

# AGGIELIFE

THE BATTALION

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## Where have you gone, you QUEENS OF ROCK

### Finding women in rock 'n' roll bands is easier said than done

By Nishat Fatima  
THE BATTALION

"Ever since rock 'n' roll came in to being, it's always had men at its forefront," said Imran Khan, a junior chemistry major. "Over the years, there has always been a serious lack of contribution from women, which makes it harder for the new generation of female rock fans to break the mold and become a rocker."

Khan said due to the lack of role models in the rock music business in the past, many women don't consider taking a crack at rock 'n' roll. He said he believes certain aspects of the industry are a discouragement.

"The alternative radio stations will play bands like The Calling and even Eminem, but they have never given a chance to female artists like Michelle Branch or PJ Harvey. They seem to be unwilling to add girls to their play lists," Khan said.

Craig Worrez, a sophomore mechanical engineering major, said rock music has bowed to trends in the music industry.

"Rock music has become all about the image that's portrayed, and women don't usually fit that desired image," Worrez said. "As the situation stands today for guys, as long as you look alternative, then you are accepted into the industry."

There are many theories and speculations as to why rock music remains a male monopoly even in the new millennium. Some students, such as Khan and Worrez, said they believe the absence of women in alternative music is due to the precedent set in the past and faults within the industry. On the other hand, some believe, on some level, women are the ones to blame.

Shannon Lynch, a sophomore biology major, said the way young women think has a lot to do with their absence in the rock music scene.

"Rock music is all about aggression and rebellion, traits that are definitely looked upon as being unfeminine," Lynch said. "Most girls think that they have to be as attractive and feminine as possible. I think that a lot of girls would rather shop and put on make up than take time to learn how to play the guitar."

In a recent article on mtv.com titled "Girl Groups: Why They Can't Keep It Together," Angelo Ellerbee, a music industry veteran and owner of the publicity firm Double Xposure, said women in the rock industry tend to lack a serious set of priorities.

"Everyone is at the stupid box thinking glamour, diamonds, cars, money," Ellerbee said. "We cannot think that. We must think about the work ethic: 'What is it going to take to win?'"

Debbie Ridgeway, a junior psychology major, agreed with Ellerbee.



JOSH DARWIN • THE BATTALION

"Once women make it in to the industry, their focus seems to shift. A lot of them tend to get caught up with the aspects of glamour and fame, rather than keeping it about the music," Ridgeway said.

While many contend that women rockers are to blame for their absence on the rock scene, some musicians believe their male counterparts are at fault.

Rachael Williams, a junior biology major, is the lead vocalist for the alternative band Throwaway People. She said men who are in rock music make it difficult for women to break in to the rock music industry.

"Being a female musician myself, I've noticed that when you start off there are already so many men in the industry, and most of them don't want to make room for women," Williams said. "This is definitely a big discouragement."

Nic Noble, a sophomore general studies major and guitar player of alternative rock band Supercal, also thinks men play a major role in determining women rockers' success. Noble said when he and his

bandmates were looking for musicians, they considered having a woman but decided to keep the group all male.

"Most existing rock musicians are guys, and they think that it's easier to work with other males," Noble said. "It's so much easier for a bunch of guys to sit down and work through their differences. When you throw a girl in there, it tends to throw things off balance."

Noble said he believes women can rock out just as well as guys, but they have to possess a certain attitude to deal with the pressures of rock music.

"When a girl is with the same bunch of guys day in and day out, she has to learn to cope with them, and vice versa," Noble said. "It's like a marriage and it takes a lot of effort to make it happen."

Noble said the audience for rock music has a lot to do with the lack of women in rock bands.

"The majority of listeners of rock and alternative music are guys, and they won't listen to female rockers unless they can respectably pull it off," Noble said. "I think that in most cases, it's harder for guys to rock out to music that has female vocals because it can almost be seen as unmasculine."

Some critics go a step further and say society is to blame.

Cassie Papp, a sophomore mechanical engineering major, said society's expectations for women's behavior is a far cry from the expected behavior for women rockers.

"Rock music is all about attitude, and most girls don't have the right mind frame," Papp said. "They are taught that they have to be a certain way in society. Because of that programming, a lot of girls don't even consider a career in rock music."

Dr. Don Albrick, a professor of rural sociology, said the music industry is similar to most aspects of society.

"All segments of society have been dominated by males, and the alternative music industry is no exception," Albrick said. "We have been taught that men have to go out there and make accomplishments in every field."

While multiple views concerning the shortage of women rock musicians are contradictory, many Aggies say a combination of many different factors continues to make rock music a man's domain.

"This isn't the kind of issue that has a definite answer," Ridgeway said. "I think that only time and experience can answer why the industry works this way. You just have to go out there and explore different aspects of the rock industry and see how different bands are to get an understanding of why so few women are in alternative music."

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