

Street SCENE

STREET SENSE

Readers question advice to Michelle



BARBARA SCHIFF

Dear readers:
I have never received such a barrage of high quality responses to a letter that was printed in this column. I am including two of them because they are so well-written and their message is loud and clear.
The issue involved is one of teenagers making insensitive to obnoxious phone calls at any time of the day or night. In my reply I had indicated that the girl who was making unwanted phone calls to a boy was in keeping with the norms of her peer group. Indeed, one of the letters you will read gives proof of this through her own experiences.
However, that is part of our cultural scene for this age group does not make it acceptable behavior for all other people. Unfortunately, at the adolescent age, being in favor in one's peer group is more important than the opinion of the best of parents.
A leading expert in the field of adolescence as a time of psychosis (craziness) which fortunately most individuals outgrow (the problem for their parents is whether they are capable of enduring the behavior until it is outgrown).
I would like to close this response with thanks to the letter writers who have filled in the dimension of the problem which I left out. I am not pretending that I am humble, just stating that I have been humbled.
Many thanks.
Barbara

Dear Barbara:
In response to your July 6 Street Sense article about teenage girls obsessed with calling boys, I had to write to give my opinion. You headline your column with "What daughter did it acceptable today." I'd like to know, acceptable to whom? Certainly not to the family of the boy Michelle's daughter is calling constantly at all hours of the day and night. What about the rights of the family of the boy not to be harassed?
I'd like to tell you the other side of the story. As the mother of a 15-year-old boy, I am bothered by not one, but at least a half dozen girls calling here all the time.
I have to unplug my phone after 11 p.m. so as not to be awakened at all hours. Because of a modern invention "call waiting," I can't even carry on a decent conversation with anyone without being interrupted. I've had obscene messages left on my machine that would make a sailor blush. My son can't eat a

meal, take a shower, or do his homework or paper route without multitudes of interruptions.
I'm not against a girl calling maybe once a day, but why 20 or 30 times? Why be a pest? When someone asks you to stop calling, you should honor their request.
Your advice to Michelle should have been a firm "stop calling this boy, period." Parents' rule should be to guide their children and teach them right from wrong, and Michelle's daughter should be told it is wrong to harass anyone. And if she does not comply, her phone privileges should be taken away.
A phone is a marvelous thing, but good phone manners in something that should go along with the privilege of using it.
Being independent and aggressive in the workplace has nothing to do with making a complete pest out of yourself. Michelle should make her daughter call this boy's mom and apologize for her behavior and promise not to bother them again.
B.L.

Dear Barbara:
I CANNOT BELIEVE your response to Michelle — the mother who is distressed about her seventh grade daughter's calling a boy "at all hours of the day and night." (The boy has asked her to stop many times.)
Regardless of the fact that her daughter's behavior is within the normal limits of current teenage mores, this is UNACCEPTABLE behavior in ANY CASE...
A male relentlessly pursuing an uninterested female, of any age; a woman visiting a neighbor several times a day and keeping her from her duties or other interests; a mother calling her adult son repeatedly for no reason but to talk about nothing;
A wife bothering her husband at his office for every little question that comes to her mind.
ANY PERSON who makes a pest of him- or herself is obnoxious, and a mother certainly should teach her children to avoid such actions, just as she should help her children in many ways to become likable persons, and to respect other people's privacy and preferences.
You DO tell Michelle to talk it out with her daughter, but with no mention of the purpose of guidance, only acceptance.
PLEASE make it clear that consideration for other people's feeling is never out of date.
H.C.H.

If you have a question or comment for Barbara Schiff, a trained therapist and experienced counselor, write to Street Sense, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150.



Neophyte Nation: Chris Thornburg (from left), Derek Spiewak and Eric Schmidt hope people enjoy the mood the band's in musically instead of trying to analyze what they're trying to do.

A Nation to believe in musically



If Neophyte Nation had a constitution, one of the words that would appear in it most would be believe. This three-man band's philosophy of music is that you perform songs that "you believe in." And they hold to that philosophy. This group has finally honed its musical blend, offering up some songs worth listening to. After all, they say, you can't perform unless you believe in your music.

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

Here's a Neophyte Nation nut-shell: Musical dexterity, a vision of clarity and songs of disparity.
Why say more? Well, under closer examination, there's some blips on the radar screen when honing in on Neophyte Nation. All of which is by design, according to band members Chris Thornburg, Derek Spiewak and Eric Schmidt.
"We have this bad habit, tendency... whatever you want to call it," said Spiewak, the group's nimble fingered bassist. "We put a lot of space between ourselves and the people we're trying to reach."
Call it a lack of interpersonal communication, perhaps, but not a musical one. Neophyte Nation put forth a rain storm of thundering bass guitar, a cascade of acoustic strumming and an outpouring of gut emotion.
In "We Hate You," off the band's self-titled demo tape, there's a discomfiting Smith-inspired angst. Other numbers hint at the experimental pop yields this collection of

Jazz-influenced musicians seek to attain.
Band interplay is intricate, a delicate balance is found between the exploratory and the obtuse. The feelings Thornburg expresses in his lyrics, though, come across as real and direct, keeping in line with his heroes Pete Townshend and Neil Young.
"It (emotional validity) definitely comes from songs you believe in," said Thornburg, the band's guitarist and vocalist. "You can't perform them unless you believe in them."
Even the bile splattered indiscriminately in "We Hate You?"
"As a kid growing up I was treated very mean by the kids in my subdivision," Thornburg said. "I got over it, I guess."
"I'm way beyond that now. I'm going out deeper things, things that are going on inside you."
At the present, the majority of Neophyte Nation's songs focus on relationships gone sour. The 1988

■ 'We have this bad habit, tendency... whatever you want to call it. We put a lot of space between ourselves and the people we're trying to reach.'
Derek Spiewak

Livonia Churchill graduate talks how he eventually wants to write about the radio inside us all, the one in which little voices tell us what we should and should not do.
All of a sudden, the signal on the screen begins to dissipate.
Band members then mention how "Elastic Girl," a cosmic swirl of voice, bass and guitar, actually has the rhythmic pulse to the number of five.
A mere mention perhaps it's these transgressions that deem Neophyte Nation somewhat esoter-

ic draws a quick response from the members.
"We're not too taxing on the brain," said Spiewak, adding that the little feature was purely for the band's own entertainment.
Added the band's drummer Eric Schmidt: "I'm not sure we're trying to associate with people through the music... Hopefully, people will enjoy the mood we're in instead of trying to analyze what we're trying to do."
In the band's bio, there is mention how they "keep a distant social profile" and how they say "they play intelligent rock when actually they just play what sounds good." The word ambiguity comes into focus.
Neophyte Nation formed in February 1991, bringing together musical collaborators through mutual friends. Initially, the band was a four-piece and included keyboard player Mike Swanson. When he left, the Nation stayed with three members.
Neophyte Nation has recorded a four-song demo and hopes to have an LP out next year sometime. In the meantime, the group is playing a small number of shows. They're in it for the long haul, members say.
"If nothing else comes out of this, I've had so much fun playing this music," Spiewak said.

IN CONCERT

Monday, July 27	Thursday, July 30	Friday, July 31
ARRESTED DEVELOPMENT With Disposable Heroes of Hipphoria at Industry, 15 S. Saginaw, Pontiac. 334-1999	BIG DAVE AND THE ULTRASOUNDS Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. 996-2747	BLADE AND THE BLUE T'S Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. 996-2747
MAY Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. 996-2747	CATHOUSE Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor. 996-8555	CRACKER BOX With Morsel at Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor. 996-8555
HWASEEM Cross Street Station, 511 W. Cross, Ypsilanti. 465-5050	CORNELL DUPREE The Ark, 637 1/2 S. Main, Ann Arbor. 761-1451	THE RATIONALS Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor. 996-8555
PARADISE VALLEY JAZZ JAM Ann's, 5756 Cass, Detroit. 832-2355	SAMARITANS Cross Street Station, 511 W. Cross, Ypsilanti. 465-5050	
	LEAGUE OF NATIONS Griff's Grill, 49 N. Saginaw, Pontiac. Benefit for Scott Pasinski 334-5150	
Tuesday, July 28	FRANCISCO MORA Ann's, 5756 Cass, Detroit. 832-2355	
DAY GLOW ORANGE Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor. 996-8555	ZIFFELZ Psychicks, 2932 Caniff, Hamtramck. 874-0254	
CHIRREL BROTHERS WITH THORNETTA Ann's, 5756 Cass, Detroit. 832-2355	JAWBOX With Circus Lupis and Current at St. Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit. 961-MEAT	
Wednesday, July 29		
	DEADBEAT SOCIETY The Ark, 637 1/2 S. Main, Ann Arbor. 761-1451	
	JOHN MORAN & THE HELLCASTERS Soup Kitchen Saloon, 1585 Franklin St., Detroit. 259-1374	
	HAPPY ACCIDENTS Cross Street Station, 511 W. Cross, Ypsilanti. 465-5050	
	MISSED IN DIARY With The Hypocrites and Mime Squirrels at Psychicks, 2932 Caniff, Hamtramck. 874-0254	
	ROBERT HOLL BLUES MISSION Detroit Bar, 655 Beaubien, Detroit. 963-3355	
	THUNDERBOLT CHOIR Lil's 21, 2930 Jacob, Hamtramck. 875-6555	
	CLAM TO FAME With Griff's Grill, 49 N. Saginaw, Pontiac. 334-5150	
	CATHOUSE With Red C and Voodoo Chili at Ann's, 5756 Cass, Detroit. 832-2355	
	JOHNNY 'YARD DOG' JONES The Alley, Greektown, 508 Monroe, Detroit. 963-3357	
	FREE WHISKY New Way Bar, 23130 Woodward, Farmington Hills. 541-9870	
	HIP CATS Coconut Jos', 225 Jos. Campau, Detroit. 259-1374	
	SOUL STATION Finney's Pub, 3965 Woodward, Detroit. 831-8070	
	SWIRL With 249 at Hamtramck Pub, 2048 Caniff, off I-75. 365-3829	
	TEXAS HEAT Sully's, 4758 Greenfield, Dearborn. 846-1920	
	Saturday, Aug 1	
	MOBY St. Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit. 961-MEAT	
	HOPE ORCHESTRA Lil's, 2930 Jacob, Hamtramck. 875-6555	
	FRANK ALLISON AND THE ODD BOX Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor. 996-8555	
	JOHNNY 'YARD DOG' JONES The Alley, Greektown, 508 Monroe, Detroit. 963-3357	
	STRAY CATS The Ritz, 17580 Frazee Road, 1015 Mile and Gratiot, Roseville. Tickets are \$10 in advance, \$12 day of the show. 718-6404	
	THE KRONOS QUARTET Phoenix Plaza Amphitheatre, downtown Pontiac. Tickets are \$17.50 in advance, \$20 day of the show. 334-1999	
	COL. BRUCE HAMPTON Sully's, 4758 Greenfield, Dearborn. 846-1920	
	Sunday, Aug. 2	
	THE KRONOS QUARTET Phoenix Plaza Amphitheatre, downtown Pontiac. Tickets are \$17.50 in advance, \$20 day of the show. 334-1999	
	COL. BRUCE HAMPTON Sully's, 4758 Greenfield, Dearborn. 846-1920	



Singing the blues: Johnny 'Yard Dog' Jones will perform at The Alley in Greektown, Detroit, Friday, July 31.