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Courtney Lee Weida

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"The cultures of zine production, distribution, and collection are uniquely collaborative and conversational."

Zine Objects and Orientations in/as Arts Research: Documenting Art Teacher Practices and Identities Through Zine Creation, Collection, and Criticism

COURTNEY LEE WEIDA
Adelphi University

Zine making involves not only the creation of handmade and self-published books, but also local distribution in zine communities, as well as archival processes of zine collecting in university and community libraries. These creative and communal practices, as part of the intellectual discourse known as zine studies, engender valuable arts-based research orientations and implications for art education. This article investigates zines for their potential as objects of research exploring art teacher identities and autoethnography, fandom in zines as a devotional orientation and interdisciplinary form of research methodology, and research questions pertaining to practices of collecting and archiving zine materials in universities and zine communities. Characterized by proliferation in the 1990s and a strong contemporary continuation, zines continue to create distinctly personal and communal spaces for art education reflection.

Correspondence regarding this article may be sent to the author at cweida@adelphi.edu.

Introduction: Zine-ing as Meaning-Making

As an art educator with a background in both visual arts and English literature, I have made zines and related handmade books for as long as I can remember. Zines as both objects and orientations weave through all of my teaching as well, from courses on the history of art education to electives on book arts and craft, to arts-based research seminars, and community projects with my university's zine microlibrary. In creating and teaching within zine frameworks, I have felt, as described by Native American storyteller Robin Wall Kimmerer (2003), that "finding the words is another step in learning to see" (p. 11). One of my earliest multiple-edition zines was a sort of illustrated protest letter circulated to peers about "The Lack of Mr. Lack," a particularly sensitive and dedicated art teacher whose teaching contract was not renewed during his first year due to budget cuts at my public high school. Although my zine did not ultimately impact school policy, it became a part of my teacher's professional teaching portfolio for his subsequent career.[1]

The pages of zines are richly reflective of the makers' hands and minds, combining personalized hybrid texts of collage and assemblage, calligraphic and scrawled handwriting, drawing, printmaking, and painting, all within a volume typically authored, illustrated, and bound by the same maker. Historian of zines Jennifer Bleyer (2004) defined such handmade and self-published books as a complex "intersection of art, protest, confession, and theory" (p. 49). In this way, zines as artifacts often layer multiple voices and orientations toward objects of interest within their pages. As Sara Ahmed noted of orientations in her 2006 book on phenomenology and queer studies, "the direction of one's attention puts one in line with others, as a line that depends on how objects move around, which in turn creates horizontal lines of communication" (p. 120). As artifacts of lived experience, zine objects and their movement in circulation reflect the conversations and unexpected creative connections between disparate subjects and people in art education with particular attention, feeling, and artistry. Additionally, such objects and our continued rich relationships with them also "help us find our way" (Ahmed, 2006, p. 39), like anchors, signs, and landmarks on our journeys (in my case, from student to teacher, to artist, and to teacher educator).

According to ZINES (n.d.), an emerging peer-reviewed journal on zines, these publications have even been associated with their own "mediascapes" (para. 2), encompassing both printed formats and digital media spaces. Zine processes of making, distributing, and archiving, along with the intellectual discourse known as zine studies (Radway, 2011), also distinctly lend themselves to valuable arts-based research orientations. Relating to inquiries about stories, histories, and labors of various handmade objects changing hands (Ahmed, 2006), the cultures of zine production, distribution, and collection are uniquely collaborative and conversational. It should be

noted that zine orientations revealingly reflect many aspects of identity, histories, and materiality. In my own life, for example, I matured during the 1990s as a student, and then I focused on handmade books with elementary and junior high school students as a teacher; but teachers at the high school level often utilize blogs and digital distribution for zine projects. Many zines can be notably timely and timeless, in that they are associated with a lineage of "retro-nostalgia" (Thomas, 2009, p. 27) that includes other art artifacts like Polaroid film, vinyl records, or public service announcements; yet they are very much of the moment, documented by each author/artist who serves as zinester. The continued contemporary influence of zines is demonstrated well by Malaka Gharib's (2020) recent hybrid comic/zine, *Just for Kids: A Comic Exploring the New Coronavirus*, which explains scientific facts about COVID-19, illustrates handwashing hygiene, and discourages xenophobia around this pandemic.

In this article, I investigate such zines in terms of their unique nature and histories. I also contextualize the centrality of zines and zine-ing as a crucial conceptual and material practice in my work as a researcher, artist, and art teacher educator, with examples from my experiences. Major themes include the potential of zines in representing art teacher identities, illuminating practices and philosophies of art education, and elevating fandom cultures of zines as a devotional orientation and interdisciplinary form of arts-based research methodology. These devotional practices are not only the creation of zines, but also their collection in archives, university collections, zine libraries, and digital archives (focusing predominantly on English-language zines from the United States).

Precedents of Zines: Zine Conventions in/as Arts Education and Arts-Based Research

Although zines were born from 1930s science fiction fanzines, many focusing on art and education are characterized by proliferation in the 1990s with a strong continuation into the current moment. Their histories present useful complexities and possibilities for arts-based research because "zine histories show as many breaks between creators as connections, and the dynamic nature of zines must set the stage for any critical examination" (Lovata, 2008, p. 334). In examining zines as enduring forms, Bold (2017) advocated for ongoing "zine-ing," and, in particular, promoting zine production by people of color as an evolving means for new spaces and previously unconsidered ways of knowing pertaining to richer cultural representation and more inclusive community building. Similarly, the examples of zines by myself and other art educators discussed in the following sections focus on categories of identification, including gender and culture, and they examine the roles of representation and anonymity in zine practices.

Although art educators and arts researchers both theorize and create zines, there are pressing gaps in the research of zines from the field of art education. Specifically, while art and design faculty are often the most likely to engage with zines in their curricula, they are also underrepresented as educators in research about zines and pedagogy (Thomas, 2018), indicating a need for further inquiry in this area. As art education researcher Klein (2010) observed of art educators, the zine framework of images and text often engenders a wealth of "storytelling, self-expression, teacher identity construction, and collaboration" (p. 42). Meanwhile, student-produced zines are characterized by collaboration and countercultural explorations (Tavin, 2002) and can be spaces for deep inquiry around media consumption and creativity (Weida, 2013).

Arts researchers like Ghorbani (2017) have recently utilized the zine as a framework for storytelling through family life history research, as an accessible means to bring researcher and research participant(s) into dialogue. Another zine, *A Balancing Act: Precarity & Socially Engaged Arts* (Vallely, 2018), documents

Vallely's artistic collaboration with local communities through visual representations and inquiries akin to a/r/tography (Irwin, 2004), including handwritten notes, mind-mapping, and detailed illustration. Each of these zine examples by art educators, art students, art researchers, and artists represent hybrid, inventive forms of writing.

Ahmed (2006) observed that the unique materiality of writing (including writing paper, writing itself, and the labor of writing) sometimes disappears or is at least greatly concealed in many artifacts of the printed form. In contrast, an element of the palimpsest is particularly highlighted through zines' handwritten and process-oriented formats, with accumulated erasures, revisions, and collaborations layered and made visible. Zines often reflect creative processes—not only in their content, but also in their structure, and they are valuable in art education for these representations.

Further, zinesters (those who make zines) in this subcultural do-it-yourself art genre also adopt and often invent diverse and discursive approaches and forms evoking other books, such as diaries, editorials, and recipe collections. In my own teaching practice, I often encourage graduate art education students not just to write their own artist statements or mission statements, but also to reframe their artwork and teaching in the context of a creative recipe or tutorial within miniature books or zines. Along these lines, I also ask students: What are the essential ingredients and alchemical steps for the kind of work that we create? How does reframing our creative process in this impossible but evocative way translate to work in the classroom, and our definitions and uses of an artist's tools? These questions and provocations encourage us to know ourselves and our work more fully, and in divergent ways.

By way of example, Dame Darcy (2014), a zinester/comic illustrator/musician with her own self-publishing company, uses illustrations, charts, comic panels, and other approaches to representation within her ornately handwritten recipe books. With recipes and other creative and often informal formats for reflection, such zines might be dismissed as a relatively new, youthful, and/or folk framework for countercultural art. However, zine histories are also meaningfully linked with long-standing traditions of self-publishing among artists and artistic communities. Zinester and zine collector Seth Friedman (1997) observed that artists embraced self-publishing in the early 20th century with (zine-like) manifestos, art journals, anarchic broadsheets, and miniature magazines.

Similarly, arts-based researchers have suggested connections between zines and political pamphlets dating back to the self-published works on the Vietnam War or even Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* (Congdon & Blandy, 2003). As a contemporary example, Creative Action (2018) in Austin, Texas, published a 2018 screen-printed zine by teenagers in both English and Spanish language editions, online and in print, which addressed the teens' research and artistic representations relating to support for their local community in dealing with Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents around immigration issues. Part of the usefulness of such zines for teaching and research is their blend of historical links to other artists' books with shifting traditions of social action and open publishing innovations toward the future.

Zine Genres and Generations: Reframing Interdisciplinarity and Identities

Zine Forms

Zines may be seen as pioneering extensions of genres like artist sketchbooks, chapbooks, and surrealist games, highlighting contributions of women, people of color, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer/questioning+ individuals in particular (e.g., riot grrrl manifestos). Further, zines can be produced by a diverse array of individual makers, whether they are students who create zines inside or outside of school settings, so-

called hobbyists working on zines recreationally, or artists who approach self-publishing and book arts such as zines as the focus of documenting their creative and activist work. In particular, zines (especially personal zines, or *perzines*) also engage the journal/diary-like realms of personal testimonials and individual experiences through collage and drawings that are not prescribed or predetermined in technique, media, or format. Through their representations of artists/authors who create them and their acknowledgment of the lineage of other makers and thinkers along the way, zines invoke questions of accessibility, identity, and authenticity in the arts.

Along these lines, zines are often as interdisciplinary as their makers, and they can have parallels in topic and form to other arts, like performance art, graffiti, and music (Thomas, 2009). Ahmed (2006) has observed the creativity of interdisciplinary scholarship as a fruitful departure from expected histories of original texts. So too have zines been described not only as texts, but also as aesthetic and social artifacts that engage performatively (Radway, 2011). For example, Curtis Widem, a New York City art teacher and performance artist, notes that his book arts and zine teaching with young people often include the creation of interactive games and pockets affixed to pages (Figure 1). These conventions are interactive inclusions that invite social engagement between the reader and the maker through storytelling (personal communication, December 5, 2019). All of this suggests that zines engage their makers and readers with media and messages in ways few other formats

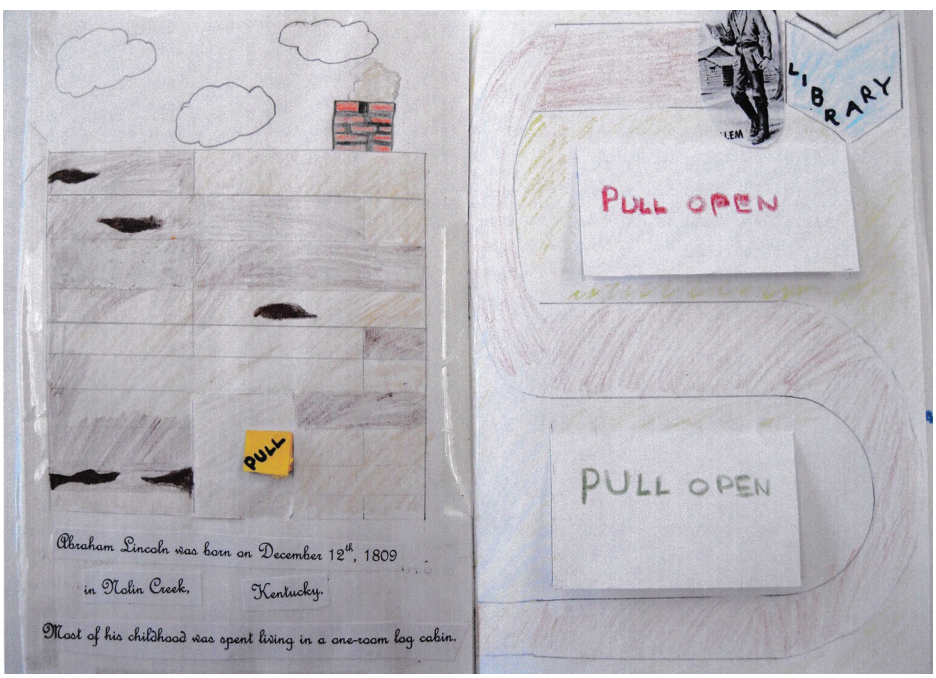


Figure 1. Curtis Widem's teaching zine, 2013.

do, spanning categories of art object, ideological tool, pedagogical performance, and research document.

With their somewhat metacognitive orientation, zinesters often have been uniquely aware of—and often participatory within—calls for creativity in and criticism of their chosen art form. Many zinesters generate conversation and inspire action through their zines. Jennifer Bleyer (2004) has stated that "integral to reading zines was the implicit challenge to turn around and write them. Zines made clear that they were not another product to be consumed but were unique contributions to a vast conversation" (p. 48). Similarly, zine-dedicated websites like wemakezines.com address the community of readers and writers of zines as an overlapping demographic, so that engagement with the history and art appreciation of zines is inseparable from their creative production.

Zine Spaces and Selves

In my art education classroom conversations and online forums, I notice an immediacy to zine-making, so that students' pressing questions, ideas, and difficulties are documented in sketches, comics, collages, and flash literature that journals their unique and often in-between positionality as teachers-to-be as objects of conversation. Broadening the fluidity of zine identities, teachers may also embrace the etymological kinship possibilities of the word *zinester* with other feminist and creative terms for individualistic makers (e.g., the term *spinster*). Instead of being used as a derogatory term or insult, this spinster/zinester role can be reclaimed in conceptualizing zines and their makers' places in art and history. Suzette Henke (2003) described it like this:

> The spinster is… society's well-kept secret resource… devoted to the spinning of cloth or the spinning of tales.… Often alone and sometimes defenseless, she continues to spin wheels and words, webs and visions, fantasies and frustrations—all collected in the marginal spaces. (p. 23)

There exists a solitary space afforded by zines as described in the quote above, in which makers are located as multifaceted observers, storytellers, reporters, artists, and individuals who perhaps operate on the margins and in border spaces (both metaphorically and geographically), and address often marginalized topics pertaining to and written by women/womxn and people of color. For example, Barnard College's zine library collection is focused entirely on zines by women of color.[2] The aforementioned categories of making particularly recognize the many creative roles that art educators may take on in their communities. At the same time, the isolation of many art teachers as the sole artist-educators in their schools (or even districts) forms a parallel with this often marginal and solitary experience of creating zines and affirms its meaning in creating connections and communities.

On a related note, some of the perzines I created during graduate study expressed the acutely isolating experience of being a female gallery assistant and studio assistant to several male artists and more senior male students who sometimes neglected my status as a fellow student, educator, and/or artist. I illustrated my frustration with having been asked to wash dishes following an art reception, while male colleagues continued conversing with a guest lecturer at the local bar. I also created mini-comics that I exchanged with other artists about the assumptions in ceramics and crafts workshops that women like myself were incapable of the heavy lifting, exposure to extreme heat, and other highly physical tasks associated with cleaning and firing a gas kiln. These exercises and collaborative conversations inspired interviews with women ceramic artists for subsequent research, which in many ways orientated my life and career "creatively around other women" (Ahmed, 2006, p. 199).

Some of these complexities around the politics of space and work are also evocatively and extensively described by Ahmed (2006), who

noted the nuances of gender and the kitchen table versus the writing desk, with possibilities of reorientating ourselves around domestic, political, and creative work. Diary-style self-disclosures in zines, when shared publicly through digital media, also raise ambivalences and anxieties around the boundaries between personal/private and digital/public. Friedman (1997) has classified the vulnerability and vision contained in zines as "unlike anything else in the mainstream: more opinionated than newspaper editorials, more personal than magazine articles, more topical than books" (p. 1). This content can be both personal and problematic in public settings, so it is important that art educators continue to question how and why they may use zines in the classroom and how they may or may not share zines beyond classroom walls.

Book artist Johanna Drucker (2007) specified helpfully that, when shared publicly, personal writing can become a special kind of genre: "Women who make books out of the materials of their lives and imaginations establish a balance that gives voice to their own issues on their own terms" (p. 14). Autoethnography can provide a metaphorical window between the inner life of the artist and the external world represented and addressed within the zine (Ngunjiri, Hernandez, & Chang, 2010). Similarly, zines written in preK–12 schools, colleges, and artist collectives reflect the self, the local environment, and the community in a very detailed and situated way.

Zinesters and the Subversive Potential of Anonymity

Zines can also cultivate an unexpected separateness from the zinester that is productive. Although zines focus on materiality and political messages openly, they may often retreat from declarations of authorship and resist identity disclosure in various ways, much like the cultural theorist bell hooks, whose pseudonym honors Black female relatives as namesakes, and uses lowercase letters to de-emphasize individual naming itself. It may also be noted that zines are often associated with authorial contact information that includes only pseudonyms, defunct websites, or fleeting college email addresses. Well past the relatively low-tech 1990s, some zines still list a physical address, suggesting an authorial and artistic choice to focus on fragmentation on a particular and often transitional moment in time instead of focusing on the identity of the artist or any digital presence.

Zines distinctly speak to tensions and dualities surrounding female authorship and artistic presence. Perhaps redefining Virginia Woolf's (1929) famed assertion that "Anon… was often a woman" (p. 51), zinesters continue to work within a framework of their own anonymity to highlight multiple possibilities of voices, names, and visions of other women from contemporary life and art history. Further, Woolf's theorizing of feminist space invokes possibility as it asks us to "imagine" spaces and sites for women's writing (Ahmed, 2006). These considerations are particularly relevant aspects of zines as art forms that complexly document gender and other identities within specific moments and lives. Models such as the Guerrilla Girls' publications serve as anonymous art and writing with hand-drawn and personalized annotations to art history, satirical comics about artists, and an array of critical collages. One might even view the Guerrilla Girls as zinesters, with their powerful advocacy for women and people of color in the arts.

From meeting the Guerrilla Girls as a student to collaborating with them to include their works in my research (Weida, 2011), I have realized more fully how writing and making anonymously can paradoxically become a strong orientating declaration of oneself, one's values, and one's work purely as an artist and a teacher (rather than a named student, spouse, parent, etc.). I have since prompted art education students to take on pseudonyms and alter egos or personalities for art and authorship in this way. This shift in naming encourages them to be able to act as guerrilla artists (or activists, or superheroes) through zines and other guerrilla-style art.

In one graduate artistic development course, my students were particularly interested in unpacking the allure and repulsion of early editions of Art Teacher Barbie. Despite her appealing potential as an action figure of our field, students questioned the doll's unusually skimpy attire, culturally homogenous students, and purely Western art history miniatures (also noted by Blair, 2006), by reconstructing her in their own zines with more representative possibilities, creating several new "Art Teacher Barbies" while writing under her name.

Similarly, in arts-based research courses I have taught, related activities have included describing oneself as an artist, describing oneself as a teacher, and visually presenting areas of overlap. Zines are a useful representational approach because university professors can write as artists or activists, students might begin to act as educators, and the choice of where to assert identity and affiliation is carefully considered. For zinesters who choose if and when to disclose age, gender, or race, each identification can be an activist statement and can spark conversations around accessibility and perspective taking.

Zine Fandoms: Devotional Orientations, Deviations, and Methodologies

Zine Orientations and Gendered Deviations

Examining naming and etymologies, both regarding ourselves and our chosen art form, can be illuminating. The very word *zine* is derivative of both *magazine* and *fanzine* (Radway, 2011, p. 140). Zines reveal a great deal of passion about their often unusual subject and format through fandom, as the zinester chooses the topic and carefully frames the structure and content of the handmade book on that chosen topic. This often obsessive focus is uniquely poised as an intensive form of research and representation. Fandom can be an interdisciplinary and uniquely contemporary way of making sense of the world through art history and media studies (Grant & Love, 2019). Zines, like other forms of nonmainstream and hybrid writing that address possibilities not yet realized, also highlight neglected issues of history and unexplored aspects of mainstream topics in art and education. If whatever we tend toward creates a particular orientation of space and time marked by potential (Ahmed, 2006), the passion of zines also represents possibility, or a context not quite available in the present moment.

Ahmed (2006) also noted women writers and queer writers deviate from expected somatic male norms of "the writer" (p. 37), and suggested that orientation can inspire us to "search for others who share your points of deviation, or you might simply arrive in spaces… where welcome shadows fall and linger, indicating others have arrived" (p. 105). With zines, the concept of topical points of deviation seems particularly resonant, as does the idea of "shadows" of fellow zinesters overlapping and diverging from one's own as a reader and maker. Zines, like other forms of nonmainstream and hybrid writing, deviate from other discourse by highlighting neglected issues or unexplored aspects of mainstream topics in art and education. Countering the so-called Great Women approach to women's studies (Nochlin, 1971), zine biographies and hagiographies purposefully give voice to particular, lesser known female activists and artists, along with collaged excerpts and articles on the same topic. Similarly, I have invited students within courses on women and imagery of Western civilization to counter tokenism in gender studies by considering less well-known historic female figures in art and education through various forms of zine-ing as documentation, comparing and contrasting voices, and adding to impartial historical accounts. This approach to deeply engaging with art through zine frameworks equips us well as art educators to look backward in history and forward in purpose.

Zines in Dialogue With the Art World and Art Education Philosophies

In the classroom, I also have found it essential to include voices of zinesters who are orientated not only in terms of topics of teaching, but also in terms of contributions to conversations in the art world. For example, New York book artist Esther K. Smith (2007, 2008) created zines alongside book objects and toys from paper; her popular publications underscore the playfulness and unlimited possibility of zine-ing. Teacher and cartoonist Lynda Barry's (2009, 2017) discursive books are graphic novels about autobiography, art, and teaching, composed on yellow legal pads. They evoke both schools and zines, and she has participated in lesser-known collaborative zines and related podcasts. These examples demonstrate the importance of art educators publicly engaging with their personal teaching practice in the art world through zines.

In addition, although zines have often been compared to blogs (Piepmeier, 2009), I have also noticed creative connections between memes and zines when working within both formats in art education classrooms. Before the internet was widely used among the public, zines served as prototypical memes with collages of photographs, remixed magazine imagery, and handwritten or cut and pasted found art and text ephemera, all layered by hand. In my online art education courses, graduate students prepare to craft their own art teaching philosophies by selecting (or collecting) and juxtaposing selected quotes by theorists like bell hooks, Maxine Greene, and Paulo Freire. They then pair these quotes with related viral imagery both from the internet and from paper that includes film stills, photographs of their own, and other original or borrowed visuals. Consistently, this meme exercise generates several new approaches for identifying and expressing what is most valuable to them about art education, and their work extends into more lengthy handmade books and zine projects. In addition, students seem to express themselves in more divergent and metaphorical ways following their focused and participatory reflection on the philosophies of the field through this zine-friendly remix approach.

Zine Technologies and Devotion to Paper

Major shifts of the digital age have certainly impacted artistic production of zines with the generation of additional platforms for their publication/exhibition, including digital zine communities, such as WeMakeZines[3] and and online zine reference sources like ZineWiki.[4] However, as a zine researcher, I have been particularly struck by zinesters who continue to devote the creation of their ideas to paper and by hand, yet use digital networks to share, distribute, and archive images of their handmade zines. The late zine researcher Piepmeier (2009) observed that, despite similarities between zines and blogs, zine creators purposefully focus on physical materials and "identify zines as a paper medium" (p. 63). In my experience, the hearkening back to paper in zine-ing creates a felt connection with journaling traditions and the crafting of a space that is, first and foremost, personal.

Paper as a space and an orientating device also engages tools of writing: ink, books, and pencils (Ahmed, 2006) as well as art (e.g., not only ink and pencils, but also paint, glue, scissors, collage materials, etc.). Many zinesters are devout fans of paper, powerful advocates for artistry, and experts in their own right on traditions of making, even as they engage with timely topics and communities of survival and advocacy, such as sexual assault, mental illness, and transgender issues, in networks and other online spaces. Whether on paper or online, the notion of fandom in the world of zines has distinct and complex ties to communities and community building, with "networks based not on the accident of proximity but on the collective elaboration of shared observations, affects, desires, hopes, and even intentions" (Radway, 2011, p. 148).

Positioning Zines: Collecting, Curating, and Archiving Within Zine Libraries

Collecting/Gathering Zines

In collecting zines for my classroom, I have also connected with several networks of artists, teachers, and librarians. A large part of the contributions of veteran zinesters to the zine scene as fans is the creation, organization, and participation in digital networks and physical archives of zines. In these practices, we realize how zines can be, in and of themselves, collections of collaged ideas, questions, and imagery. Collecting zines into archives becomes an elaborate practice of curating volumes, which also contain multitudes, like intricate Russian nesting dolls. Collecting or gathering is particularly generative, for as Ahmed (2006) noted, archives are homes as well as "ways of gathering material in which worlds gather" (p. 94).

Bleyer (2004) has noted that the very ways in which we subscribe to, exchange, and/or collect/curate zines also are artistic, observing that the zines she has acquired over time are effectively "artifacts in [her] own personal museum" (p. 49). Along these lines, my own personal zine collection focuses on art history, gender, motherhood, and art education in sequence with many of my life experiences. Meanwhile, museum researcher Jade French (2020) has created a black-and-white mini-zine research series and website, titled *Ask a Curator: A Mini Zine Series*, addressing several curatorial methodologies regarding disabilities and museums. These examples echo a rich organizational artistry, noted by famed philosopher Maxine Greene (2000), of gathering arts education ideas together as metaphorical collages or museums.

As we practice these acts of zine collection as educators, we also contribute to the record of our communities and shape guiding conversations between zines through the archives themselves and our transparent curatorship. There is even a zine library code of ethics (Berthoud et al., 2015), a zine-like document that outlines educational considerations of making zines accessible, advocates for purchasing zines from their makers as opposed to photocopying them for zine libraries, and models representing various opinions when collecting zines on a given topic. As an educator and artist who has worked in both schools and museums, I find the intensely traditional, physical, and yet contemporary elements of zine creation and collection to be a central means to continue arts practices alongside and in symphony with teaching practices.

Curating Zines and Creating Zine Spaces

In addition to zine historians and zine researchers, zinesters themselves (often including librarians and others affiliated with universities and communities) have created directories, galleries, and libraries of zines in their home universities. Barnard College's iconic urban zine collection is now part of the official Columbia University library system (Barnard is also the longtime host to New York City's annual Zinefest event, which includes workshops and exhibitions). Zines have also enjoyed a growing presence in digital university library research guides often utilized by both researchers and teachers (Emily Carr University of Art & Design, n.d.). Perhaps one of the most prominent resources addressing the vast and transnational range of zines is the digital Grrrl Zine Network (n.d.), a web directory of zines (much like a distro, or zine distribution service). Creator Elke Zobl (2009) observed her learning process in categorizing lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender+ and folk zines over a decade as "reading, archiving, and researching" (p. 2). Although not currently being updated, the Grrrl Zine Network subtly reconfigured language and status online to represent its membership, with references to webmistresses of online zines and distros (instead of the conventional webmasters).

Other arts researchers and arts educators who produce zines find themselves engaging some interesting contradictions pertaining to physical zines and digital documentation and also around identity and ideology in education. Specifically, zines are often seen as products of resistance, and yet they are often collected by university librarians and professors that are, in

many ways, part of higher education establishments (Wee, 2017). The parallels of the underground art and cultures of many kinds surrounding zines brought from public collections into universities (Radway, 2011) engage predicaments of the wildness and activist nature of zines that may be somewhat tamed (or even tainted) by their presence in hallowed university halls.

However, the discursiveness of zines and zine studies often feels parallel to that of art educator identities. Art educators straddle the worlds of art and different realms of education in provocative ways that sometimes join and sometimes question particular structures and paradigms of these two fields (not just the gallery world, but also craft circles; not only universities, but also preK–12 schools). Johnson (2003) examined particular assertions of self and space in writing creatively, suggesting women and others "have to figure out how to take up the space around us, to take it up like a craft" (p. 103). Similarly, Ahmed (2006) advocated that women "claim" (p. 11) space for writing, creating a sort of home.

For me, zines are at once a sort of continuous companion in my career, my artistic home, and my creative craft; changing me and reflecting alterations in the ways in which I read, write, and make art with my own students. The culmination of this process is a zine and altered book library that I curated, which includes zines by preservice teachers, art education graduate students, students in other areas of education, and colleagues (Figure 2). This gallerylike library includes beautiful handmade book objects of many shapes and sizes, addressing interdisciplinary teaching issues between the arts and other subjects.

The latest iteration of our microlibrary is based in our university literacy center; we hope it is of service—not only to university students, but also to local preK–12 students who utilize the center, and even parents in our local communities (Figure 3). In parallel fashion, my fellow professor colleagues and I have shared our collections and teaching materials on zines—not only with students, but also with our colleagues at the university.



Figure 2. Author's university zine and altered book library, 2013.



Figure 3. Author's university zine and handmade book library, 2018.

We did this in part because we noted in the research pertaining to zines that few connections specifically link the zine pedagogies of teaching faculty with their college and university libraries (Thomas, 2018).

Archiving and Classifying Zines

Zine archives reflect deep inquiry into topics explored by the individual zinester through art and literature, often with a theme or tone of education. As Ahmed (2006) reminded us, archives are both dwelling places for documents, as well as orientation devices that reveal our own positions as artists and educators. The zines I highlight for students address topics of enduring interest in both art and education philosophies, such as an exquisitely designed set of zines around Rudolf Steiner and sample art projects from the Waldorf movement (Mottershead, 2016). The interdisciplinarity of zines highlighted in collections, such as the zine archives at Adelphi University, can position art education and book arts in terms of sustained connections to areas like literacy, educational philosophy, and teaching practice.

Although zines have commonly been classified alongside artist books in some academic libraries, they also are increasingly being recognized for their research value due to their particular "anthropological efficacy" (Wee, 2017, p. 155). Researchers have noticed that zines have a sort of half-life (Gunderloy, 1990) among their readers with relatively low circulation yet relevant content, or perhaps even an afterlife (Radway, 2011) in which those who create them are deeply influenced by reading both their own earlier zineing and that of others. In creating zine collections

in collaboration with my own students over the past 8 years in teaching spaces, I particularly wanted to impart that a key element of the zine genre lies in striking a structural and philosophical balance between personal and public conversations. At the same time, our zine archives must have an evolving consideration for the temporal: of communicating in a sort of constellation with the present moment as well as perhaps a future reckoning on these issues.

Hopeful Orientations: Futures of Zine Objects and Zine Communities

Creating books by hand, documenting and archiving arts-based research in them, and writing directly to and for artists and educators as a zinester remains a dually visionary and historical set of creative processes. Zine-ing, from the creation of perzines to public service announcement pamphlets, is a distinct approach to making, and can become an orientation that will "point us toward the future" (Ahmed, 2006, p. 21). As I transition between my own shifting orientations from zinester, to zine teacher, to zine researcher, to zine librarian, and perhaps even zine analyst, I am delightfully aware of the permeability and lack of hierarchical structure of these categories. I cannot help but note the cathartic and even therapeutic elements of zine craft and zine stewardship as I progress through the changes and challenges in my career; not only as an advisor, professor, and supervisor of art teachers in training, but also in my continued training to become a psychoanalyst.

Ahmed (2006) observed how hope is an "investment" (p. 376) in following our lines of orientation: a process of being under pressure, of not giving up, and enduring journeys full of doubt. The art education–related anxieties my students express (and with which I too often grapple) along our way are also addressed with a fresh sense of hopefulness as we write, draw, and collect self-prescribed survival guides around topics such as arts advocacy in and beyond school walls and the roles of the arts in human understanding within art programs and in other areas. Zine-ing for oneself and for others becomes part of dually personal and public practices of committing to our field.

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ORCID

Courtney Lee Weida http://orcid.org/0000-0002-1029-6429

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ENDNOTES

[1] Contemplating his teaching in this immersive way also encouraged me to realize my own wish to become an art educator.

[2] https://zines.barnard.edu.

[3] https://wemakezines.com.

[4] http://zinewiki.com.