The Subway Thing

For posterity, here is the original Subway rant that pretty much got Spine.cx on the map. I just wanted to make sure it wasn't lost.

Bring Back the Classic Cut

An Online Petition

Picture this, I'm at Subway, and I'm looking forward to sinking my teeth into my freshly-made, renaissance-quality 12-inch roasted chicken sub. Mmmmmm....Delicious. It's lunch time, and I'm relatively hungry. My mind is pretty much blank except for the culinary concoction that I'll be injesting in the next few short minutes.



"What kind of bread?" the nice lady behind the counter disturbs my sandwich-induced meditation.

"White," I reply, without hesitation. I never could get into the idea of submarine sandwiches on whole wheat, but I digress...

My mind is racing with pictures of generous helpings of meat and vegetables all nestled into a V-shaped canyon of tasty bread with that clever little strip disconnected from the main loaf. It actually seems to invite toppings to fill it up. It's just not proper if it's not overflowing with the girth of edible vegetation.

The nice lady turns abruptly, and grabs a loaf from the rack behind her. Faster with a knife than that android from "Aliens", she slices open the bread and begins to place the sumptuous ingredients within. I begin to notice something not quite right with the look of this proto-sandwich, but I let it go; after all, she's the Sandwich Artist, not me.

I follow along the sneeze guard, toward the cash register, as the nice lady continues making my meal, and I finally realize that the bread is not actually in two pieces, as the Subway sandwiches of yore, but rather one. It's simply slit down one side like a hot dog bun. I'm in shock. There's just no way I'm going to get all the toppings I want on this sandwich. I'm in such a state of disbelief that I pay, slackjawed, and leave with an $8 mutation under my arm.

Apparently gone are the days when one could ask for enough lettuce and tomatoes to effectively have	Most people don't read the text, so here's another picture:

a side salad with one's sub. Not to mention the impossible feat of attempting to eat one of these hideous abominations; I won't go into the gory details here.

Sure, you can bend to the will of the establishment, and force yourself to *ask* for the old cut, but that's really not the point. Do you have to ask for the "classic" Coke anymore? No, it's the default. And you know why? Because it's better. The public stood up and bitched, and the establishment listened. Power to the people!

To anyone who longs for the classic subway bread incision, and abhors this incredulous deformity of art, please sign my petition to bring the 'classic' cut back to the Subways of our fine nation, and to find the one responsible for instigating this despicable mutilation of sandwiches.

How do you like your buns?

A comparison of two sandwiches

Purpose: To demonstrate that the new "hot dog" style of Subway bread cutting is inferior to the old "V-shaped canyon" style.

Hypothesis: The old style will hold more vegetables, and be easier to eat. Overall, providing a more enjoyable lunchtime experience to the eater.

Procedure: I get together with a non-believing friend to use as a control specimen. I figure he won't mind getting a sandwich cut the new way because he doesn't yet know the difference. I know it's kind of unethical, letting him actually pay money for an abomination like this, but hey, it's for science. We travel to Subway with plans to get basically the same sandwiches, only mine cut the old way, and his cut the new way. The time at the actual store was rather uneventful. The staff were polite and efficient as they always are. I don't blame them for this fiasco...they're just doing what they're told. But how can you call your employees Sandwich Artists when they must bow to the Establishment's method of cutting bread?

Let's take a look at the sandwiches once we get them back to the lunchroom and unwrap them:

The Old Cut	The New Cut
old_before.jpg This is what a sandwich should look like. Neat. Tidy. Perhaps a little spillage around the bottom, but that extra stuff is all good.	new_before.jpg Look at it. It's disgusting. It looks like somebody gutted a muskrat.

Here we can see my assistant, Ryan, attempting to eat the sandwich cut the new way. As he soon finds out, it's not very easy.

The Eating Process
new_during.jpg This might just be the most disturbing picture of all; he can't even get it to his mouth without spilling toppings all over the place. Poor Ryan, the sacrifices he makes for science...

Now that we're finished eating, we can examine the aftermath. You can easily see that the waste factor is much lower with the old cut.

Tidy	Messy
old_after.jpg The only toppings lost here were the ones that fell out during transport.	new_after.jpg This is what it looks like on the other end of a black hole.

Conclusion: We now have empirical evidence to support the previously made hypothesis. It is reasonable to believe that the old cut is superior.

The Gourmet Bread Conspiracy

or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the New Cut

I don't know if many of you other people noticed this, but looking back, didn't the new cut start appearing just about the same time those new gourmet breads came out? Not to mention that @%!&*? hand puppet with the voice of the parrot from Aladdin. I believe that the introduction of these breads was not simply to allow the sandwich eater more choice, but also to distract patrons from the fact that it was being cut using an inferior method.

Now, I'm all for innovation in the wheat sciences, but these breads hardly innovate. I was going through the drive-through at a Subway near my home, and I asked the gentleman behind the voice in the speaker to explain the difference between these new-fangled types of bread and, I kid you not,

this is a quote:

"*Hearty Italian, that's basically white with some crap on top; Country Wheat, that's whole wheat with crap on top; and Parmesan Oregano.*"	Note the crap.	

I'm not going to comment on his obvious coarseness of language, on the contrary, I appreciated his frankness in the matter. Parmesan Oregano is the only one of the breads that actually involves something new, apart from the ill-fated Asiago Cheese bread, which only lasted about a month.

As a discriminating consumer, would you say that "some crap" on top of a regular offering of bread warrants the prefix "gourmet"? I sure don't. It is because of this that I feel the "gourmet" breads of Subway are nothing more than a "smokescreen" of sorts to draw the attention of the public away from the more important issue that's right under our noses: the absense of the V-groove cut.

"Try this new bread, it's great!" says my friend as he chomps down on his new-cut sandwich; a fallen mustard-soaked pickle already staining his shoe.

I rest my case.

The fresh salmon debacle

Or lack thereof, as the case may be

As I'm sure you're aware, my cause is to get the old cut re-instated. But throughout the course of my campaign, various people have emailed me with their own grudges against Subway, and although it deviates from this site's goal, I couldn't help but indulge myself and bitch about this as well.

A loyal reader (Joe U. Rinator) sent in this photo of what I consider to be another grave disappointment:



At first, like you, I saw the brightly-lit letters spelling out the words "Fresh Salmon". "Hooray!" I thought. What luck. At least one Subway has made a consious descision to offer a choice of meats above and beyond the ordinary selections. This might even give people who aren't hardcore vegans a choice other than the veggie sub. Hell, I'm the furthest thing from a vegetarian possible, and I'm

thinking to myself that I'd love to try a 12" Salmon on white right now.

But then I look a little closer at what I thought was a JPEG artifact, and my blissfully ignorant reality is shattered once again, by the complete, unadulterated absurdity of a large sandwich chain. I leaned in, close to the monitor, and saw some barely visible lighter blue text above and below the word "fresh". I zoomed in for a closer look:



Oh the horror. I realize that what I had seen was not a JPEG artifact, but something much more sinister. Not an innocent product of a lossy image-compression algorithm; no, this was a deliberately-placed, law-suit avoiding manoever. Cleverly framing the advertisement of "Fresh Salmon" were words to change the meaning into a much less appealing product: "new fresh salmon taste".

I'm pretty sure that if what they were serving was salmon, they would damn well call it salmon. This leaves me with quite the poser: If it's not salmon, then what the hell is it? At best it's fish-flavored tofu; at worst--and this is probably closer to the truth--it's a carefully mixed concoction of alge and sawdust. If I want sawdust in a fast food product I'll go to McDonald's.

Just another page in a growing dossier of evidence that the standards at Subway are sliding down a slippery slope from whence there is no return.

The word on the street

The public's opinion of the new cut

I've seen quite a few people sign my petition so far; 152 as of this writing, but I thought the best way to be sure I was doing the right thing was to take to the streets and ask the public. While investigating, I found out some interesting truths:

1. Not many people like to have their picture taken by a stranger; especially when you tell them that it's for a web site.
2. People think you're weird when you ask them about sandwich breads.
3. As I suspected, the public massively prefers the old cut.

Hear what the public had to say

street1.jpg	"*I totally despise the new way, I prefer the old way. It seems to be more convenient and less messy.*" Listen (32 KBps MP3)
street2.jpg	"*I personally hate the new cut. I'm not sure why they changed it but I would like to speak for the old cut.*" Listen (32 KBps MP3)
street3.jpg	"*It's very simple...the new cut just isn't acceptable. With the old cut, you get all that stuff, and you can hold it in your hand, and just keep chewing and chewing and chewing; man it makes like a huge sub. The new cut? It's crap!*" Listen (32 KBps MP3)
street4.jpg	"*I like the old way better than the new way because all your stuff doesn't fall out.*" Listen (32 KBps MP3)
street5.jpg	"*[I like] the old way because it fits more into it and it stays nicer because when it's cut the new way it's more messier because it goes all over the place. The old way kept it in the sub.*" Listen (32 KBps MP3)
street6.jpg	"*I prefer the old way, just because things don't fall out the side like they do more now, like everything was on top, you know, so it couldn't fall out the side and that the stuff stays in better and everything blends in better that way.*" Listen (32 KBps MP3)
street7.jpg	"*The old cut is better! I like the old cut. Bring back the old cut*" Listen (32 KBps MP3)
street8.jpg	"*I always ask them to cut it the old way, and then they look kind of cranky when they do.*" "*I ask for the old way because I don't like the new way. Yeah, there's not enough room there.*" Listen (32 KBps MP3)

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