

#32: one more thing before I get on with my future



As I stand poised atop the narrow precipice of graduation, staring down at the bottomless pit that is my future as a Clark graduate, several realizations come to mind. The first is that the preceding metaphor was very awkward. The second is that beer can indeed be considered a fifth food group, but only when you're at the point where the first four are Ramen, Twinkies, caffeinated water and Store 24 hot dogs (2 for .79). The final, and maybe most important realization that I have reached while contemplating my future in the real world and my past as a college student, is that nothing ever really changes.

I like Clark a lot. This may come as a surprise to those of you who remember the article giving "25 reasons to leave Clark," but I have enjoyed my time here more than I could have ever expected. Looking back, I have seen many signs of change, with little actual advancement in any direction. The Pub became Grind Central, as beer proved once and for all that it is more popular than coffee. The specialty store became uh, a student lounge, I think. DAKA, which sucked, became Bon Appetit, which has been work-

ing up to sucking for the past two years. The International Cafe (in truth, before my time) became Leo's Deli and then the Higgens Bistro, but has yet to prepare a sandwich in less time than it takes to read *The Sunday Times* from cover to cover. The French Quarter became some other coffee place, and then a View of the World, after students began to wonder why they would ever buy coffee when there was free coffee available in the same room.

UPNRP (Urban People are Not Respectable People, or something to that effect) has replaced the previous ITTNT (Ignore Them and They're Not There) plan. Clark now has a radio station that is audible to anywhere between 10 and 15 rooms in Dodd (depending on the wind), but we lost a TV station in the process. For better or for worse, *The Progressive* became *WheatBread*.

As far as the Clark administration goes (and they rarely go as far away as I would like), David Milstone has become Associate Dean of Students, which must be a promotion because his former title apparently required him to forcibly remove stray cats

from Clark dorms. Former Dean of Students Catherine Maddox-Wiley has been replaced by Denise Darrigrand, who assures me that it is a policy of hers, "to never lie to the student press." Fred Greenaway is now the Provost, whatever the hell that means. President Traina now ignores students from a house that is closer to campus.

"What about Worcester?" you ask, a quiet voice from the back of the room.

"Ahh, Worcester, City of (Paved) Dreams. You know what Worcester needs?" I ask, continuing this stream way past appropriate. "I don't know, but it sure needs something."

Worcester may not be much better, but it has changed a lot. During the year I got here (1994), the gangland Galleria became the Worcester Common Fashion Outlets, and the Icecats were playing their inaugural season. The hot club in town was a place called Bowlers, and neither the Espresso Bar nor the Palladium were open yet. Medical City was an idea, nothing compared to the ditch it is today. Main Street Brewery wasn't open yet either, but it also had yet to go out of business, which it did several months after opening. Al and Harry's became Kamanitzas which became Scarlet O' Hara's. Tarragon's begat an overpriced Mexican joint called

Shorty's which begat an overpriced Mexican joint called Sioux City Grill which is now a vacant lot on Park Avenue. Tortilla Sam's appeared and moved. Lloyd's burned. And remember when The Centrum was orange? What was up with that?

Some things haven't changed. Clark's student body is still equal parts weirdos, rich foreigners, pseudo-jocks, and uptight politically-correct people. Student Council is still a joke. There's still crime in the city. People still wonder about IDRISI and the library. They're still talking about building an Environmental School, and Atwood is still crumbling. The food still sucks. Randy Mack is still here.

The point of this little retrospective rant would have to be that, no matter how things appear, Clark is virtually unchangeable. Give up now. Go out and buy that Sony Playstation with the money that your grandmother gave you for Christmas, and spend the rest of your time here playing Twisted Metal 2 in your Maywood suite with the 5 other people who could tolerate your presence in Wright Hall. Because no matter how much you try and change things, people are still people, and Clark is still Clark—a decent University with problems that will not easily disappear. •

