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# Hanks: At SXSW, love of Duran Duran was still going strong

Anna Hanks, Local Contributor

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When I was in junior high school, I could have told you anything about the band Duran Duran. With crucial information gleaned from Tiger Beat and Rolling Stone, I could have explained how the band was formed, when their next record was coming out, and which song of theirs I'd been dancing to that morning.

Yet, when the band played a show in Houston in the early-1980s, I didn't bother asking my strongly religious parents if I could go. If it wasn't an outing organized by the church or my family, it wasn't likely to happen.

When the other girls came to school sporting their new Duran Duran shirts and talking excitedly about the show, I pretended that I didn't care and hadn't wanted to go.

So when Duran Duran played Stubb's during South by Southwest, you can bet your vintage Walkman I was there.

"It's more important for you to see Duran Duran than it is for me to see Duran Duran," my husband said before leaving me at the venue. Luckily, I had a gazillion friends there. During the show, I lent earplugs to a girlfriend who'd also missed seeing Duran Duran when she was 13 and sang along to all my old favorites.

I realized how long I'd been wanting to see the band when I saw LCD screens flickering in the darkness while people were capturing digital images of the band playing "Girls on Film." While the opening notes of the tune recall shutter sounds, most modern cameras don't make that noise.

The next day, I was hungry for more Duran Duran, so I went to see a panel where the band was being interviewed by John Norris, who once played their music videos on MTV. I sat as close to the stage as possible.

Before the panel started, I ended up making friends with the people around me. Bizarrely, nearly everyone there seemed to be exactly my age. This doesn't happen very often once you leave school, so it was a little eerie being in a place where everyone had a similar point of reference. Yet I shouldn't have been surprised.

As Rob Sheffield pointed out in his memoir "Talking to Girls About Duran Duran" the band was an obsession for a lot of women who grew up in the '80s.

In my quest to get close to the interview, I'd plopped down next to Kitty Amsbry, who had a Duran Duran tattoo on her bicep. When I admired it, she pointed out another. When I asked her what it said—because I can't read text that small without my glasses—she laughed with what I chose to think was a hint of recognition. From her, I learned that love of Duran Duran is still going strong on the Internet, and that there are lots of "Durannies" who've bonded online.

Until this past weekend, I'd had no clue that the Duran Duran fanbase was still a going concern. Turns out, I wasn't the only one

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who'd spent time away from the band.

"By the time I came back, all the 13 year-old girls had grown into very beautiful fans," said Roger Taylor, the band's drummer, who'd left the band for a few years. At least I'm pretty certain it was him, as the band members don't look precisely like the posters in my childhood bedroom.

I was still on a Duran Duran high when I went to the free Bright Eyes show on Auditorium Shores on Saturday night.

Since I was late to the show, I ended up squeezing through a crowd of people who were mostly half my age. In my quest, I nearly stumbled over a girl who was sitting on the ground. Instinctively, I asked if she was OK, or if she needed a medic.

When the people around her said she needed help, I made it my priority to find it. I commandeered one of the guys behind the soundboard barricade into making some phone calls, then literally sprinted my plus-size self around Auditorium Shores, searching for medical help.

Sprinting back with the medic in tow, I realized exactly how long it had been since I'd done any sprinting. Clearly, I'm not 13 years -old anymore. That's a good thing.

Somehow since I was 13 - and too covered to ask my parents about going to see one of my favorite bands - I seem to have turned into the sort of person who has no qualms about making a fuss when it's necessary.

To paraphrase Duran Duran, somehow I've grown up -- not just into a very beautiful fan -- but into a responsible grownup.

Hanks lives in Austin.

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2:30 PM on March 29, 2011

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12:47 PM on March 27, 2011

It was such a pleasure to meet you, Anna! It's great to see people reconnecting with the band. I invite any and all wayward Duranies to join us at [www.gimmeawristband.com](http://www.gimmeawristband.com) :)



foolintherain

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8:59 AM on March 27, 2011

This band belongs in the hall of fame, and I am glad that they are sticking around to ensure that their haters will

pay their proper respect. I missed this show and wish that I hadn't.



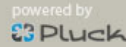
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