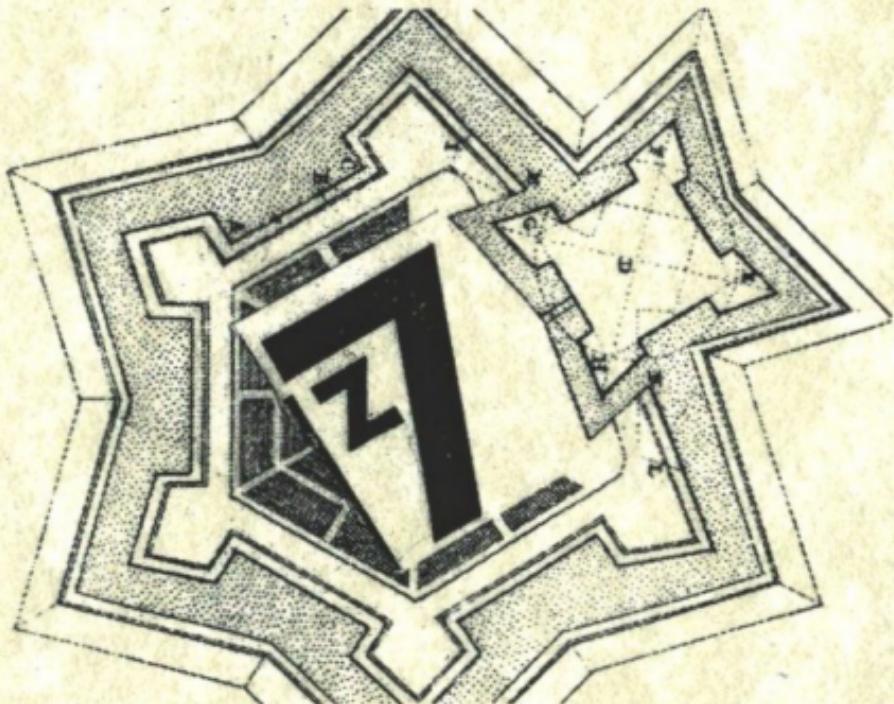


Ladyfinger #90

**WHY ZINES WORK**



Morgan Stern

## WHY ZINES WORK

### 1. What is a zine?

A zine is a booklet made by a transgender anarchist who doesn't have any other options.

The zine is a format that's good at containing information.

A zine is a unit, a thing, a piece of information.

A zine is, specifically, a **chunk** of information.

It is made of ±7 smaller chunks of information.

A page folded thrice makes for eight portions; six smaller pages and cover: this is the classic format.

## 2. When Doesn't it Work?

My last issue was a moment's musings about pet play. People liked it! My previous was about a much more interesting topic I've been researching for a long time, and nobody cared.\*

Why did one work, and the other didn't? I think it was the format.

I broke the format with the flop: it was a double issue. Double was too much! Even I got bored in the middle.

I should have listened to Miller and his famous law.

\*#89 Puppygirl & Philosopher  
& 87 Synagogue Zodiac Mosaic

### **3. The Law of Exactly Sevenish**

Seven has been a number of magical and cosmic significance for all of human history.

Especially 1956. That's when George Miller wrote

**The Magical Number 7, ±2.**

The paper explains why you can remember a telephone number but not a credit card number.

I think Miller's Law is about more than just human short-term memory. What if it applies not to just our brains, but information itself?

What if it's part of a **general information theory** that we don't have yet?

Regardless, it applies to zines.

## 4. The Theory of Memes

Before it was rare Soyjaks, **the meme** was a serious theory by Dawkins '76. He named memetics following genetics, including selection. But his evolutionary metaphor didn't even apply to evolution.

Don't get me wrong, I like his theory (and evolution.) But Dawkins called a meme a unit of culture. Sounds squishy, doesn't it? Let's call it instead **a chunk of information**. Even better, a **mirrorable** chunk of information: one that can be easily repeated.

For us, by Xerox.

## 5. The Mirroring Section

I guess that makes this  
the mirroring section.

The mirroring section.

You may have heard of **mirror neurons** - they're a useful discovery that's become something of a meme!

This is the **monkey see; do** network in your brain. It means that the Xerox in our brain is essential to learning and being: we copy, we become. Likewise information copies and becomes.

So what does the mirror network mirror, anyway? ... "Phenomena?" I think it deals in chunks.

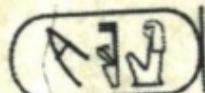
## 6. Shrink To Grow

Notice that you don't have to read Miller, Dawkins, and... uh, Rizzolatti to follow me. That's because their books compress into my mini-page chunks. The behavior of the chunks is what mattered to Miller, not the number. They **compress, nest, and scale.**

Scaling means that the **riot grrl** concept can go from zine idea to cultural Thing.

If copied and shared, the information you're reading could compress-nest-scale, too.

It would no longer be 6 chunks about **Miller, mirroring, and memetics**. It would become one idea, a Zine Theory, told in one word: **zinetics**.



Morgan Stern  
Ladyfinger Press

THE FORMAT (that functions)

- I. A zine is one page with sevenish parts.
- II. A zine is black and white.
- III A zine is cheap or free.
- IV. A zine photocopies easily.

THE FILLING (that fucks)

A zine does not sell  
cheeseburgers.

A zine is small, below,  
and against.

WHY ZINES WORK

## 2. When Doesn't it Work?

### 3. The Law of Exactly Sevenish

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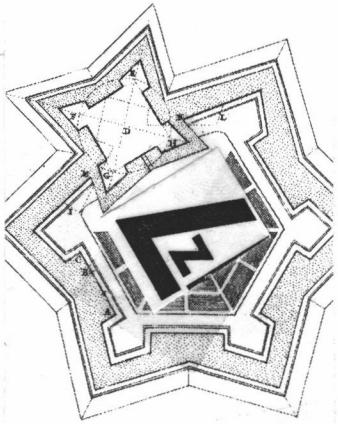
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[tumblr.com/ladyfingerpress](http://tumblr.com/ladyfingerpress)

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