

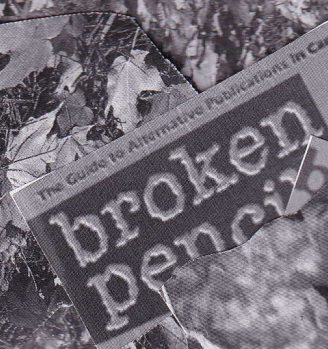
Crunching Around:

Zines &

DIY

Digital

Scholarship





Some Notes On “Crunching Around”

One of the surprising (to me!) aspects of my job as an academic librarian is that I often get the opportunity to meet with high school English and Writing teachers in research and digital skills workshops, and I always come away from those events having been inspired by these seasoned, thoughtful, and creative professionals—I’ve learned more about teaching in that context than any other. In the spring of 2025, I was teaching a workshop entitled “Activating Digitized Popular Culture Archives for Creative Nonfiction Research” in New York City as a part of my institution’s concurrent enrollment program, where a primary topic of discussion was how to encourage students to explore digitized “old media” to locate interesting materials, trace their interests, and develop questions. As we explored and developed prompts for student exploration, one teacher, Claire A. Davanzo, connected the approach to a practice she calls “crunching around,” and it’s a concept that has really stuck with me. I recently reached out to Claire to revisit the idea and to ask her to describe in her own words since it was such an inspiration for this zine. Claire teaches English and Writing courses at Verona High School in New Jersey, with a focus on creative non-fiction, film adaptation, and gender and literary texts. She told me:

I use the phrase “crunching around” often, and across a wide range of classes, which, now that I’m reflecting on it, I think is important to the universality of the practice... When I tell [my] students that we need to “crunch around” in a text (or in a pool of texts), I’m actually often thinking literally of what it means to “crunch around” in some really crispy autumn leaves. There’s a real satisfaction that comes from kicking things up, raking things together, seeing what shakes out, and I think students find

it freeing to take this more exploratory approach to reading (sadly, in many secondary school English curricula, there is not much space made for this kind of curiosity and whimsy). They are encouraged to ask questions, turn over particular words and phrases... [crunching around] probably shares quite a bit with the “close reading” concept, but not quite as narrow a focus, if that makes sense. Additionally (and really equally importantly), for me, “crunching around” also connotes a sense of an investment of time and energy; it’s not going to be accomplished in a few minutes, but rather across, at minimum, a few hours (and in those high level classes, oftentimes a few weeks and even beyond the coursework itself - it’s been so gratifying to me to have students come back years later and tell me about how they’ve turned over texts or concepts we “crunched around” in together years ago). I think this probably speaks really well to the work we did in the spring, where, as you probably saw, I was really focused on finding just the right thing and was prepared to spend some time and energy looking for it.

It’s in that spirit that I employ the concept of crunching around here: an inquisitive process that represents meaningful investments of time and attention in an open-ended way that welcomes serendipity and presents opportunities to explore, shift focus, and keep attentive to one’s interests as they encounter unfamiliar things.

-Patrick Williams
November 2025

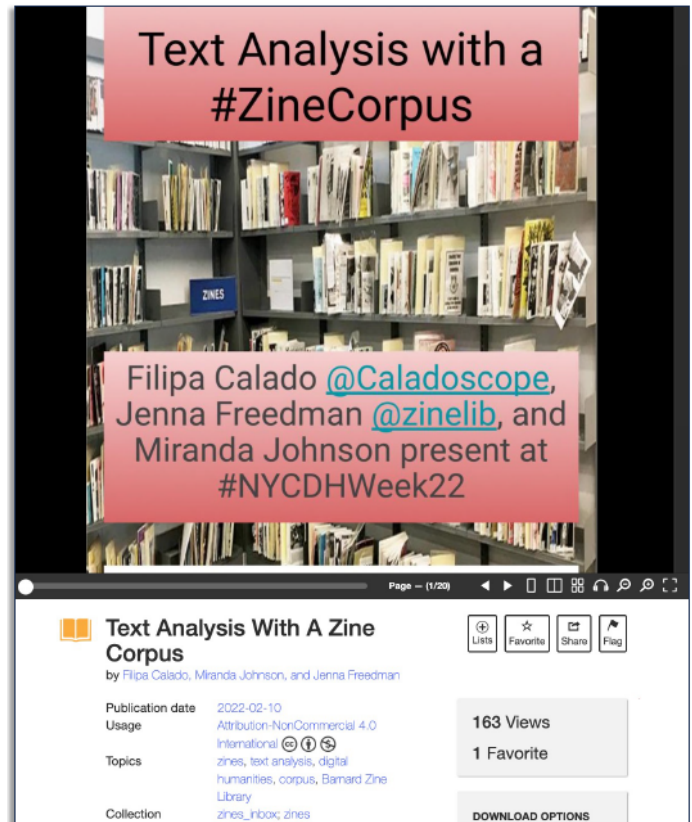


Background & Inspirations

This zine documents my work and my reflections on a project I undertook as part of a panel called “Distros, Datasets, Metazines” at the 2025 meeting of the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading, and Publishing. I’m grateful to my friends and colleagues, Jolie Braun and Jason Luther, without whose collaboration, camaraderie, and inspiration none of this would have been possible. My presentation, entitled “Exploring DIY Geographies and Communities in Broken Pencil and Punk Planet Using Digital Methods,” gave me a chance to grapple with some questions and opportunities that had been nagging at me for quite a while, and working through them with Jolie and Jason has given me lots to think about going forward, particularly in context of the networks, documentation, and zine history practices Jason and Jolie so thoughtfully consider in their work. For this project, I looked specifically at the representational and pedagogical afterlives zines live, and the constraints and affordances of the datasets they may ultimately become.

Now, it’s not natural for me to think of a zine as merely a dataset—they are alive and connected and feel like the opposite of what we consider data—but as ephemeral publications, we’re more often encountering them in digital forms and platforms, and I want to make sure we’re doing so in a way that engages and activates their contents for readers.

I’m interested in ways to use digital tools to really dig in and get back to the rich, visual material we’ve got and do so in ways meaningful to zine readers and researchers; not as a way of proving anything with data or answering questions in aggregate, but as an entry to immersion and engagement with the connections and context present in these very special publications. I want to find ways to get folks crunching around as a way of understanding.



The zine from Calado, Freedman, & Johnson’s 2022 NYC DHWeek presentation is available on the Internet Archive.

This project has been a long time in the making, but a few recentish developments in my teaching and research have brought me to the current use case. First, I draw considerable inspiration from a 2022 NYC Digital Humanities Week presentation and provocation from Filipa Calado, Jenna Freedman, and Miranda Johnson, whose Text Analysis with a Zine Corpus event surfaced some interesting guiding themes. First, due to issues of design, scarcity, institutional structures, creator consent, and a bunch of other factors, we don’t actually have a prepared and inclusive zine corpus to work with as we might with early modern printed texts, social media posts, newspaper articles, or other media often subjected to digital humanities techniques like text and data mining. The Zine Corpus workshop was one of the first times I’d seen zines discussed in a DH context, and this groups’ aim was to encourage that zines be

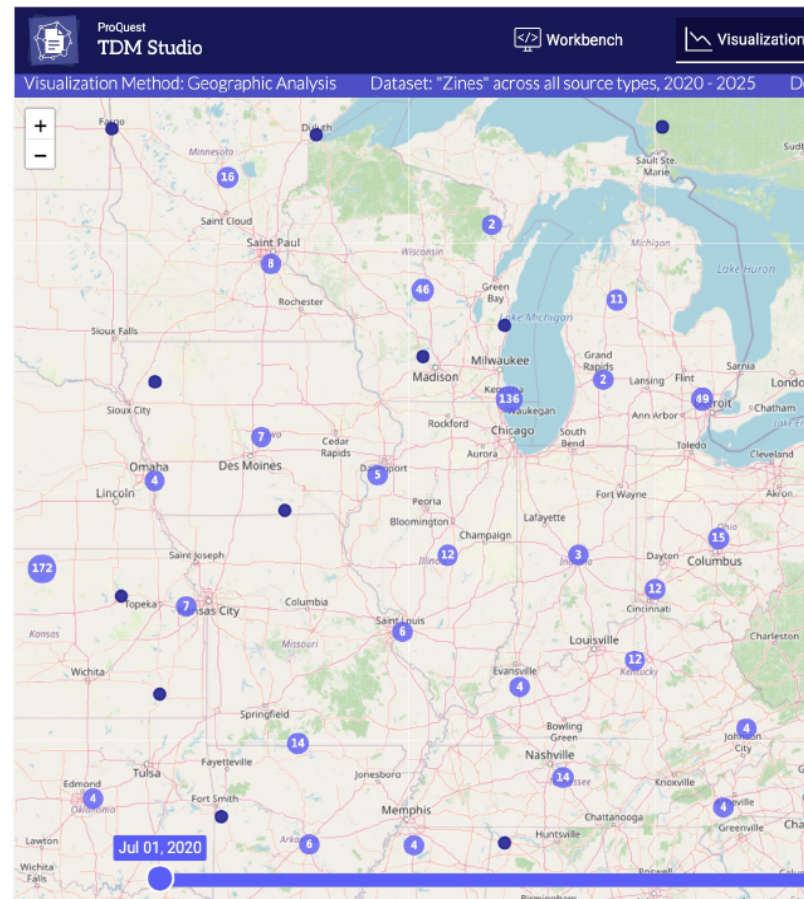


studied in the ways other texts have been with DH methods, considering the question: what is gained or lost with a step away from the physical/visual object in zine studies, and what other ways can we represent and work with these texts.

Around this same time, I was a couple of years into developing and teaching a new course in my institution's Digital Humanities major, Computing Culture, which is a core class that introduces students to the philosophies and methods of digital humanities as well as to the history of technology from a humanities perspective.

One of my aims in the class is to get students focused on the inflection point of the mid 90s to the early 2000s, when traditional print media was merging with, resisting, and inventing the digital media we have today—things like blogs, Voice over IP, digital music sharing and Napster, Y2K, the emergence of YouTube, and the earliest glimmers of the social web. I bring students to our Special Collections Research Center multiple times, and we work with digitized media archives of magazines, catalogs, and other publications, which definitely gives them a sense of independent and corporate media of the time.

But one thing I have struggled with is immersion and engagement beyond just locating cool and weird examples to respond to. One thing zines bring to that conversation is the foundational networkiness of their creation and distribution, and their inherent community self-awareness. I have been looking for a digital approach to stimulating that immersion and attention beyond just starting from page 1 and reading what's at hand in a linear way.



A look at geographically-organized results for the term “zine” across all included content

Another impetus for this work is the proliferation of digitized archives and platforms that really seem to have flourished during the pandemic. One particular platform that stimulated my thinking here was ProQuest's Text and Data Mining Studio (PQTD), which encourages a new way of interacting with the licensed media archives that firm provides to libraries.

Essentially, PQTD is a suite of tools to enable users to apply text and data mining techniques to licensed content on a platform that complies

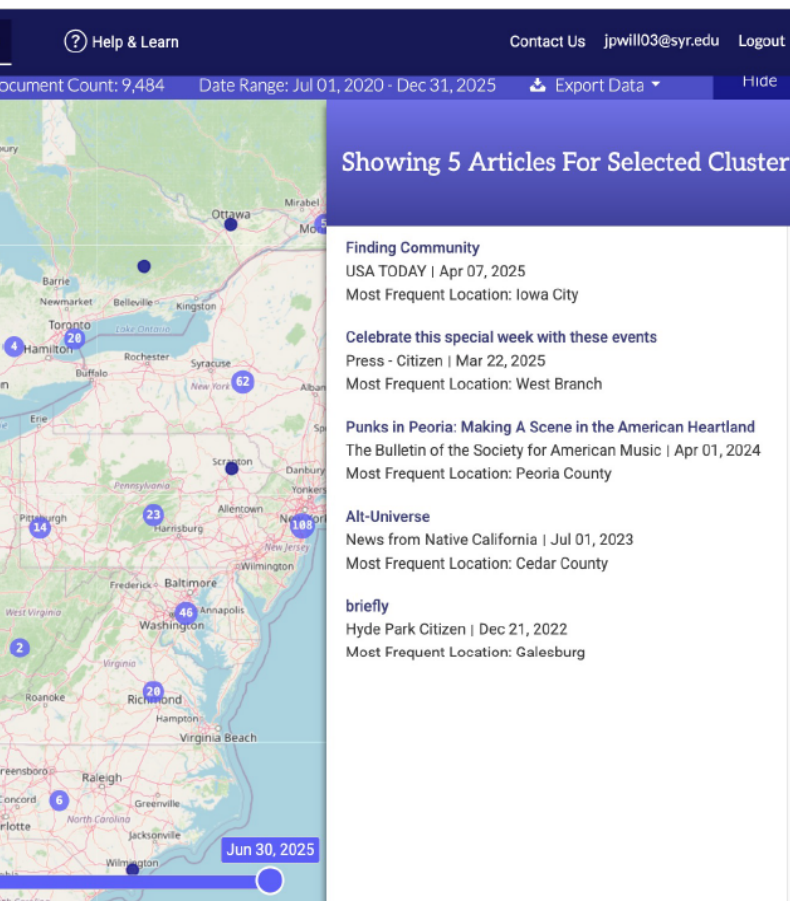


Figure 1. Screenshot of the ProQuest TDM Studio Visualization interface.

with the terms of ProQuest's contracts with rights holders—those terms have been a barrier to researchers wishing to do text and datamining work on content that is not in the public domain. One emphasis of this tool is geographic analysis of search results. This screenshot is of a general search for the word “zines” across all content, but with results grouped by a sampling of places mentioned in the texts.

What struck me when this project was released and our library subscribed in 2021 is that

Broken Pencil, the storied Canadian metazine, was one of the titles included—and that never happens! In a sense, *Broken Pencil* access on the PQTDM platform is one piece of the missing zine corpus Calado, Freedman, and Johnson discussed in their workshop, and while the tools is designed to look across thousands of documents and titles, we can sort of underutilize the tool to zero in on a single periodical as well.

Also during the pandemic I began diving much more deeply into digitized archives of material to support my online teaching. That led me to realize that another metazine, *Punk Planet*, has been digitized in full and was made available on the Internet Archive. There is a range of ways these archives are becoming available to us in terms of design, mediation, sophistication, and flexibility - from full corporate to full diy – and *Broken Pencil* on ProQuest Text and Data Mining Studio and *Punk Planet* on the Internet Archive, I think, represent two extremes of the range.



Broken Pencil, then & now

Broken Pencil was a long running quarterly publication documenting the DIY, independent, and small press literary culture of the past 30 years. It had a print circulation of 3,000, and was based in Toronto. It's associated with Canadian indie writing and comics communities and was published with support from the Canada Council for the Arts and the Ottawa Arts council. Content-wise, it is focused on zine culture and associated DIY media communities. It contains thousands of brief zine reviews (as well as book, album, and other arts reviews), features, columns, editorials, and comics, authored by hundreds of contributors. It also contains a small amount of advertisements, and in fact it offered discounted rates for independent media advertisers.

Our access to *Broken Pencil* as a comprehensive digital surrogate is exclusively available via ProQuest—*Broken Pencil* is included in both ProQuest's flagship ProQuest Central product as well as Alt-Press Watch. While Alt-Press Watch does include lots of independent media,



Broken Pencil's inclusion here is a boon to zine researchers, as “our” content is not generally available within tools like this – as Calado, Freedman, and Johnson mentioned, the nature of zine content typically excludes it from the most common periodical archives and DH platforms/interventions.



One relevant idiosyncrasy of ProQuest's treatment of *Broken Pencil* is that it emphasizes the individual article as the unit of focus (rather than the quarterly issues)—this is not surprising given that this is in the context of a library database, but that has some implications for our current use case. The deep indexing allows us to query within only, say, reviews, advertisements, or news articles, and the interface is polished and familiar—focused more on searching and keywords contained in *Broken Pencil* and other publications than on the experience of reading *Broken Pencil*. In fact, the Proquest coverage for *Broken Pencil* does not allow users to read full issues easily & it even excludes cover images (gasp); that's something that gets in the way of immersion and noticing—we can lose the glue of what holds an issue together.



Punk Planet, then & now

Punk Planet, based in Chicago, had a shorter run, publishing 80 issues between 1994 and 2007, with a print circulation of 16,000 at its peak. Similar to *Broken Pencil*, topics included independent arts, with a focus on music and politics. Alongside its album reviews, feature stories, columns, and letters to the editor, *Punk Planet* also included hundreds of zine reviews in a similar style to *Broken Pencil*. *Punk Planet* was much more reliant on advertising, and includes lots of it—from record labels, zine distributors, shops, and other associated sources. *Punk Planet* also resisted corporate sponsorship of any kind and had a policy of rejecting major label ads.

In terms of its digital afterlife, our comprehensive access to surrogates for *Punk Planet* comes thanks to community archiving to the Internet Archive, in part due to uploading undertaken by Dan Sinker, its publisher. This set of digital surrogates is decidedly more DIY in nature. Facsimile PDFs of the issues are the unit of



focus, and in fact there is no article- or contributor-specific indexing, and the optical character recognition (OCR) is far from perfect. Here we have piles of material for crunching around in but not a lot of evident direction beyond the chronological for exploration.

One aspect of this approach that I appreciate is the emphasis on whole issues with OCR'd PDFs that are both readable and searchable, and that allow readers to maintain immersion and engagement among the contents of a single issue; more akin to the focus of a reading room experience than the ProQuest approach affords.



as metazines, as datasets, as corpora

harmonies	disharmonies
♪ ethos, themes & topics	≠ unit of analysis (article/issue)
♪ coverage (limited to overlap)	≠ file formats
♪ regions, place names	≠ indexing
♪ type & design	≠ OCR quality
♪ emphasis on mailorder	≠ different playgrounds, different games

In thinking about how these two titles match up, both as examples of metazines and as DH-ready corpora, I want to make a few comparisons. First, the harmonies—both publications have a shared approach and ethos; they cover similar themes and topics; they are both North American publications written in English looking mostly at local and regional communities, and they share, to an extent, an aesthetic I’ll call “maximally irreverent 90s desktop publishing.” Both titles foreground the use of postal mail as a communication and distribution channel.

The disharmonies among the two titles come mostly from how they were prepared for their digital afterlives—*Broken Pencil* is presented to us as a constellation of thousands of individually authored, classified, and indexed articles; *Punk Planet*’s issue format is preserved but we don’t have additional apparatus to navigate the various genres and forms it contains, and we have no further indexing beyond issue number and date. So in terms of making comparisons or

processing content, we have different platforms and different approaches; *Broken Pencil* being proprietary, closed, and orderly to an inspiring level, and *Punk Planet* being beautifully messy, open, and open ended. I’m interested in how to make these approaches play nice together, at least conceptually, so we can put titles in conversation and crunch with one another regardless of their digital afterlives.

Why place?

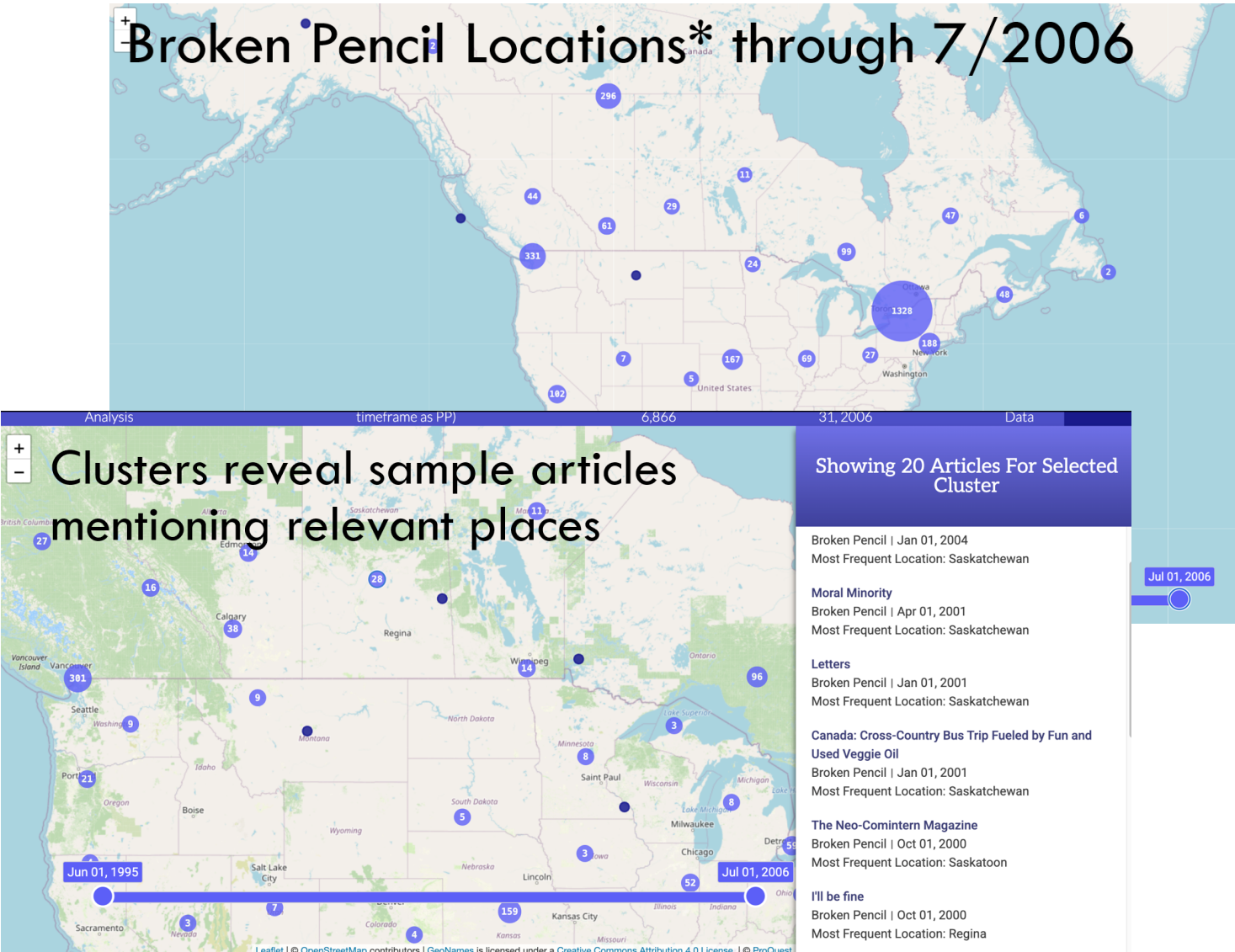
There’s a further similarity shared I want to highlight for the context of my use case as well. The way that Place operates in both *Punk Planet* and *Broken Pencil* is something kind of special. Not only are mailing addresses and locations foregrounded in the various kinds of materials each title published, but postal addresses and other indications of geographical roots are plentiful in the text, across most genres and forms. This is both because of the necessity of knowing where to send your self-addressed stamped



envelope and money order or well-concealed cash, but also, both publications serve as rare documentation of these ephemeral media and the communities within which they are created, circulated, and consumed. So, locations and place names offer a way for us to look at similarities and differences between the publications and a way to draw readers into the content of the publications themselves.

The image below is a mapped progression through time of locations named in the text of

items published in *Broken Pencil* via the ProQuest Visualization Studio. The static images hides the dynamics, but logged in to the platform one can zoom in and the clusters spread out to more locations—for example, that cluster over Toronto, once zoomed in, includes individual counts for Toronto, Hamilton, Buffalo, Rochester, and other Lake Erie/Lake Ontario adjacent places. We can see a couple of things pretty quickly; first that the “range” of the publication text extends as time passes, and deepens in certain areas. We also see some shifting





as new place names change the orientation of the sort of centers of gravity, and the platforms process of sampling locations.

I'll also note that I have an asterisk after the word locations because the way the Named Entity Recognition works is not perfect, and we can expect both some false positives and some false negatives. The approach used by ProQuest attempts to correct for equivocation among place names and person names, for example, based on context, but it's far from foolproof and we might see a street name or person's name that is also a city or country name get confused by the algorithm, and since we have access to the text of the documents, we can visit them to see the full context or valence of the mention.

When we zoom into a location that catches our attention, we get a list of the items in that cluster, and the links on the right take us to the full text of the item on Alt-Press Watch, where we can view and download the page or pages containing the article text.

The first time I did this, I got really excited—with *Broken Pencil*, here was a way to look at specific places, and get a sense of how they were represented within this essential chronicle of the DIY cultures of the era. A great way to enter the text and to already be prepared to ask certain questions or to view the content through the lens of a particular geographic community and to crunch around in the connections. To me, that's a great way to approach any media archive, particularly among a group of students like mine who are mostly unfamiliar with this type of material.

While this is kind of a superpowered and fancy (and expensive) way of accessing the content, it got me wondering what would be the easiest way to get from the messiness of something like the *Punk Planet* archive to an active and engaging interface like this for digging in and exploring that rich content.

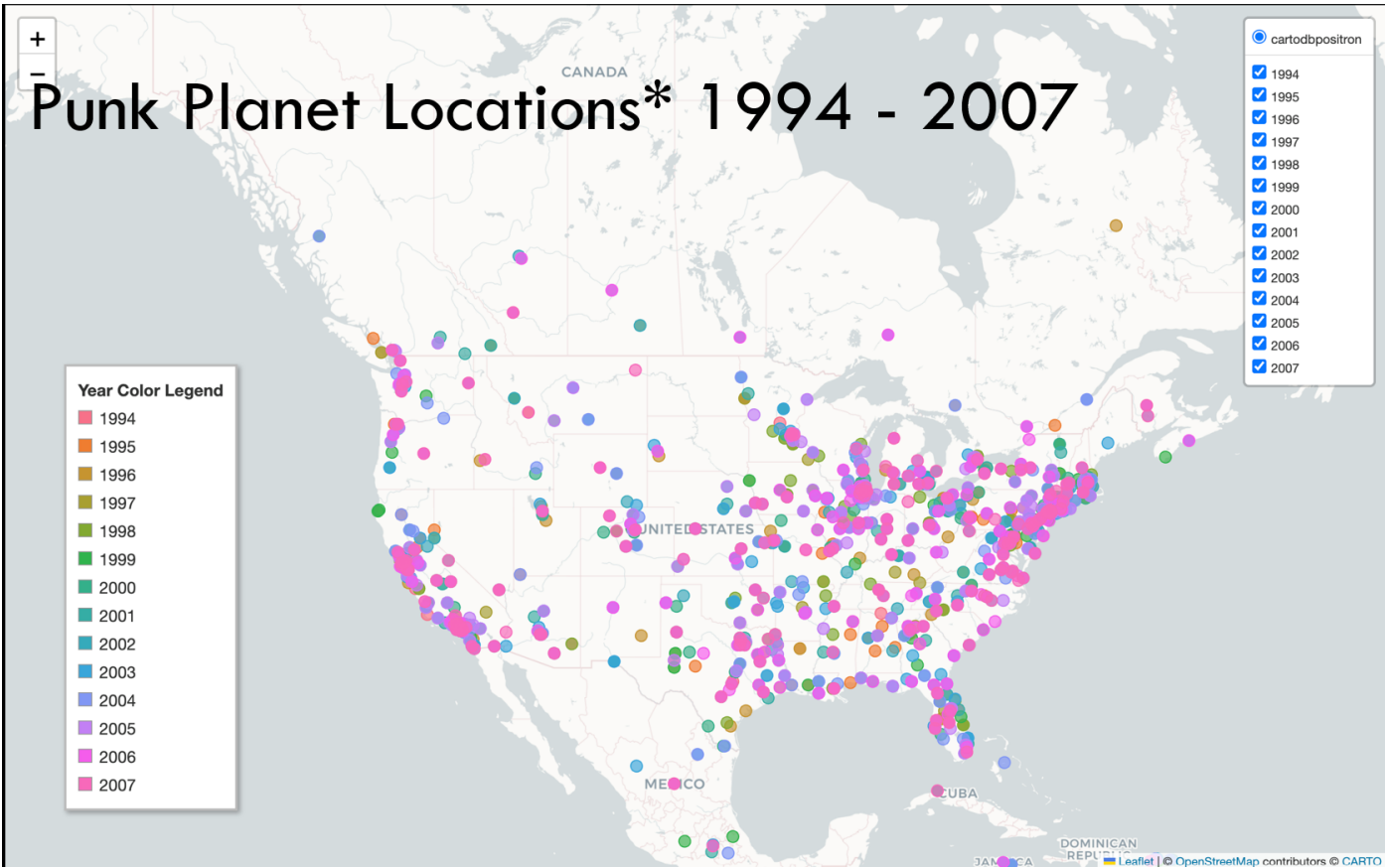
How can I extend this approach to spatial analysis outside of the ProQuest tool & content to the other scattered pieces of a potential zine corpus?



After the more coding-heavy approach I'd used when I first discovered the *Punk Planet* archive a few years back, I also wanted to see what I could do here that was mostly browser based. I do teach my students some light coding in the course, and in fact many students will do quite sophisticated text analysis and processing projects later in the semester, but what I was after was a meaningful entrypoint to the cultural history of that proto-web moment that also introduced students to a kind computational thinking about ways of reading without getting bogged down in learning syntax or setting up a development environment.

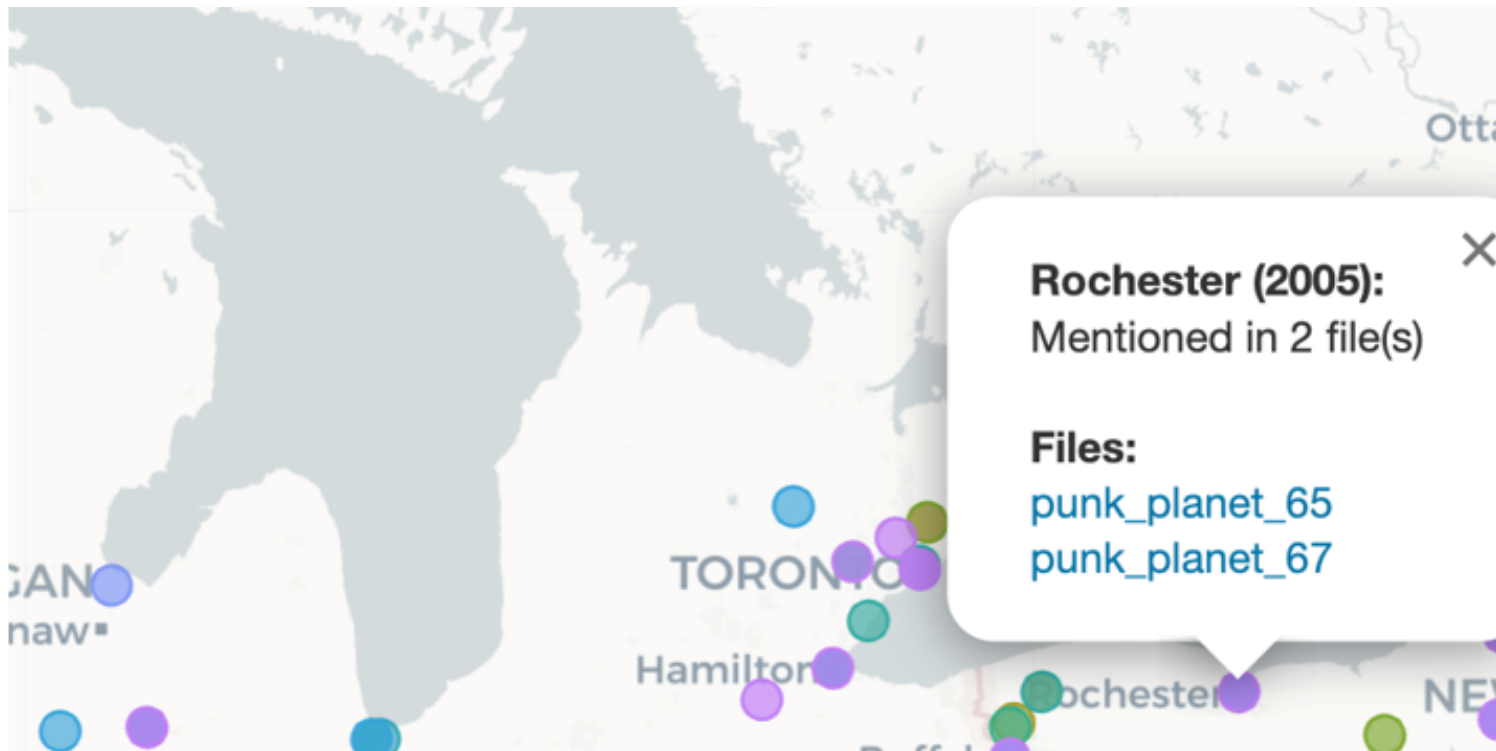
My hope was to use free and user-friendly tools

like text mechanic, the DataBasic suite of tools, Voyant tools, and other resources to create a workflow, and I got close! But I found no acceptable free Named Entity Recognition resource that could deal with the necessary scale of text included in the 80 issues (or even a single issue) of *Punk Planet*. So I went ahead and used python to accomplish that part of the process of building out the map.



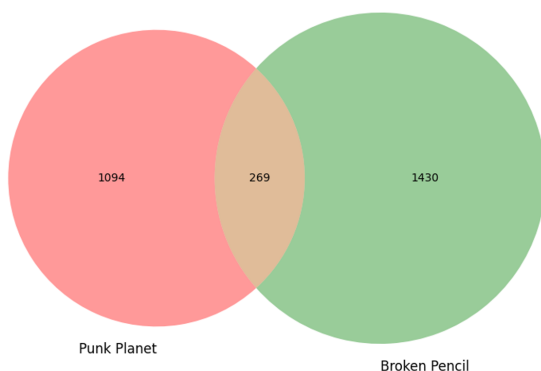


a DIY interface to encourage crunching around



When a user zooms in on this map, they can see a bubble for a location in each year's worth of *Punk Planet*, and links to the full text of the issues that mention the term; users can click to the page and ctrl/cmd+f to navigate through the mentions—it may be one, it may be 25. That's another departure from the ProQuest version, but it's one I prefer—since the PDFs are searchable, it seems most valuable to encounter those counts within the issue where readers can see them in context.

A venn diagram of de-duplicated and normal-



ized unique locations reveals overlaps found in each publication in the date range. You'll see that *Broken Pencil* featured more total locations with almost 1,700, *Punk Planet* featured fewer, with a just under 1,400, and there were 269 exact matches between them.

But, I don't want to get to hung up on those abstract discrepancies, first, because we know there are likely some false positives and false negatives in both datasets, and second, because each Named Entity Extraction process used its own city name list. But we can safely say that those nearly 270 matched city names (some of which are in the wordcloud to the right) represent true overlaps, and are would be worthy queries to determine how each location is present in each title.

So, while we're not able fully plot both datasets on a map in the same way, the shared space of the map and intersections of matching city names offer us ways back into the text to think about questions like:



INTERNET ARCHIVE

WEB
 TEXTS
 VIDEO
 AUDIO
 SOFTWARE
 IMAGE

ABOUT
BLOG
PROJECTS
HELP
DONATE
CONTACT

Full text of "Punk Planet 67 (2005 May- [covers 1, 2, 3]"

notes from underground

issue # 67 I May and June 2005 I f 6 4 S L

CHRISTA CONNER

How does city X appear and operate in each title?

What cities are commonly collocated in the text?

How are rural, suburban, and urban areas present?

Like many DH approaches, this quick and dirty abstraction of the material in the publication, in my opinion, isn't so useful in answering specific questions—where its value lies is in the way it can draw readers' attention into the rich material represented as page image files and full image PDFs in each resource.





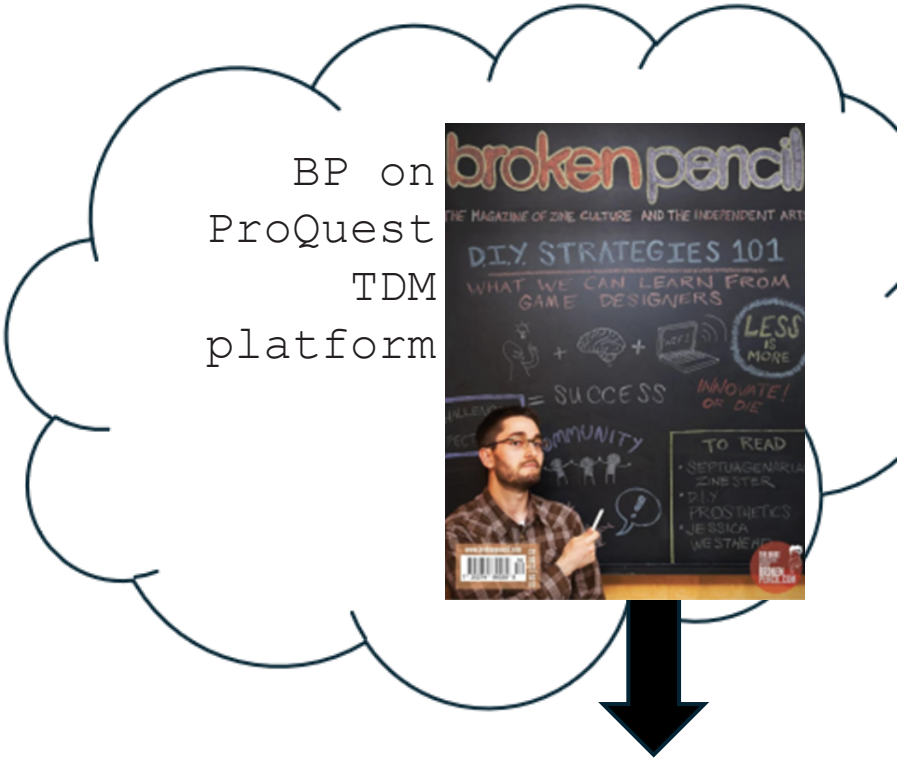
A Very Official Range of Computing Crunchability

In terms of comparing the two approaches, I'm going to introduce a very official range of computing crunchability, with Ultron from the Marvel Cinematic Universe on the far left, representing a more precise, comprehensive, systematic, and, I guess I will say, low-user-agency interface and Conky from Pee Wee's Playhouse representing a weird, chaotic, homebrew interface that perhaps requires more of the user

than they'd prefer. I like this scale because it highlights some of the contrasting values at play in these types of tools.

I think I'd place the ProQuest *Broken Pencil* interface somewhere to the right of Hal 9000, near Vashti & her holy manual from E.M. Forster's 1909 story "The Machine Stops." The data is clean and verified, the prescriptive interface is

Minimal crunch
Precise
Corporate
Systematic
Comprehensive
Closed
Intentional
In situ





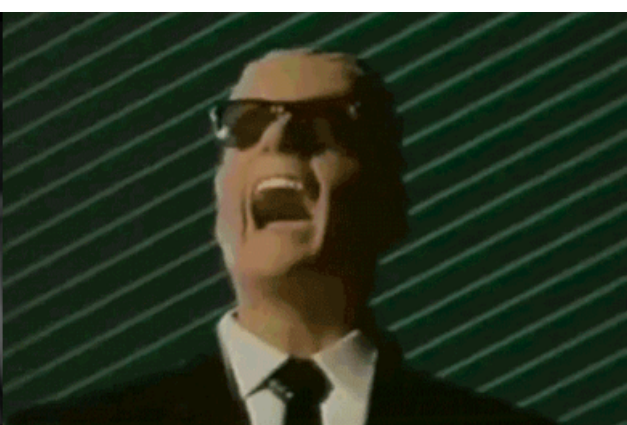
useful but not adaptable, and it is engineered for shorter attention spans with a perhaps consumerist emphasis on individual articles. It's also expensive and requires a fair amount of institutional privilege to access; a bit of a walled garden. I'd place the *Punk Planet* map interface somewhere between Max Headroom and Conky; credible but glitchy, transparent but finicky, and of course requiring some DIY

spirit and maintenance, and with aspirations toward immersion above all else. For my use case, I actually prefer the sloppiness and overwhelm inherent in this approach, because those aspects facilitate a conversation about what the text mining is actually doing, makes it accountable for mistakes and misinterpretations, and emphasizes the reader's return to the text to do so.

PP on
homebrew set
of folders,
PDFs, & and
textfiles



Max crunch
Chaotic
DIY
Playful
Experimental
Transparent
Glitchy
Portable





On portability...

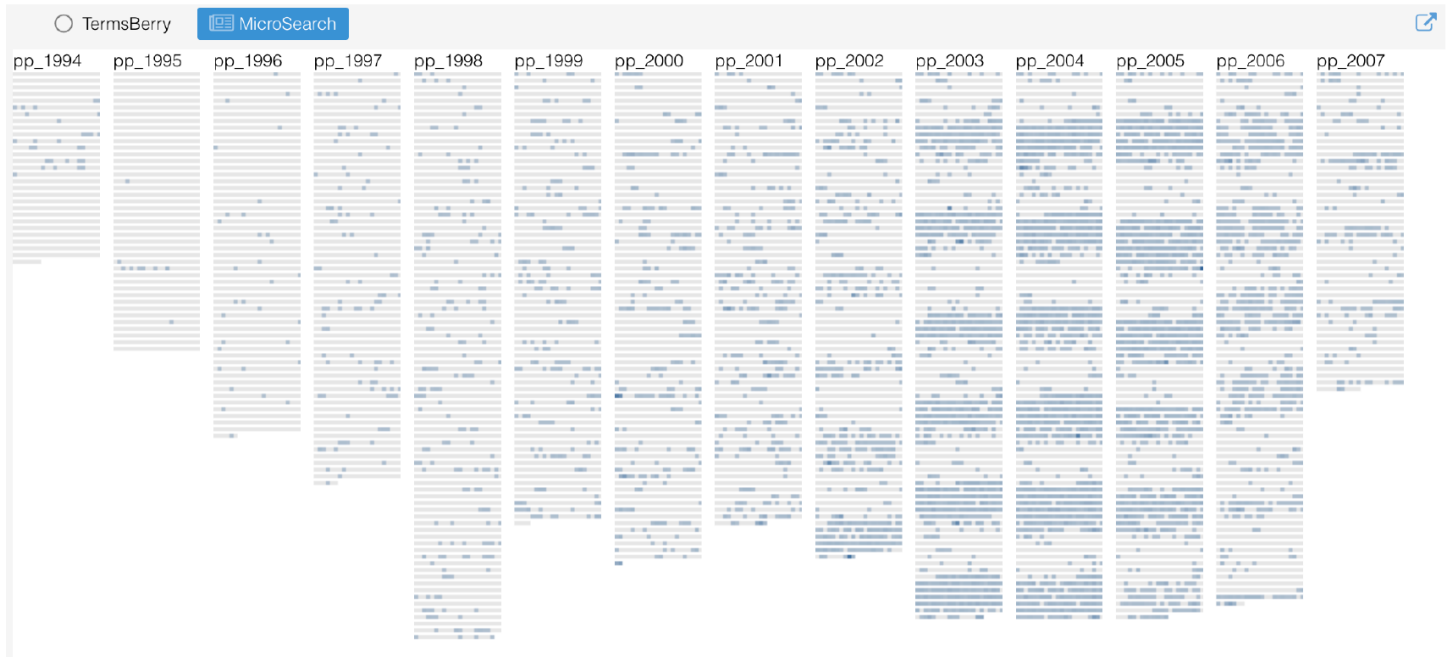
As my intent in undertaking this project was to see how closely and easily I could approximate the ProQuest style browsing interface for *Punk Planet*, what I realized is that, in creating a framework to do so, I'm close to a workflow for doing something similar with many of the zines and zine-like texts that are housed in the same manner on the Internet Archive, and I think that's my next project, creating as simple a suite of scripts as possible to help folks go from what's on the Internet Archive webpages to a directory of processed texts and map files to explore locally on their own machine requiring little more than a list of URLs. Something shareable scalable and openly tweakable.

Something crunchy.

Computationally, this is fairly trivial, and essentially only requires a handful of scripts. The benefits of that package would that it would allow a user to search and explore from local directories and with native OS tools, but it would also offer easy portability of these texts to well-known and very user-friendly open web platforms for further text and data analysis with tools like Text Mechanic, Data Basic, Tableau Public, Voyant Tools, Applied Poetics, and Zotero, opening up even further opportunities for digging into the individual documents with some guiding questions.

Scripts to process IA zines geobrowsing

- a script to download pdfs and full text content from the relevant IA repository
- a script to strip all but the document text from the full text files
- a script to organize the individual issues into chronological order
- a script for limited named entity extraction (I used spaCy, so does ProQuest; I'd use a GeoNames list for city verification next time to harmonize with PQ)
- a script to geolocate extracted names & build the map (I used Nominatim from OpenStreetMap the Leaflet JavaScript library)



An expression of that is a story implicit in the above image that's an example of extending into those realms. The image above is the result of me uploading the processed full text dataset of *Punk Planet* into Voyant Tools, which is a very popular coding-free platform for digital humanities exploration and experimentation.

What we are seeing here is Voyant's micro-search tool, which shows hits for a search query across many documents, with position preserved. Because I have the issues grouped as years (I simply copy content from each plain-text issue into a pp_YEAR text file), we can see something changing over time, and in this case it's the presence of the string "www," which is also a kind of location, if you will.

In the illustration, we see a seemingly unstructured sprinkling of "www"s in the early days of the web and as we move more towards 2007, we start to see these hits begin to organize into prominent bands at the ends of the issues published in the later years. Which of course prompts the question: why?

When we use this to guide us back to the full text and image issues, we see that all the hits in those sections are urls listed in the zine, album, and book reviews—here's an image of that section in *Punk Planet* 68 from 2005.

This issue's reviewers: Abbie Amadio (AJA), Amy Adoyzie (AA), Joe Biel (JB), Ari Charney (AC), Vincent Chung (VC), Lisa Groshong (LG), Dan Laidman (DAL)

AK Ink #13
Well-done Anchorage-based zine featuring interviews with writer/musician Neal Pollack; Ted Kim, who talks about his simple, unassuming line drawings; the editor of the literary zine *Twenty-Four Hours*, Josh Medsker; and bands like The Derelicts and Eu Visahm. Whew! There's even more, it's jam packed-deds. (AA)
\$2 or trade, PO Box 244235, Anchorage, AK 99524, www.akink.org

All It Up!
I like the concept of this zine+mixtape thing. The writing is good, and there are some fun songs on the tape. Juls chronicles living in what she calls the All house, interactions with various punk kids there and other observations. Recommended. (CS)
No price given, Juls Generic, 1342 E. Georgia, Vancouver, BC V5L 2A8, Canada

America? #13
Travis's writing kindles up warmth and spirit through reflection on life as a book-savvy, bike-loving, aging youth in Gainesville. Working in library undoubtedly aids in penmanship, and in the case of America? the effect is present. Also included are probing interviews with Sam Mcpheeters and Lance Hahn. (BM)
\$1, PO Box 13077, Gainesville, FL 32604-1077, obscurist.press@gmail.com

Arthur #15
It doesn't seem fair to compare this pro-designed, color, 64-page tabloid

At Both Ends #5
This thick-ass HC zine leans sober, articulating clearly, even in its aesthetics. Looking good like *Second Nature* and *Inside Front*, Steve covers Converge, Go It Alone, ATB and more while wisely leaving little room for reviews. Solid interviews and shit columns top off this is a well-refined music zine. (VC)
No price given, Stephen Falls, #201, 555 E. 6th Ave., Vancouver BC V5T 1K3, Canada, www.atbothendsmagazine.com

Born Dead #6
This zine would be fairly standard if not for including a couple of articles on conflict resolution in human rights groups and a travelogue of a trip to the Manitoba Summerfest concert. Not a bad read. Also has quite a few music reviews. (CS)
No price given, PO Box 26840, Maryland Postal Outlet, 676 Portage Ave., Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 0W0, Canada

Brisk Walk #3
Well-written zine from Matt where he explores the profound (the anniversary of his friend's death) to the mundane (an interview with a dude selling "quality brutality" to the locals in the form of records). The best piece is an interview with fellow zinester, Travis Fristoe of America? Fame. (AA)
\$1 or postage, Matt Uglyfoot, 5700 N. Tamiami Trail, Box 402, Sarasota, FL 34243

Broken Hipster #2



So that's interesting, but as a reader who has spent a good deal of time looking at the issues in this archive, I know that the review section has ALWAYS been in the back of the issue, and what we're seeing here is the chronological

increase in reviewed zines having URLs associated with them, at times even in the place of the mailing addresses that accompanied most reviews in the earliest issues. Here's the zine review section from issue 1:

Zine Reviews

52

If you want us to review your zine send us a copy to the address listed in the front of this zine. The fanzine reviewers are as follows: Karen Fisher (K.F.), and Jim Testa (J.T.). Jim gets a lot of zines apparently...

394 OCONEE #3

Many, many years ago, Pattie was on the staff of the very first issues of Jersey Beat. Nowadays, she's the editor of this well-written R.E.M. fanzine. Pattie collects interesting articles about REM from other publications, rounds up news and gossip, interviews the author of an R.E.M. biography, and isn't afraid to voice her aggravation at the band's penchant for re-releasing the same song in a lot of different formats (something she sees as exploiting the legions of devoted completists among R.E.M.'s fans.) (J.T.)

(Pattie Kleinke, PO Box 1026, New York NY 10023 \$3)

ANNOYANCE #6

A well written half-size punkzine, no photos to speak of but good interviews with Sloppy Seconds and Pounded Clown, reviews, and an editorial about whether turning 20 makes the editor too old for the punk scene. Hey, kid, I have T-shirts older than you are! (J.T.)

(Vassar College Box 3092, Poughkeepsie NY 12601 \$1)

ARROW OF TRUTH #7

This is technically the fan club newsletter for the band AntiCupid but in fact this little half sized has more good articles than most of the "real" fanzines I get three times its size. There's a piece on slampit etiquette (read it, bonehead!), news on other PA bands, an article on finding inner peace, and over 400 synonyms for the word "cool," which I intend to use as a reference for months. Yeah, this is definitely cool...I mean, "kickin' boss." (J.T.)

(33 Naomi Ave, Landisville PA 17538 SASE)

BOREDOM #3

Davey from Berkeley is a modern day hobo as well, and in this issue there a lot of advice concerning free transportation via hopping trains or hot-wiring an old VW, and tons of traveling tales. Ooh! also a short interview with Bikini Kill. My favorite part is the letters section which includes some nastygrams from what must be by now his ex-roommates, and the gem of the

running some of the pages lengthwise. Reviews, columns, lots of great photos, and interviews with SNFU, The Cows, Blacktrain Jack, and Rancid are the highlights. (J.T.)

(% Patrick West, Trinity College #104, Hartford CT 06106 \$1) (This address is only good until May 1, by the way.)

COMETBUS #31

This is the first issue I've ever read of this, what must be the classic punkzine. Aaron Cometbus gives you the continuing saga of his life and times, with an A+ for penmanship. Boy, does he have some great adventures. I'm sorry I missed the older issues, especially the story about touring with Crimpshrine in a Ford Pinto. I only wish I could say something bad about this zine because everyone else loves it so much, and I hate to be a bandwagon-jumper, but for a week I read it every night and couldn't stop till I was done. Now I can't stop thinking about him or what he's doing now. Actually, I kept wondering how in the hell he could have a girlfriend while traveling all over and never talking to her (well, never writing about talking to her). That is such a typical female thing to think, I know. Maybe that's just a story for another day. (K.F.)

(Send for Cometbus now and send me back issues if you have them. \$2.50 ppd. thru Wow Cool, 48 Shattuck Sq., Box 149, Berkeley, CA 94704 OR Blacklist Mailorder, 475 Valencia St., San Francisco, CA 94103.)

COOL BEANS! #2

I got so excited when my copy of Cool Beans #2 arrived in the mail. It was so big and fat! Chock full of entertaining reading material, I am still referring to it, it gave me days of pleasure perusing its contents. The theme of this issue is "Head Injuries," but luckily for me, Ms. Squeamish of the Century, there are not too many gruesome stories. There's interviews with Seam, Jon Spencer, Bob Mould, lots of little stories, and good zine and record reviews. I like reviews like these, completely subjective without all the analytical and comparative references, Matt just tells you why he likes something, and that's that! In case you don't know

- indie labels send those things out to retail stores too. (J.T.)

(Adam Tanner, Box 622, New Milford CT 06776 \$2)

DIE EVAN DANDO DIE #1

Jeff Fox, onetime editor of the hilarious Maximum Rock N Raoul, returns to zinedom with a vengeance, taking on the notorious king of alternative bubblegum, Evan Dando. Besides an Evan Dando quiz (What would be the funniest? a. Evan ages badly, b. Evan gets laryngitis, or c. Evan's sphincter falls out and rolls away), there's a piece on how to shave, a list of bands that are better than the Lemonheads, and a piece on why David Janssen was more of a man than Evan Dando. You get the idea. And you know what? This silly thing got Sassy's Zine Of The Month and written up in Time magazine. Sheesh! (J.T.)

(1464 Easton Rd, Warrington PA 18976 \$1)

DREAMWHIP

What is it about these guys and their road trips? Ah, the romantic wanderlust of the punk, the modern-day version of the antisocial hobo. I am dubbing this a "zenzine." It is pure artistry. Small in size, pen-and-ink shapes and drawings accompany a sort of surreal, stream-of-consciousness-style journal, and other tidbits and random thoughts. #1 kind of revolves around a road trip, #2 has lots of road imagery too. I really love this mostly because it's so different from everything else. (K.F.) (Dreamwhip #1 and #2 are available for \$1 each ppd., P.O. Box 53832, Lubbock, TX 79453.)

EBBB! #4

This certainly isn't your typical punkzine - the editor has a nine year old daughter he's raising by himself, who makes guest appearances throughout the zine - but a lot of what goes into Ebb! is very punk indeed - dealing with homophobia, climbing in through a backstage window to see a GWAR show, hanging out with Jawbreaker, favorite show reviews, and so on. A labor of love, and it shows. And the next time I get to Chicago, I got look this guy up. (J.T.)

(PO Box 397, Smoke IL 60076 \$1)



In digital humanities we often talk about creative misuse of tools, and the dangers and affordances of doing so. The technology I've described here is not groundbreaking; in fact it's heavily derivative. But I think the context of using these tools in zine studies makes it newly exciting. The messy, open ended, and playful ethos of zine culture is a good match for these kind of crunch-forward experimental approaches, and I hope we can gravitate towards interfaces that acknowledge that.

I think it also makes the case that our own homegrown, local archives may offer us opportunities the vendor-based ones don't, especially for novel categories like zines. Similarly, I think we want to avoid over-mediating access on these more precision-focused quantitative platforms

—we're not looking to determine relative punkness to a statistically significant level here, and things being not millimeter-precise and orderly is exactly what gets us back to the original text and images. It also gives us a chance to build in critical awareness and adjudication of the technological processes as we read and immerse. The goal in these cases should be to get back to the text; to move swiftly from reductive abstraction toward immersion and engagement. To crunch around, explore connections, and deepen our attention to the materials.

Tools, inspirations, experiments

- Filipa Calado, Jenna Freedman, & Miranda Johnson's Text Analysis with a Zine Corpus companion zine: <https://archive.org/details/text-analysis-with-a-zine-corpus>
- Beta version of my Punk Planet mapped interface: <https://patrickwilliamsintext.com/punkplanet/>
- Coding tools: spaCy, geopy, Nominatim, pandas, Leaflet & Open Street Map, GeoNames
- Browser-based tools: Voyant Tools, DataBasic.io, Text Mechanic, Tableau Public, Applied Poetics, Zotero

