana in video games. With the Pixar-led return of the animated short, Mickey returned to the big screen with the 2013 2d-3d Animation hybrid *Get a Horse!*. Does this herald a return to form for the Mouse? Hard to say. Mickey's career hasn't been an arc; it has moved in arcs. While never regaining the glory of his golden age, he has experienced periods of being in fashion and then falling back out of it.

Even if Mickey does not regain his fabled stardom, he will endure. He has survived where his contemporaries have failed. Who can honestly say they fondly remember Bimbo the dog or Koko the clown, or even Mickey's flesh and blood contemporaries Laurel and Hardy? He has moved beyond the realm of pop-culture into icon. Mickey Mouse is more real than many of the people walking the streets today. Disney may own the rights to Mickey Mouse, but they don't own him. As Marshall Fishwick put it "He does not belong to Disney; he is ours. At Disney World, I heard a father tell a son, "There's the guy dressed up like Mickey Mouse." "You're wrong dad," came the reply. "That is Mickey Mouse." Like Ronald McDonald, Superman, Sherlock Holmes, Santa Claus and Dracula he has transcended his source material, and become almost permanently etched into the popular conscience. Ω



# THE MAVERICK

BY MADISON

I've always done my best to keep  
walking  
Because sometimes I have want to pause,  
And listen to that constant yearning  
Before I think of the cause

When I come upon a crossroad,  
All that comes to my mind is fright  
As my movements become slowed  
Since I don't know which path's right

I've always managed to move on,  
Perhaps just by a hair though  
Yet soon those too will be all gone  
And I'll fall into the abyss below

Despite it all, I still take a step forward,  
Pursuing the bridge life has placed here  
With so many choices yet to be explored  
Seeming I'm a maverick amongst my  
peers

I've but no choice to continue on  
Through the torrents thrown my way,  
But soon the shrouded night will fade  
With dawn bringing about a new day Ω

# VISION FOR BIKE ADVOCACY IN BERKS COUNTY ... A BIKE PATH

BY CHRIS



I am on the city Planning Commission. I'm trying to be an interface between citizens and the planning/zoning aspects of development. I also have plans to reboot WalkBikeBerks. In the coming years, I'll need a lot of input from the youth of the city, and I'll need some help with trend-setting, bike and walk audits of intersections to get bike lanes and better crossings, ideas for how to implement a school bike course for PE credit, and in general anything you'd like to see changed in the city and surrounding areas. I'm more of an information-gathering person rather than a strategy or influencer person, so that's where I'm hoping you'd come in and lead where I'm weak. We'd like to get the Bike Hub co-op started again, and make the streets safe enough to get a bike share, charging stations for electric bikes, and enclosed bike parking at RACC with an ID swipe, to name a few things.

Ideally, I'd like people to be able to get more health-related benefits, like a free bike and gym membership, without having to qualify for things like Medicare Advantage. WalkBikeBerks Ω



---

# IN THE SHADOW OF TWO ELEPHANTS

BY M.

(The stage is mostly dark. The only source of light is a lantern set on stage. In the background, a large stone head looms. Attached to it is a propaganda poster. Around the lantern are huddled two figures in the remnants of fine military uniforms.)

Cast:

The man

The woman

The battling armies offscreen

The man: Do you think they're still fighting?

(Loud Explosion heard offstage)

The Woman: Yep

The Man: Does it sound like they're getting closer?

The Woman: can't tell.

(A loud bang is heard off-screen and the sound of a bell falling down. )

The Man: No. The Cathedral is on the other side of town,

The Woman: Shame. I loved going there to see the stained glass.

The Man: Did you ever hear their choir?

The Woman: Hear it? I sang in it.

The man: You're kidding me.

The Woman: No.

(she performs the first thirty seconds of Ava Maria)

The Man: I can sing. I just don't. Nothing to sing about anymore.

They sit in silence for 10 seconds.

The Woman: I'm hungry.

The Man: Hi hungry I'm

The Woman: Don't do it.

The man: We'll have to conserve food but I think I got some caviar and a couple of crusts of bread in my pack here I can spare.

(He cracks open the can)

The woman: Give that here.

The Man: You have to let it air out a little.

The woman: It's canned caviar. The good stuff comes in a jar,

The man: You're putting on airs. There's no discernible difference between the canned and jarred varieties.

The woman: GIMME!

(They begin to wrestle like children. The lantern is knocked over in the struggle, illuminating the stone head.

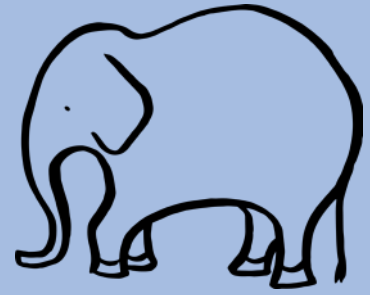
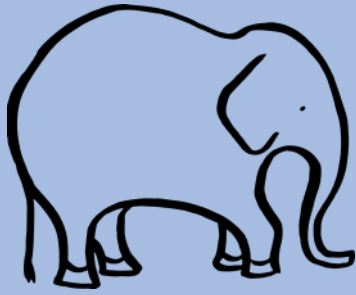
It resembles them man, but it's more handsome and young. Written on it is "Our beloved General. The woman sees it but the man does not notice. The woman is obviously tense from this scene on. The man does not notice.

The man takes the two pieces of bread and spreads caviar upon them,)

(They eat in silence)

The man: We are sane people in an insane world





The Woman: Are we?

The man: Are we what?

The woman: Sane. We just damned near killed each other over a can of caviar.

The man: You call that a fight? My brothers and I would bash each other about till the floor was a study in scarlet.

The woman: What a delightful childhood you had.

The man: Better than the one those kids in the refugee camps are getting

(The woman looks guilty.)

The woman: Children always get the worst of it.

The man: When elephants fight, it is the grass that suffers.

The woman: That Shakespeare?

The Man: No. It's a Zanzibarian proverb.

The Woman: Zanzibarian?

The Man: Shakespeare made up words.

(They sit there in silence for five seconds)

The Woman: My army was all mercenaries. Gold can't buy loyalty.

The Man: Ehh?

The woman: I saw the stone head, It was you, You're the General of the Cokes.

The man: You know that's a racial slur, right?

The Woman: As general of the RC army I don't care.

(He stands up)

The Man: You?!? YOU'RE The General of the RCS? What in the name of GODOT are you doing down here?

The Woman: Same as you. Did your check bounce as well?

The Men: I Didn't have mercenaries! My men were loyal citizens.

(She stands up as well)

The Woman: So the conscript army deserted?

The Man: Rebelled.

The Woman: Was this before or after the massacre at the school?

The Man: That was an errant round hitting a water heater. More of my men died in that explosion than your army ever killed. And what about the fire at the church?

The woman: That was started by a truck hitting a land mine!

The Man: I never used land mines!

The Woman: Well sounds like you lost control before you realized it!

The Man: Who started this war?!?

The Woman: I don't know!

The Man: Neither do I!

(They sink to the ground. Exhausted, but they have both relaxed. The burden has been lifted. There are no longer secrets between them. )

The Woman: Do you think they're still fighting?

(Loud Explosion heard offstage)

The Man: Yep. Ω



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# THE CUB CAFE

BY M. M.



Undeniably the best menu item in The Cub Café, and, according to some people, the only one worth eating, are the chocolate chip cookies. They are baked on premise from frozen cookie dough, and are best grabbed as soon as possible, both because they are best when eaten fresh from the oven, when the chocolate chips are still molten, and also because they disappear quickly. The worst would be whatever has been sitting under the heat lamp at the international table the longest. Like the rest of the menu, it changes from day to day.

The Cub Café, in its current form, opened on January 16, 2016, and is, as Kutztown's website put it, a "newly renovated all-you-care-to-eat restaurant(that) has a wide variety of seating environments to make you feel relaxed and ready to take on whatever the day brings". Like all food service on campus, Cub Café is run by Aramark.

Aramark is a catering company started in 1936 that operates in

nineteen countries. They have managed the food service on the Kutztown campus fairly well. They have extensive experience managing all sorts of institutional food services, from prisons, hospitals, museums, zoos, and schools, and it shows with the new Cub Café. The new layout of Cub Cafe is a work of beauty, with fireplaces, easy-to-navigate food stations, rocking chairs, bar stools, televisions, couches, cozy nooks, and multiple drink stands, many featuring Pepsi's new fountain design, to prevent long lines.

The changeover to buffet style from the previous "food court" format was widely disliked, however, as many people noticed a drop in the quality of the food, and one student in particular mourned the loss of "Burger Studio and Walkin' Taco", though this may have just been nostalgia talking. Keyona Easton, an expert with ten years in the food industry, said that the change to one-price buffet-style was

probably "so students aren't held up (and are) able to eat between classes in a short time". The lines in the old "food-court" style Cub Café were terrible, and the old Cub Café was, quite frankly, almost claustrophobia-inducing. Whether the loss of hour-long lines and an unpleasantly packed echoing cafeteria was worth the drop in food quality is a matter of debate that still has not been settled.

Of the nineteen students interviewed seventeen regularly ate at Cub Café. The majority of those seventeen ate there more than once a week, but, of those seventeen, the overall consensus on the food was bland contentment, although one respondent said that "sometimes it makes my bowels hurt". Their answers could serve as a thesaurus entry for mediocre: "so-so", "meh", "alright" "doesn't draw me in" "hit or miss" "fine" "usually ok" and "not the best". The nicest thing said was that Club Café had "a good variety". Every respondent asked, however,



agreed it was better than The South Dining Hall, which is not open to the public and requires a meal plan to even enter the building, and so remains something of a whispered legend to commuters.

When asked what improvements could be made or what complaints they had about Cub Café, the suggestion ranged from the utterly useless “nothing in particular” and “more freedom of choices”, to the completely practical, “serve breakfast a little longer”, to the superfluous “(add) smoothies” and “more tacos”. One smart aleck even said he wanted “a pool table, Playstation 4, and (space to play) air football”.

It seems the old cliché had it right: you really can't please everyone. Serving food on this sort of scale

is hard work. Still, of those interviewed, not a single one was really enthusiastic about Cub Café, despite eating there so often. What was missing?

One Cub Café patron interviewed said that the thing that needed improvement was the “employee's attitude”. This coincides nicely with something that Easton also said: “one of the biggest things in hospitality is to be making a connection with the people you're serving”. During one of my many, many attempts to get an interview with a higher-up at Cub Café I asked one employee what working at Club Café; she gave a shrug of resignation and said that “every day's a new adventure”.

The shrug of resignation seems to be the general attitude of every-

one towards Cub Café. It's just a job to them, and there's no particular incentive to improve things. As long as a certain bare minimum standard continues to be met, people will continue to eat there. Could it be better? Yes, in a hundred different ways, but it's not actually going to change. As the thriving state of the American Instant-Ramen industry and a thousand late-night dorm-room culinary atrocities can attest, college students are in no way gourmands or even picky eaters. Enough people are, if not satisfied, content with the status quo, and Cub Café will not lack for customers in the foreseeable future. Ω

The Cub Cafe is a residential dining hall, located on Kutztown University Campus, McFarland Student Union Building, 15200 Kutztown Rd, Kutztown, PA 19530



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# YOU ARE ENOUGH

BY PAMELA F.



A little drawing of a girl to remind you — you are enough, as you are. With green skin and stick legs, and someone forgot to draw your ears. And you have three fingers and no knees.

If I had only one opportunity to speak to you, and it was in this article, what do I want you to know?

“Let go of who you think you are supposed to be and be who you are.”  
— Brené Brown

When my father was dying, I asked him what was the one life lesson he wanted me to know. He said, “Mail your birthday cards out on time.”

My father died on March 17, 1998. He has been dead for twenty-six years, four months, and seven days. Of all the things he wanted me to remember, it wasn’t, “Don’t use a credit card or make sure you floss your teeth. He didn’t want to give me financial advice, dental hygiene advice; he wanted me to remember to value others. To let my friends know they mattered.

I haven’t met everyone who reads my writing and I don’t know when your birthday is, and we might have never met. But I want you to know you are enough. You don’t have to be someone else to be accepted. You don’t have to copy someone else’s

art to be liked. Or sing someone else’s songs. I appreciate you and am grateful you read my stories. (I would also be grateful if you helped me clean my cat’s litter boxes.)

You can be you.

## How to believe you are enough

Write down on a piece of paper. I am \_\_\_\_\_. (Write down your name.) And then write:

**I am enough.**

For example, if your name is Pat, write down. “I am Pat. I am enough.” In the national bestseller, *Influence, The Psychology of Persuasion*, Robert B Cialdini, Ph.D., talks about the committing power of written statements. “There is a magical pull to believe what you have written.”

Based on Cialdini’s research, if you want to change your behavior, write down what you want to believe. If you have a goal, writing it down gives you something to aim for. Aiming for a new belief about yourself is as valid as believing you will make a certain number of sales.

When you see someone else’s creation, say out loud, “That’s really cool. They are them and I am me.” Which means you don’t have to compare what they created to what you did. If you want to get rid of the negative script that is on a constant

feedback loop. “They are better at drawing than me. They have a better sound when they sing, They have more litter boxes than me.” You need to replace it with a new track.

Believe what God says about you. “You are fearfully and wonderfully made.” I struggled with believing that about myself. I could believe it for you, but not for me. Then I realized I was letting other people define me, and not letting God define me.

God knit us together in our mother’s womb. He knew who we would be. He knew that Cathy would have curly hair and he knew that I would have really hairy legs. If someone is mean to you, it shows their character not your worth.

Today you are enough. You might learn something new tomorrow. You might fall, not fail. There is no failing, it is just learning from what you just made. You might trip on a cat who is the same color as your carpet. You might spill paint on your painting, or sing a note a little off-key. And that is okay, you are creating, and learning to be you. (And learning to look where your cat is laying down.)

“The most terrifying thing is to accept oneself completely.”

— C.G. Jung



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# AN ODE TO MY CAT

BY KAYLEE Q.



Sometimes it's feels like it's us against the world.  
You understand what it's like to jump at loud noises.  
To run under the covers when something startles you.  
To hide away in the shadows when things get overwhelming.  
You get what it's like to snap on those you care about when you're stressed.  
To want to just be alone, in a small quiet room with nothing bothering you.  
You understand that physical touch isn't always pleasant,  
and how it feels to unconsciously flinch away when you are touched.  
You know what it feels like when your way of showing love doesn't match with those around you.

But you also understand that sometimes you just want to be held.  
Some days you just need a little extra love.  
You know what it's like when you get bursts of energy or you're just too excited to contain it.  
You get what it's like to be told you're too loud.  
To be told to just calm down.  
To be told to shut up.

We see one another, we get one another. So here is to you, the reflection of my being.  
Thank you. Ω



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Submissions may be sent for consideration for the next edition.  
Please utilize our website or mailing address listed below.  
We will be opening a poll for the title this summer. Ideas? Contact us.

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We as a community can implement changes to better the world in which we live.  
We are called to be our brother's keeper. The marginalized in our society are a fragile part of our world.  
We are connected to them in intricate ways and if we allow, we can join in their vulnerabilities  
and create stronger communities together. Positively Produced Foundation is a nonprofit serving  
adults with autism with an aim of overall societal inclusion, especially gainful employment opportunities.  
Positively Produced will help businesses understand the benefits of employing adults  
with autism and assist in the recruitment, hiring and onboarding process.  
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Interested in partnering your company in this exciting venture?  
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# THE ADOPTED ASPIE

BY CLAIRE Malfaro

Once on a hike with a group of individuals with autism, I attempted to facilitate what I thought appropriate interaction necessary between two member of the group. Another member chided me, saying that at times I had spoken down to people in the group or acted like I needed to intervene when she thought it unnecessary. Another member of the group came to my defense, saying "Claire is like the adopted Aspie". Truthfully, it was one of the greatest compliments I have received. I did take into account the criticism of the woman who thought I behaved in a condescending manner and changed my behavior as best I could. The other comment, calling me the adopted Aspie, I have carried like a medal. People on the autism spectrum, I have come to believe, are of such a high caliber of character that I was honored to be "adopted" into their group.

Having spent most of my career studying and treating individuals and families with members who have level 1 autism, I have come to see first hand the incredible honesty, work ethic and compassion that these individuals possess. My experience

is not unique, research bears out the findings I have had. Initially, it was suggested that people with autism "lack empathy." Tony Atwood, a renowned physician who specializes in autism, found the opposite. There is an intentional disconnection at times by people with autism to the pain of others. They experience it so viscerally and powerfully that it overwhelms them. Children with autism often sooth themselves by thinking about or talking about their special interests. When they see someone else suffering, they do the same - speaking about what interests them. It is not because they don't care or are self centered, they lack the theory of mind to know what might soothe that particular individual, so they share their own interest.

Temple Grandin, perhaps the most famous American with autism who is a doctoral level researcher in Animal Science wrote, "I don't want my thoughts to die with me, I want to have done something. I am not interested in power or piles of money. I want to leave something behind. I want to make a positive contribution - know that my life has meaning."

Our organization has been created to help individuals with autism make that positive contribution. We are asking society to refocus on the qualities that really matter - honesty, integrity and hard work. People with autism struggle to make it through the interview process and may have holes in their job history. It is not because of lack of skill, quality of character or laziness. Our culture has come to prize being smooth, polished and socially adept over practically everything else. Since social language/communication deficits are the crux of autistic traits, that leaves people with autism outside of the job pool - under and unemployed. We seek to change that.

We desire to assist in helping to reacclimate to the concept of placing a premium in our culture where it matters - hard work, strong character and integrity and not simply the shallow façade idealized in our society.

Listen to the voices of the contributors of our publication - hear what they are saying. Help us change the paradigm - it makes sense as a society and makes good business sense. Ω

**"l'essentiel est invisible pour les yeux,  
on ne voit bien qu'avec le coeur".  
— "The Little Prince"**





# POSITIVELY PRODUCED FOUNDATION

## MISSION STATEMENT

The Positively Produced Foundation's mission is to employ adults with autism, assisting them in leading productive lives by improving social language communication skills, community interaction and employment preparedness.

## VISION STATEMENT

To create a safe environment where adults with autism can thrive in the world including full community engagement.

Our aim is to educate employees and business leaders regarding the benefits of hiring a neuro diverse workforce as a greater goal of full community understanding.

[www.positivelyproducedfoundation.com](http://www.positivelyproducedfoundation.com)