

But maybe “zines” go further back in history than we think!

From Cornell university
<https://guides.library.cornell.edu/zines101/history>

A (very short) timeline of zine history:

- 1517?: Luther’s 95 Theses as the first major zine (specific, self-made and published)
- 1770s: American Revolution broadsides
- 1920s: Surrealist and dada (artists and the avant garde critique of the bourgeois)
- 1930s: Sci-fi (fans met at conventions and readings; the publication of zines such as *Amazing Stories* and *Weird Tales*)
- 1940s: Beat poetry chapbooks, such as Allen Ginsburg and San Fran friends
- 1950s: Samizdat (Soviet Union DIY; this was literature secretly written, copied, and circulated in the former Soviet Union and usually critical of practices of the Soviet government)
- 1960s: Comics (industry news and information magazines, such as [The Comic Reader](#), as well as interview, history and review-based fanzines)
- 1970s: Punk fanzines and zines (zines about established punk culture, bands, direct action and non-conformity)
- 1990s: Riot grrl zines
- Today: Zinefests, zine distros/small presses, and zine libraries galore!

A Brief History of Zines

From Duke University



- 1930: “The Comet,” believed to be the first science fiction fanzine, published.
- 1930-1960: Mimeograph duplicating machine available.
- 1944: Xerography invented.
- 1961: IBM Selectric Typewriter introduced.
- 1960s/1970s: Zines characterized by a synergy between outspoken political commentary, literary experimentation, heartfelt critiques of rock and roll music, influence of drugs on visual communication, and revolution in layout and design.
- Mid 1960s: Inexpensive offset printing used to create alternative newspapers and underground comics.
- 1967: The Underground Press Syndicate (UPS) is founded. Founding members include the *Los Angeles Free Press*, the *East Village Other*, the *Berkeley Barb*, *San Francisco’s Oracle*, *Detroit’s Fifth Estate*, *Chicago’s Seed*, and *Austin’s Rag*.
- Mid-1970s: Punk rock zines begin to emerge
- Late 1970s: Birth of the Do-It-Yourself (DIY) movement and the indie music scene.
- 1980s: Copy machines become an increasingly popular way to publish zines, especially as Kinko’s copy shops begin to proliferate.

- Early 1980s: Mike Gunderloy publishes first mimeographed “Factsheet Five” zine review list.
- 1990: *Bikini Kill*, written by members of the Riot Grrrl band of the same name, inspires other early Riot Grrrl zines *Summer Star*, *Jig Saw*, and *Girl Germs*.
- Early 1990s: Riot Grrrls movement, with zines like *Queenie*, *Heck*, *Mad Planet*, and *Kikizine* (the last two by Sarah Dyer) are featured in *Seventeen*. Zines begin to be created with desk top publishing programs; e-zines are distributed via the Internet. Rebecca Walker writes an article for *Ms. Magazine* called “Becoming the Third Wave,” marking the emergence of the third wave feminist movement.
- 1992: “Revolution, Girl Style,” an article by Farai Chideya and Melissa Rossi about Riot Grrrl feminism, published in *Newsweek*. Although Riot Grrrls across the country lamented the nationwide portrayal of their underground movement as just another cute girl fad, the article sparked a boom in the production of zines by teenage girls and young women.
- 1993: Debbie Stoller and Marcelle Karp publish the first issue of *BUST* as a photocopied zine.
- 1997: *Zined!*, a video documentary by Marc Moscato, is released. *A Girl’s Guide to Taking over the World: Writings from the Girl Zine Revolution* edited by Karen Green and Tristan Taormino is published.
- 1998: Independent Publishing Resource Center (IPRC) is founded in Portland, OR. The center is “dedicated to encouraging the growth of a visual and literary publishing community by offering a space to gather and exchange information and ideas, as well as to produce work.”
- 2001: The Sallie Bingham Center for Women’s History and Culture acquires collection of 1500 zines from Sarah Dyer, creator of *Action Girl Newsletter*, a zine review publication focusing on zines by women and girls. *Grrrrlyshow*, a documentary by Kara Herold featuring women zine creators, is released.

- 2002: Bingham Center acquires zine collection from Sarah Wood, who ran GERLL Press, a zine “distro” (distributor) based in Chicago, Ill., in the early- to mid-1990s. The first issue of *Zine Librarian Zine* by Greg Meins is published in Portland, OR, marking the first attempt to document the creation, mission, and organization of zine libraries nationally.
- 2003: The Bingham Center acquires zine collections from Ailecia Ruscin, author of *Alabama Grrrl*, and Arielle Greenberg, editor of *William Wants a Doll*.

Adapted and expanded from a timeline by Doug Blandy
<https://blogs.library.duke.edu/digital-collections/zines/timeline/>



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