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How ChickRock Happened

By Amy L. Spears

C hickRock—yes, I admit it's an odd term, but I like it. It often evokes snide remarks and stupid questions (So, you like Mariah Carey? What do you play besides Madonna?). But at the same time it makes me feel a little empowered. I've created my own genre.

So what exactly is ChickRock? Well, it's not Madison Avenue, it wouldn't be Madonna. It probably should be artists like the Indigo Girls and Sarah McLachlan, but sometimes my own prejudices get in the way. It's always Ani DiFranco, Tori Amos, Jen Trynin, P.J. Harvey, Maggie Estep, Lisa Germano or whoever else gets dubbed my obsession of the week.

ChickRock is a genre of music without any particular sound to define it. But, as I'd like to tell all the record companies who've proclaimed the "Year of the Woman," it takes more than the right anatomy to be worthy of initiation into ChickRock. First, talent is a must. So the Spice Girls need not apply.

Second, a true ChickRock artist displays a certain degree of political consciousness and a healthy dose of cynicism, but she's got to be able to stop taking herself seriously once in a while. (Hence, Alanis Morissette isn't included but Ani DiFranco and Dar Williams are.) The subtle irony of Cole's "Where Have All the Cowboys Gone?" runs circles around the ranting of Meredith Brooks' "Bitch."

Third, a sense of individual musical style can't be left out. There will be no pop princesses admitted to this elite group, which is why Madonna wavers in and out of our little band of misfits as she wavers in and out of brilliant originality and sappy regurgitated pop.

With that established, you've got an idea of what ChickRock is and why it's needed. It's a separatist or any other not so nasty name by those disgruntled few. It's my own personal cause, driven by the thought that female performers are finally getting an equal shot, though sometimes seems all you have to do is teach a woman a few chords and next thing you know she's got triple platinum. And she's "secured a spot on next year's Lilith Fair lineup," or some other similarly naseating cliche.

Not to say that all of the women who've achieved substantial fame are completely untalented. In fact, most of them are really great. I just think there's a big difference in the standards for quality between men and women in the music industry, so we've got dozens of female one hit wonders on the scene, singing sappy love songs over worn out drum machines, while the women with real messages are left to waste away on the periphery of fame.

So all of this is why ChickRock was born. And it's why I'm so glad to leave WDUB after three years. All of this is why I feel I can defend myself when called a separatist or any other not so nasty name by those disgruntled few. It's my own personal cause, driven by the thought that female performers are finally getting an equal shot, through a voice and a guitar. Or a piano. Or a violin. Or a dijiridoo.

Besides ChickRock, Amy L. Spears will long be remembered for her fondness of titanium. Oh, glorious, uncorroding metal!
Sex in 4-Color

By Randall Frey

I saw my first Playboy when I was seven. A friend of mine who lived down the street had discovered his daddy’s secret stash and had plundered the magazines for the benefit of his pals one fine Sunday afternoon. My pals and I feverishly flipped past the articles on hair loss clinics and sports cars and politics. We paused on the centerfolds. I can’t really relate what I saw. It was some sort of alien just beamed down to earth, studying this strange culture. I was like one of those bounty hunters from Critters. And I was trying to take it all in, as if there would be a test later. None of this stuff, by that I mean woman stuff, was ever mentioned in school, or at home, on the TV shows I watched—Daisy always kept her dukes on. The stuff in the magazine was new. The home, on the TV shows I watched—Daisy always kept her dukes on. The stuff in the magazine was new. The stuff was hot. And I couldn’t really figure out why.

Traveling a bit farther down the old memory lane makes the matter seem a little clearer. A year or two before my pals broke out the Playboys and we all engaged in our little street corner cultural study, I had an affair with the girl next door. When I say, “had an affair,” I actually mean, “had the affair.” The girl and I played on swing sets together. We had tea parties. I was her dukes on. The stuff in the magazine was new. The stuff in my pals. They were the kind of boys who spent afternoons in the woods, turning over large rocks and squashing the bugs underneath just for kicks; they would not ask to hold hands. Looking at Playboy cartoons showed a guy and a gal doing “it,” whatever it was, whatever it was. I was even further confused by the fact that the man was coming at the woman from behind. For one reason or another, I didn’t think this was how “it” was done. Even when I did learn about sex years later, this cartoon still troubled and haunted me. Little did I know, this cartoon would give me the idea for how to make sense of my pubescent follies.

Lately, I’ve considered writing some articles accompanied by cartoons and submitting them to magazines other than the MoYO. Because the material is ever-present, I’ve decided to go for the low, bawdy road. This is what I have in mind: My intended targets. I want to create a series of cartoons which deal with the anxieties I addressed above, only in a less Norman Rockwell-esque manner. The cartoons all focus on a little unlike me he knows what is going on. Every punchline involves the boy—in early drafts called Dink—looking at something in his neighborhood and getting kind of horny. One cartoon I’ve finished has Dink looking at a girl eating an ice cream cone. Dink has a blank look on his face. The thought bubble above his head reads, “I’ve got a boner.” Now that’s comedy.

Another cartoon I’ve been working on involves a more elaborate set up and is in several panels long. The gag is that Dink’s father—Dick, Dick Johnson, or maybe Mr. Pecker—is showing Dink how to fix a deflated bicycle tire. Dink’s dad pumps it up, commenting on how round and firm it is. To make a long gag short—this takes about six more panels—Dink quips that the woman down the street might want the pump because she has no breasts. Ha! Ha! Chris!

Anytime I read over the dumb sex comics currently in magazines, I say to myself, “I can do this. I can do better than this.” I go back to working on Dink. I really want to write a joke which simplifies the whole male experience—including health concerns, politics, stereo performance, car racing, boats, and thoughtful erotic gift ideas—and which involves the punchline, “I got a boner.” I have yet to write the joke. Maybe if I remove the part about cars, I’ll come up with something better on hair loss, the gag will work. I don’t know. I haven’t given up yet and am sure that young people out there are relying on me for that first does of sexual information. I know I’m not the only one who is coming at the woman from behind. I mean, I’ve been going to diners, coffee shops and truck stops since I was five or six. My Pap (a great, big, retired steel-mill foreman) used to take my sisters and me to a small coffee shop in the old mill town where he lived. It was there that I had the first reuben sandwich, the first whiff of over-strong coffee that was to stay with me for a life time and shape my post-adolescent food-consumption experiences.

As a kind of rite of passage, I have moved on from the small-town coffee shops of my kindergarten/elementary school years. When I hit puberty, my father thought I was ready for the big town experience: Primanti Brothers. Primanti Brothers is a Pittsburgh diner (with swivel stools and stainless steel countertops, yay!) and a Pittsburgh institution. People from all over the country, including Hillary Clinton (even she has taste), have sampled its famous sandwiches. I can still taste them:

(Continued on page 27)

Grease Me Up

One woman’s descent into the depths of Pittsburgh diner culture

By Nina Clements

There are two types of people in this world: those who like diners (and by default, grease), and those who don’t. I belong to the former category. Another interesting fact about diners and grease is that you never can tell exactly who belongs to which category, which in my opinion makes diners and grease all the more fascinating. People who enjoy diners are not simply grumpy, sketchy, over-forty truck drivers named Dwight, or teenagers trying to sober up. I, and many other people, enjoy diners and diner culture for a multitude of reasons. I enjoy the grease on the foils, the plates, and the napkins (this is making my mouth water). I still question what exactly it is that diners offer me and all kinds of people from different classes, backgrounds, genders, and ethnicities. Is it merely the grease?

Hmmmm. Grease. The stuff heart attacks are made of. The stuff that forms the perfect glaze atop a slice of cheese or over a hot burger, or the bubbly perfection of a grilled cheese sandwich. In case you haven’t noticed, grease and cheese are interleaved in my world of diners. Food here at Denison never satisfies my grease-filled cravings. The food is often unintentionally greasy, like the veggie chicken sandwich, but it’s not the same. This dissatisfaction has led me to the conclusion that it is not only the grease, but also the atmosphere that accompanies it, which I crave. I miss going to truck stops and diners on a regular basis; I haven’t found any in Ohio thus far which compete with Pittsburgh’s diner culture (subculture?).

When I actually thought about it, I realized that I’ve been going to diners, coffee shops and truck stops since I was five or six. My Pap (a great, big, retired steel-mill foreman) used to take my sisters and me to a small coffee shop in the old mill town where he lived. It was there that I had the first reuben sandwich, the first whiff of over-strong coffee that was to stay with me for a life time and shape my post-adolescent food-consumption experiences.

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Under the Needle’s Point

The healing power of acupuncture

By Robert Levine

“I have a plan for you,” Dr. Terry Smith said excitedly. “There are little wells of energy at your fingertips. We’re going to access the yang points on the meridians of your large intestine. The meridian runs up your arms through the shoulders, and out to the top of your head. That’s where the energy will be released.”

Brandingish a fine needle tightly by its coiled wire base, he leaned the tip of the needle right up against the skin. After a brief preparatory warning, he inserted the needle quickly—its tip piercing the skin several mm deep—directly above the cuticle of Mark’s index finger. The needle stuck in place.

“Feels like a bee-sting” he added. “Now, I’m going to turn the needle, and call it your acupuncture point.”

Leaving the needle inserted, he carefully turned it clockwise; suddenly, like a screwdriver tightened to its limit, the needle wouldn’t turn anymore.

“You see that,” he said. “That’s the qi grabbing on to the needle. Qi is the health energy of the body.”

The Wedgewood Surgery Center, located in Powell, OH, performs normal medical practices, with the exception of one day out of the week. On that day, Dr. Smith, normally an anesthesiologist, practices acupuncture treatment, the ancient Chinese medical technique that uses needles to stimulate healing points within the body. Radical Chinese medical treatment in central Ohio! What’s this guy thinking, one might ask. The prospects of success seem as likely as a Luce day-time Emmy. However, Dr. Smith has history in his corner.

Acupuncture is a bit of an anomaly. From a Western perspective, it is a wildly unique medical system of maintenance and healing, with roots stretching back several millennia. We would consider it “alternative medicine,” but if seniority has any weight in the scheme of things, acupuncture should certainly be considered the constant. Comparing conventional medicine in our country today to what our ancestors did five thousand years ago would be an attempt to veer across an enormous gorge of perpetual change and development. The difference is unfathomable. Acupuncture, on the other hand, maintains the same fundamental scientific beliefs and techniques today that its originators did when it was first discovered in 2696 B.C. under the reign of Huang Di, the third emperor of China. Personally, I find it relieving that the spirit of Huang Di might be born again today in the body of some Newark native and still be able to get his gimp knee treated traditionally.

Acupuncture has only recently made sporadic interjections into European medical treatments. The ancient Chinese medical technique that uses needles to stimulate healing points within the body. Radical Chinese medical treatments between all parts of the body, realizing the human anatomy as an intricate network of healing energy. This will be an attempt to veer across an enormous gorge of perpetual change and development.

Dr. Smith explained that the human body is a conduit for energy, Acupuncture entails stimulating pressure points on channels called meridians. Meridians run up and down the body in orderly, discernible patterns and govern the movement of the body’s healing energy, called qi.

Disease and ailment occur when our bodies are out of balance. When the flow of qi is obstructed, stagnant qi can lead to anything, from muscle soreness to cancerous tumors. Acupuncture attempts to clear the body’s energy channels, much like Drano would a clogged pipe. Traditional practice of the system has been used to remedy almost any ailment that can occur in the human body.

The general Western mindset views medicine in direct, linear, cause-and-effect terms. If someone has heart problems, then the doctor attends to the heart. The idea of stimulating a point in the index finger of the hand to relieve pain and soreness in the shoulder might seem implausible to us. But the practice of acupuncture does not picture symptoms in isolation. Acupuncture is indicative of the holistic way of thinking that pervades Chinese scientific thinking. It draws connections between all parts of the body, realizing the human anatomy as an intricate network of healing energy. After Dr. Smith’s introduction, Mark got undressed and put on a hospital gown. A nurse came in to take his pulse and measure his blood pressure. She also put a CD into a portable stereo on the dresser next to Mark’s bed. “This is some new-age Asian music,” she said. The title of the CD was SFLA, the artist Chris Theriault. It sounded like elevator music; light, overly synthesized, played over “natural” sound effects like birds chirping and water ripples. It was the kind of CD you would buy at a store called Earthly Designs, along with a stuffed Koala bear puppet and a bumper sticker that read “Save the Manatee.”

“It’s all about setting the mood,” the nurse explained.

During the wait for Dr. Smith, three of the nurses would pop in intermittently, offering Mark blankets or bed adjustments. One came in carrying a small box of liquor to show us. She announced it as tokays liquor. The box was a deep rouge, with gold borders and lettering. The printing on the side read “Shebiengejie.”

“Look at the ingredients,” she said with a knowing smile.

I read them aloud to Mark. The bottle contained a tonic derived from the testes and penes of snakes and dogs and the testes of cocks, dear, sparrows, combined with dozens of Chinese traditional drugs, all immersed in a sweet liquor.

Mark laughed. I read on. The box read, “for invigorating the kidney—young and replenishing vital essence and blood.”
When Dr. Smith inserted the needle at the base of the hairline to act as the meridian release point, Mark said it felt like someone had jabbed a syringe, *Pulp Fiction*-style, right into his forehead.

Regulating the function of the viscera improves your overall health. Often, just the act of drinking it can whet your appetite. The liquor makes you have ease of mind and go to easy sleep. It further makes you healthy and strong, full of vitality, and makes your sexual life perfectly satisfactory."Wow, I thought. Can Gatorade claim the same?"

"It belongs to Dr. Smith," the nurse explained. "A little stiff in my calf muscles, where the energy was running. I feel really relaxed."

"It feels like the sensation you get when one part of your body falls asleep. Except there’s a pulse. There’s a throbbing feeling in my calf."

Mark sat on the side of the bed. He looked utterly bewildered.

"I feel like I’ve woken up from a really delicious nap."

"I feel it," the nurse commented. "You’re experiencing a release of endorphins. Endorphins are morphines for the body. They should give you great sleep, great relaxation."

Mark proceeded to get dressed.

**Pretty soon I was tapping my foot along with the needle, and we were both in sync with the music. Just me, Chris Theriault, and Mark Coleman’s *qi,* snapping to the beat.**

Dr. Smith returned with a small package. Inside were "seeds," microscopic spheres coated in 14 karat gold. Seeds were used with a subsection of acupuncture called auriculotherapy, which is defined as a therapeutic intervention in which
The Glory that was Greek Denison three years after the Decision

S
ome might say that the Greek system created MoYO. Our first issue, published in October 1991, consisted entirely of discussions on all things Greek. Since then, the system and the magazine have gone their separate ways. We played around with theme issues for a year or two—one dedicated to college sex, another to hate crimes—and then developed the broad, always-on-the-fringe format with which most of our current readers are familiar. When the fraternities lost the right to reside in their houses in 1995, Mind of Your Own was silent on the issue. As for the Greeks, they remain as popular, unpopular, controversial, and controversial as ever. Still coming to grips with losing their houses, the Greek system is nevertheless a source of pride for a significant segment of the student body, while remaining a symbol of shame to others. Even with fraternity men actively integrated into campus living and dining space, the Greek-independent divide endures. And, as always, there are many students who are just plain apathetic. MoYO has decided not to be.

With this being the final year in which current students witnessed firsthand the events in 1995 which have shaped the past three years, MoYO returns to its dialogue on the Greek system. We want to look at the system as it is now in comparison to what it was when the trustees made their decision. We want to focus on the questions and concerns raised by the student body in ’95 and see how they have played out. Changes in the academic, social, and residential life are at the center of this consideration. And we have called a variety of voices—Greek and independents: first years and seniors; students and administrators—to address these issues. We may not have every voice represented because of space and time limitation. If any perspectives are missing, especially the reader’s, then don’t hesitate to respond. After all, you do have a mind of your own.

When asked if Michele Myers was justified in making such a decision, Raiser answered, “I’m sure she can justify her decision,” but mentioned that he himself could not. Raiser feels that the administration acted unfairly in making the decision. “The administration…took it upon themselves to decide for the fraternities how we should be and how we should act.” He suggested that the logical way to conduct any kind of decision process would have been for the administration to have sat down and to have talked to the IFC, and essentially to have worked together to arrive at an agreement upon how the fraternities should conduct themselves. However, Raiser stated that the president, the president, etc. did not work with the fraternities to achieve any of these goals. It appears that the administration proceeded at its own will, and eventually ended up evicting the men from their houses. Raiser agreed that much has come of this decision, and that, although the administration had planned otherwise, the changes have not always been for the better.

One might rightfully speculate that one of the goals of the decision was to improve the grade point averages of the fraternities as a whole. When asked if he saw a change in academics, Raiser did not feel that anything drastic had happened since the fraternities were moved out. “As far as grade point average, I’d say that, no, it hasn’t really changed.” Raiser added that he felt that, on the whole, GPA depended on the individual, regardless of whether that person was Greek affiliated or not.

A significant effect of the decision that Raiser detected is a dramatic change in the social activity of the University. Before the decision, Raiser noted, fraternity Row was “the premiere social scene” for many students, Greek as well as independent. “They have a place to meet. But nothing really ever came of it.” Interviewer Jean Lamont likes to date wrestlers who are on time. In 1995, billiard balls damaged President Meyers’s window in what was believed to be a response to Option Three.
Ode on a Second Grecian Turn

An interview with President Michele T. Myers

Interview By Paul Durica

In 1991 then Editor-in-Chief John Boyden conducted an interview with Michele Tolela Myers which became a highlight of MoYO's first issue. On November 5, 1997, Denison's eight president announced her resignation and her plan to assume the presidency of Sarah Lawrence College in the fall of 1998. Before she left, MoYO wanted to speak with her once more and to discuss the Option Three decision which will forever be associated with her presidency. With courtesy and good cheer, she readily obliged. Like my predecessor Boyden, I was able to ask many an interesting question but failed to learn the appeal of Jerry Lewis to the French.

MoYO: In the first MoYO interview in 1991, you stated, "I am not out to dismantle the Greek system; I want to strengthen it—I want to make it stronger and better." Now, three years after the fraternities have been made non-residential, would you care to elaborate on what the "egregious excesses of the system" were that necessitated the decision?

MTM: Traditionally, I was told that the Greek system—particularly on the men's side but probably on the women's side as well—was able to attract students who were campus leaders and that the majority of people who were influential on the campus belonged to the Greek system—the athletes, the campus government students, the leaders of organizations of all sorts—and that they were also pretty good students. I'm talking about thirty or forty years ago. It wasn't my experience when I came to this campus almost ten years ago. The members of the Greek system on the whole were not particularly prominent among the leaders of the campus, nor were they certainly prominent among the very good students on the dean's list. There were obviously exceptions; there were some terrific students who were members, but if you look at their grades, they were weaker. In fact, the grades reflected that. The Greek men as a group were always performing less than almost any other group you could conceivably consider on the campus. You begin to draw into an organization only the weaker members of the larger society, then you begin to create small groups in that society that are less productive and that are going to contribute less. Except perhaps to attention, and we began to get more many good students from schools who formerly would not send us good students. All of a sudden our pool has changed, and we are able to be more selective. We don't have to take everyone anymore, and that has made a big difference. We are now getting a cohort who are largely large and larger every year of very talented students, which means these are the students who are going to be the members of all the organizations we have. They are coming in better to begin with. We really have done away with that bottom of the pool which absolutely populated the fraternities. We don't have them on the campus anymore. We have a rating system in admissions, and little by little each year we are taking one rung out. The bottom rung doesn't get in anymore, and then the next bottom rung and the next bottom rung. Each year we have eliminated the weakest students. We were not in the position to do that before, because people were not sending us enough applications of good students, so we could not have the numbers and the quality we wanted. Now we can, and that is important. I don't think it's unrelated to the Greek situation. One thing alone explains why the improvements exist—there are better students who are now members of Greek organizations, and, therefore, they do better. The Honors program has also grown, and with that so many students who are members of the Honors program—the realization that these Honors kids are not different from anyone else. They are not nerds. You find them on the sports fields. You find them in Greek organizations now. You find them everywhere. The distinction between Honors students and non-Honors students is less because we have more people who are better. All of that combines to make the academic performance of all students better. We have had less attrition for academic reasons in the last two years which is a good sign. It's all related.

MoYO: Do you think the decision to have the fraternities and sororities rush in the spring accounts for some of the average GPA increases?

MTM: I think it's better. It helps take a more academic focus. The full semester is used to get them acclimated to the campus and to the academic demands, and when you perform at a performance of freshman, particularly men more than women, falls down when you have parties all the time, but not quite as much as it used to. It used to shift even more. The shift is still there. But it is not as dramatic, which is helpful.

MoYO: Extending the academic issue just a little bit further, do you see more academic and service-oriented fraternities like Sigma Epsilon as the way of the future for the at Denison?

MTM: I think Sigma is the way of the future. There's no doubt in my mind. The purely social busi- ness, if it is going to lead to the kind of excesses it once led to and the dangerous behavior—because there are people who die every year, either from hazing and rush- ing, abuse, alcohol, and accidents as a result of abuse of alcohol. I mean people don't kill each other deliberately, but people die out of accidents because there was a lack of somebody paying attention. It's just too dangerous. The risk of just a purely social emphasis I don't think anyone wants that anymore. The young people may want it, but...
I think my sense of accomplishment comes from believing that I’m leaving the place in better shape than I found it—more focused and with a sense of being really accomplished. I’ve worked on all along. Everything I’ve done, at least in my view, has been to build little pieces that all came to that central focus that we had to improve academic quality and academic reputation.

MoYO: Back to Option Three. What role did you play in its adoption in 1995? From what I can gather, the decision was largely made by the trustees, yet many students perceive you as having played a decisive role. How responsible do you feel for the decision to make the fraternities non-residential?

MTM: The decision was made on both sides. The trustees obviously made the final decision. It is a policy decision, all policy decisions are in the hands of the trustees. I’m a member of the board, so in that sense I anticipated in the decision process as well. I think my leadership in this respect was that I brought issues to the attention of the board and recommendations on how the issues should be dealt with. The board then discussed all this and figured out ways and strategies to determine whether we would do what I recommended or not. Ultimately, the impetus for making the change came from them. The decision came from them.

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MTM: Right. There are three that are still owned by the fraternities. Two of the three are being leased to us for a medium term—I wouldn’t even say a long term—and then one is not. They haven’t done anything. Sigma Chi has neither sold nor leased, nor will do anything. They are going to keep it. Kappa Sigma and Theta have leased, but they still own all. The others we own. From my perspective, I think the University would be better served if we owned them all or if we had really long term leases with the three others who don’t want to sell. On the other hand, if one of them or two of them decide to go it alone and can do it, I don’t see any problem. They won’t be able to use them to house their members. I mean that’s not an issue anymore.

MTM: I think it is far better now than it ever was. Maybe students see it differently. I’m not very sure. My sense was that when Greek system was operating, when the fraternities were operating—providing parties, unlimited alcohol to anyone who was invited—any social alternative that was tried failed. Even the students who were not invited to the fraternity parties didn’t want to go to anything else. They were just gnashing their teeth because they didn’t get invited. They were not willing nor able to create something else. Nothing else was going to match the aura of these parties. That’s what I think was so destructive, so it didn’t matter what we tried, what SAC tried, it didn’t matter how much money we gave them to do things. What they did had nobody show up. Social alternatives were non-existent.

MoYO: Speaking of supervised activities, how would you evaluate the University’s efforts to meet the social needs of the student body after the fraternities were made non-residential? One concern which was frequently voice when the trustees were making the decision was that social life at Denison would completely evaporate without the Row. Has SAC been able to meet the social expectations of the student body? Are there areas in need of improvement?

MTM: I think it is far better now than it ever was. Maybe students see it differently. I’m not very sure. My sense was that when Greek system was operating, when the fraternities were operating—providing parties, unlimited alcohol to anyone who was invited—any social alternative that was tried failed. Even the students who were not invited to the fraternity parties didn’t want to go to anything else. They were just gnashing their teeth because they didn’t get invited. They were not willing nor able to create something else. Nothing else was going to match the aura of these parties. That’s what I think was so destructive, so it didn’t matter what we tried, what SAC tried, it didn’t matter how much money we gave them to do things. What they did had nobody show up. Social alternatives were non-existent.

Once we took away the parties at the Row, then there was no other alternative but to have things on campus or else to do things off campus. Now the fraternities have tried to do things off campus, but things off campus cost a lot of money. You have to get buses because everyone is worried—which they should be—about driving, so it’s far more costly than doing them in a house. As a result there are fewer of those things. So really the campus social life is all there is. We’ve put in money, added a staff, and have empowered people to do whatever they wanted to do and to fix up the existing social venues so it would work. We are still fixing up the Roost, that’s not the best venue yet. There will be action there over time. The Bandersnatch took off. The Bandersnatch was renovated when I first came here. I wanted it to be a nice coffee house for people to use it as they are using it now. If you had ten people there, that was it. Now every night there is a nice group of people pretty much—from what I hear—good things happen there, fun stuff. And there’s no alcohol there. And it works really well. We need to find something to
Dan Fisher

SPRING 1998

Lenane on the Social Scene

Interview By Dan Fisher

One of the major concerns expressed by the student body was that the fraternities were made non-residen-
tial in 1995 was that social life at Denison would be more structured and more important by
the social scene. To address this concern the University began to promote the Student Activities Coordina-
tee and the Student Activities Office as the providers of social venues which would be open to all students—Greeks and inde-
pendents alike. To gauge the de-
gree to which the official body-
ies have met the social needs of the student body, MoYO dis-
patched a freshman reporter.

MoYO: As we all know, you’re leaving at the end of this semester. What do you hope your administr-
tion will be remembered for? What do you rate as your most significant accomplishments at Denison? Any regrets? Anything left undone?

MTM: I don’t have regrets. I feel very good about the last ten years. I think my sense of accomplishment comes from believing that I’m leaving the place in better shape than I found it—more focused and with a sense of being really focused on improving the academic program and the academic quality of the institution, that is really what I’ve worked on all along. Everything I’ve done, at least in my view, has related to that. It has come to that central focus that we had to improve acade-
mic quality and academic reputation. The decision about the Greek system was related to that. The deci-
sion on offering scholarships to talented students was related to that. The decision to become smaller initially, so we could at least not get worse was related to at least having a floor under which we were not going to drop—
I thought the floor was already pretty low, and I did not want to drop farther and then little by little moving that floor up as much as we could. I think we’ve done that, although we’re not as high as we would like but we are a long way from the very worst. People are not leaving in droves. We have shown them that we are building little pieces that all add up.

MoYO: How did you react to the large amount of criti-
cism from the alumni directed specifically at your presi-
dency?

MTM: It was hard. It was really hard. You see these people are very, very loyal, and some of them have been with the university for over twenty years. They are full of letters we received that year from alumni, and I would say that the vast majority of these letters are very negative and very personally negative. There is no way around what they say is true, like, “Oh, my god, these people are hating me. They don’t know me.” It’s not easy to take such criticism, but after awhile you become a little more immune. After I passed the first notebook, I would get very angry. But when the letters are very negative and very personally negative, that is what I feel best about.

My regret, if I have any, is that the students have had conflicting views about me all along, and that has always been distressing to me because I really like stu-
dents and care about students a lot. I do this business for the student body’s social ed-

Lenane: This is a difficult question to answer—mainly because I don’t like the word “success.” The Greek organizations play a role in the social life on campus and I would say a smaller today than before the decision in 1995 was made. I feel that Michelle Myers and Denisonians, including SAO, Res. Life, faculty, etc., are more diverse than ever be-

MoYO: To what extent, do you think, do Greeks control so-
cial life at Denison? Lenane: This is hard question to answer—mainly because I don’t like the word “success.” The Greek organizations play a role in the social life on campus and I would say a smaller today than before the decision in 1995 was made. I feel that Michelle Myers and Denisonians, including SAO, Res. Life, faculty, etc., are more diverse than ever be-

MoYO: Do you think that control has lessened since the big ‘95 fraternity residence decision?

Lenane: As a matter of fact, “the control” has lessened based on the fact that more organizations are sponsoring, and co-sponsoring events on campus—the diversity of pro-
graming is amazing! Furthermore, the Greek organizations sponsored events, such as Greek Week, are open to all students.

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Several years ago, like many people on campus, I found myself quite involved in the controversial decision about whether or not to make fraternities non-residential. At the time I was a faculty advisor to a fraternity, a member of a key administration committee on Greek life, as well as someone who was asked to write and present to a committee of trustees a report about some of the current issues surrounding the fraternities. In all of these roles I openly expressed my views on the topic. I spoke out in various meetings and assemblies. I wrote more than one letter to the editor in the Denisonian. For a variety of reasons, I was firmly in favor of fraternities being made non-residential. Obviously, some people like what I had to say and, obviously, some people didn't. Some of the more secret-society oriented among those people who disagreed with my position have even found it noble to direct a bit of petty reprisal, in the form of vandalism, against me and my family at home. So be it. What I've always found remarkable, however, about those turbulent days (by Denison standards) is what was rarely discussed seriously by people on either side of the fraternity issue. Namely, how would such a move effect the intellectual life of the college?

I had occasion to exchange views with practically every type of person who had a dog in that fight. You name it, and I heard all the arguments, pro and con. I especially heard from fraternity supporters the many predictions of gloom and doom if these organizations were to be made non-residential. You know, young people would stop enrolling at Denison; alumnae and academics would stop contributing money to the school; the social life on campus would dry up and blow away. Yada, yada, yada. What few people—especially those people who were not members of a fraternity—ever seem to have considered is that these organizations, in particular, had existed for eighty years. I'm sure I would have looked for another teaching job at a more socially varied school. Over the last three years, the changes that have occurred have had an exciting place to teach. My hope is that it will just keep getting better. There is still a lot of work to do in this arena.

I contend that we've all benefited from the structural change to the fraternity system. We've all benefited for the simple reason that Denison is a better academic college now than it was before. We are markedly more diverse. That development has brought its own turmoil, but it is a realistic and a necessary turbulence we wrestle with now. There are no pat answers in an open society. To walk out on another limb, I would contend as well that among the people who have benefited most from the change are fraternity men. They've been mainstreamed. They've been made part of the real social fabric of Denison. Of course, losing special privileges and status—unfair and undemocratic advantages—will piss anybody off at first. But, on the other hand, it can be quite an educational experience. Real learning makes difficulties. For fraternities to exist now as simply one more voice among many is the best intellectual thing that could have happened to them.

Kirk Combe is an Associate Professor of English.
Elephants on the Floor Above and Brats in the Basement

By Adam Williams

Everyone on the North Quad has them. They dwell in the basement. It's more pressing than the lady bug invasion and worse than the failing integrity of the buildings. The Orkan man isn't qualified to handle the situation nor the Granville gun toting bompkins. No not even our very own Denison University Keystone cops would be permitted to bungle these affairs. At night they creep out from dwell in the basement. As they come out the cracks in the wall. The row becomes familiar with their putrid, fermented excrations. The paper-mache dividers slightly offend their ceremonial chant: "Drink mother fucker!, Drink mother fucker!, Drink mother fucker!, Drink!" The bowls of triumph reach the moon when the task has been accomplished. North Quad is the unfortunate victim of a frat Brat infestation. Now for me to ad nauseam stereotype the entire male Greek system under the aforementioned terms would be an act of suicide to my definition. Frat Brats are those small factions outside the gentlemanship conduct of a respectable fraternity. These wanna-be Frats resort to coercion and territorial ape urges. The Frat Brats use the independents above their lightly rented room as an outlet for pent up resentments. Students in the study lounge interrupt the proceedings underground with excessive noise, so they say. Large objects disappear out of sight. Where the animosity between the upper stairs and the down stairs originated would conjure up more fingers to point.

Historically, three years ago. The fraternities lost their homes. The decision was made by the Board of Trustees. The Denisonian corresponded as a collective intelligence or, in more traditional terms, with random acts of violence. The Trustees detailed the terms by which the Committee transported Denison's resident Greeks beyond its boundaries. The Denisonian procured the honor of reasonable discussion of The Decision and properly placed it towards the rear of the April 24, 1995, Vol. 138, No. 20 publication. The resolutions of Ye Grande Olde Councile were presented in print. The Trustees further appealed to the populace by addressing the student body about the implications of their declaration and holding an open forum for students to express concerns. In other words, get the complaint out of your corpse now: what is done, is done.

Denison classmates no doubt valued the dialogue opportunity. A bonfire illuminated the tear drop and billiards balls cracked Michele Myers' windows. But that's over, and all is forgiven for the most part. So the question hidden within the abyss of nothingness of the remaining malcontent—affectionately dubbed Frat Brats—is what exactly did transpire in the minds of Ye Olde Committee? I asked Angie Sheets, Director of Fraternity affairs, to shed some light on the ambiguous Row Affair. My inquiries engaged facts, technical legal stuff and the Trustees declaration to remove fraternities from the Denison scene would warrant a better environment and a better scholastic institution. At least The Trustees believed in the good kind of intentions. Whether or not those intentions were achieved could only be determined by mass meeting, surveys and statistics.

For the most part Fraternities have continued on with standard operations: community services, Rush, Pledges, co-sponsored events, etc. But the sects of Frat Brats nevertheless persist to harass the innocent, as if their houses represented the core bond of the chapter. I have two words: penis envy.

Adam Williams is an angry, young man whose fashion sense is purely Johnny Cash.

New Kid on the Block

Sigma Phi Epsilon's president speaks

In order to gain a clear understanding of what Sigma Phi Epsilon is about, it is probably beneficial to take the Greek sexes. Non-campus Fraternities could not monopolize the social scene with the pull of an un sanctioned party palace. Security became a factor, as well, and the Denison controlled houses could better fall under the University's protection. Denison could be accountable for any mischief within the college's sacred boarders and, thus, lowered the risk of unruly conduct with the rep of Fraternity Row. The Board of Trustees truly believed that the declaration to remove fraternities from the Denison scene would warrant a better environment and a better scholastic institution. At least the Trustees believed in the good kind of intentions. Whether or not those intentions were achieved could only be determined by mass meeting, surveys and statistics.

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Do you feel the Decision benefitted the campus?

"I don’t know whether the decision to make the fraternities non-residential has been beneficial because I wasn’t here when they were residential—I have nothing to compare it to. As for what the Greek system offers the community—social options (yes, even for non-Greeks) and a bit of community service.”

Lyndsay Greer ’99

“No, the decision simply made parties move off campus, which could lead to drinking and driving or into dorm rooms which disturb the residential environment. I don’t know how much they offer besides enforcing cliques and stratification of our society.”

Jack Inman ’99

“I think the decision was very beneficial for the campus—the campus is much more integrated. It is a much fairer system in comparison to the sorority system.”

Jen Brickner ’98

“No. If they were in their houses, I wouldn’t have to deal with them in the dorms.”

Emily Williamson ’99

“By taking away its role as the dominant social scene on campus, Denison’s fraternity system has to decide how it will face its identity crisis. I think any opportunity to reflect on what an organization stands for should be seen as beneficial, not something to cry and moan about.”

Ben Sutherly ’98

“No. Before, there was a distinction between Greek and Non-Greek. Now, there’s not.”

Sara Jones ’99

Administration: harshly vindictive or sternly supportive.

“Trying to mediate the interests of Greeks and non-Greeks...trying to keep the students happy, but out of too much trouble. Trying to deal with a strong, yet in some ways (admittedly flawed system) that is very important to many people, including students and alumni.”

Lyndsay Greer ’99

“What type of access should the fraternities have to their old houses?

“They should install lawn jockeys, so they can pee on their own grass.”

Kari Hernquist ’99

“It’s only practical for them to be limited — people live in there. Maybe to their chapter rooms. I think they deserve something on campus.”

Erica Schmidt ’00

“I think they were falsely disillusioned that students would do better in the classroom if they weren’t in the frat houses. I hear this has taken away from the male bonding that occurs between brothers in the houses, being together 24-7, and that the GPAs have not changed at all.”

Laura Griffin ’00

“The administration is definitely not supportive of the Greek system, but I also wouldn’t say that they are harshly vindictive. They definitely want to change many aspects of the Greek system.”

Mark Stevens ’99

“Administration: careless crusaders against tradition and friendship provided by Greek life.”

Mary Beth Carren ’00

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“Only to their areas of the house. In an ideal world, dorms would be separate from frat activity because the residents and frat members often have differences.”

“Administration: careless crusaders against tradition and friendship provided by Greek life.”

Jen Brickner ’98

“Throw them in there and lock them up.”

Emily Williamson ’99

“If a fraternity house is still owned by the fraternity, they should have more access than they do. Personally, I don’t see why there is no drinking allowed in rooms that are owned by or rented to a group. We basically rent our dorm rooms, and we can drink there. What’s the difference?”

Mark Stevens ’99

“Administration: careless crusaders against tradition and friendship provided by Greek life.”

Jen Brickner ’98

“I don’t know. I guess not any because I think a lot of resentment exists between fraternities and current residents of the houses. Maybe it would be better to make a clean break from the houses.”

Jennifer Schenk ’98

“Authorized.”

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Any favorite “riot” or Row memories?

“Yeah. But I won’t tell you.”

Magnus Isaksson ’98

“I remember they couldn’t riot worth a damn. I mean, five of my friends could riot better than that. All they did was set a couch on fire and break some windows. That’s not a riot. Although it was funny to see Wyatt Holliday’s middle finger in the picture in the paper the next day.”

Laura Griffin ’00

“Probably not. One can go to parties or not go whether they are affiliated or not. I have two roommates, one’s a frat boy with a 3.91 and the other’s an independent who might not graduate this year.”

Jack Inman ’99

“I think SAC does a lot of great activities, but as a senior I have no social life—only books, exams, and research.”

Jen Brickner ’98

“It sucks because only 10 or so people go. How can you have a stupid dance with 10 people? Or do anything else?”

Nate Paine ’00

Does being affiliated have anything to do with academic performance?

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Laura Griffin ’00

“With my academic performance? Definitely no. I would have gotten a C in research methods if I was a Tri-Delt or not. My letters don’t help or take away from my ability to do statistics.”

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“SAC = Shitty Administrators Correction of past mistake.”

Mark Stevens ’99

“Unknown acronym—I’m not sure what can be done to make SAC more socially acceptable, but unfortunately there aren’t free kegs at SAC functions.”

Jack Inman ’99

“I know this stands for Student Activities Committee, but I can safely say that I will never attend one of their activities while I am a student here.”

Laura Griffin ’00

“SAC: your venue for Friday night fun or unknown acronym.”

“I really don’t even know what that means.”

Kari Hernquist ’99

“I’ve never done anything SAC. I know what it stands for, but I don’t participate.”

Emily Williamson ’99

“What’s it...Student Association...I don’t know what the hell...system.”

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Nate Paine ’00
Acupuncture

(Continued from page 11)

stimulation of the auricle of the external ear is utilized to alleviate health conditions in other parts of the body.

Dr. Smith referred to the human ear as one of several holograms on the human body. He used the example of a snowflake to illustrate the concept. A snowflake, he said, has six sides that appear to the human eye. The ice crystals that make up the snowflake have a similar shape; they have six sides as well. A snowflake is hexagonal at both its ultimate level and at its molecular level. The ice crystals are "holograms" of the snowflake as a whole. In a similar fashion, the ear is a hologram of the entire human body. There are points on the external ear that represent every other part of the body. Holograms are essentially anatomical microcosms.

The nurses showed me a diagram to illustrate the external hologram. On it was a human ear with the entire human body. There are points on the external ear that represent every other part of the body. Holograms are essentially anatomical microcosms.

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What could have possibly been on my mind that night? It seems as though Dave and I were going to a deli for a midnight snack. I admit, however, that occasionally after eating diner or truck stop, I feel like I have ended up like our parents... work five days a week, escape for an hour, and are scared to death of ending up like our parents. We love (almost) every minute of it, and are scared to death of ending up like our parents: working forty-plus hours a week at some job we hate just so we can afford our middle class tastes. No thank you. I want none of that. I think we all do.

MoYO: What does music mean to you?
KEVIN: Pure religion. It has very little rules or restrictions. Art is its own thing. I mean, there are certain aspects that are established, like an academic or professional one, but music is completely free form. It is a vessel that allows us to express ourselves. That is what music means to me. To be able to express oneself through music is a powerful experience. Music is a universal language that can bring people together and break down barriers. It can heal wounds and inspire change. Music is a form of art that allows us to connect with others and share our emotions.

KEVIN: I was tired of the idea of working a desk job the rest of my life and wanted to play music and write songs, so I started this band with Tito. We love (almost) every minute of it, and are scared to death of ending up like our parents: working forty-plus hours a week at some job we hate just so we can afford our middle class tastes. No thank you. I want none of that. I think we all do.

MoYO: What were your influences, both musically and non-musically?
KEVIN: I listened to a lot of U2, Pale Divine (a St. Louis band, whose guitarist now plays with Love Spit Love), the Velvet Underground, Jane's Addiction, and the Pumpkins. Recently I've moved more toward the epic shock rock/Indie rock like David Bowie, the Sex Pistols, Ani DiFranco, and Superchunk. As far as non-musically goes, I would have to say mixing literature and the fine arts. For example, I have artwork up in shows. Kind of like an Andy Warhol thing.

KEVIN: Which one of us would you say is the artistic genius and which one is the musical genius?
MoYO: With a band like MoYO, there really isn't a distinction between the artistic and musical genius. We all contribute to the creative process. The entire band is involved in every aspect of the music, from writing and arranging to performing. Each member brings their own unique perspective and style to the table, resulting in a cohesive and dynamic sound. In a sense, we are all the artistic and musical geniuses, working together as a team to create something greater than the sum of its parts.
open mind and an open heart, a lot
of work and persistence. But on
the other hand, I write songs that I
don't know what's going on in them,
which makes them mystical and
spiritual in a sense. I believe that art,
any form, but music especially,
speaks to everyone. Sometimes it's
even like therapy.

MoYO: Do you have anything go-
ing besides your band?
KEVIN: Since “WMF,” I've writ-
ten about two-hundred and fifty
songs. I've also managed other
bands and produced quite a bit. I love
to write, and I've written an actual
mass that I call My Lonely Shrine.
I've written a play, poetry, and done
a lot of painting.

MoYO: What was the worst thing
that happened to you at a show?
KEVIN: We had a new band open
for us who had only practiced twice
before the show. They absolutely
rocked, and when we got out there
and played, we ended up doing ter-
rible. It was a little embarrassing.

MoYO: Have you met anyone that
has really stuck out in your mind?
KEVIN: My closest friends, the
band Perch from St. Louis, the list
goes on. I think it's cool that these
small bands are your heroes one
minute, and you want to be them.
The next minute they're working on
your album, and the next minute
you're playing better shows than
they are.

MoYO: What do you see yourself
doing in ten years?
KEVIN: Still creating music, writ-
ing, doing artwork for galleries, and
producing bands. I want to be mar-
rried and have some girls with my
wife, no boys. I want to be living out
life in a Christian community, wak-
ing up, kissing my wife and daugh-
ters good-bye, and going to work.
And making more money than I do
now.

MoYO: Do you have anything go-
ing besides your band?
KEVIN: Since “WMF,” I've writ-
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songs. I've also managed other
bands and produced quite a bit. I love
to write, and I've written an actual
mass that I call My Lonely Shrine.
I've written a play, poetry, and done
a lot of painting.

MoYO: What was the worst thing
that happened to you at a show?
KEVIN: We had a new band open
for us who had only practiced twice
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