

Hey, you can 'beam me up' to these local fanzines

This column has mentioned topics like environmental degradation, Rush Limbaugh and the proliferation of strip malls, but the thing that got readers most riled up was a comment on the lack of fanzines around these days.

None too surprisingly, everyone who was irate about the subject happened to produce a fanzine of their own. So, in the interest of keeping the peace, here's a look at some of the zines produced right here in our own backyard.

For those who don't know what the heck we're talking about here, a little review is in order. Fanzines are tiny magazines, usually printed with a ditto machine, that are written by folks with a yen for publishing and a little extra time on their hands.


For a full list of fanzines from around the world, write to: Factsheet, Five, 6 Arizona St., Rensselaer, N.Y. 12144-4502. While you're waiting for that list, try one of these zines:

U2 And Them (send \$1 to Amy Johnson, 14154 Hubbell, Livonia 48154) — As you may have

guessed, this small booklet is dedicated to extolling the virtues of U2. But, since U2 hasn't put out an album in several years, Johnson fills her pages with other tidbits of info like a reader survey (sample question: How many times did you see the movie "Ghost Dad?") and the music from the theme song to "Green Acres." The style is perky stream of consciousness. In Johnson's letter to "Left of Center," she complimented this column, saying "I sort of really enjoyed it." Gee, thanks, I guess.

Protect Yourself — A Woman's Survival Guide on Campus (send \$1 to Allen Salyer, P.O. Box 1531, Royal Oak 48068) — Kudos to any man who can put out such a serious anti-rape zine. This earnest booklet advises women how to avoid rape with a slew of tips and article clippings. Their motto is "Read this. Copy it. Pass it along to a friend. Protect yourself. If it offends you — too bad."

Infantzine (send \$1 to 501 Avis Drive, Suite 1, Box 130, Ann Arbor 48104) — Every part of this zine is sure to offend someone. It treats the



left of center

Jill Hamilton

line between funny and disgusting. Their motto is "Something to read." The style is the rantings and ravings of a madman. Sample article title: "How and Why to Hate the Aliens." The troublesome thing is, the author seems to be serious.

Hailing Frequency (U.S.S. Intrepid, P.O. Box 1094, Dearborn 48121) — This isn't really a fanzine, but it's the newsletter for the local Star Trek club. "Lt. Commander" Lorraine Heiner describes the club as an "alternative life style that we hope will lead to peace, caring for humanity, scientific discovery, advances in education and wholesome social interactions." Sentient beings

who believe that "Star Trek" is more than just a TV show, but rather a set of guidelines to living one's life should contact the address above.

A few months ago, State Rep. Perry Bullard, D-Ann Arbor, introduced legislation to establish a Michigan Registry of Bothersome Practices. The tongue-in-cheek resolution would allow folks who are bothered by things like junk mail and those little subscription cards that fall out of magazines to get them officially registered with the state. The resolution is currently "in committee" where Bullard guesses "it will most

likely never see the light of day again."

But if it does, there are some suggestions of bothersome things for the registry:

(1) Unfunny comic strips like Garfield and Funky Winkerbean. The Hall of Famer in this category is Nancy.

(2) CD maxi singles with seven remixes of the same song. Listening to the same song seven times in a row is not healthy.

(3) The cost of food at the movies. It works like this: The "wee junior drink" is two bucks, the large drink is \$2.50. So, you opt for the good value and end up with the obscenely huge bucket o' pop and hungry man, family-size barrel o' popcorn. What a bargain.

(4) Infotainment TV shows. I'm hoping that these show peter out from lack of material. After all, there are presumably a limited number of bre'al crimes involving strippers.

(5) Local TV News. The hair-do's, the egos, and the lack of any actual news are bothersome enough but the

worst part of these shows is their preoccupation with violent crimes. If on a given day, they don't meet their quota of local violent crime, they will show footage of violent crimes that happened in other cities.

The other thing is their copcat mentality. A few weeks ago, there was a plane that almost crashed at Metro Airport. It didn't crash or anything, but since the all news crews were already down there, they kept covering the non-event.

Every 15 minutes or so, they'd break into regular programming to say something like "We're at the scene of the plane where that plane almost crashed. The plane is still fine and everyone is still uninjured."

To be up with this kind of thorough news coverage, they interviewed bystanders who had witnessed that, indeed, the plane did not crash.

If you know of some bothersome practices that you'd like to gripe about, jot 'em down and send them to *Left of Center*, The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150.

STREET SENSE

Marriage is a commitment

Dear Barbara,
Wow, you struck a nerve with your last column on abuse, but I want to go back to your latest column. Mike from Birmingham is a good example of the old, double standard. Women who supplement sexual intercourse with masturbation are perceived as nymphomaniacs. Men, on the other hand, are just "boys being boys." I think Mike needs to grow up and realize that masturbation with the help of porno films isn't a bad behavior.

Sue from Westland
Thanks for the note. Thanks especially for giving another opportunity to comment on masturbation.

To refresh the readers' memories, Sue's note refers to a column published a month ago. A woman wrote that she wanted to break up with her fiancé because she found him masturbating to a pornographic film. She was raised to believe this was wrong and was disgusted by it. I advised her to follow her instincts and break up with him.

Mike from Birmingham then wrote to say he was vehemently opposed to my advice. He stated that masturbating is a normal behavior and that the woman in question was intolerant. He was even more incensed by my approval of her intolerance.

This is a complicated issue. I hope today's column will clarify how I think of it. Yes, Mike, masturbation is a normal behavior for men and women. If you are single, then enjoy your sexual pleasures as you like. The woman who wrote was contemplating marriage. When such a commitment is explicit or implicit, the frame of reference changes. Now you have become part of a two-person society, and this is a problem of two people.

Ideally, marriage can provide a unique experience for mature intimacy. It can offer an opportunity to achieve the security to be fully giving with another person. This level of maturity and intimacy cannot be achieved through self-stimulation. If one spouse is able and willing to relate in a thoughtful and sensitive manner, then behavior not in kind by the other is hurtful.

If you are a person who desires a relationship at this high level, then my advice is not to settle for someone who is clearly not interested. To repeat, I hope this clarifies this difficult subject.

Dear Readers,
The column on Sept. 16, in which I asked you to write in with stories of women who were willing to put themselves in danger resulted in an outpouring of letters. This may illustrate how prevalent abusive relationships are among readers of this column or in this culture.

Therefore, for the next few weeks, the letters will be printed without comment. All of the women who wrote deserve to be heard; many of them exposed their deepest fears for the first time in their lives. I want to make it clear that any letter sent to me is absolutely confidential. This can be accomplished in two ways. One, writers can change the demographic facts in the letter they send so they will not be recognizable, or two, it can be written naturally, which I prefer, and I will change any identifying details so that anonymity can be preserved.

I hope many of you will contribute your personal reactions to the following letters, and when all of them have been published, I will print my personal reactions and yours. I also hope that in the future, readers will continue to express themselves as these women have. The benefit to our readers could be more than my comments.

Dear Barbara,
Your Monday, Sept. 16, Eccentric article re: "Luck — Abuse" has prompted this letter.

Until comparatively recently, abuse of women has never been brought to light. Today there are articles and still more on the subject and rightfully so. Having lived with a verbally abusive man for 40 years, I have a question for you: Why is the male so often like this? Perhaps if one had some insight to HIS problem, one could cope.

Why am I still with him? In my day, perhaps, a matter of pride in not letting the world know that my marriage was hell, that I had made a mistake, that divorce was so uncommon and such a social taboo, that working women (of people I knew) was unheard of then, the responsibility of financially raising children alone was terrifying.

In my case, I cannot understand his need to blame me, to undermine, to demean and humiliate. I never knew at what second he'll "blow up," leaving me shattered and devastated. I'm always on guard. All it has accomplished is for me to withdraw. What has he gained and why has he robbed me of a loving, companionable relationship?

I feel he has and will always betray me in any situation, particularly in front of the children — hence one can't expect much respect from him.

Am I really a woman of low self-

esteem? Am I a female wimp or nurse, always hoping for something better? (When do I give up?)

Why his need to dominate, to control? What is this in the structure of so many males? What do they think they gain — certainly not the respect that they seem to be seeking.

A Lonely Wife

Ms. Schiff:

I survive. The how is simple —

Choose not to need others.

What do you have to sell.

Forgive them — they know not what they do.

Give back more than you have taken.

So Giving

If you have a question or comment for Barbara Schiff, a



Barbara Schiff
trained therapist and experienced counselor, write to Street Sense, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150.



social eyes

Denise Lucas

Our intrepid Street Scene reporter is always looking for the unusual and welcomes comments and suggestions from readers and entrepreneurs. Send those to this column in care of this newspaper, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150, or call 953-2131.

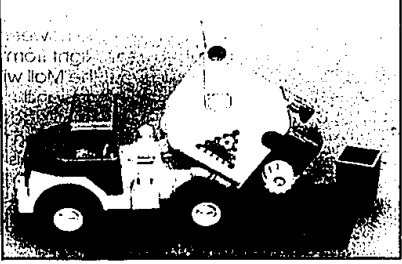
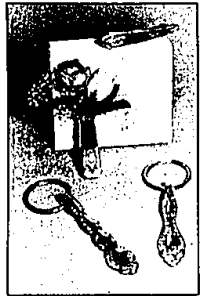


The Cat's Meow

FJ Designs have copied from various buildings — mostly stores, churches and schools which have a lot of character and historical significance — from throughout the United States for its Cat's Meow Village, so named for the little black cat painted some where on each piece. The latest additions are the Franklin Cider Mill and Franklin Community Church, painted and silk screened on half-inch thick, 4-by-5-inch blocks of wood. The Franklin pieces are priced at \$10.95 each, with a gazebo available for \$9 as a companion piece for the Franklin Community Church. They're available exclusively at Concourse Card and Photo in the Bloomfield Plaza, Telegraph and Maple roads, Bloomfield Hills.

Versatile flatware

As silverware, they looked great on a festive dining room table. And they look just as great as jewelry. Old silver plate has found a new life as fashion accessories. Solid handles are transformed into key rings (\$15.50) and barrettes (\$18), while hollow handles serve as vase pins (\$25). They're available at the Apple Weath, 32626 W. Seven Mile, Livonia.



Keep in Truckin'

There's a new truck on the road and in your child's toy chest... the recycling truck. New from Discovery Toys to experience the world around them, the recycling truck (from Germany) features durable rubber wheels that will explore all terrains, two recycling containers and a manual dumper at the back for emptying out the bins. In bright primary colors, the recycling truck will give your child hours of fun while using gross motor and life skills.

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