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Fanbinding, Preservation, and Local Archives: Un-Digitizing Trends and Media Ownership in Fandom Information Practices

Kimberly Kennedy
Stony Brook University, kimberly.kennedy@stonybrook.edu

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Fanbinding, Preservation, and Local Archives: Un-Digitizing Trends and Media Ownership in Fandom Information Practices

Cover Page Footnote

Thank you to all of the fanbinders in Renegade Bindery who participated in this research study for their insightful and thoughtful contributions.

Introduction

Media fans are heavily involved in preserving digital culture. De Kosnik (2016, 2019) discusses how media pirates, intentionally or not, create decentralized digital archives of content that is otherwise at risk of loss. Similarly, media fans, recognizing the risk of loss of fandom content due to historical experience with platform takedowns, have found ways to preserve fanworks. Most notably, fans created Archive of Our Own (AO3), a fan-controlled fanwork archive, to preserve digital fan content. However, media fans hold an awareness of the ephemerality of digital content and also seek ways to preserve access and maintain control over resources through physical ownership of media objects, especially those available primarily in digital formats. The rise of digital streaming services for subscription access to music, television, books, and more has limited consumers' opportunities for ownership of their media. In response, many have turned to more traditional access methods such as vinyl record collecting. Research provides some possible reasons for this trend, including an attempt to "disrupt the music industry's efforts to define and regulate their consumer identities" (Hayes, 2006, p. 52) and regain "the feeling of being again in full control of use and ownership" (Wohlfeil, 2019, p. 2). These modern vinyl collectors seek out vinyl music as a way to preserve their personal access without reliance on digital platforms controlled by third parties.

A parallel trend exists in fandom spaces in the form of fanbinding. Fanbinding is the practice of printing fanfiction and other digitally-posted fanworks into books, most often through the use of bookbinding techniques but also through print-on-demand platforms. In the summer of 2020, a community of fanbinders created the Discord server Renegade Bindery. While at first Renegade Bindery had only a few members who were interested in the craft, it is now a community of over 3,000 people who are either interested in the craft or actively creating fanbound works. This membership growth matches the increased interest in fanbinding, which is now popular on social media websites like TikTok (Barnett, 2024).

My previous research found that a common motivation for fanbinders to participate in this craft was preservation of their personal access to beloved fanworks, which echoes broader trends of controlling media through local physical archives (Kennedy, 2022). This implies an understanding of the ephemeral nature of digital content and a subsequent fear of losing access to their favorite content without their intervention. Fanbinding creates a physical copy of a fanwork that

cannot disappear due to takedowns or server failures, thereby establishing the fanbinders' ownership of that story as long as the physical copy exists. This new research study focuses on preservation for personal access and local archive building and how these trends in fan communities echo broader themes of media ownership and control.

Methodology

In December 2020, as part of a research study, I circulated a survey and conducted informal interviews with some volunteer fanbinders in Renegade Bindery on the topic of fanbinding and fanwork preservation. At that time, the server had about 200 members, and I had 12 participants in my research study. While that project focused more broadly on the potential of fanbinding as a preservational practice, one finding showed that a common motivation for fanbinders to participate in this craft was preservation of their personal access to fanworks, rather than seeking to preserve fanworks for a larger audience in the long-term. Further, many fanbinders echoed broader anxieties around media ownership and the role of non-LIS archiving in media preservation. In order to directly address this finding, I developed a new research study in March 2024 that was both meant as an update to the original study, since the server has grown to over 3,000 members, and also a more targeted look at this idea of personal preservation and local archive building.

In March 2024, I posted an explanation of my research project and a link to the survey in the Renegade Bindery Discord server in the general and fandom studies channels. It was open to anyone in the server, even those who had not yet officially bound any works since many of the questions were opinion based or could be answered theoretically. There were 14 questions focusing on fanbinding experiences and fanbinder thoughts on preservation of fanworks and local physical archives, and then an open question for participants to provide any additional thoughts on the topic. All questions were open text to give participants the opportunity to provide detailed responses. In order to have some measurable data from the open text responses, I manually reviewed all responses to pull out recurring themes and standardize response formats into quantifiable data points.

The survey was open for just over a month, and had 157 participants. Interestingly, this participant number was close to the same percentage of the overall server population as my original research study at about 5-6%. Participants

could also indicate whether or not I could directly quote their responses in my research or just use their answers as data points for summarization purposes. Participation was completely anonymous, and no personal identifying information was collected, so each participant was assigned a number in the response data. When quoting participants' responses in this article, they are cited as P-[participant #]. This research project was reviewed by the Stony Brook University Office of Research Compliance and was found to be qualified for an exemption from IRB oversight in accordance with federal exemption category 45 CFR 46.104.d(2)(i).

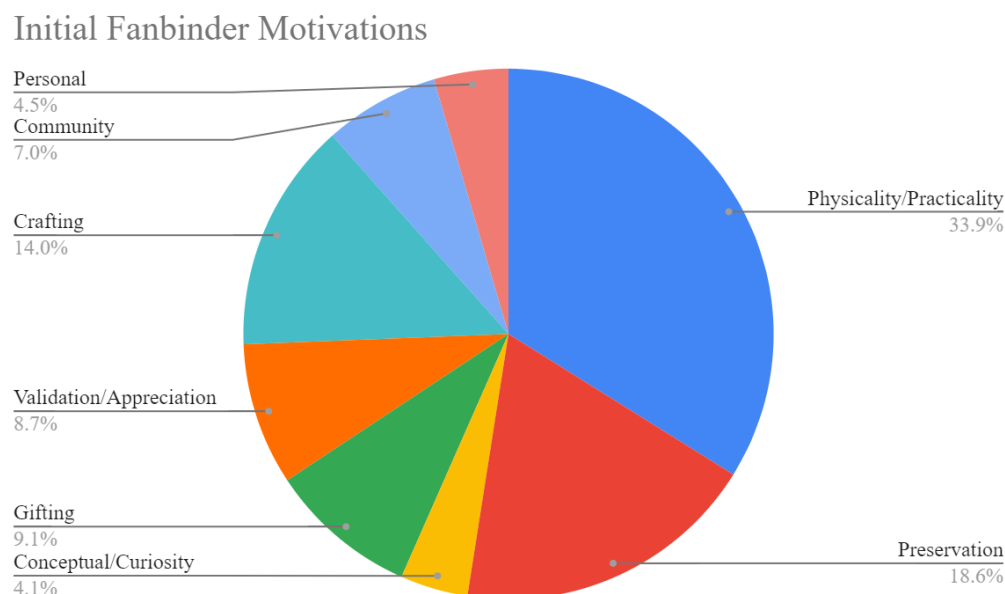
Demographics

The first few questions on the survey focused on how long participants had been involved in fandom, Renegade Bindery, and the craft of fanbinding in order to better understand their level of experience with fandom culture and fanbinding. Most participants in the survey had been involved in fandom culture in some form between 10-19 years, with a range of less than one year to 55 years. When asked about the length of time they have been a part of Renegade Bindery, most participants responded that they had been in the server for a year or less, but some participants had been part of the community since its creation in the summer of 2020. This larger percentage of new members aligned with my expectations due to the recent popularity of fanbinding in social media spaces. Similarly, when asked how long they had been creating fanbound works, most participants (47%) answered one year or less. Notably, a few participants responded that they started fanbinding before the creation of Renegade Bindery, demonstrating that individuals participated in the craft before the community was established.

Fanbinder Motivations

Similar to my previous research study, this survey asked participants about their interest in the craft and their motivations for creating fanbound works. With the higher volume of responses in this survey, I could identify eight recurring themes for fanbinder motivations: 1) Physicality/Practicality, 2) Preservation, 3) Conceptual/Curiosity, 4) Gifting, 5) Validation/Appreciation, 6) Crafting/Creativity, 7) Community, and 8) Personal, or reasons personal to the specific fanbinder.

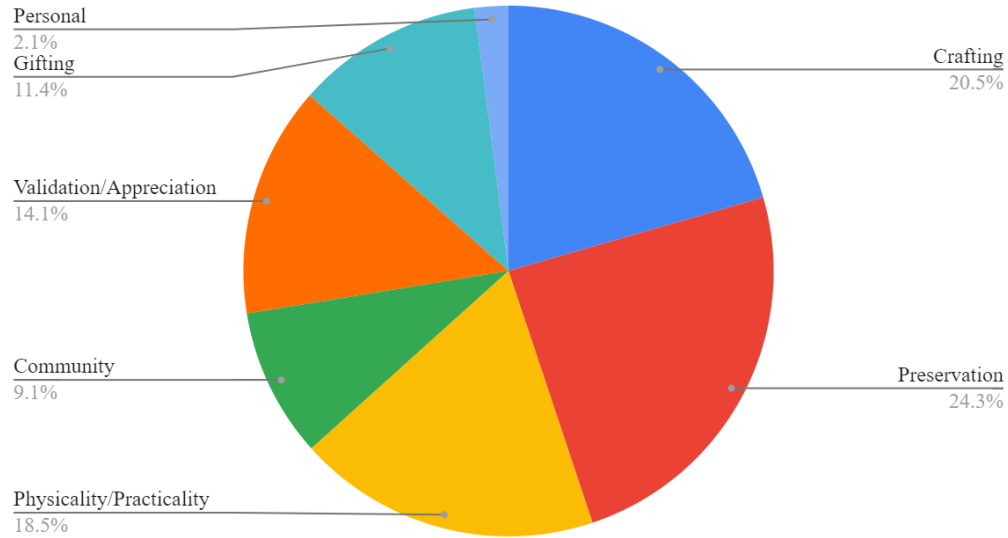
Most participants mentioned more than one of these motivations in their responses, and what prompted their initial interest in the craft shifted slightly when compared to what drove their motivation to continue creating fanbound works. Initially, the most common motivation for taking an interest in fanbinding was the desire to own a physical format of a digitally-posted fanwork, with preservation and crafting as the next most common (Fig. 1).



[Figure 1. Initial Fanbinder Motivations]

Once participants started fanbinding, their motivations for continuing shifted more heavily towards preservation (24.3%), with crafting (20.5%) and physicality (18.5%) falling to the second and third most common motivations (Fig. 2). However, of those who listed preservation as a motivator, most (about 67%) specified that by preservation, they meant preservation of their personal access to their favorite fanworks, not necessarily preserving them long-term for a general audience.

Current Fanbinder Motivations



[Figure 2. Current Fanbinder Motivations]

Physicality or practicality included any responses that mentioned wanting to hold a tangible object, wanting a physical collection, or reasons that reading a physical book was more practical or comfortable for the participants than reading off of a screen. As an example, one respondent wrote as a motivation “I wanted physical book versions of the stories I read over and over again, to avoid some of the blue light at bedtime” (P-4). Another noted their primary motivation as “To have physical books in my bookshelf. I’m a bit of a dragon hoarder” (P-149). This idea of creating a physical book from online content was a popular motivator for fanbinders.

Preservation covered any responses regarding preserving personal access and long-term preservation for a wider audience. About 67% of respondents who mentioned preservation as a motivator clarified that personal access was most important to them. These participants explained their motivations with responses such as “I want to be able to read these books when I am 80” (P-48). Another 33% of respondents in this category specified that part of their motivation is long-term preservation of fanworks and fan culture. For example, one fanbinder wrote that their primary motivation is “to continue to immortalize these works, however small that effort may be” (P-13). This also demonstrates an understanding that fanbinding

will never be able to preserve every single fanwork in print because the volume of digitally-posted fanworks is so large. As a point of reference, Archive of Our Own currently hosts over 13 million fanworks, and that is only one fanwork repository (Archive of Our Own, n.d.). Based on their responses, fanbinders understand that preservation efforts through fanbinding can only preserve a subset of fan content, but still find meaning in the effort to create physical formats of selected works.

For many fanbinders, the craft itself is what drove their interest and motivation. Renegade Bindery was created at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in summer of 2020, and many fanbinders joined the community in search of a new hobby they could pursue while at home that also fit their fan-centered interests. In this survey, many participants noted that fanbinding is their creative outlet, and that it provided them with the opportunity to learn a new skill. One participant, in answer to their motivation for creating fanbound works, answered that “I finally found the art I want to make!” (P-2). Fanbinding, and bookbinding in general, has been described as “1,000 hobbies in a trench coat”, meaning that the craft requires binders to learn many different skills to complete a project (Minkel, 2024). For many fanbinders, this is a welcome challenge and an opportunity to flex their creativity and crafting abilities.

Gift-giving (11.4%) and participation in a community (9.1%) were also common motivators for creating fanbound works. Many participants tied these two concepts together in their responses, finding that gifting physical copies of fanworks to others gave them a method of participation in fan communities. As an example, one participant mentioned that gifting fanbound works was their “way to contribute to fandom beyond leaving kudos and comments” (P-64). Just as fan writers and fan artists contribute to their fandoms through posting fanfics and fan art, fanbinders can contribute by creating physical fanwork objects and gifting them. Often, their gifting practices focus on the author of the fanwork they bound or close friends. One participant wrote that having an author respond favorably to receiving a fanbound copy of their fic was a motivator for them (P-48). Participants defined this community participation both in terms of Renegade Bindery, which has a very active community, and as a part of fandom in general. One participant listed as their primary motivations “the pleasure of sharing them with other people (authors and fellow binders,) the pleasure of enjoyment as part of a community (the fannish experience for me in many ways)” (P-121).

For many fanbinders, the craft of fanbinding appeals to them as a way of validating fanfiction as a genre as well as showing their appreciation for fan-created

works and their authors. Historically, fanfiction has been at risk of takedown or loss in part because the writers and the stories they create associate heavily with marginalized groups, particularly the LGBTQIA+ community (Dym & Fiesler, 2018). Pushing back against this trend through preserving fanfiction in print and validating fanfiction as a genre was a central driving factor in the creation of Renegade Bindery. Fanbinder ArmoredSuperHeavy, who created the server Renegade Bindery, posted his list of motivations for fanbinding on DreamWidth shortly before creating Renegade Bindery. His first two motivations are listed as “to make a demonstrative statement on the validity of “fic” in general (and fanfic within that specifically) as a newborn genre of literature that has really only come into its own in the last 15-20 years” and “to disrupt preconceptions about what is valuable and worthy of being memorialized in print, much less published in a fine edition” (ArmoredSuperHeavy, 2020). Participant responses reflected some of these motivations, reporting that they participate in the craft “as an act of subversion against a culture that devalues fanworks and queer stories” (P-93) and “as elevation of the ‘status’ fanfiction has by giving them nice-looking physical coats” (P-117). Other focused more on demonstrating appreciation of the stories and their authors, such as “wanting to honour and validate fans’ labour” (P-111) and “to create a beautiful book to do justice to the story” (P-126). Preserving these stories in print allows fanbinders to show their appreciation to fanfiction authors and also push back against a narrative that demeans or denounces fanfiction as a genre by presenting the stories in handcrafted works of art.

With the increased popularity of fanbinding in social media spaces, many participants joined Renegade Bindery after seeing a post or video on the topic that intrigued them. For some, the concept really appealed to them, such as one participant who found an article on fanbinding circulating on Tumblr and “fell in love with the idea” (P-2). Another participant was intrigued by the idea both because of the bookbinding aspect and because of the callback to zine production popular in previous decades of fan culture. They responded that “I’ve always been intrigued by bookbinding, and fanbinding is both more advanced than the zines I grew up on, and a sort of flashback to that time, with its emphasis on creating hard copies of fics” (P-133).

Personal reasons for engaging with fanbinding varied widely, but included motivations like binding their own and friends’ works, or finding personal meaning in the craft because of their own experiences or positionality. As an example, one participant gave this reason for finding meaning in the practice:

the author of my favorite fanfiction disappeared last june after more than 13 years of daily chapter updates. She was elderly and retired and her fanfiction, which has more than 3k chapters and i believe 10m words, got me through parts of my life where i didnt think i would survive. that fic is literally so integral to who i am as a person. I was and still am struggling to cope with losing a friend so precious to me, and i decided after a few months of depression that i would learn to bookbind so that i can preserve her work in a form fitting it's quality. (P-107)

One participant summed nearly all of these motivations in response. They listed their motivations for fanbinding as:

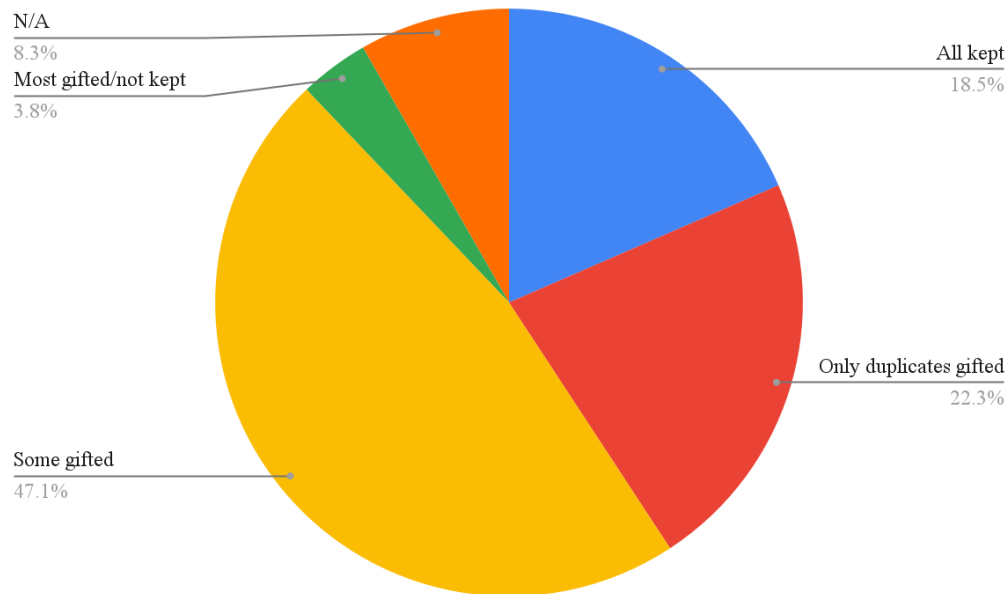
Preserving a kind of anti-capitalist folk narrative and art that's part of a community I belong to is also important to me, and capturing stories I love in some sort of permanent fashion, especially old or small fandoms—though I also bind a fair amount of whatever I'm currently reading, and especially queer stories. Making something tangible and beautiful with my own hands and practicing a skilled craft. The opportunity [to] share my appreciation and participate in the community by basically creating a really elaborate rec for the fic I'm binding when I share photos online and send a copy to the author. (P-156).

This demonstrates the range of motivations for fanbinding and how they often overlap.

Fanbinding and Preservation

The area this study focused on was preservation as a motivation and preservation practices. Most fanbinders reported that they did not intend to facilitate long-term access to fanworks through their craft, and instead wanted to preserve their personal access to their favorite fanworks by building a local physical archive. This motivation was reflected in participant responses to the survey question regarding retention practices. The vast majority of fanbinders keep at least some of the books they bind (Fig. 3). About 40% of participants reported that they keep at least one copy of every book they bind, with about half of that 40% gifting any duplicate copies they create. In many cases, fanbinders make a duplicate copy of a work for the purpose of gifting the second copy to the fanwork's author. For example, one participant answered “I plan to make 2 copies of each book, one to keep and one to send to the fic's author. If the author does not want a copy, I will

either only make one copy to keep or offer the second copy to any friend who might be interested” (P-77).



[Figure 3. Retention of fanbound works]

Some participants who responded that they did not intend to keep most books they made cited space restraints or reiterated that the joy of gifting was a primary motivation for them. One participant specified “part of the joy is gifting! I also wouldn’t have space for 118 books, so it’s nice to be able to experience the joy of creation without reaping the consequences haha” (P-5).

When asked about fanbinding as a method of fanwork preservation, most participants (about 64%) saw fanbinding as a good method of preserving fanfiction and other online fandom content long-term. Most participants in this group cited limitations of online digital archives, arguing that “those books will be here for a long time. The internet in comparison is so fragile” (P-157). To many fanbinders, having the physical copy makes the fic feel more permanent than leaving them just in online archives. One participant noted that “ultimately physical media is less susceptible to loss than digital media, where websites die, file formats die, and storage can simply stop working at a whim” (P-51).

This sentiment is unsurprising considering fandom’s history with content loss, particularly on third-party platforms. Two notable examples were the mass fanwork takedowns from LiveJournal and fanfiction.net. In May 2007, the blogging site and popular fanwork repository LiveJournal suspended over five hundred accounts, many of them linked to fandom activity (Fanlore n.d.). Several years later in 2012, fanfiction.net deleted thousands of fanworks from their site without warning, citing violations of their content policy (Ellison 2012). Fans during this time period experienced regular loss of access to fanworks, and many are now drawn to fanbinding as a more stable access method.

Some survey respondents (about 30%) saw some potential for preservation in the practice of fanbinding but saw major limitations. Many respondents specified that fanbinding works best as a method of preservation for the individual binder and those who receive the books as gifts. One participant likened fanbound books to a “special collector’s edition” that only preserves the fic for the binder, but not the general public (P-36). Several participants noted a similar concern that while binding a fic preserves it for the binder, it does not mean the work will be accessible to others if the fic is removed from an online platform. Further, several participants expressed concern over there being no central or specialized archive to hold these books long-term, which means there is no guarantee for their preservation beyond the binders’ lifetimes.

Even if a specialized archive existed, some of these concerns would remain. As an example, one participant expressed concern over the selection process, which is mainly based on fanbinders’ personal preferences, meaning that “there will be a lot of works that slip through the cracks” (P-68). Additionally, one participant raised the argument that fanwork authors may not want their fanfiction preserved long-term, which is particularly important to consider when the authors themselves removed their content from online archives.

Other participants saw more value in fanbinding preserving an experience or a statement. One response highlighted the possibility of fanbinding preserving their experience of fandom as a whole, writing “since I’m not good at writing myself, this is one way I can also remember my own journey through fandom” (P-132). Another referenced the potential of fanbinding in validating fanfiction as a genre, saying that “I see it more as a way of indicating that fanfiction is something worth preserving” (P-80). Similarly, another participant pointed out that “we still have Star Trek zines that were bound in the 60s because the act of binding and sharing those works made them worth keeping. Physical media legitimizes itself, if

not with pop culture then with future historians” (P-77). Even if fanbinding cannot comprehensively preserve fanworks or make them widely accessible if the digital formats disappear, it does create the potential for a long-lasting statement on the validity and importance of fanfiction and surviving fanbound works for future study.

Only about 5% of participants saw no potential for fanbinding as a method of fanwork preservation, citing limitations in circulation and the lack of a central archive as barriers to general preservation. One major concern expressed in this group of participants was that a printed work cannot include all the necessary formatting and contextual information to fully preserve a fanwork. One participant gave the example of a fanfic that, when highlighted, revealed hidden lines in the story, which they noted was “something a physical medium may not be able to replicate as well—therefore was it well persevered?” (P-98). For the majority of respondents, fanbinding has some potential in preservation of fanworks, but with many caveats:

It is a good way for an individual to preserve the work for themselves long term. It is not a good way to preserve fanfic and fandom content for research or archival purposes as there is no central catalogue, and no way for anybody but the owner of the physical tome to view the book. In addition some typesetters make modifications for ease of reading in print and for language convention purposes, so many fanbinds are not direct reproductions of the original content and renders the book an unfaithful copy. However fanbinding increases the likelihood a fic will not be completely lost if it is deleted from the internet and storing data in multiple formats and locations generally increases the lifespan of the data. (P-8).

As this participant mentioned, even if it is not widely accessible, fanbinding can prevent a fanfiction from being lost completely. Several fans have reported owning what is likely the only remaining copy of a fanfiction because they printed it out, even if they just printed and saved it in a binder. For example, a Tumblr post from mizunocaitlin discusses how they retained access to a deleted Star Wars fanfiction because they printed it into a 3-ring binder in 1998. They wrote in the post, “beyond the author’s own hard drive somewhere on this green earth, I think this might be the only copy” (mizunocaitlin, n.d.). A survey participant described surviving copies like these as “the last remnant of a lost fic” (P-31). While this opens the possibility of sharing a lost fic with others when preserved only in print, it mainly

preserves access for the person who saved it in a print format, which echoes the opinions and priorities of many fanbinders.

Local Fanwork Archives

Since so many fanbinders have expressed concerns over the ephemeral nature of online content, this survey also aimed to gauge their preservational practices that extended beyond fanbinding. This includes keeping local digital archives of fanworks to preserve personal access and avoid fanwork loss if a work is taken down or deleted. When asked, the vast majority of respondents (94%) expressed concern over losing access to fanworks, and most (89%) have experienced loss of a fanwork at least once in the past. Of those who answered that they did not worry about losing access to fanworks, some specified it was because of their preservational practices, like saving favorite works in several formats and locations to ensure personal access. And similarly, some participants stated they have not lost access to any favorite works because they always save them.

Most respondents (78%) always download local digital copies of favorite fics and have a defined method for doing so. For example, one participant said “I have a folder of HTML downloads on my laptop called “the library of alexandria” just for this purpose” (P-144). Some participants (15%) will sometimes download local copies depending on the situation, such as saving local copies for fanworks they want to bind. As one participant explained, “I have a couple of HTML and PDFs, but that’s largely a byproduct of downloading them to turn into a typeset” (P-85). Another 7% reported no defined methods for saving local digital copies.

The best preservational practice for digital files is to save multiple copies and different formats in several locations. A portion of the fanbinders surveyed (27%) save multiple digital formats of favorite fanworks and store them in multiple locations. Sometimes this was an unintentional practice, such as for the many participants who only download extra formats and save them in other locations for the purpose of reading on a phone or e-reader. Many others had detailed methods for what formats they save and where, including one participant who has been downloading copies since 1998 and storing them in several different locations. Most commonly, participants downloaded and saved PDF formats of fanfics, followed by EPUB and HTML. They also reported saving them in locations like personal computers, external drives, phones, e-readers, and cloud-based services.

This suggests that fanbinders not only build local physical archives of fanworks, but often create digital local archives as well.

This is especially important for opening the possibility of easily circulating lost fics. One participant who had experienced loss of fics they loved also identified the missed opportunities of finding echoes of a fic that doesn't exist anymore:

I've also had the experience where I've come into a fandom 15+ years late, and go through old LiveJournal group posts and see people raving about fics that no longer exist because they were deleted, or the account was privated or it just no longer exists. Luckily I've been able to get copies of some of those lost fics, but that has only been through the grace of the people who ripped them all those years back and who now pass them around through email for those who ask. (P-119).

Some of these lost fics will still survive and circulate in some way because of fans who saved local copies.

Local Media Archives

This local archive building, both physical through fanbinding and digital through download and storage methods, echoes broader themes of media control and ownership. Many people, both in fandom communities and externally, are building local archives of their favorite media as a method of preserving their personal access. Local archive building is becoming more popular due in part to anxiety over reliance on streaming platforms for access to media (Brady 2022, Conroy 2024). Although streaming services make promises of reliable and convenient access to media, the actual impermanence of streaming generates fear of loss of access and control.

This is particularly concerning for the long-term accessibility of content, since media often moves between platforms or is dropped from all platforms entirely. Streaming platforms frequently remove content without warning. As an example, some streaming platforms have removed episodes from popular sitcoms such as *Scrubs* and *30 Rock* because they showed characters in blackface (McGowan 2023). While it is important to acknowledge the problematic aspects of media, this kind of practice does also leave a gap in the archival record. This is especially true for media that does not exist in a physical format, such as streaming shows that only exist on that platform. If that content is removed from the streaming

platform, it could easily be lost. Even licensed digital content is not actually owned, and access to that content can be removed at any time without warning.

Accessing media through streaming and digital licensing is very convenient, but does not guarantee personal access to content or long-term general preservation. In response, many media fans have turned to more traditional access methods via physical media objects, including maintaining a DVD, CD, or vinyl record collection. This allows consumers to regain a sense of ownership and control over their media. These local physical archives preserve their personal access to media without reliance on digital platforms controlled by third parties, which echoes motivations expressed by fanbinders for creating fanbound works. As an example, one fanbinder listed as a motivation for fanbinding “because I was both interested in trying bookbinding and am also a frequent advocate for physical media. I do not trust the internet (and private corporations even less, when it comes to streaming) to keep films and television, music, ebooks, or even fanfiction perpetually available” (P-106).

Based on the findings of my previous research that revealed fanbinders’ awareness of digital ephemerality, this survey questioned if their preservational practices extended to media outside of fan content. When asked about their collection-building habits, all but 6 participants, or 96%, responded that they maintained at least one physical media collection aside from their fanbound works. Also, 67% of respondents had more than one physical media collection. Their reasons for collecting physical media directly related to broader trends. One participant said that they collect physical media “because I trust streaming and digital media about as far as I can throw it” and cited the recent merge of anime streaming platforms Crunchyroll and Funimation (P-86). Following the merge, any digital licenses in Funimation did not transfer over with the content, so all Funimation users lost access to their purchased content (Harding 2024). Another fanbinder elaborated on their physical collection formats and collection practices:

i am pretty obsessed with keeping my physical media. while most of my CDs have gone by the wayside over the years, i am fanatical about keeping my DVD and print book collections. the only way to 'own' a media that gives you pleasure or engagement or enjoyment is to have a physical copy that cannot be taken or deleted by an online corporation. (P-27)

While several participants noted that physical media is not guaranteed to last forever either, they saw value in the redundancy of multiple formats and one noted that “physical objects do not last forever, but they can be made using archival

practices and repaired throughout time, digital media can't really do that yet" (P-10). Perhaps unsurprisingly for a group that creates books as a hobby, the most common physical media collection reported (78%) was traditionally published books. This was followed by DVDs/Blu-rays (59%), CDs (47%), and vinyl records (19%). Some had formats like video games, art prints, and collectibles.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this research project, a clear link can be drawn between the preservational practices of fanbinders and broader themes of media ownership and access. As one participant wrote, "binding to me is the fanfic equivalent of burning a CD with your favorite playlist on it" (P-71). In both cases, fanbinders and media fans, the immediate need is for long-term personal access to favored media, but these fanbinders, vinyl collectors, and media pirates are all, intentionally or not, creating local archives of content that may be at risk of loss. Without consumer demand, physical formats of digital music would not exist. Similarly, without the dedication and hard work of fanbinders, much of that fan content would only exist digitally.

If AO3 were to disappear tomorrow, fanbinding would only save a comparatively miniscule amount of fan content. Many more would be saved by the many AO3 users who download and store these works, and could share these with others online, which happens often already when authors take down their works unexpectedly. However, with the constant risk of digital information becoming obsolete and inaccessible, fanbinding could prove a more stable preservation format in the short- and long-term. For example, one fan found a Star Trek zine from the 1960s in a thrift store with content that does not exist anywhere online (Rosenberg 2022). Redundancy is key in preservation, and fanbinders, vinyl collectors, and media pirates are all, intentionally or not, creating local archives of digital content that may be at risk of loss. These trends point to some media fans prioritizing control and ownership over the ease of access offered by digital archives and streaming services and suggests that seemingly obsolete formats and practices will play a continued role in debates over access, control, preservation, and ownership.

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