

What's wrong with wrinkles?

Older women put the question to merchants and advertisers

By Shirlee Rose Iden
staff writer

"What's wrong with wrinkles? Nothing at all if you're one of the guys. A kiss of death for women."

That's the conclusion of the Michigan Media Project, a group of feminists that has advocated for women for 17 years.

"Since 1973, we've had a series of programs and conferences to get women to be more comfortable on television," said Israel, media project coordinator, clinical social worker.

"Now we've become aware that

comfortable or not, it's impossible to find a substantial presence of older women on TV. In fact, it's a question of the invisibility of these women in media."

Israel contends that in scrutinizing more than 200 magazines, the committee found that female gray hair and wrinkles were no wrinkle at all. "A large percentage of Cadillac cars are purchased by older women, but they're never shown in those ads," said Israel. "And we looked over dozens of catalogs and found no older women. It's as if women over 35 don't wear clothes."

"FIFTY WOMEN over 50" was organized to bring this inequity to the attention of advertisers and merchandisers as well as the consuming public.

Marge Norman of Southfield, who claims she never noticed ads until recently, is part of the committee whose bottom line purpose is to educate consumers.

Included are metro area women and others prominent in many fields all over the country. They are writers, therapists, civil rights advocates, sociologists, pathologists, art dealers, judges and others.

Lt. Gov. Martha Griffiths is a member as are Betty Friedman, writer-journalist, Mildred Jeffrey, Wayne State University Board of Governors; Erma Henderson, president, Detroit Common Council; Selma Goode, president, Michigan Federation of Older Women; Harriet Alper, writer; and Patricia Xill Burnett, portrait artist, among others.

Norman, a widow, who ran her husband's insurance business during his final illness, says the media project plans a kick-off event to end the invisibility of the middle aged women and put her back in the picture.

"We'd like to see a Marlboro man who's a woman, and put the grand-

ther back into family scenes. If you really think about it, he's always missing. I'd like to meet him," said Norman.

The Michigan Media Project will open up the question of "what's wrong with wrinkles?" at a 7 p.m. Tuesday, March 3 program at 5000 Town Center, Southfield. Reservations are requested. Call 352-1998.

The public may attend at no charge and there will be complimentary valet parking, said Israel.

STERLING SILVER awards will be presented to the J.C. Penney Co. and to Loebmann's for their enlightened use of older females as models. Positive Farnished silver awards are being readied for Hudson's and Ralph Lauren for not using older female models.

"While J.C. Penney has a television campaign going with older women and Loebmann's makes a point of using mature models, many Lauren Intercontinental ads often include older men, but never an older woman, and Hudson's has a clientele of older women but never features them," said Israel.

Hudson's and Lauren are being contacted via letters which will request a meeting with the media project group. "We've asked and now

will wait and see what happens," said Israel.

"We're going to encourage women, and men if they're sympathetic, to write to companies and let them know this matters to them. It seems like the ad agencies have the same attitude now that they did when we went to them during the early days of the women's movement."

"YOU'D THINK they'd listen. They're missing a lucrative market."

A slide presentation will be part of the program which is planned to include some open discussion.

"This will be a consciousness raising thing," said Israel. "Some men have shown an interest in attending. With so many people living longer, why put women out of sight?"

She pointed out that well over 30 million Americans are 50 years or older and constitute a formidable market.

"As things are, it's negative to say older woman," said Norman. "With media the stress for women is to look younger, not good but younger. The fitness ads aimed at women talk about feeling young, for men the message is to look more vital."

The awards and program will be considered to have brought favorable results, said Israel, if Hudson's



Joan Israel

and Ralph Lauren will agree to meet with the committee, who simply want women presented in a positive light and presented at all.

In a 1988 column, Erma Bombeck, who's part of the same team, pointed out that no one ever suggested that Mr. Clean get a rug. "But women? Get a wrinkle and you can't even sell a box of prunes."



retirement memos

Margaret Miller

Worrying is something you never retire from

"HI WE'RE HOME!" said a cheerful voice on the telephone.

My reaction was something like "thank heavens," because the call was 24 hours early and the caller was daughter Mary and she and her friend, Linda, had just driven up the East Coast right through the season's worst blizzard.

They had been visiting us in Florida and they had planned to spend a day sight-seeing in Washington on the way north. The snow shut down the nation's capital completely, but it didn't deter them from continuing on, so they arrived home a day early.

I HAD EXACTED a promise that a telephone call would be made as soon as they arrived in Maine. That was when there was a lesser storm in the east, and it was moving north. Mary wanted to know if I was really worried. They were good drivers, and they had a dependable car with snow tires. I understood that, but, yes, I worried and would they be sure to make that phone call.

In the days before it came, I found myself wondering why I kept up this silly worry routine.

Joe told me I might fly up and tell them how to drive. That if I could find an airport open, his suggestion was no more ludicrous than

my state of mind, so I tried to put my thoughts on other matters.

LIKE THE SUMMER right after we retired when daughter Kathy drove by herself from Michigan to the West Coast, and I worried her every mile of the way.

And last winter, when daughter Ann reported a harrowing drive through an Alaska snowstorm to get from Anchorage, past Mount McKinley, to Fairbanks. I was glad I heard about that one when it was over.

I even remembered the fretting I did when Ann was considering driving alone the length of the Alaska Highway, in spring when it's mostly mud. She didn't, as it worked out, but I got in a good worry.

I'M NOT SURE when it is that a worrywart mother can expect to reform. Retirement hasn't done it, really, but distance has helped. Joe still has hopes for me. Of course, he never worries at all.

Margaret Miller was Suburban Life editor for Observer Newspaper for 16 years. She and her husband, Joe, have retired to Florida, where she writes Retirement Memos.

The best commentary

"The U.S. Constitution is the oldest written constitution in the world and has been a model for many other governments. Thomas Jefferson called it 'the best commentary on the principles of government which

has ever been written.'" The Quaker-town Chapter Daughters of the American Revolution urges you to become familiar with your rights under the Constitution.

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Legible letters show adaptability

Dear Mrs. Green:

I'm 24 years old, left-handed. I have always been extremely curious about handwriting analysis. Please tell me about my handwriting and what it reveals.

C.W.
Detroit

Dear C.W.:

Your handwriting is attractive, large and legible. And it tells me you are a young woman who is usually adaptable in her daily behavior. You seek smooth relationships with others and a lot of tact is here to help accomplish this.

With your caring nature you can often be found reaching out to those around you with empathy and a helping hand.

A very strong need for recognition, attention and admiration is another aspect of your personality. So you will also be found trying to satisfy this need. But it will usually be within the limits of acceptable behavior for your social set.

You have an awareness for cloth-



graphology

Lorene Green

I'm 24 years old, left-handed. I have always been extremely curious about handwriting analysis. Please tell me about my handwriting and what it reveals.

ing and appearances and probably dress fashionably.

TO SOME past situation you are feeling a little resentful. But it does seem you are either trying to keep it under control or at least hidden from others.

There is a noticeable lack of receptivity to new ideas or concepts. Have you considered this has a way of limiting your creative thinking the resourcefulness. Perhaps you feel more secure with the tried and true without realizing the ideas or

suggestions of other people might at times prove better.

Self-consciousness in your handwriting points up the possibility of criticism experienced in your early life.

You have a sense of pride and are aware of the importance of putting your best foot forward. However, the motivation may be a little weak at times.

Some of your lower loops do not return to the base line suggesting you are not feeling completely fulfilled at this particular time in your life.

If you would like to have your handwriting analyzed through this newspaper, write to Lorene C. Green, a certified graphologist, at 3251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150. Please use a full sheet of white, unlined paper writing in the first person singular. Age, handedness and signature are all helpful. And objective feedback is always welcomed.

College choir stops here on concert tour

North Park College Choir of Chicago, now on an 11-city tour, will stop to perform in concert at 7 p.m. Sunday, March 8, in Ward Presbyterian Church, 17000 Farmington Road. The concert is sponsored by Dearborn Evangelical Covenant Church and Faith Covenant Church.

in Farmington Hills. Admission is free.

Gregory Athos, associate professor of music at North Park, directs the 55-member choir in a three-part program.

"Music for the Season of Lent" is made up of compositions by Bach, Holst, Tschernikoff, Poulenc and Faure. "An American Sampler" commemorates the 200th anniversary of the U.S. Constitution with American folk hymns and spirituals. "Music from Our Scandinavian Heritage" concludes the program.

Couple marks 50th anniversary

George and Alma Flammer of Plymouth will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary with a family gathering and dinner.

for more than 40 years.

Their children are Iver Wilson of Farmington Hills, Doris Trivette of Dayton, Ohio, Norman Flammer of Redford and the late Roy Wilson. The Flamers also have eight grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

George Flammer and Alma Spelker were married Feb. 6, 1937, in Detroit. They have lived in Plymouth

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