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From the Stacks: February 2, 2007

—By Staff, Utne.com

February 2007 Issue

Utne Reader's library is abuzz with a steady flow of 1,500 magazines, newsletters, journals, weeklies, zines, and other lively dispatches from the cultural front that are rarely found at big-box bookstores, newsstands, or even online. So we share the highlights (and occasional lowlights) of what's landing in our library each week in "From the Stacks." Check in every Friday for the latest edition.





Reading [Azizah](#), I couldn't help but feel like I was eavesdropping. The magazine is the self-proclaimed "Voice for Muslim Women," a voice unfamiliar to many. As I skimmed through, ads and spreads of "modestly" cool headscarves and clothing were jarring at first, and I admit to subjecting the publication to a wary scrutiny. A closer reading, however, revealed *Azizah* to be among the most positive women's magazines I have encountered. Stories include profiles of accomplished young Muslim women, an explanation of the rights of women in Islamic marriage, a look at Islamic home finance, as well as skin care tips (no Botox here). *Azizah* is a celebration of modern women who take pride in their faith, strength, and intelligence, and I look forward to hearing more of the too-often unheard voices it presents. -- *Elizabeth Oliver*

[Ong Ong](#) is an eclectic zine that arrived in care-package fashion from Seattle. From the extensive cover (hand-processed by one person) to the handful of inserts, Vol. #3's arrival demonstrates the great care that must go into crafting this publication. Enclosed were an array of seemingly random items, including a card with a bunny on it, stickers from the Bikery (a nonprofit education and repair center), an old check from the Metropolitan National Bank of Seattle, and a big purple dot sticker. The content is equally delightful and hodgepodge, containing interviews with band members, comics, more stickers, an engaging short read by a jailed protester, and posters of past concerts that rocked. What's more, all these treasures can be relished while sampling some West Coast bands on an enclosed CD. -- *Elizabeth Ryan*



With President Bush and his pals hitting the post-State of the Union circuit, we've gotten a steady barrage of assurances about the coming victory in Iraq. *Draft NOTices*, a quarterly newsletter put out by the [Committee Opposed to Militarism and the Draft](#), isn't buying it. "[T]he President insists that we are winning the war / but his dumb-ass smile says otherwise," writes poet Reyes Cardenas for the latest issue. The newsletter focuses on hot topics such as the US military budget, sexism, and homophobia, with the January/March issue updating readers on Rep. Charles Rangel's 2003 bill calling for a draft. Writer Jorge Mariscal sums up much of the publication's concerns asking, "Is a draft going to help prevent or end a war, or help wage it?" -- *Mary O'Regan*

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[Wonka Vision](#) is celebrating its 10th anniversary this August, but it's new to us, just bounding into our library this week with its recent "Art and Design" issue

devoted to toys. *Wonka Vision* is one part feisty music magazine, one part indie art and culture commentary, and the rest seems to run on unbridled enthusiasm. The cover story is an interview with the creator of comic book character "Spawn," Todd McFarlane, who expounds on his passion for toys and sports. In my favorite item, the magazine matches up '80s pop culture icons, pitting the likes of the A-Team and GI Joe against each other in a battle of coolness. (The A-team wins, of course). -- *Jenna Fisher*

If you're looking for some heady reading, you might want to think about *Brain Work*, the bimonthly newsletter of the [Dana Foundation](#). In the Jan/Feb issue, Brenda Patoine explores the theories behind neurogenesis -- the idea that humans continue creating new brain cells into adulthood. The theory runs counter to the long-held belief that humans were stuck with the same brain nerve cells for their entire lives. This issue also dishes the latest neuro-news about addiction, treatment, and experimentation. People interested in *Brain Work* can sign up for a subscription on the [website](#), and the fact that it's free should put their minds at ease. -- *Bennett Gordon*

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