

Proceedings from the Document Academy

Volume 10
Issue 1 *Proceedings from the 2023 FanLIS
Symposium*

Article 2

2023

Fandom, Fanzines, and Archiving Science Fiction Fannish History

Karen Hellekson
Independent scholar, khellekson@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ideaexchange.uakron.edu/docam>



Part of the [Arts and Humanities Commons](#)

Please take a moment to share how this work helps you [through this survey](#). Your feedback will be important as we plan further development of our repository.

Recommended Citation

Hellekson, Karen (2023) "Fandom, Fanzines, and Archiving Science Fiction Fannish History," *Proceedings from the Document Academy*. Vol. 10 : Iss. 1 , Article 2.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.35492/docam/10/1/2>

Available at: <https://ideaexchange.uakron.edu/docam/vol10/iss1/2>

This Conference Proceeding is brought to you for free and open access by University of Akron Press Managed at IdeaExchange@Uakron, the institutional repository of The University of Akron in Akron, Ohio, USA. It has been accepted for inclusion in Proceedings from the Document Academy by an authorized administrator of IdeaExchange@Uakron. For more information, please contact mjon@uakron.edu, uapress@uakron.edu.

Introduction

In this online era, it is all too easy to bandy about the term “fanzine” while lacking any real understanding of what these texts used to look like or how they were duplicated and exchanged. Indeed, many fans have never seen an old fanzine in person, instead viewing online scans or photos of sequences of single pages.¹ Even those who entered science fiction (sf) or media fandom in the face-to-face era before the 2000s—and thus might have seen fanzines as perfect-bound or spiral-bound photocopied office-paper-size packets in the dealers’ room at conventions—have rarely seen old-school-style fanzines from the 1930s, as these are rare. Yet fanzines’ modes of duplication, binding, and exchange have implications for archiving physical copies of these texts. Particularly with the advent of fan binding as a new mode of practice, wherein favorite fan texts are printed on high-quality paper and then bound by hand into readable works of art, it’s time to revisit the physical aspects of fanzines (Kennedy, 2022). Here I also specifically focus on the historical moment when media fandom branched off sf fandom, which also heralded a turn from fanzines as newsy accounts of fan clubs to fan-created fiction set in various properties’ story worlds—most importantly *Star Trek* (1966–1969), although other fandoms, notably Jane Austen fandom as well as Sherlock Holmes fandom, with its famous *Baker Street Journal* (1946), have long, storied histories that predate my focus here; even classical texts had their fandoms in the day (Klimchynskaya, 2014; Willis, 2016; Rosenblatt & Pearson, 2017; Booth, 2018; Glosson, 2020).

I undertook archival work on fanzines from 2012 to 2014. I visited the fanzine holdings at the University of California, Riverside, and the University of Liverpool. My ostensible plan was to assess what happened to fandom and fan communication, including transatlantic communication, during World War II. I found my answer: not much. Communication mostly shut down, so there wasn’t much to see. Paper was rationed, a fact noted by fanzine writers and also expressed by the bizarrely large sizes of the fanzines themselves, with readability compromised by extremely small margins and extremely tight lines. Postage rates were high. Many fans went to war and stopped engaging. Those who did not go to war worried about those who did. For me, the most poignant demonstration of this was Los Angeles–area superfan Forrest J Ackerman’s (he insists on the omission of the period) remembrances of his brother, who was killed in action; as shown in Figure 1, he put his brother’s photo on the cover of his fanzine, *VOM* #39.



Figure 1

Forrest J Ackerman's brother on the cover of VOM #39

(<https://www.worthpoint.com/worthopedia/forrest-ackerman-vom-obit-brother-74350013>).

This lack of positive findings was further compounded by my inability to publish my research. A book I had been working on, which was the prose to accompany images of fanzine covers, was killed when the press's lawyers shut down the project as a copyright violation. The general consensus remains that fanzines aren't considered public. If I wanted to publish, I'd have to get written permission to quote from the person who owns the letter. Alternatively, I could speak in sweeping generalizations. When I realized I couldn't get global permission for all items in the collection at the library level, so I would have to contact every single letter writer or his heir to request a written letter, I killed my project.

All this is to say that I have looked at a lot of fanzines; they have been an interest of mine since about 1982, when I was in high school and I joined a Doctor Who fan club that put one out. Further, as someone employed in the printing industry, I remain interested in how this world and its requirements overlap with

the world of printing hard-copy fanzines. I do have experience in creating physical artifacts like fanzines: I was always on the newsletter committee at church camp when I was a girl, and I preferred typing mimeo stencils to interviewing fellow campgoers. I worked as a secretary in college and used carbon paper and Selectric typewriters. I was a secretary in grad school and used the Xerox photocopier with a sheet of yellow plastic so the machine could copy the professors' light purple mimeographed handouts; the grad students used dot-matrix printers and had to rip the pages apart. Now we all print things out on laser printers, or maybe we don't need a hard copy at all. But I am familiar with the smell of the solvent used to mask errors on a mimeograph stencil. I know about the erasers used when typing a fair copy; there's even a sculpture of one in Washington, DC (Oldenburg & van Bruggen, 1999). I know what a pain it is to center or right-justify text on a manual keyboard. I know what the cc: means at the bottom of the letter: it's the literal carbon copy I'm making when I type.

It turns out that all of these things are important when reading old fanzines, because their authors are office-supply geeks and secretary wannabes who make a lot of references to the joys and terrors of putting out a regular zine. They write of the pain of having to right-justify a newsletter, which only goes to show how much they care for their readers—although the extra work made the issue late. They lament the hideousness of having to retype a stencil after making an error at the end—no wonder it was late! They hurl accusations at certain people who owed articles but didn't write them, so the editor had to write everything himself at the last minute—no wonder it was late! They report on the hassle of having to draw everything the wrong way round so it would appear correctly when printed—it made them just a little late. They preen because they hand-colored a photo and pasted it into every issue—it was worth the wait!

I am one of a subset of readers for fanzines, the existence of which I hadn't considered: the office-supply geeks, the once-upon-a-secretaries who had to hand-crank the mimeo machine, the grad student wielding a yellow plastic sheet at the photocopier while wondering why the professors didn't update their mimeo'd handouts, the folks who remember that one time they created a newsletter with some friends but never got past issue 2, because nobody could get it together enough to do issue 3. To people like me, for whom this is nostalgia—those of us who have done all these things and know exactly what these fan writers are talking about—the fanzine editors' focus on physically creating a timely newsletter is hilarious. And it's not just people of a certain age who find this riveting. At the 2014 Worldcon in London, I attended a demonstration of fanzine making via spirit duplication. Instead of watching the presenters, I watched the audience watching the presenters. I was delighted to see that they were fascinated. For me, the sharp smell of the solvent was familiar; so was the chug-chug-chug of the machine as it pooped out wet pages of light purple typewritten text. I couldn't believe I had

forgotten these smells and these sounds. But to the newbies, it was, well, new. Imagine! Smelling that! Imagine smelling that every day as you *wrote a fanzine in 1953!* It was thrilling, seeing that on their faces. And it was thrilling, feeling that: *1953!* I was 40 years after that! They too smelled that smell! In *1953!*

All this informs how I think about fanzines—affectively. However, it’s time we traced the content of early fanzines while also acknowledging the implications of their physicality. After providing definitions, I will address fandom and fanzines; discuss modes of reproduction; address the sf and media fandom split; list archival fan magazine holdings; and briefly touch on ethical considerations when citing fanzines. I have attempted a chronological ordering of fanzines through time, but we will meander through a few byways on our journey to the present.

First, a few definitions. Fans are people who actively engage with something—a text, objects such as coins, or music groups or sports teams. Fandom is the community that fans self-constitute around the text or object; fandom comprises the creation and exchange of texts or objects. Fanzines are fan magazines, aka fanmags, featuring fan-written essays, analysis, artwork, and later fiction, reproduced by various means and mailed to subscribers.

Fanzine Chronology Overview

Table 1 lists dates that are relevant to sf fanzines. Each of these events will be discussed in more detail below, with the understanding that each topic has far more information about it than can be discussed here.

Table 1

Timeline of Sf Fanzine History—Relevant Dates

Time	Event
Late 1920s	Contemporary sf fandom coalesces around print fiction
April 1926	Hugo Gernsback encourages fan communication
May 1930	First sf fanzine is released
1936 or 1937	First sf conventions are held
1939	First Worldcon is held
1966	Worldcon 24 launches media fandom
1967	<i>Spockanalia</i> fanzine released
1972	Star Trek Lives! convention held

Modes of Fanzine Reproduction

Before we can get to each era and its fanzines, first I want to make the point that most of the modes of fanzine reproduction had already been invented when the first proper fanzine was released in 1930. This means that technologies were already in place when sf fandom was created around texts by the likes of H. G.

Wells and Jules Verne. If fans were to create newsletters, which they indeed did, then all the most common modes of reproduction used until the late 1960s were already in use. This means that fan practice from May 1930 wasn't much different from, say, May 1940 or May 1950. Reproduction technology advanced, of course, and people upgraded their equipment as new iterations became available, but the modes of reproduction remained limited (with heavy leaning on the two drum-based reproduction methods, mimeo and ditto). This creates an interesting flattening of experience across perhaps 30 years' time, and it makes me think: Imagine smelling that every day as you wrote a *fanzine in 1933!* The same smell as *in the 1950s!*

Fans had access to and skill using these reproductive modes. They used what was at hand. Table 2 lists the relevant technologies in the order in which they were invented or attained wide use.

Table 2

Timeline of Modes of Physical Reproduction of Fanzines

Time	Invention
1450s	Letterpress printing
1806 (1867)	Carbon paper (typewriter)
1869	Hectograph
1876	Mimeograph
1923	Spirit duplicator (aka ditto®)
Late 1960s	Photocopy (aka Xerox®)

Other physical modes of reproduction exist too, of course, such as lithography, linoblock, silkscreen, stamp, and photo offset. I don't discuss those methods here, and there are undoubtedly others even more interesting.

Letterpress Printing and Carbon Paper

Of the modalities listed in Table 2, letterpress printing didn't change much from the technology's invention by Johannes Gutenberg in the 1450s. Affordable letterpresses for hobbyists were popular in the late 1800s, so they were often used for things like newsletters; indeed, one form of fanzine distributions, apas (apa stands for amateur press association), may be traced from weird tales fandom to sf fandom via letterpress use (Hayden, 2009). Carbon paper, although invented in 1806, didn't really take off until the appearance of the typewriter in 1867 (Lawlor, 1998). This technology permitted as many copies as could be legibly made with a single keystroke on first a manual, then an electric, keyboard, usually about five.

Hectograph

Hectography, a relatively unknown and definitely understudied mode of reproduction, dates from 1869; the technique was invented in Russia by M. I.

Alisov and is currently in use by tattoo artists. By its very name, the process ought to make 100 copies (Greek *hecatón*, “100”; it is often spelled hektograph), but it is actually 20 to 50. A 1944 *Fancylopedia* entry (“Hekto,” 2022) describes the process thus:

The basic hektograf is a pan of evil-smelling, rather firm gelatin, which has glycerin in it. The master sheet is drawn with special hekto pencil or ink or carbon paper, or typed with special ribbon or carbon paper, so that the original has a great deal of pigment in it. . . . The master is placed face down . . . and much of the pigment comes off on the latter, following the lines of the original. After a couple of minutes the master is removed, and the copy sheets are placed on the gelatin, smoothed, down, and removed. On each one some of the ink comes off; enuf (you hope) to make a legible copy. After the copies are made, the remaining pigment sinks in and is diffused thru the gelatin, so that it can be used again in a day or so.

Each copy thus had to be made one at a time, by hand. In 2013, the University of Iowa held a workshop “demonstrating and using obsolescent printing techniques” for zine creators, with step-by-step instructions (Kohasi, 2013).

Mimeograph and Spirit Duplicator

Affordable mimeograph and spirit duplicator reproduction, which followed the hektograph in 1876 and 1923, respectively, are similar in that they both use a drum method to reproduce text or an image. Since I have actually used mimeographs (ca. 1970s–1990s), I was surprised to see that Thomas Edison patented the mimeograph in 1863; I wrongly associated mimeos with 1960s-era stuff. According to *Fancylopedia*, “spirit and mimeo both use rotating drums that press ink through a prepared stencil, but use different technologies: Some people incorrectly confuse a spirit duplicator with a mimeograph, but the latter is an ink-based process. Ditto is a dye transfer technique done with a solvent of methylated spirits, which accounts for the distinctive odor emanating from fresh copies” (“Spirit Duplication,” 2021).

Regarding long-term durability, “mimeographed images generally have much better durability than spirit-duplicated images, since the inks are more resistant to ultraviolet light. The primary preservation challenge is the low-quality paper often used, which would yellow and degrade due to residual acid in the treated pulp from which the paper was made. In the worst case, old copies can crumble into small particles when handled. Mimeographed copies have moderate durability when acid-free paper is used” (“Mimeograph,” 2023). These facts have obvious repercussions for archival storage and display.

Figure 2 shows an electric spirit duplicator at work, showing how the drum turns to run off copies. The drum modality is also used by mimeo machines. Nonelectric ones work on the same principle but use a hand crank. Multicolor printing was easy to do on ditto masters, taking only a single pass. But just like hektography, purple was “the most readable for the longest run” (“Spirit

Duplication,” 2021). For these modes of reproduction, any pastel color could be used, but light purple or lavender were the most common, with purple being better.



Figure 2

A spirit duplicator at work. From Sam Kellar (2017, June 22), “Original A B DICK 215 Electric Spirit Duplicator” [Video], YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vVgaZeLpHd8>).

Photocopy

Photocopiers came into wide use in the 1960s. The process uses xerography; an electrostatic charge affixes powdered toner onto a page in an image. Unlike drum methods, the output is black, not light purple. However, mimeo and ditto remained common for larger print runs because photocopying was initially expensive.

Production

Regarding good print runs from a single plate or stencil, the following limits seem clear. For letterpress printing, any quantity might be run at high quality. Carbon paper is a paltry five-ish pages. We can’t give the hectograph its 100 pages; it’s only 20 to 50. For spirit duplication, a good run is 40 copies. Mimeo is capable of a couple hundred copies from a single stencil if the ink source is continually replenished. And for photocopying, any number of high-quality reproductions is possible. If these print runs seem small, it’s because they were: many early fanzines had print runs of 20 or so—or fewer. Initially, it was possible to keep up with everything being published.

Fanzines followed the technology. As photocopiers rose to ascendance, many fanzines were printed at a copy shop and perfect bound or spiral bound, often between heavy covers, with or without artwork. It was eventually possible to print

color images instead of having to color in black-and-white images. Currently online vendors specializing in bespoke books permit fans to create gorgeous photo books with full-color artwork in small print runs for a relatively affordable price. And in the current era, handcrafted books may be created by a fan binder, with a print run of two, likely laser printed on acid-free paper before being bound between hard covers.

Some Implications of Reproduction Technology for Archiving

What are the implications for archiving of these most common fanzine-reproduction technologies? Of course there are implications related to the physicality of the zines, such as quality and composition of paper, decay associated with light or damp, fading, and ink transfer and fastness. Currently the biggest preservation problem is fragile paper.

Because early fanzines had such small print runs, each copy might be unique, as editors pasted in photographs or hand-colored images. But these modalities have repercussions for duplication in that each fanzine copy might be unique. Common sense tells us that modes of reproduction like carbon paper would be associated with especially small print runs—unless the editor is willing to type each page over again, thus rendering larger print runs their own layer of unique content, with small differences between each batch of pages grimly retyped (but probably not right-justified) by the determined editor. Carbon-copy fanzines might be instantly recognizable by their smudginess, while the top page of a carbon-copy zine might be inferred by exceptionally heavy keystrokes. With such a zine, each set of pages might be its own unique artwork. Hectographs, mimeos, and dittos start out dark when the ink is fresh, but they get lighter and lighter as the copies are run off, and in drum-based reproduction methods, the closed-in parts of a's and e's fill in with ink as the stencil degrades. Then there are letterpress items, which appear so timeless that paper may be more revealing than typeface for a first-glance assessment of age. Further, a zine may be mixed media: a mimeo'd fanmag might have a hecto'd cover.

Luckily, it is often possible to learn the reproduction mode (if it is unclear) or the number of subscribers, and thus the number of copies mailed, by simply reading the zine. The editors often remark on such things.

A Brief History of Sf Fanzines: Timeline of Events

Late 1920s: Contemporary Sf Fandom Coalesces Around Print Fiction

Sf fandom arose around contemporary books being published, but importantly, many early sf and proto-sf magazines published new and reprinted old items by authors like H. G. Wells (1866–1846) and Jules Verne (1828–1905) (Figure 3). This led to a fandom built around what was known at the time as

scientifiction. This era of sf has been extensively studied, as has the fandom built around these scientific romances (Grossman, 2011; Link & Canavan, 2015; Canavan & Link, 2018).



Figure 3

Amazing Stories cover for May 1926 advertising stories by H. G. Wells, Jules Verne, and Edgar Allen Poe (<https://stendec8.blogspot.com/2012/02/amazing-stories-with-edgar-poe-jules.html>).

profans met each other and came into a sense of group self awareness” (“Science Fiction League,” 2023).

May 1930: First Fanzine Is Released

The Comet, edited by Ray Palmer out of Chicago, Illinois, is the first recorded fan magazine. It appeared in May 1930. According to a 1935 review, “Copies are now so rare that they are almost unobtainable at any price” (“Cosmology,” 2022). Figure 5 shows the cover of *The Comet*, which was mimeographed. It is subtitled “Science Correspondence Club Bulletin,” emphasizing that it is a club newsletter. It was originally stapled together.

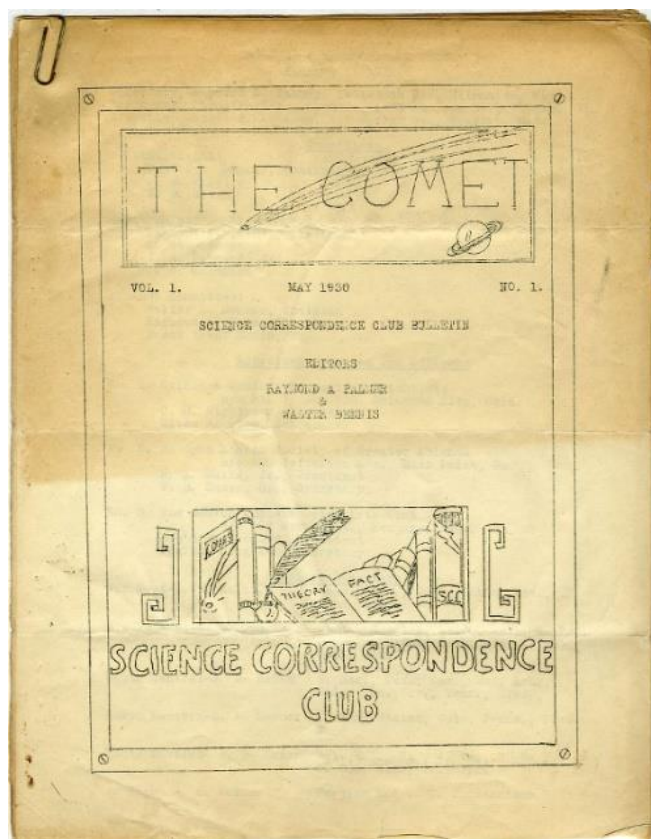


Figure 5

Fanzine cover for The Comet, May 1930

(<https://amazingstories.com/2015/06/clubhouse-fanzine-reviews-mr-ackermans-fervent-ebullient-denunciation-stories/>).

I am unable to show you an image of *The Comet*, volume 1, number 2, with a hand-drawn cover and robot artwork in purple and pink, which I suspect to be hecto'd.

1936 or 1937: First Sf Conventions Are Held

The first sf fan conventions were held in 1936 or 1937 in the United States and the United Kingdom. I am unable to show you the image I have of a zine reporting that the first-ever British science fiction convention, held by the Leeds chapter of the Science Fiction League, occurred on January 3, 1937, but *Fancylopedia* confirms this factual information (“1937 Leeds Convention,” 2022). This was just one such contender. Other contenders were meet-ups in Philadelphia and New York City.

1939: First Worldcon Is Held

The first Worldcon (also known as Nycon), or World Science Fiction Convention, was held in New York City over the Fourth of July weekend, 1939, at the same time as the World’s Fair (“Worldcon,” 2023). About 200 people were there, including notable fans from New York City and Los Angeles. This event was hotly anticipated and the subject of much zine copy. Figure 6 shows California superfans Forest J Ackerman and Muriel “Morojo” Douglas in costume. The first Worldcon, which established the convention scene as a stalwart feature of sf fandom, was also the first appearance of fan cosplay, or costume play (Culp, 2016). Much has been written elsewhere about the creation of early fandom, including face-to-face fandom reliant on the convention scene (Canavan & Link, 2018).



Figure 6

Ackerman (left) and Douglas in costume at the first Worldcon in 1939. Myrtle R. Douglas, “Forrest J Ackerman and Myrtle R. Douglas in Costume,” ICG Pat and Peggy Kennedy Memorial Archives (<https://icggallery.org/items/show/44899>).

1966: Worldcon 24 Launches Media Fandom

Worldcon 24, aka Tricon, was held in Cleveland, Ohio, September 1–5, 1966. It was at this convention that Gene Roddenberry hoped to find a ready audience for his new TV show, *Star Trek*. As Figure 7 shows, his budget permitted a sci-fi-dressed model to help advertise the show. Roddenberry attended in person and made friends with superfan Bjo Trimble while wrangling scheduling. He screened the show in a late-night time slot, so hardly anyone saw it, but those who did loved it (“Tricon,” 2023). Fandom leapt to attention, and a new crew coalesced around this great new color TV show and its fascinating breakout star, Leonard Nimoy—although no sooner did this fandom get started than it had to organize a massive “save our show” campaign when the powers that be at NBC threatened to cancel the series—the first such fan campaign of its kind (Trimble, 2011). The fandom that this crew comprised was made up mostly of women. There is extensive scholarship about *Star Trek* fandom, including work along the lines of race and gender (Jenkins, 1992; Coppa, 2006; Garcia-Siino, Mittermeier, & Rabitsch, 2022). *Star Trek* fandom grew so commanding that its practices came to dominate the fan scene (Garcia-Siino, Mittermeier, & Rabitsch, 2022).



Figure 7

Model at Worldcon 24 (Tricon) in 1966, advertising Star Trek
(<https://calisphere.org/item/ark:/86086/n2pc30tv/>).

1967: *Spockanalia* Fanzine Released

With a fandom now tracking a media text instead of a written text, Star Trek fandom quickly created a zine of its own, using techniques learned in sf fandom, which most fans were familiar with. *Spockanalia* appeared in 1967 and went through several printings, as the May 1968 third printing in Figure 8 illustrates. Its table of contents, which I am unable to show you, lists authors by their full names and includes poetry, a letter column, and an imagined Vulcan handbook. Its publication ushered in an era of media zine work, with in-world stories (hinted at by the poetry and Vulcan world building in *Spockanalia*) coming to dominate. Star Trek fandom also invented the fan fiction genre of slash, or homoerotic pairings (classically Kirk and Spock, or K/S), which has been extensively studied (Penley, 1997; Russ, 1985; Jenkins, 1992). The hard-copy zine-creation scene of this productive era has been described by Camille Bacon-Smith (1992, 2000).

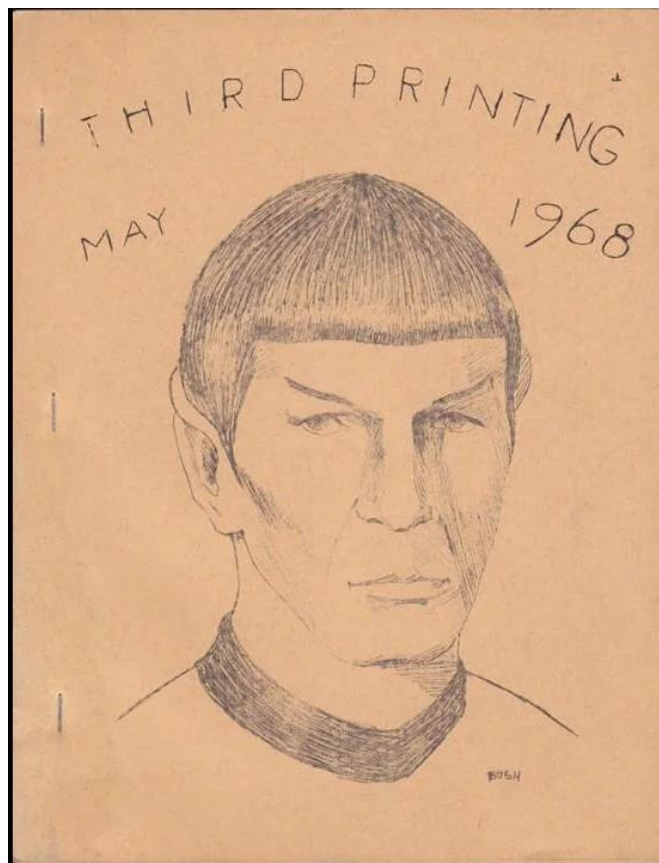


Figure 8

Cover of the third printing of *Spockanalia*, 1968

(<https://www.startrek.com/article/spockanalia-the-first-star-trek-fanzine>).

Because writers published under their real names, to avoid any issues with privacy or copyright, it is appropriate to reproduce *Spockanalia*'s dedication page by eliding street addresses, as shown in Figure 9.

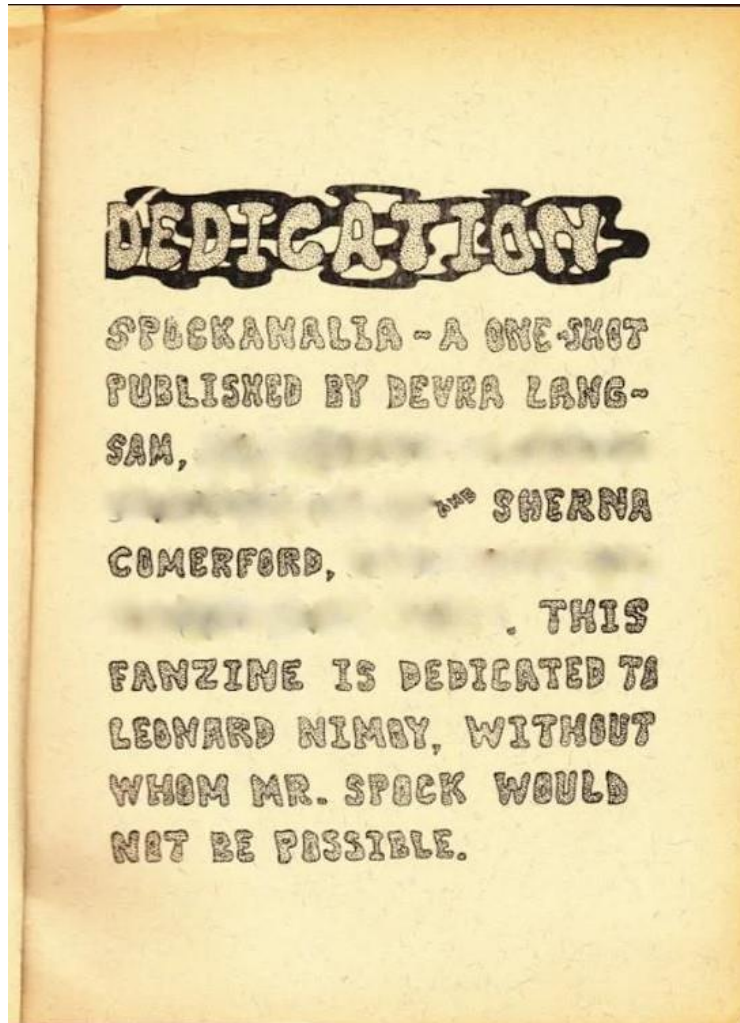


Figure 9

Dedication page of Spockanalia, eliding the street addresses of the editors. The issue is dedicated to Star Trek's breakout star, Leonard Nimoy (<https://www.startrek.com/article/spockanalia-the-first-star-trek-fanzine>).

Joan Marie Verba (1996) lists all the Star Trek zines published from 1967 to 1987.

1972: Star Trek Lives! Convention Held

The 1972 Star Trek Lives! convention, held in New York City, was important for fanzines because it led to a book, also called *Star Trek Lives!*, published in 1975 (Figure 10). As *Fanlore* notes, “The long-term impact of the book seems to have been that many devotees of the show had been unaware of the existence of fanzines and especially fan fiction, and that the chapter covering these subjects opened a life-changing door for them” (“*Star Trek Lives!* [Book],” 2023). This book also led to widespread awareness of the convention scene—and more fans. In addition, fan club information was published in *Star Trek* and spin-off novelizations. *Star Trek* played relentlessly in syndication, so the classic series had an audience familiar with the text. But no new *Star Trek* was available until *Star Trek: The Motion Picture* was released in 1979. The cold years in between canonical primary texts were taken up by fans who consumed primarily written texts, including fan fiction—although creating fan videos became an important fan activity (Coppa, 2008, 2022). In turn, fans’ affective response and well-demonstrated loyalty to the show led to the franchise’s next major offering: *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (1987–1994, which appropriately aired in syndication).



Figure 10

Cover of *Star Trek Lives! Personal Notes and Anecdotes*

([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Trek_Lives!#/media/File:Star_Trek_Lives!_\(1975\).jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Trek_Lives!#/media/File:Star_Trek_Lives!_(1975).jpg)).

The Fanzine Scene Today

Because this is a brief history of old fanzines, I won't say much about fanzines today except to say that of course they still exist. Online analogs exist too, like fan fiction archives featuring in-world fictive stories, the comments to which reproduce the letter columns so important to early fandom. I don't know of any fanzines reproduced by hecto or letterpress, but both modalities are seeing a current resurgence in interest as art forms (Fleishman, 2017). Mimeo and ditto reproduction would be harder, but hobbyists maintain the specialized equipment, with helpful YouTube videos aplenty. Photocopying has turned into color laser printing, with high-quality images output at a copy shop. All of these modes have implications for longevity and storage, with acid-free paper the gold standard.

Archival Sources for Sf Fanzines

The archival sf fanzine holdings of the University of Liverpool, the University of California, Riverside, the University of Iowa, and Syracuse University are the best known, but many other universities hold fanzines.² More information about these smaller collections is becoming available as they go online. These nonlending special collections libraries, like Liverpool, in Figure 11, may be visited in person and the fanzines read in a space meant to protect the fragile documents, with special reading blocks to nestle the spine of the book into and weighted ropes to hold volumes open. The documents may be photographed for personal use.



Figure 11

University of Liverpool's reading room, ca. August 2014. Photograph by Karen Hellekson. Creative Commons Copyright Attribution 4.0 International (CC by 4.0) (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

Ethical Considerations

Because these older fanzines are considered the property of the writers/contributors, and because early fans wrote under their full names and freely provided street addresses, it is not ethical to reproduce such information in full. This means that libraries have been putting information online but eliding some of it to retain privacy. Figure 12 shows how the University of Iowa handled my request for a table of contents of fanzine holdings. Although I can see the holdings at the collection level, after clicking on a promising title, like the S. Hereld Collection of *Blake's 7* Fanzines and Fan Fiction, I cannot see the zines comprising that collection; nor can I view any table of contents information.

Listed, but...

[S. Hereld Collection of *Blake's 7* Fanzines and Fan Fiction \(MsC 877\)](#)
[Susan Hill Fanzine Collection \(MsC 401\)](#)
[Debbie Hoover Fanzine Collection \(MsC 430\)](#)
[M. Horvat Collection of Genre Apazines \(MsC 825\)](#)
[M. Horvat National Fantasy Fan Federation Collection \(MsC 886\)](#)
[M. Horvat Collection of Science Fiction Convention Materials \(MsC 884\)](#)
[M. Horvat Collection of Science Fiction Fanzines \(MsC 791\)](#)
[Celeste Hotelling-Lyons Fanzine Collection \(MsC 400\)](#)
[Deidre Johnson Media Fandom Materials \(MsC 960\)](#)
[Brian Knapp Fanzine Collection \(MsC 294\)](#)
[Laura Leach Collection of *The Man From U.N.C.L.E.* Fanzines and Related Materials \(MsC 911\)](#)
[Marian Mendez Blake's 7 Fanzines Collection \(MsC 969\)](#)
[Lynda Mendoza Collection of David McCallum Memorabilia \(MsC 895\)](#)
[Papers of Nicholas Meyer \(MsC 425\)](#)
[Organization for Transformative Works Fanzine and Fan Fiction Collection \(MsC 320\)](#)
[Save *Farscape* Auction Collection \(MsC 371\)](#)
[Vee Stade Star Trek Fanzines \(MsC 962\)](#)

...preserves anonymity



Access to collguides.lib.uiowa.edu was denied

You don't have authorization to view this page.

HTTP ERROR 403

Reload

Figure 12

Screenshots showing ethical considerations at work in cataloging media fanzine collection holdings. Clicking on the links (left) generates a denial message (right). Screenshots by Karen Hellekson. Creative Commons Copyright Attribution 4.0 International (CC by 4.0) (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

Conclusion

This review of fandom, fanzines, and archiving fannish history has just touched the surface of big events in the fannish world relevant to sf and media print zine culture, from the late 1920s up through the early 2000s, when fandom moved away from print fanzines and toward the internet as dial-up modems became available. The creation and distribution of these physical artifacts comprised fandom for many. Further, the importance of the Star Trek franchise cannot be overstated; these fans drove media fandom, and their convention practices in particular came to be normalized across the entire fan scene.³ Much work remains

to be done on fanzines, particularly in terms of preservation work, as many fanzines are in danger of falling apart. Luckily, as archival work continues, these documents are being cataloged and scanned, saving at least the contents of these remarkable artifacts.

Endnotes

1. Several sites provide scans of fanzines, including eFanzines.com (<https://efanzines.com/>) and Fanac (Florida Association for Nucleation and Conventions), “The Fanac Fan History Project” (<https://fanac.org/>).
2. University of Liverpool, “Science Fiction Hub” (<https://libguides.liverpool.ac.uk/library/sca/sfhub>); University of California, Riverside, “Fanzines Collection” (<https://library.ucr.edu/collections/fanzines-collection>); University of Iowa, “Discovering Fanzines” (<https://guides.lib.uiowa.edu/fanzines>); Syracuse University, “Science Fiction Fanzines and Ephemera Collection” (https://library.syracuse.edu/digital/guides/print/sf_zines_prt.htm).
3. Of course there is a convention for hard-copy zine creators: Corflu (“correction fluid”), held since 1984 (<https://corflu.org/>). Another fanzine con, Ditto, was held from 1988 to 2007 (<https://web.archive.org/web/20080114012804/https://www.circlenk.com/ditto/>).

References

- Bacon-Smith, C. (1992). *Enterprising women: Television fandom and the creation of popular myth*. University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Bacon-Smith, C. (2000). *Science fiction culture*. University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Booth, P. (Ed.). (2018). *A companion to media fandom and fan studies*. Wiley. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119237211>
- Canavan, G., & Link, E. C. (Eds.). (2018). *The Cambridge history of science fiction*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781316694374.020>
- Coppa, F. (2006). A brief history of media fandom. In Hellekson, K., & Busse, K. (Eds.), *Fan fiction and fan communities in the age of the internet: New essays* (pp. 41–59). McFarland.
- Coppa, F. (2008). Women, *Star Trek*, and the early development of fannish vidding. *Transformative Works and Cultures*, 1. <https://doi.org/10.3983/twc.2008.0044>
- Coppa, F. (2022). *Vidding: A history*. University of Michigan Press. <https://doi.org/10.3998/mpub.10069132>
- Cosmology. (2022, November 16). In *Fancylopedia* 3. <https://fancylopedia.org/index.php?title=Cosmology&oldid=178825>
- Culp, J. (2016, May 9). *Meet the woman who invented cosplay*. Racked. <https://www.racked.com/2016/5/9/11451408/cosplay-inventor-morojo-myrtle-r-douglas>

- Fleishman, G. (2017, June 21). How letterpress printing came back from the dead. *Wired*. <https://www.wired.com/story/how-letterpress-printing-came-back-from-the-dead/>
- Garcia-Siino, L., Mittermeier, S., & Rabitsch, S. (Eds.). (2022). *The Routledge companion to "Star Trek."* Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429347917>
- Gernsback, H. (1926, April). A new sort of magazine [Editorial]. *Amazing Stories* 1(1). <https://archive.org/details/AmazingStoriesVolume01Number01>
- Glosson, S. (2020). *Performing Jane: A cultural history of Jane Austen fandom*. Louisiana State University Press.
- Grossman, L. R. (Ed.). (2011). *Sense of wonder: A century of science fiction*. Wildside Press.
- Hayden, P. N. (2009, December 3). *H. P. Lovecraft, founding father of sf fandom*. Tor.com. <https://www.tor.com/2009/12/03/h-p-lovecraft-founding-father-of-sf-fandom/>
- Hekto. (2022, November 28). In *Fancylopedia* 3. <https://fancylopedia.org/index.php?title=Hekto&oldid=180213>
- Jenkins, H. (1992). *Textual poachers: Television fans and participatory culture*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203361917>
- Kennedy, K. (2022). Fan binding as a method of preserving fan fiction. *Transformative Works and Cultures*, 37. <https://doi.org/10.3983/twc.2022.2107>
- Klimchynskaya, A. (2014, January 30). *Sherlock Holmes: The original fandom*. Den of Geek. <https://www.denofgeek.com/books/sherlock-holmes-the-original-fandom-2/>
- Kohasi, A. (2013, July 16). What the hectograph?!?! *University of Iowa Libraries*. <https://blog.lib.uiowa.edu/speccoll/2013/07/16/what-the-hectograph/>
- Lawlor, J. (1998, November 12). Carbon paper still messy, still in use. *New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/1998/11/12/technology/carbon-paper-still-messy-still-in-use.html>
- Link, E. C., & Canavan, G. (Eds.). (2015). *The Cambridge companion to American science fiction*. Cambridge University Press.
- Mimeograph. (2023, July 5). In *Wikipedia*. <https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Mimeograph&oldid=1163652825>
- 1937 Leeds convention. (2022, December 28). In *Fancylopedia* 3. https://fancylopedia.org/index.php?title=1937_Leeds_Convention&oldid=182962
- Oldenburg, C., & van Bruggen, C. (1999). *Typewriter eraser, scale X* [Sculpture]. National Gallery of Art Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC.
- Penley, C. (1997). *NASA/TREK: Popular science and sex in America*. Verso.

- Rosenblatt, B., & Pearson, R., eds. (2017). Sherlock Holmes fandom, Sherlockiana, and the Great Game. Special issue, *Transformative Works and Cultures*, 23. <https://journal.transformativeworks.org/index.php/twc/issue/view/27>
- Russ, J. (1985). Pornography by women, for women, with love. In *Magic mommas, trembling sisters, Puritans, and perverts: Feminist essays* (pp. 79–99). Crossing Press.
- Science Fiction League. (2023, August 10). In *Fancylopedia* 3. https://fancylopedia.org/index.php?title=Science_Fiction_League&oldid=192432
- Spirit duplication. (2021, November 1). In *Fancylopedia* 3. https://fancylopedia.org/index.php?title=Spirit_Duplication&oldid=167792
- Star Trek lives!* (book). (2023, July 24). In *Fanlore*. [https://fanlore.org/w/index.php?title=Star_Trek_Lives!_\(book\)&oldid=2481839](https://fanlore.org/w/index.php?title=Star_Trek_Lives!_(book)&oldid=2481839)
- Tricon. (2023, August 4). In *Fancylopedia* 3. <https://fancylopedia.org/index.php?title=Tricon&oldid=192208>
- Trimble, B. (2011, August 31). *Bjo Trimble: The woman who saved “Star Trek”* [Interview]. StarTrek.com. <https://www.startrek.com/article/bjo-trimble-the-woman-who-saved-star-trek-part-1> and <https://www.startrek.com/article/bjo-trimble-the-woman-who-saved-star-trek-part-2>
- Verba, J. M. (1996). *Boldly writing: A Trekker fan and zine history, 1967–1987* (2nd ed.). FTL Publications. <https://archive.org/details/boldly-writing-a-trekker-fan-and-zine-history-1967-1987>
- Willis, I. (Ed.). (2016). The classical canon and/as transformative work. Special issue, *Transformative Works and Cultures*, 21. <https://journal.transformativeworks.org/index.php/twc/issue/view/23>
- Worldcon. (2023, May 31). In *Fancylopedia* 3. <https://fancylopedia.org/index.php?title=Worldcon&oldid=189938>