

The Mechanics of new media (science) writing

Articulation, Design, Hospitality, and Electracy

Student Podcast: Twins Transcripts (Grace and Debbie)

[music intro]

Grace: [0:04] Hi, you're listening to Grace...

Debbie: [0:06] ...and Debbie on River Rats...

Grace: [0:10] ...Dr. Rivers' new media science podcast.

Debbie: [0:12] On today's episode, we'll explore ongoing twin research at Saint Louis University.

[0:17] [music]

Dana: [0:22] We looked around, and as my sister said, we noticed that quite a bit of it focuses on genetics or the scientific factors of twins. While that research is very important and relevant for twins, it doesn't really talk about who twins are as individuals. We want to focus more on the interpersonal and, as you said, humanistic nature of it, and that led us to studying what we are studying for our dissertations.

[0:44] [music]

Debbie: [0:46] Dana and Catherine, the twins quoted there are right. I feel like twin curiosity is a bit misguided.

Grace: [0:52] What do you mean? They have the same DNA, they look alike, and they can read minds. What's so misguided about that?

Debbie: [1:00] Well, throwing out the whole reading minds part. Here is an example: [music] it's summer, we're in my favorite Pittsburgh amusement park, Kennywood. There's signs, cotton candy, crowds, when suddenly someone comes up to me and asks...

Grace: [1:13] Did you feel that?

Debbie: [1:14] All I feel is confused.

Grace: [1:16] What happened?

Debbie: [1:17] My twin, Diane explained. Someone had poked her, then ran up to me and asked, "Did you feel that?"

Grace: [1:22] Wait, why exactly would someone have gone up to a stranger, poked her, and then ran over to her twin and asked if she felt anything?

Debbie: [1:30] Well, around that time there had been a show about twins where they did freaky experiments. They blindfolded them, they'd hold a rose under one twin's nose and the other would say, "Oh I smell the sweet fragrance of a rose." They'd prick one twin with a thorn, the other would say, "Ouch," and so on. I think that this is what turned everyday citizens into scientists, and my twin and I from amusement park goers into unknowing test subjects.

Grace: [1:56] Okay, maybe that is a little misguided, but there's research that goes beyond the freaky, physical aspect of twins to their relationships. Dana and Catherine, PhD students and twins at Saint Louis University are exploring the *who* of twins.

Debbie: [2:10] Who they are, how they affect one another.

Grace: [2:12] Also what they are, which so many others focus on.

Debbie: [2:15] That is so much more interesting.

Grace: [2:17] Well, come on, you're a twin, don't you think you're a little biased?

Debbie: [2:20] Not really; relationships, who we are, who we will be, those are the big questions, the interesting questions.

Grace: [2:28] Not, "Did you feel that?"

Dana: [2:30] My research focuses on, during development of twins in college. Then also their college experiences, benefits and challenges that they may have. My main data collection tool in my research is qualitative interviews. I'm meeting with twins, and sitting down face to face and having interviews with them. I'm having conjoined interviews with the twins, sit together and speak directly about the same topic, and then I'm following up with separate interviews. Those are private. When one twin leaves the room [sound of door closing on audio interview] and they discuss the topic, privately, and then the other twin comes, and she or he has their own private interview. Basically data collection method, I'm now using Chickering's (1969) Theory of Student Development. This is a very well-known and -regarded theory in higher education...

[3:15] [background music]

Debbie: [3:17] Quick note for those who are not familiar with higher education theories: Chickering broke student development into seven categories.

Grace: [3:23] (1) developing competence, (2) managing emotions, (3) moving through autonomy and toward interdependence, (4) developing mature interpersonal relationships, (5) establishing identity, (6) developing purpose, and (7) developing integrity.

Dana: [3:43] Focusing on this first one, it's called managing emotions. I'm studying the third one, which is called moving toward autonomy, toward interdependence. Then, the managing of mature relationships.

Grace: [3:55] See what she is doing here? Qualitative interviews.

Debbie: [3:59] We are talking face-to-face conversations, not blindfolds and poking people.

Grace: [4:05] And what we are discovering isn't something that no one can relate to.

Debbie: [4:07] Not just twins' college development, but anyone's development.

Grace: [4:12] You got an A?

Debbie: [4:13] You got four hours of sleep?

Grace: [4:15] But you joined four clubs?

Debbie: [4:16] Your roommate likes country music?

Grace: [4:19] How do you manage it all? Who do you turn to?

Debbie: [4:22] That's what she is exploring. The gel and development of students who have someone to celebrate with and console with them.

Dana: [4:30] I'm studying twins in all levels of college: undergraduate, graduate and then professional education, such as twins in PhD programs. I think what I will find is that it varies...

[4:39] [background music]

Dana: [4:40] Twins who are sophomores or juniors, may be just beginning to develop some of that autonomy, or having it such as a unique experience. Twins who are in master's or PhD programs, they may be a little bit more interdependent. However, that could vary and depends very much on the twins themselves, because everyone is different.

Grace: [4:57] Her preference itself is very different. Dana goes to great lengths in her research.

Debbie: [5:02] Examining transcripts page by page, ensuring the twins' confidentiality.

Grace: [5:07] Revealing parts of herself...

Debbie: [5:09] Her scientific-ness, her considerate-ness, and even her relationship with the twins.

Grace: [5:14] Through to destruction.

Debbie: [5:16] Twin discovery and development: she is her research!

Grace: [5:20] Here is what we are talking about.

Catherine: [5:21] You take each transcription and go page by page, and looking through each page, and try and determine what are they trying to say? What are the twins trying to say? From there I may develop patterns and themes. From the themes, they will obviously relate to findings.

Debbie: [5:37] I was intrigued, because you code them and then you go on to say how you will destroy *everything*.

Catherine: [5:43] Yes, audio tapes. That's right.

Debbie: [5:46] Do you just have a giant shredder just waiting for all of these things? I'm imagining a barrel and there's going to be some great fire, and that's going to happen with all of the files. [fire sound effect]

Catherine: [6:00] That's usually how the audio tapes are destroyed, in fires since it doesn't leave any trace.

[6:04] [music: sample of "Video Killed the Radio Star," The Buggles]

Debbie: [6:06] That was Catherine, researcher of twins, and twin to Dana.

Grace: [6:11] This whole process...

Debbie: [6:12] Burning stuff for science...

Grace: [6:15] Is very interesting, but their togetherness...

Debbie: [6:17] Their relationship...

Grace: [6:19] Is even more interesting.

Dana: [6:20] We both completed residency projects, which served as pilot studies for our dissertations. She completed one and I completed one. We each interviewed two sets of twins, similar samples: attending college together and twins in the same careers. We went through the finding process and the destroying of the materials. [fire sound effect] That's how we destroyed them was through fire, they're gone.

Grace: [6:45] We caught on to the bond they were forming conducting their pilot studies, and the work itself reflects that positive relationship.

Debbie: [6:54] Dana interviewed two sets of twins in her pilot study, undergrads in chemistry and PhD students in education who spoke of the support of the relationship.

Grace: [7:03] Emotional *and* social.

Debbie: [7:04] Just imagine: someone who knows not only what you're going through, but what you've gone through.

Grace: [7:10] That's the level that makes these twin relationships so interesting.

Debbie: [7:14] What we want people to know about twins: the immense support.

Grace: [7:18] It's probably a dream to have academic support, too.

Debbie: [7:20] No, not cheating.

Grace: [7:22] Especially when life gets even more stressful.

Debbie: [7:24] Wait, more stressful than college? No!

Grace: [7:28] Like in higher education when the support becomes even more important.

Dana: [7:31] Sometimes when you're at the higher levels of education, such as the masters level, that you have full-time parents and people coming back for the master's degree, but they're working full-time jobs. Those people don't always have the time to form study groups. By having a twin, they were always able to have a study group with one another. That was something that they found to be very important when they studied for their exams, their thesis exams, their comprehensive exam, and their PhD program, which is something that we also talk together in our program, that they found it very helpful to have that support, and synergistic. I think that it is a two-way street that we have very positive influences on each other, that we're able to help one another, support one another.

Debbie: [8:15] Confession, we're being a little sneaky.

Grace: [8:18] That "synergistic" part, that's the researchers describing their relationship, not their subjects.

Debbie: [8:24] This synergy isn't something only twins can experience, Grace and I just had our own twin moment.

Grace: [8:31] The following is a dramatic reenactment.

Debbie: [8:33] Grace: "We should go back to that one part about *who* twins are, not *what* they are."

Grace: [8:38] Debbie: "I literally just started writing about that. Oh my gosh, we just had our own twin moment, see?" It's just about spending enough time together.

Debbie: [8:48] That's our point. By exploring this *who* of twins, we can discover what makes their relationship so special.

Grace: [8:55] *Not* biology...

Debbie: [8:56] Same DNA, look alike...

Grace: [8:58] But chronology, spending time together.

Debbie: [9:00] Someone who spent all that time with you, since birth.

Grace: [9:04] It's impossible for any other relationship to be like that: same experiences, same time.

Debbie: [9:09] It's unique and strong, but still something that's not exclusive.

Grace: [9:12] Like mind reading.

Debbie: [9:13] Anyone in a long relationship can relate to a lot of what happens in a twin connection.

Grace: [9:19] Those whose solution is synergy can help whomever's relationship.

Dana: [9:22] If you don't want to be friends with someone, then you don't have to be friends with them. You don't have to make that time to interact. However, in a twin relationship, growing up and going through the same school and elementary school, we had to resolve differences because we were around each other quite often without our family units. The issues had to be dealt with. It couldn't be something you could take or leave, we had to learn how to come up with solutions, and resolve any minor differences that occurred.

[9:44] [music: sample of "Video Killed the Radio Star," The Buggles]

Debbie: [9:49] Yes, I remember that people would ask me, "Do you and your twin ever fight and not talk to each other?" I'm like, not really, it makes no sense.

Dana: [9:57] That's right.

Debbie: [9:59] It's like you're always around each other so it would be kind of annoying if there's one person always around you who always stops talking to you. [crosstalk]

Catherine: [10:08] Yes, that's it exactly.

Dana: [10:09] I think it's important for some twins—not all twins, we don't want to generalize and say all twins have a good relationship and are supportive of one another and friends with one another because some twins don't have those types of relationship. However, for our relationship, I think we both view each other as best friends. We're very good friends with one another, and I think that's important, because if I lost all of my other friends tomorrow I would still have Catherine. [10:34] [laughter]

Grace: [10:36] Catherine.

Catherine: [10:37] I agree with you Dana.

Debbie: [10:39] They're bonding even as we interview them.

Grace: [10:43] They chose to use the pseudonyms Dana and Catherine, and now they're laughing at using fake names.

Debbie: [10:48] I'm surprised that they even remembered.

Grace: [10:50] Me too.

Debbie: [10:51] Made warm fuzzy memory and everything.

Grace: [10:54] But they did, barely, and now they're bonding over it.

[10:58] [laughter]

Dana: [11:00] Yes because I know that she will always be there. She's not going to leave and desert me come good times or bad times. Instead, if I lost all of my other friends, she would be there.

Debbie: [11:09] I think we can all relate to that: friendship.

Grace: [11:12] ...And it's definitely conflict.

Debbie: [11:14] But there's still something about this *who* that goes beyond even those examples.

Grace: [11:17] It's at once something pressed on them by their surroundings—being in the same family, social experiences—and by choice.

Debbie: [11:24] Like Dana said, she views her twin as her best friend.

Grace: [11:28] Twins. So similar, so one, some people honestly think that they can read each other's thoughts.

Debbie: [11:34] Welcome to part two, "The Who of Two."

Grace: [11:38] Which continues to ask the twin relationship question being addressed by Dana and Catherine, PhD students at Saint Louis University.

Debbie: [11:48] ...And twins.

Grace: [11:49] We explore the exploration of twin relationships.

Debbie: [11:53] The scientific research and its qualitative focus.

Grace: [11:56] Not poking park goers.

Debbie: [11:58] And we looked at the results to research.

Grace: [12:01] Some keys to close twin relationships, like conflict resolution and best friendship.

Debbie: [12:06] But what about the context of these relationships? How do twins fit into society? How do twin relationships affect *other* relationships?

Grace: [12:16] Being a twin is exciting, but there's a lack of understanding of twin relationships by non-twins that complicates close twin-ships.

Debbie: [12:23] Like stereotypes.

Grace: [12:25] Stereotypes make it difficult for anyone to fit in.

Debbie: [12:28] Twins are no exception.

Grace: [12:30] Some people...

Debbie: [12:31] Stereotypers!...

Grace: [12:33] See twins as *dependent*.

Debbie: [12:34] *Having* to be together to thrive.

Grace: [12:37] Whereas some twins are actually *interdependent*.

Debbie: [12:39] *Choosing* to be together to thrive.

Grace: [12:42] Here's what Dana has to say.

Dana: [12:43] I think that it is a generalization in society. Many people think that twins are dependent on one another, and that if one twin doesn't do something, the other one won't be able to since they are dependent on one another. I like to think of us as interdependent. That we're both able to—and we do both function individually. You have your research and advisers and I have mine. We both took our classes. I think we're very both interdependent of one another. However, I do believe that is a stereotype of society.

Grace: [13:13] *Dependent* is a very negative stereotype to fight.

Debbie: [13:16] People would be taking away from your very you-ness.

Grace: [13:20] They assume you *need* someone else.

Debbie: [13:22] To be with your twin would be seen as *weak*.

Grace: [13:25] But consider this: two percent of the population...

Debbie: [13:28] Small...

Grace: [13:29] Or 4.5 million people...

Debbie: [13:32] That's quite a bit...

Grace: [13:33] In the United States are twins.

Debbie: [13:35] So, many people suffering from misunderstanding.

Grace: [13:38] So, they created their own society to fit into.

Debbie: [13:42] "Twinsburg!" Imagine this: there's sun, cotton candy, and, yes, scientists too.

Katherine: [13:47] There's a town named Twinsburg here, it was founded by a set of twins in the 1800s. This festival occurs annually, and it draws about 2,500 sets of twins, triplets, multiples.

Dana: [14:03] That's sets of twins. 2,500 sets. That's quite a bit. When we first attended, this is something that they have every year at the festival, they have onsite twin research, and we went to the pavilion. We looked around and as my sister said we noticed that quite a bit of it focuses on genetic or the scientific factors of twins.

Debbie: [14:22] Great. So, when twins aren't being criticized for being too similar, they're being experimented on.

Grace: [14:27] Well, science can help. Remember Dana's scientific research? Chickering places interdependence after autonomy and developing mature relationships.

Debbie: [14:37] For some, now, there is still a negative stereotype around twin interdependence. Society expects us to be independent.

[14:45] [music: sample of "Independent Women," Destiny's Child]

Debbie: [14:51] Except for some special cases, like marriage.

Grace: [14:54] This inability to accept twin interdependence by some in society leads to problems for twins.

Debbie: [15:01] They've got to marry, too.

Grace: [15:02] There are some twins, though, who have already created a oneness. Then, an outsider one tries to enter that relationship to forge a oneness with one twin.

Debbie: [15:13] One plus one plus one equaling one.

Grace: [15:18] I hate math!

Debbie: [15:19] Well if you thought that was bad, consider this. Thanks to women putting off pregnancy until they're older, and the greater use of fertility drugs, twins are on the rise. We need to understand twins better, because if we don't, we'll get more cases of twin misunderstanding.

Grace: [15:35] When that happens, like with marriage, we have major problems. Or pickles.

Dana: [15:42] We've known twin brothers who've gotten into a little bit of a pickle. In this situation, a set of twin brothers that one of them was married; one of them was not. He was single, and he would always come over to the house and be there. The wife didn't really enjoy that, didn't appreciate having two people there, because I can image she felt she was married to two of them. It can be a little bit troublesome, because it was a twin relationship and then trying to compare it to the wife, and it wasn't exactly the same and it was not the same and it won't ever be the same, because this person shares your birthday and has been with you through everything—you have quite a life history together. The wife obviously may not know all of those types of things that had happened prior.

Kate: [16:20] I'm Kate. I am a fraternal boy/girl twin.

Michael: [16:28] My name is Michael. I am a fraternal twin.

Grace: [16:32] What, more twins?

Debbie: [16:33] This pickle between twins and spouses isn't an isolated incident. Kate, a fellow new media scientist, told us about the balance between marriage and twin-ship.

Grace: [16:43] Here she is talking to her twin brother, Mike.

Kate: [16:46] No one's ever going to know you. No one's ever going to have my back. I genuinely mean this: no one is ever going to have my back the same way that you do.

Michael: [16:53] Right.

Kate: [16:58] I know I was very conscientious about finding somebody to bring into this whole family dynamic, because I want everybody to get along, and I don't want anything to change the relationship that I have with my brother. I know some of the rockiness that we had with your spouse at the beginning definitely made me think conscientiously about how I wanted James to come and integrate with that. I think it definitely is a different dynamic when you have a twin, thinking about getting married. You can't have somebody come in to that twin relationship that's going to disrupt it, because I didn't want to lose my twin. I didn't want there to be friction between everybody.

Debbie: [17:37] Friction. Not a good word when we talking about marriage. Twins want to keep their bond. With marriage, they want to bring their spouses into that bond.

Grace: [17:47] But the spouses need to be ready.

Debbie: [17:49] To have open minds.

Grace: [17:50] Dana explains.

Dana: [17:52] A married twin had created somewhat of a triangle between his brother and his wife, and he was in the middle. He didn't know what to do about it.

Catherine: [17:59] A difficult place to be in.

Dana: [18:02] Yes. It takes a lot of managing and negotiating.

Catherine: [18:05] It depends on the people, how understanding they are in accepting them.

Dana: [18:10] Fortunately, we've been very lucky. They've been very accepting and very open-minded, and that helps.

Debbie: [18:17] Our new twin friend, Kate, has one such lucky relationship.

Grace: [18:21] In Kate's case, her husband, James, and her twin, Mike, were friends before any wedding vows made them brothers.

Debbie: [18:28] Which might have made James' transition into their twin relationship a little more effortless.

Kate: [18:34] I'm here with James, my husband.

James: [18:37] With a twin of your spouse, in regards to having to put in effort, I don't think I ever had to put in effort in the form of it being arduous. It was something that was easy because we had a friendship that was outside of the scope of anything to do with my spouse, and that's made it easy.

Kate: [19:00] Would you have felt alienated or felt like there was difficulty in our relationship if my brother didn't like you and wasn't so congenial with you?

James: [19:14] I think that would have been much more difficult, yes.

Debbie: [19:17] Negotiating and open-mindedness.

Grace: [19:19] We expect it with the one you're dating or married to. But with someone else, too? Someone who is close to the one you are close to?

Debbie: [19:27] To make matters more difficult, you can't understand the twin closeness because, in most situations, you are not a twin.

Grace: [19:34] Or, maybe you are a twin, but you and your twin aren't as close.

Debbie: [19:38] You don't understand the relationship.

Grace: [19:40] But you do know that there is this other person taking away your love interest. Someone always around when, oftentimes, you want to be alone.

Debbie: [19:49] You can imagine more situations.

Grace: [19:52] And you can't understand why.

Debbie: [19:54] Yes, there's family. But we're talking about a romantic interest. Typically, those people get precedence.

Grace: [20:01] But when they don't get that level of attention...

Debbie: [20:03] ...and they can't totally grasp why...?

Grace: [20:05] We have a problem.

Catherine: [20:07] From this festival, and there was a set of male twins. They were about 50 years old, and he was dating a lady, and the lady told him to dump his twin brother. She didn't want him around anymore. He knew her for a couple of months. He's known his twin for 50 years. That's quite a challenge for him to just dump his brother.

Dana: [20:30] It depends on the person, the person who you're involved with. How they view twins in general.

Debbie: [20:36] We need to understand the twin relationship and its closeness, and its need for acceptance.

Grace: [20:42] Isn't there enough love to go around?

Debbie: [20:45] Hopefully. We need to open some minds of society to get fewer situations like the marriage triangle.

Grace: [20:52] It's not that some twins can't love their spouses as much. Those twins just have another very rich relationship that they have to maintain.

Debbie: [20:59] Kate explains.

Kate: [21:01] In marriages, they talk about your spouse being your other half. But in a twin relationship, you spend the first 20 some years of your life feeling like your twin is your other half. Just because you get married doesn't mean that that other half goes away. I bet that's why there's that conflict, because the other half of yourself is both your twin and your spouse. You can't have two halves overlapping, and it just doesn't feel right to cut it down to a quarter each.

Debbie: [21:40] In this twin relationship, maintenance is sometimes too high maintenance for others to accept.

Grace: [21:46] It can end relationships altogether.

Debbie: [21:48] It's so different, society has to reconfigure their idea of what a romantic relationship is.

Grace: [21:54] The goal to find the one, now involves the one who had a two.

Debbie: [21:59] As seen in our examples, it's hard, and sometimes impossible for some people to share so much. Even if the non-twin of the relationship accepts the twin, others in their web of interdependent relationships might not accept the twins' interdependent relationship.

Catherine: [22:16] There is a set of twins that reside in Michigan. One of them was dating a lady who lived about an hour north of the city that the twins reside in. He was quite serious with her. He was ready to move in with her and establish a life with her, and that was OK. He negotiated all of this with his twin brother. The brother thought it was great and to go for it, figure out what happens. However, it did not work out because the lady's stepson did not like the twin and his twin brother. He wasn't very accepting of that: so, it dissolved.

Dana: [22:50] It dissolved very quickly. That's what made it hard for him. It was just over. He had been dating her for a long time, and that was very hard. He came to the twin festival, and everyone could tell that he was quite sad.

Debbie: [23:02] Dissolved very quickly.

Grace: [23:04] Some twin relationships are so strong that they dissolve other relationships.

Debbie: [23:08] You never imagine a healthy, strong relationship causing such stress, and literally ending other relationships.

Grace: [23:15] It's so difficult, so painful.

Debbie: [23:18] These cases of some strong twin relationships colliding with romantic relationships. How do you deal with that sadness?

Grace: [23:25] Again, we have to re-examine the *who* of two.

Debbie: [23:28] The strong twin relationship, which causes so many problems for others, is the answer for twins.

Grace: [23:35] They can turn to someone who will not leave them just because they disagree.

Debbie: [23:39] And that's amazing.

Grace: [23:40] That level of dependability, security: twin-ness.

Dana: [23:44] We try to reach a compromise with one another. Most of the time we can. If we can't, then for the sake of moving on, we'll just say, "I'm going to look at it this way." Or "I'll do what I want to do, you do what you want to do," and you move on. Then, it doesn't become something that really overshadows us. That might be something that both of you can relate to. If you do have disagreements with one another, sometimes those can be a little impactful in life. They can be a little stressful, those things. You fight with a best friend, or fight with a boyfriend or fiancé, it can be hard. It's nice to know that with one another, if we do have any disagreements, that they are resolved, most often, quite easily. That's something I think you mentioned with Dianne [Debbie's twin sister], that we are able to resolve those and move on. You just put them behind you and move on for the better sake of everything else.

Grace: [24:29] I've heard of, "You know, just move on," but it seems like they really have a system here.

Debbie: [24:33] The close twin relationship can give you a level no other relationship can. An ability to truly accept one another and move on.

Grace: [24:43] No bitterness, no conditions. Just unconditional love.

Debbie: [jokingly crying] [24:46] So beautiful.

Grace: [24:48] We know this isn't every twin relationship.

Debbie: [24:50] But imagine, the unique opportunity, the unique compatibility, to be so completely close.

Grace: [24:57] And this understanding builds on so many levels.

Debbie: [25:00] We said this before, but biologically...

Grace: [25:03] ...with the same genes, maybe some twins are literally born with compatible personalities, talents, interests.

Debbie: [25:08] ...And chronologically...

Grace: [25:10] ...with so many shared experiences for so long...

Debbie: [25:13] ...that builds amazing understanding.

Grace: [25:14] From that understanding, honesty.

Debbie: [25:16] From honesty, trust.

Grace: [25:17] They know what the other is thinking and feeling. They don't need to be able to read each other's minds.

Debbie: [jokingly crying] [25:24] They can read each other's hearts.

Grace: [25:26] Stop it! Let's check it out.

Dana: [25:27] I would say that we're both very honest with one another. I don't know if there's anyone else that would be as honest with you as I am. I don't think there would be anyone that wouldn't be. If I can't be honest with her, I don't know if there would be anyone else that would be that honest with her, just because we have so many experiences together. It's a very open relationship.

Catherine: [25:50] In addition we know each other very well. That's somebody you can confide in and seek honest feedback from, just because you know each other so well and you have so much history with one another.

Kate: [26:03] I think because there's that shared experience with those people, I will always go to my brother before my husband, when it comes to specific emotional things. Obviously, a hug from my husband is just as comforting as a hug from my brother. But, part of it is just that life history together. I imagine that's true for somebody who has another sibling who is not a twin. But part of it is, so much you just don't have to say with your twin, because you just know.

Grace: [26:34] A strong twin relationship means that someone is there for you.

Debbie: [26:37] Always.

Grace: [26:38] It's at the same time inclusive and exclusive.

Debbie: [26:41] Twins can form such a close bond with one another, while also being shut out by society.

Grace: [26:47] Ideologically, society is against twins.

Debbie: [mockingly] [26:50] Besides that whole mind reading thing.

Grace: [26:53] Society says, "Be independent."

Debbie: [26:55] Twins can be *interdependent*.

Grace: [26:58] Society says, "That's weak."

Debbie: [27:00] Those twin relationships are *strong*!

Grace: [27:02] Society says, "OK, you can be interdependent...in a romantic relationship."

Debbie: [27:07] Twins can develop strong *romantic* relationships while also maintaining strong *twin* relationships.

Grace: [27:13] Society says you must choose. Twins break the mold of society, and society tries to break twins.

Debbie: [27:19] But the immense support [jokingly crying] twins give one another.

Grace: [27:23] Get it together! The support twins give one another is brighter than any shadow cast on them from misunderstanding and pain.

Debbie: [jokingly crying] [27:31] They have a unique set of problems, but they can handle those with their unique strengths.

Grace: [27:37] ...And festivals.

[27:28] [music]

Debbie: [27:40] In Pittsburgh and Twinsburg, people physically experimented on twins...

Grace: [27:44] ...with varying degrees of scientific-ness.

Debbie: [27:46] In St. Louis, twin researchers, Dana and Catherine, qualitatively test twins to get to the bottom of the "Who of Two."

Grace: [27:55] Who are twins as a relationship?

Debbie: [27:57] Through the examples...

Grace: [27:59] ...and the relationships, themselves...

Debbie: [28:00] We saw how much of a strong twin bond reflects aspects of siblings and friends. All of their shared experience wraps them into an ultimate trust burrito of honesty and love.

Grace: [28:13] Sometimes, though, this relationship conflicts with a society that can't stomach it.

Debbie: [28:18] As curious as we are to see if twins can feel each other's *physical pain*, we never really examine how they handle *emotional pain*.

Grace: [28:26] When society rejects you, you could have someone to turn to. When others can't understand, someone understands.

Debbie: [28:33] They have a twin, a sibling, a best friend. We would like to thank Diane [Debbie's twin sister] for starting us on this trail of twin research.

Grace: [28:43] Thank you to Dana and Catherine for sharing their research with us.

Debbie: [28:45] Thank you to our contributors: Kate, for her interviews; James and Mike, for participating; and our entire New Media Science class for their insight and expertise.

Grace: [28:56] Thank you for listening to this edition of River Rats. Tune in to the different New Media Science Writing stories to find out what other researchers at SLU [St. Louis University] are discovering.

Debbie: [playfully] [29:21] Enjoy the banjo.

[29:06] [music]

Grace: [29:13] Here's one last fun fact, and it concerns marriage.

[29:15] [laughs]

Debbie: [29:20] So, Grace could not quite manage through that fun fact. If identical twins marry identical twins, their children will legally be cousins, but genetically, will be siblings. What?!

[29:33] [music]