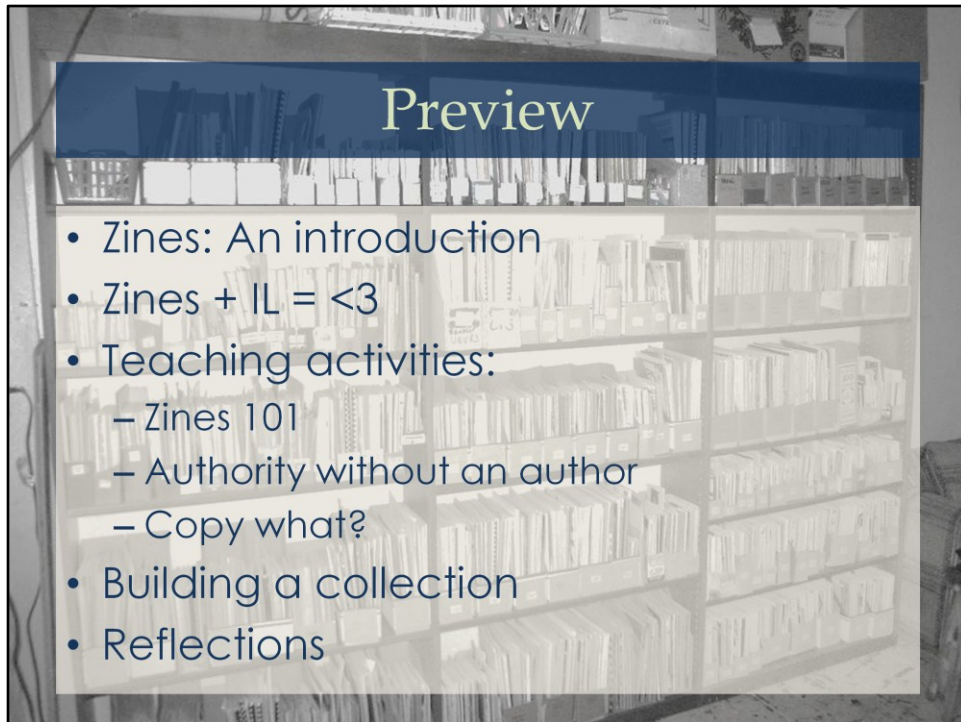


Photo from wadem's Flickr stream:

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About me: I'm the Undergraduate Services Librarian at the University of Iowa. I've been making zines and teaching with them since about 2006. My library has a collection of zines going back to the 1930s, but they're housed in special collections, so I usually take my own collection around to classrooms. (Handout: *Teaching Info. Literacy with Zines* zine and the insert)



*Photo of the Denver Zine Library from Colorado College Tutt Library's Flickr stream:
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/tutlibrary/854065469/sizes/l/in/photostream/> CC BY 2.0*

Overview of presentation:

1. Talk about what zines are
2. Why zines and IL are a match made in heaven
3. Teaching activities to do in library instruction: Zines 101, Authority without an author, Copy what?
4. How to build a collection on the cheap
5. Reflections

Zines: an introduction

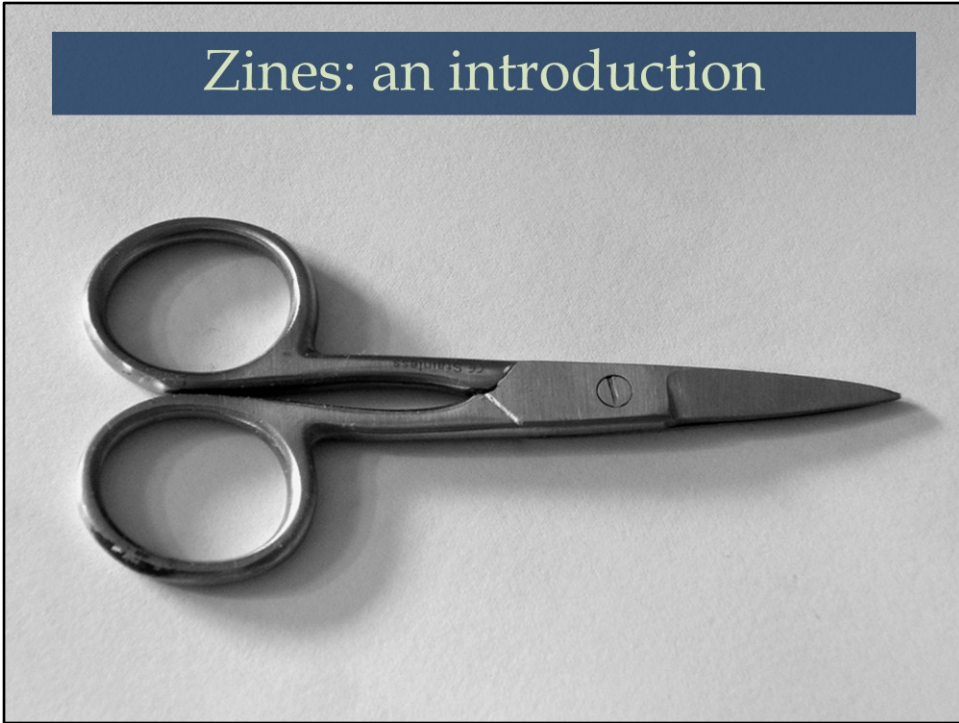


Photo from James Bowe's Flickr Stream:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/jamesbowe/3708293822/> CC BY 2.0

Before we get started, who has read zines before? Has anyone made a zine? Does anyone already have zines at their institution?

Anyone want to throw out a definition of zines?

Zines: an introduction

Zines are self-published works, created out of passion, not for profit.



Photo from James Bowe's Flickr Stream:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/jamesbowe/3708293822/> CC BY 2.0

I like this one, cribbed from the Independent Publishing Resource Center in Portland, OR. Zines are self-published works, created out of passion, not for profit. It's open-ended, it includes lots of odd materials, but it's not very descriptive.

Zines: an introduction

Zines are self-published works, created out of passion, not for profit.

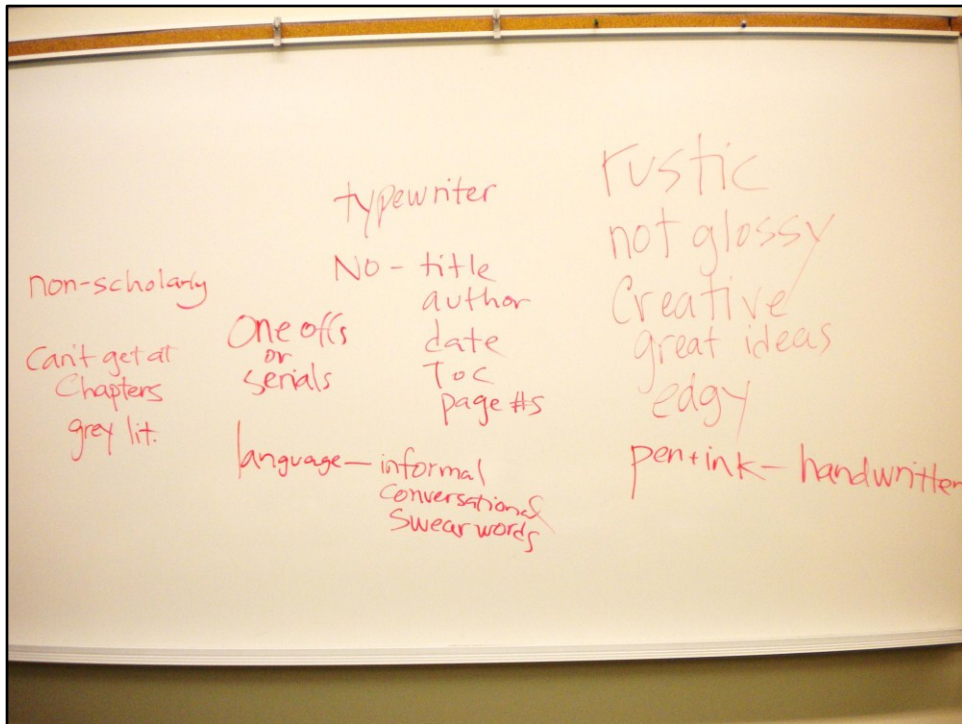


How are they different from other publications?

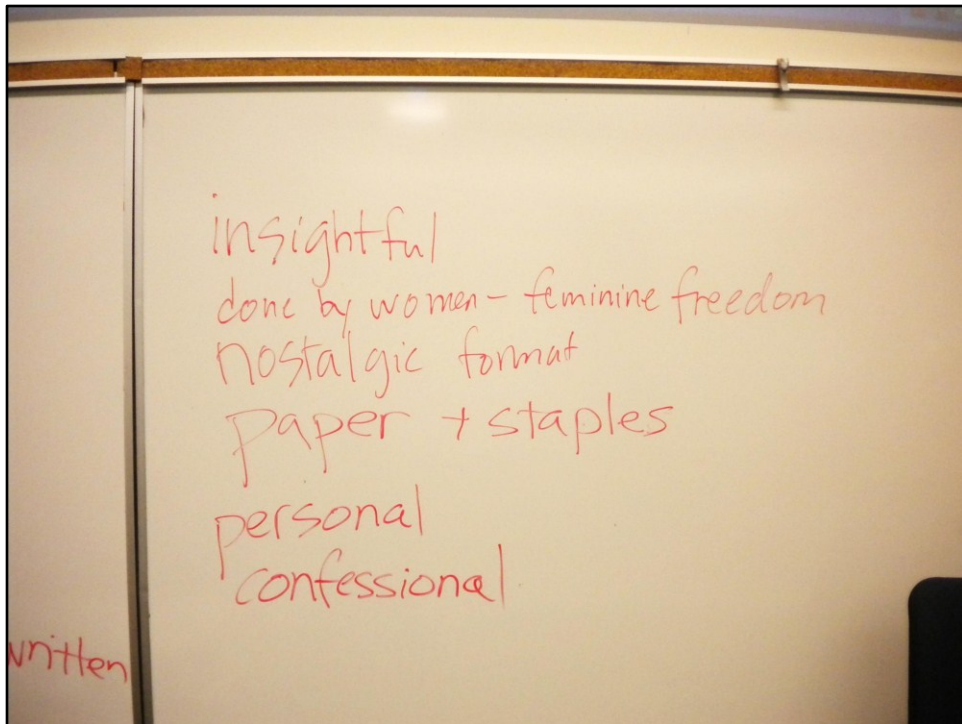
Photo from James Bowe's Flickr Stream:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/jamesbowe/3708293822/> CC BY 2.0

So we'll take a few minutes for you to look at some zines from my personal collection. They're not necessarily demonstrative of zines in general, but they should give you a sense of what these publications are like. While you're looking, think about how zines are different from other publications.



(At WILU, I gave folks about 3 or 4 minutes to browse, and then we brainstormed together. This and the next slide show what they came up with: Non-scholarly; can't get at Chapters; grey literature; one-offs or serials; typewriter; may not have title/author/date/table of contents/page numbers; language may be informal/conversational/include swear words; rustic; not glossy; creative; great ideas; edgy; pen and ink, handwritten)



(Insightful; done by women – feminine freedom; nostalgic format; paper and staples; personal; confessional)

A few other things to note here: zines are self-published, they are physical objects (so, they're not blogs – see Jenna Freedman's Zines Are Not Blogs: <http://zines.barnard.edu/about/notblogs>). They're still being made by people today – all the zines I passed around at WILU were made since 2000. Finally, zines can be really weird or controversial!



Photo from Benjamin Chun's Flickr stream:

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ACRL Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education:

<http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/informationliteracycompetency#stan>

So zines are basically weird little information packages. It makes them really great for teaching IL topics, in part because the contrast can be so stark between other kinds of publications. I work with college students, and there can be so much emphasis on technology, that handing them these odd little publications can be in itself engaging. It is also a very accessible way to introduce IL topics. Students who may feel intimidated by academic journals will often respond well to the informal, intimate nature of zines.



Photo from Benjamin Chun's Flickr stream:

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ACRL Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education:

<http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/informationliteracycompetency#stan>

I've just highlighted here a couple of the relevant points from the ACRL IL Competency Standards for Higher Education – there are other places where zines could fit, but this is mostly what we'll be focusing on.



Photo from Carissa GoodNCrazy's Flickr stream:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/roq2bark/3633773522/>

This first exercise is a gimme – it's what we've just done. Give students a big stack of zines, ask them some guiding questions (could be more focused on bibliographic elements, on authorship, on aesthetics...). Work together to create a list of characteristics you notice, and follow up with some discussions about why you might look for information in these publications. This is a workshop you might see at zinefests or infoshops, just giving a basic introduction. I often end this kind of exercise with a chance for everyone to make a collaborative zine together: pick a theme and everyone makes a page on that theme, then you compile all the pages, photocopy them, and everyone leaves with a copy. It is a way to empower students to see how they can create or summarize information in an equally valuable, low-stress way. Also, undergraduates tend not to get a lot of craft time in classes, and they seem to get really into it.

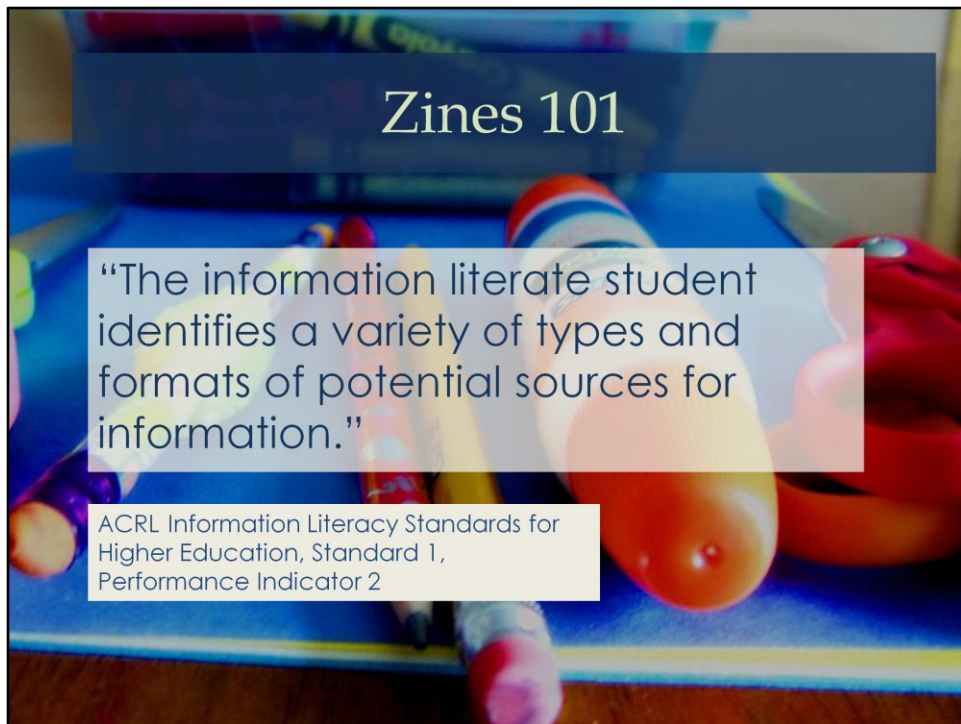


Photo from Carissa GoodNCrazy's Flickr stream:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/roq2bark/3633773522/>

And, this lesson can easily be mapped back to the ACRL standards. My learning objectives for a session like this are usually pretty minimal: that students recognize at least one characteristic of zines, and that they know that the University of Iowa Libraries has a huge collection of zines available in Special Collections. It's a way to broaden their understanding of library resources, and get them thinking about alternatives to traditional publishing.

Authority without an author



Photo from crownjewel82's Flickr stream:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/crownjewel82/2861417140/>

Who here looked at a zine with no author listed? Or an obvious pseudonym? Or just a first name? Zines often have cloudy authorship, or even if you know who the author is, there may not be any good way to determine their qualifications.

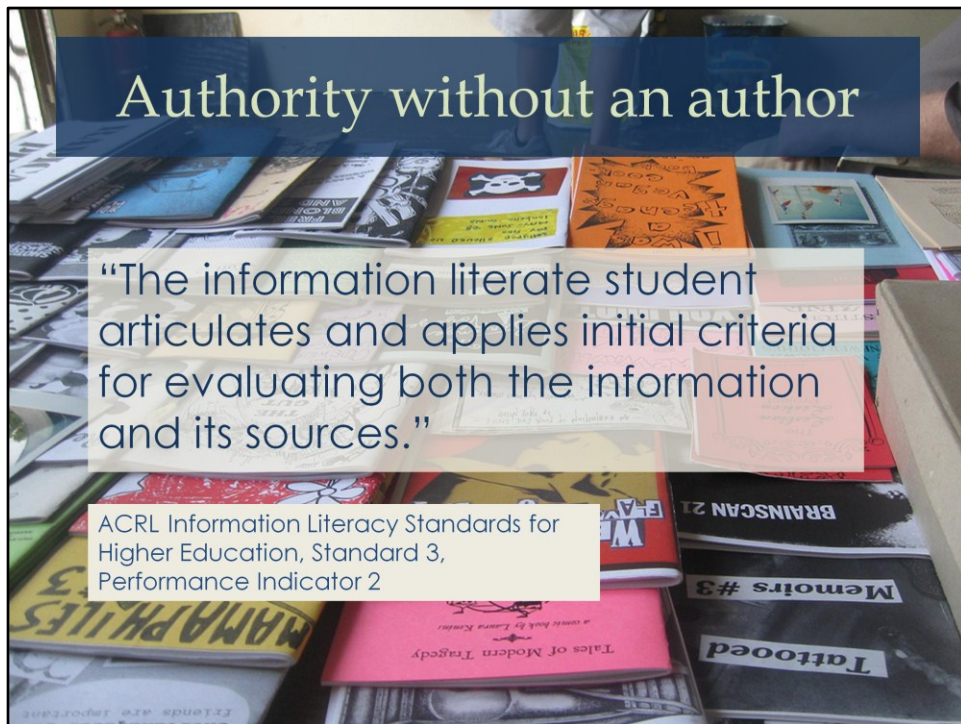


Photo from crownjewel82's Flickr stream:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/crownjewel82/2861417140/>

This is a performance indicator from the ACRL standards that many undergraduates struggle with, and I find myself teaching toward with first-year students.



Photo from crownjewel82's Flickr stream:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/crownjewel82/2861417140/>

CRAAP test: http://www.csuchico.edu/lins/handouts/eval_websites.pdf

A tool like the CRAAP test can be useful to help students develop habits of evaluation. For anyone who is not familiar, this is a set of questions developed by librarians at Chico State. The intention is to help students think critically about a particular document. It is somewhat geared for online information, but applying the CRAAP test to zines makes for an interesting discussion. We're going to look specifically at the areas of Authority and Purpose.



Photo from crownjewel82's Flickr stream:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/crownjewel82/2861417140/>

CRAAP test: http://www.csuchico.edu/lins/handouts/eval_websites.pdf

These are the CRAAP test questions for evaluating the authority of a document. If there is no known author (or a pseudonym, etc), how can we evaluate that? Many zines are about controversial topics: there are very legitimate reasons to publish an anonymous account of sexual assault. Are survivors qualified to write about certain topics that health officials are not? On the other hand, who can confirm the identity (or experience) of a completely anonymous writer? Because so many zines are very intimate narratives, they may even bring the legitimacy of these questions up for debate.



Photo from crownjewel82's Flickr stream:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/crownjewel82/2861417140/>

CRAAP test: http://www.csuchico.edu/lins/handouts/eval_websites.pdf

These are the CRAAP test questions for evaluating purpose of a document.

Sometimes this is very explicitly stated! For example, in the zine *Abortion Party*, the author describes her three experiences having abortions. In the introduction, she writes "Maybe I've felt like that's the kind of thing to keep secret because I think a lot of people keep it a secret. I'm learning, however, that as I spill about my abortions other people start talking about theirs. For me, it helps me lose my sense of shame about it and gain a sense of power. Trip out on the power of self-disclosure."

So, for this exercise, I'd ask students to apply the CRAAP test questions to a single zine, and share those thoughts with each other. Why would someone choose to read these zines instead of getting information from a more traditionally trustworthy source? You could further it by asking them to compare with an academic article or a website on the same topic. This is also a good introduction to primary source material. When I did an exercise similar to this one with a group of first year students, almost all men, I had them looking at Riot Grrrl zines from the 1990s, feminist zines made by young women. These zines included content about women's bodies, sexual assault, and a number of other potentially titillating topics. I was nervous at first, but this exercise provided an opportunity for great empathy – these fellows were clearly

not the intended audience, but thinking about the authors and their intentions helped them recognize the value of these documents.

Copy what?

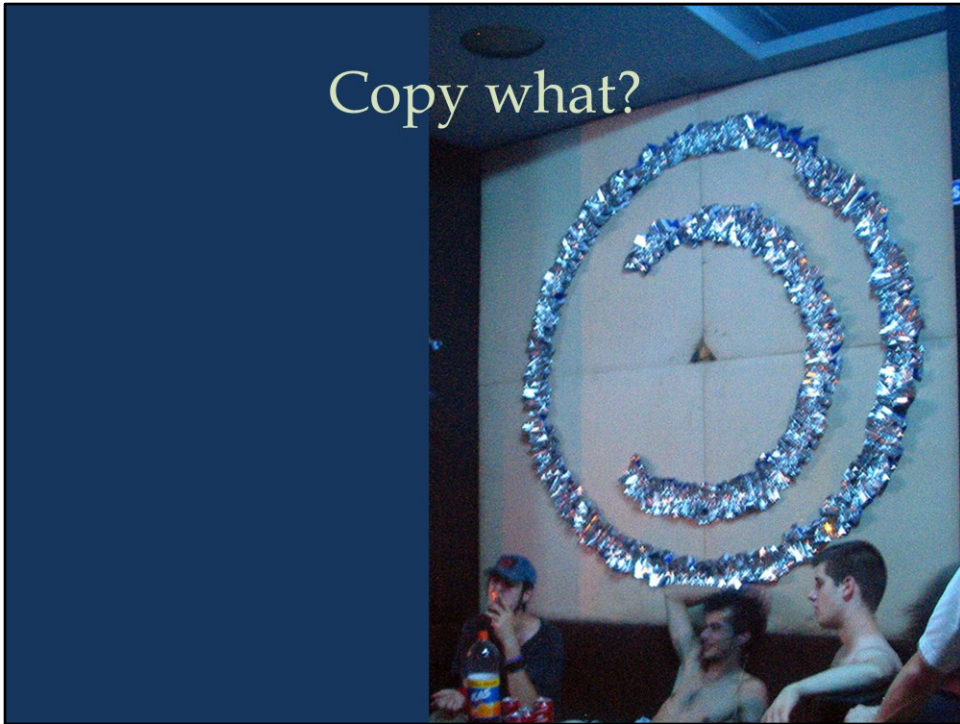


Photo from Segon Acte's Flickr stream:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/97037793@N00/168815760/>

This last activity is focused on copyright.

Copy what?

“The information literate student understands many of the ethical, legal, and socio-economic issues surrounding information and information technology.”

ACRL Information Literacy Standards for Higher Education, Standard 5, Performance Indicator 1



Photo from Segon Acte's Flickr stream:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/97037793@N00/168815760/>

There is, naturally, a fit with the ACRL standards here. However, this is an activity I've only done so far in my volunteer work with a local arts organization, not in a proper classroom. We looked at a mix of zines with particular statements about copyright. Did anyone see something like that today? A creative commons license, or the copyleft symbol, which is just the backwards C like on this slide.



Photo from Segon Acte's Flickr stream:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/97037793@N00/168815760/>

This is the copyright statement from the zine *Show And Tell #2*: the author has put the regular copyright symbol and X'ed it out, then written "Copy me! Copy me! Copy me!" This isn't a legally binding statement on copyright, but is part of a tacit agreement within a zine-making community.

(At this point, I handed out the *A Zinester's Quick Guide to Copyright* zine.) For this arts organization, I made this zine – it is not made by a lawyer, and is based on US copyright law, so take that into consideration. It provides the very basics of copyright, which made for a good starting point for discussion. Many people are surprised that copyright is automatic. Educating them about the options available offers a way to make more informed decisions, whether it is for making zines or publishing photos on Flickr.

We followed up this discussion by watching *a Fair(y) Use Tale*, which is an introduction to fair use via Disney cartoons:

<http://cyberlaw.stanford.edu/blog/2007/03/fairy-use-tale> Did anyone see the

Fantasia zine out there? Many zines use copyrighted images or text within them.

Asking students to evaluate whether this falls into fair use is a great way to get them thinking critically about intellectual property. We ended by making a zine together,

using a lot of collage...but with images from the public domain.



Photo from ramsey everydaypants' Flickr stream:
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/everydaypants/3771581674/>

So, if you're interested in trying out these or other instructional activities, you're going to need to get your hands on some zines. In your handout, I've identified some of the places where you can find zines, and I'm just going to walk through them quickly.



Photo from ramsey everydaypants' Flickr stream:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/everydaypants/3771581674/>

These are my top recommendations for building a zine collection on the cheap. In my presentation proposal, I said I thought you could build a teaching collection, something like these zines I've used here for about fifty bucks. I'd love to hear if anyone goes out and does this! First thing, I'd say is to make friends with zinesters. Many zinesters absolutely support libraries, and you may get some donations if you just meet people and explain what you're doing. Which isn't to say you shouldn't pay people for their work – all but the most elaborate zines sell for five bucks or less apiece.

Zine Fairs are annual events where people meet up to buy, sell, and trade zines. I've included a list of some of the big zinefests in Canada in your handout. If you can make it to one of these, you'll have a chance to meet tonnes of zinesters.

Although zines are not blogs, many zinesters are very tech-savvy. You can find zines on Etsy, as well as from online distros. There's even a social networking site specifically for zinesters, called We Make Zines. All are great ways to connect with zinesters and to buy zines.

There's also a moderately active listserv for zine librarians:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/zinelibrarians/>. It is a great resource for any issues of zines in libraries. And, occasionally people post about giveaways of duplicate copies – just last week, someone from San Francisco Public Library offered numerous grab bags of zines that are outside their collection policy.

Finally, I've suggested that you make your own zines...not that you should be teaching based on a collection made up only of zines you made yourself. Many zinesters are interested in trading, so if you don't have a large budget for buying zines, you may make your own zine and see if you can find people willing to trade with you.



Photo from Raoul Louar's Flickr stream:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/72006245@N05/6506053557/>

To wrap up, I want to propose to you one last exercise you can do with zines in the classroom. This is one you can use in any of your instruction. It is basically getting students to make a zine that reflects what they've learned. I have friends who use this in high school math classes, asking students to make a mini-zine explaining sine, cosine, and tangent – it forces them to explain what they've learned in a limited space, and gives the chance to use images as well as writing. Next year I plan to use this for some general library-use issues, and then use those student-made zines to teach other students. (Here I hand out the pre-folded *A Little Publication In Yer Hands* zine.) This is a bit more worksheety than I'd usually do, but I just wanted to get the idea across. Take a minute to jot down quick answers, either in text or drawings.

Questions?

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