

The best way, the only way, is lazy way

If you're going to be lazy, you have to be efficient and fast.

That's the household doctrine of Shirley Conran who wrote the international bestseller "Superwoman" for every woman and man who hate housework. And that covers a multitude of haters.

I interviewed Ms. Conran recently when she was in town to promote her book. Anyone who believes life is too short to stuff a mushroom and would rather lie down on the couch than sweep under it is a writer after my own heart.

I've just finished reading "Superwoman," which is the how-to-hate-housework book floor-scrubbers everywhere have been looking for. And if you're one of the few who feel most comfortable with a broom in your hand, this book could change your life.

"What is a home?" Ms. Conran queries. "A home is a myth. It's a no-see Golden Gate Bridge, — one day long, never-ending cleaning job that nobody notices until you don't do it."

"No matter what they claim, no one can tell you how to make doing the



"Around the edge"

by Jackie Klein

dishes a sensuous experience. But until the women's movement comes up with a mechanical housekeeper, somebody's got to do the dirty work."

"SUPERWOMAN" is a book about housework and how to avoid it. It's the basic minimum of household information you can get away with as quickly and painlessly as possible.

To get the best out of the book, it's important to know your limitations, allow for your weaknesses and ignore the impossible milk and honey standards of the unnaturally perfect television housewife.

Ms. Conran's system is to run her house the way she runs an office. If you lost two vacuum cleaners and \$240 worth of laundry in one year, she advises, it's best to keep track. Save bills because computers never make errors in your favor, she suggests, and keep work lists.

Ms. Conran files every valuable scrap of paper except money in her kitchen drawer. She makes another list of things that nobody will care much if she doesn't do.

The following is her list of don'ts to save time and money:

- Don't wax floors — seal them.
- Don't make beds. Use sleeping bags.
- Don't ever buy anything that needs ironing.
- Don't shop for food when you're hungry.

THE FOLLOWING includes some of her do's:

- Do be carefully inefficient. Start running out of things but never toilet paper.
- Do get your family to tidy up after themselves or stand a cardboard box under the kitchen table and dump ev-

everything you find in this lost property office.

No one's going to strangle you if the furniture is dusty, Ms. Conran assures. Your man doesn't love you because you can tell the difference between whites and whiter-than-whites. Your children won't remember you with love in 20 years because your floor didn't have waxy, yellow buildup.

Ms. Conran hires herself as a clean-

ing lady from 9 to 11 a.m. every Saturday. When her time is up, like the cleaning lady, she stops. Leftover work has to wait till next Saturday morning or forever.

If you're working outside the home at a full-time job, Ms. Conran suggests, give the house a daily lick and spit instead of a daily smorgasbord of cleaning. When she does dig in, she uses her own home-made household cleaners.

House prices will continue to rise

By MARY CONNELLY-SZCZESNY

Playing the real estate market is harder than playing Monopoly.

And right now, buyers and sellers are trying to figure out the rules of the game.

"I think there is a state of confusion at the present time on the part of both buyer and seller," said Realtor Frank Kuhn. "The buyer is asking, 'Is now the time to buy?' and the seller is trying to become psychologically adjusted to the leveling off of prices."

Steeplly rising mortgage interest rates and a tight money market have left their impact on the Birmingham-Bloomfield real estate market, according to Kuhn.

Kuhn made the comments in an interview following the announcement that he was chosen as the 1979 Realtor of the Year for the Birmingham-Bloomfield Board of Realtors.

The board serves a market area which extends into Birmingham, Bloomfield Township, Bloomfield Hills, Southfield, Troy, West Bloomfield and Farmington Hills.

SINCE AUGUST changes have occurred in the real estate market. Homes are on the market longer, there is more financing through land contracts or second mortgages and there is a slackening of skyrocketing home prices, Kuhn said.

He continues to advise people to



FRANK KUHN

get into the market. Housing prices are likely to continue going up and mortgages can be refinanced if interest rates head down next spring, he said.

"Buying a home is probably one of the biggest investments the average family will ever make," Kuhn said. "It has been historically an outstanding investment and hedge against inflation."

The current 14 percent mortgage interest rate (slightly higher with a

less than 30 per cent down payment) "has had a strong impact" on the Birmingham area market, Kuhn said.

"PRICES ARE leveling off. We are not seeing the acceleration in the value of homes due to inflation as we had over the last two years," he said.

Home sellers continue to profit from their home sales but are not always ready to accept the recent changes in the market, he said. "If you are the seller, I don't think you're prepared to accept this leveling off philosophically when your neighbor's home sold a number of months ago for a very attractive price," Kuhn said.

"We're also investigating and reverting to other means of financing such as land contract sales and financing through second mortgages."

"In a traditional market where there is a good supply of money with what is accepted as reasonable interest rates, generally the majority of sales are assumptions or general financing," he said.

"Because of the higher interest rates resulting in higher mortgage payments, some people are either temporarily out of the marketplace or have to set their sights slightly lower in the price of homes they are considering in order to qualify with the lending institutions and/or be able to afford the monthly payments."

"At the present time homes are taking longer to sell as opposed to the same period last year but they are still selling well," Kuhn said. "I personally feel there are some good buys out there."

"In the 10 years I've been here, I've never heard of one house selling for a price less than it did six months or a year ago."

KUHN WORKS at Chamberlain Real Estate, Bloomfield Hills. He has been in real estate since 1969. He sees the current market conditions as temporary.

"I think we're in a temporary holding pattern before the next strong upsurge," he said. "The prices of food, petroleum and construction costs continue to go up. It's natural to assume the value of homes in this marketing area will have to again go in a vertical direction."

"If interest rates start to decline from the present level of 14 per cent or even higher in the next few months, people can refinance their homes without incurring much penalty."

"We've gone through tight money markets before. In the last cycle interest rates were 10 to 11 per cent and they went back down to eight and nine per cent and people refinanced their homes generally with the same lending institution," he said.

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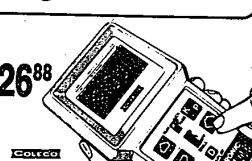
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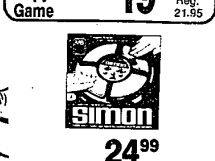
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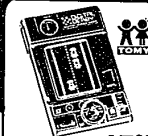
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