

Rachel Gross

Gorham High School

Grade 12

### Contrary to Popular Belief, Chick-Fil-A is Not Always Good for You.

Bright red brake lights repeatedly glowed over my face as we continued to move up through the drive through. After waiting 30 long minutes in the new Chick-Fil-A drive through, I couldn't wait to reunite my taste buds with the taste of the famous chicken sandwich. As we finally reached the second window, the lady working handed me my food while the scent of the chicken sandwiches inside the bag immediately filled my tiny Honda Civic. After such a long wait, I couldn't wait another second before trying my sandwich and delicious waffle fries. My sister is not helping me at all as I try to exit the drive through, while I have burning hot bags of food in my lap, my soda in one hand and her milkshake in the other. I continuously say, "Caroline, you better grab your stuff before I throw it out the window." Even though Caroline's my older sister, since the second I got my license, I've always been the one to drive. Whether it was just to our mom's house, to Target, or even if she was the one craving Chick-Fil-A in the first place. Caroline was never the best driver and I usually ended up with a headache from all the brake checks, so I never complained about driving anyways.

As I begin to roll away from the second window, still with beverages in my hand and food in my lap, I am struggling to keep the wheel straight using my knee for control. I make a slight swerve causing the bags to move and causing Caroline to accidentally drop her phone. She gets annoyed but it's okay because she finally grabs her milkshake and cleans out the cup holders, throwing the old plastic water bottles in the back of my tiny car. We set the drinks down and she hits play on the music. Not only has she never been the best driver, but she also has never had the best music taste, so of course I yell over the 40 max volume to change the song.

We finally get out of traffic and leave the Chick-Fil-A parking lot. Caroline and I are always down to take the long way home. So even though there is a direct route home from Westbrook to Gorham, I take us all the way into South Portland. This allows for the maximum amount of songs to be

played in one car ride. The sun was beginning to set and my food was beginning to get cold. At a red light I grab my wrapped sandwich from my bag and begin to unwrap it as Caroline yells, "The light's green," I say thanks and hit the gas. We turn right onto Brackett Road, a road that I used to refuse to drive on when I first got my license. The turns, bumps, and potholes always made me uneasy while going 35 miles per hour. Now, I know this road like the back of my hand. Going 60 in a 35, I take the first bite of my sandwich. I think to myself, "That was definitely worth the wait." I continue taking little bites, holding the sandwich in my left hand, my soda in my right hand, and controlling the wheel with my knee.

My headlights are dim and I have the discussion in my head on whether or not I should turn my high beams. My mind decides not to, because it will be too hard to turn them off if another car drives by. I set my beverage down, but still have half a chicken sandwich in my hand. I notice the song being played by Caroline, and I demand she let me pick a song on the last stretch of our drive home. She hands me the phone and I look up my favorite song. As my eyes shift back and forth between the screen and the road, I click on a song and immediately go in to take another bite of my sandwich, and when my eyes return to the road, I see a woman jogging off to the side. I drop my sandwich and swerve to avoid hitting her, when a car comes out of nowhere. All I see now is darkness.

Distracted driving takes the lives of at least 3,000 people a year. Most people think of distracted driving as texting or driving while under the influence, avoiding one of the biggest reasons for car accidents. Eating while driving can cause the driver to become heavily distracted due to the loss of hand and eye control. Eating or drinking while driving increases the chances of a car accident by 80%. Is eating your chicken sandwich in the car more important than the lives of yourself, your family and friends, and even strangers? Not to me it isn't!