

Day^A at the Fair



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A little trivia for y'all. What does Todd, your friendly neighborhood columnist, have in common with '70s rocker Rick Derringer?

While he was jammin' to "Rock 'n' Roll Hoochie Koo," back in Section G, Row 47 of the Omaha Civic Auditorium on the 3rd of March, 1975, I was conceived in that gray area somewhere between the second and third verse.

By the time "I didn't ask to be born" started pumping through the Marshall stacks, the wonders of nature and cell division began to happen, thus securing my destiny as a child of rock 'n' roll.

Is it any wonder the first album I remember owning was Queen's "Flash Gordon" soundtrack? The second I laid down that bit of vinyl on my Fisher-Price record player, I knew rock was the savior of the universe.

There's also the "Eye of the Tiger" 45. Amy, my kindergarten sweetheart, still anguishes about the suffering she endured being forced to listen to "Survivor" for hours on end. Maybe that's what caused us to break up before the start of the first grade.

Who needed girls? I was up in my room pounding away on my Muppets drum kit and slicing and dicing the plastic strings of my Smurfs guitar, all while wearing Underoos on my head. Had to be a mysterious rock star, you know.

By second grade, I outgrew the Underoos and had transformed into an 8-year-old carbon copy of my idol, Billy Idol, complete with the spiky hair.

Shoot, this column isn't supposed to be about my rock 'n' roll childhood, but about the merits and foibles of the fair known as Lilith.

Well, I say poop on Lilith Fair and everything about it. According to my good friend, the anonymous dictionary with the missing cover, Lilith was a female demon or vampire who lived in desolate places. Or, in medieval Jewish folklore, she was the first wife of Adam before the creation of Eve, and when that happened, she became a night witch who terrorized infants.

Lilith sounds a lot like several ex-girlfriends of mine.

At the turn of the millennium, the last thing I imagined would happen is a music festival as janky as Lilith Fair. It just as easily could have been called "M.E.N. G.O.O.D." (Musical Experience for the Neurotic Girls Of Our Day.)

If the future were like the "Mad Max" movies, the Apocalypse would have wiped out all the pansy Lilith chicks, and I wouldn't be writing this, I'd be out doing apocalyptic shenanigans.

The biggest problem I have with Lilith Fair isn't the idea of women getting together for a summer music fest. I'm cool with that. But the lineup sucks.

If Lilith Fair were the XX chromosomal equivalent of the "Monsters of Rock Tour" of many moons ago and featured bands such as L7, Babes in Toyland, the Lunachicks and Tribe 8, amongst others, I'd be there in a second, scared for my life at the prospect of being trampled to death by a herd of she-males.

The fear of death is what makes going to a concert fun in the first place.

I went to my first rock concert when I was fifteen. Metallica. Omaha Civic Auditorium (yes, the one in which I was conceived). Black Album tour. I went in a boy and came out a man. No, I didn't get laid. I survived the mosh pit, barely. I left with fried retinas from the explosions during "One" and was deaf for a week.

A year later, I nearly lost my toes after a day of moshing in a Lollapalooza pit wearing sandals.

Having learned a painful lesson, I picked up a pair of steel-toed Sears Diehards for serious shows, such as Tool or White Zombie, and they've done their job keeping my feet safe.

At Lilith Fair, Diehards would be out of place unless they were on the feet of a Feminazi hell-bent on getting busy with Ani DiFranco backstage.

The closest I came to Lilith Fair was seeing

Lineup at Lilith Fair only suitable for wimps who don't rock

the Dave Matthews Band. I do like their albums, but the concert was so lame. Of course, this was just a week removed from seeing KISS from the eighth row, so that may have had something to do with it.

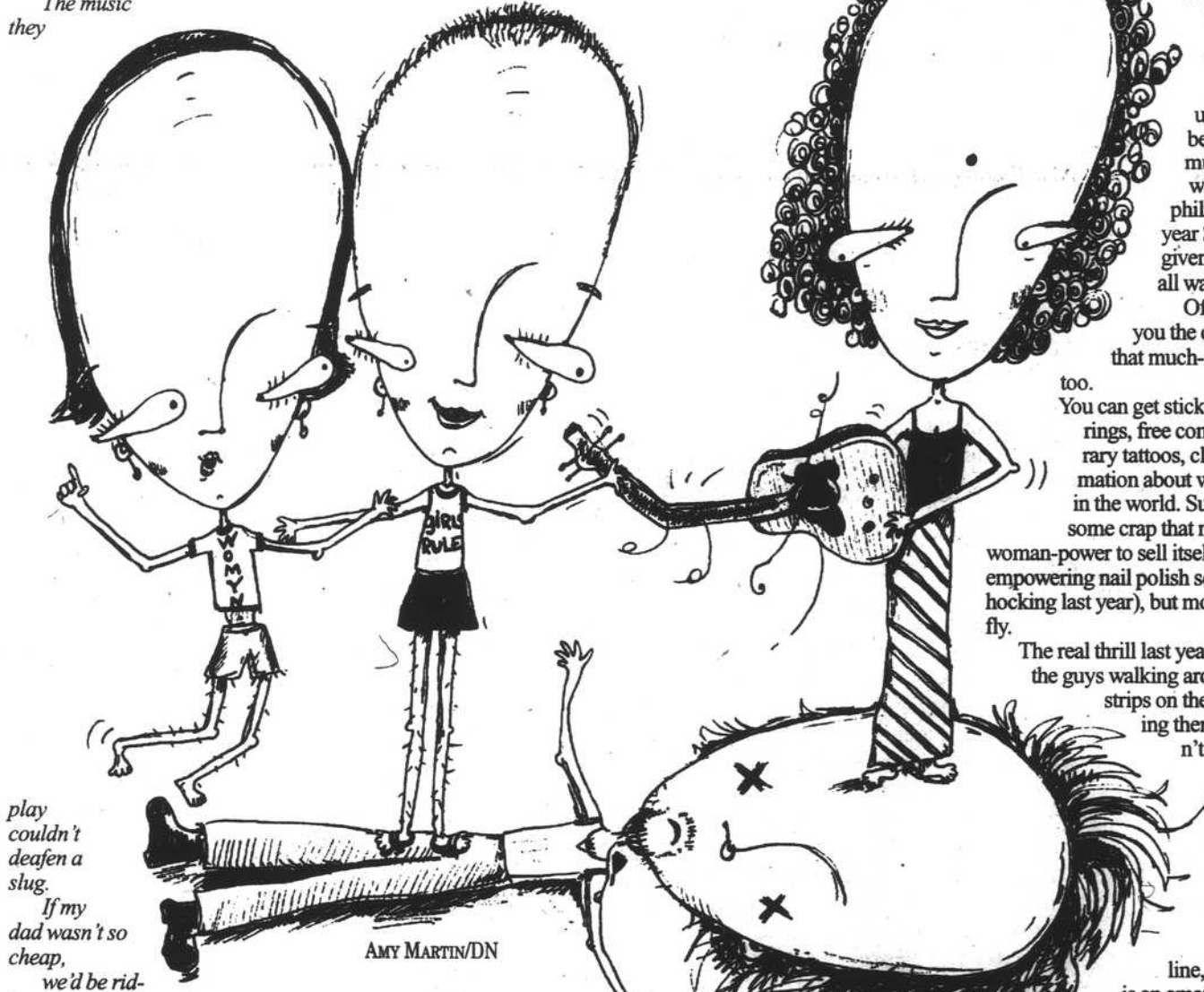
If going to a concert is on a list of your summer activities, please, do yourself a favor and don't go to Lilith Fair. It will suck. What's the fun in sitting around listening to whiny songs about the horrors of boys and out-of-tune acoustic guitars? That's not even a concert, it's more like a self-actualization session with 10,000 people.

Please people, don't go to Lilith Fair. Even if you hate rock, I guarantee you the gala and spectacle of a rock show alone will be so much better than the sheer horror of being in the presence of women who've got more issues than National Geographic.

To close out this little ditty, I've composed a song to the tune of "Iron Man" by Black Sabbath, the original metal band. Enjoy. But before you do, Ieva, the DN's Latvian Princess, turns 20 this week. Wish her a happy b-day.

"Lilith Fair"
Start growing your leg hair.
We're going to Lilith Fair.
Strap your Birkenstocks tight.
We're gonna hold each other tonight.
Don't bother bringing ear plugs.

The music they



play couldn't deafen a slug.
If my dad wasn't so cheap,
we'd be riding in a nicer Jeep.
Lilith, Lilith Fair,
we're going to Lilith Fair.
Flowers, flowers everywhere.
Gonna put some in our short hair.
By the human rights booth
is a cute girl by the name of Ruth.
Is she straight or is she bi?
It's hard to tell with those hairy thighs.
On stage is Ani DiFranco.
Last night, she was on Jay Leno.
Lilith, Lilith Fair,
we're going to Lilith Fair.
At the end of the night
Ozzy swooped down and established his might.
Now all the girls are dead.
That's what they get for having no sense in the head.
Lilith, Lilith Fair,
Don't go there if you dare.

Concert experience shatters stereotypes of Lilith Fair festival

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I decided recently that I'm a bit of an oddity (everyone who knows me is now uttering a collective "duh" right about now). I say this because I love practically every kind of music there is.

Except polka.
And Joey McIntyre.
I can rock out to Nine Inch Nails or mellow myself with the Cowboy Junkies. I love listening to Bach and Vivaldi. I won't apologize for digging Ice Cube and old school Public Enemy. Hell, I'll even turn on Froggy 98 every once in awhile (thanks for the influence, my East Campus compadres).

Because I am such a worldly gal when it comes to music, it should come as no surprise that I love going to concerts.

I love the vibe running through the crowd when the band is about to take the stage. I love the opportunity to get a contact high from tokers nearby. (Well, not so much. That actually gives me a wicked stomachache.) I love convincing myself my life would be complete if only I had that band's \$30 T-shirt in my



who make up Lilith? I'm guessing "probably not" again. Not every performer there is your typical acoustic guitar-strumming alterna-chick.

If whacked-out stereotypes are stopping you from taking the opportunity to enjoy some of the most amazing women in music, you should really let go of them.

Last year, I got to see Me'Shell Ndegeocello, Sarah McLachlan, Mary Chapin-Carpenter, Natalie Merchant, Sinead O'Connor and the Indigo Girls all in one place. There were local Kansas City artists on the Village Stage, and Martina McBride and Sister 7 on the Second Stage. That's a lot of talent for a measly 50 bucks.

Tour organizer McLachlan has made a point to mix up the venues enough to include a little something for everyone. When you go, you're going to see bands you don't recognize, and you wouldn't normally ever hear. This is a good thing, y'all. The real fun of living life is to expose yourself to new things, after all.

When you go to the Ozzfest tour, you know what you're gonna get. You're going to get a bunch of whacked-out freakies busting it up in the mosh pit. That's so 1995.

Lilith mixes it up by not just being a concert. It's music combined with messages and philanthropy. Last year \$700,000 was given to charities when all was said and done.

Of course, they give you the opportunity to buy that much-needed tie-dye,

too. You can get stickers for your car, rings, free condoms and temporary tattoos, clothes and information about what's happening in the world. Sure, there's always some crap that monopolizes on woman-power to sell itself (like the self-empowering nail polish someone was hocking last year), but most of it is pretty fly.

The real thrill last year was seeing all the guys walking around with Biore strips on their noses and hearing them say, "But I didn't know it'd take 15 minutes to dry!"

Man, am I a tool!" Oh yes, there are antics all around.

Bottom line, though, this show is an amazing display of what women in the music industry can do. It's not about how many lesbians you can spot in the crowd or how many straps you have on your Birkenstocks.

It's about supporting local artists and getting to see some of your long-time favorites. It's about educating yourself on important issues. It's about contributing to worthy causes, like RAINN (the Rape and Incest National Network). It's about the road trip and the fun you can have while you're rockin' out to Liz Phair or Tracy Bonham.

All in all, it's a rad concert experience. Someone who's actually been there thinks you should round up some friends this summer and go to Lilith. It'll start in July, probably in Canada. (Hey, great excuse to go to Canada, eh?) It's a good time for not too much money, so dump your prejudices, and let yourself groove with some talented chicks.

Oh, and uh, if you're offering a free ticket, I may know a taker. ...

drawer.
I love the whole idea of the concert, especially the ones you get to road trip to.
My official mantra when it comes to them is that you should get out and go to as many as you possibly can. (Oh, and try to go for free if you get the chance. I hate to say it, but it's probably easier to do this if you're a girl. Sorry, guys.)
This is why I've made it an official tradition to trek to Lilith Fair every year.
Now, this is the time when I help you to get all of the stupid, pre-conceived notions about this show out of your educated heads. Pay attention.
I don't own any Paula Cole CDs. I'm not a member of the National Organization for Women. I have a boyfriend. I shave. For the last two years, I've taken the road trip to Sandstone with a guy. So, do I fit your stereotype of the typical chick who goes to Lilith? Probably not.
Missy "Misdemeanor" Elliot, Queen Latifah and Lauryn Hill all performed on the tour last year. Do they fit your stereotype of the women