

Zine Reviews — Slingshot #142 (Spring, 2025)

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Spring 2025

What is a 'zine' you may ask? I'd call it a sort of propaganda of the deed, where the deed is birthing a publication *on your own authority*. No officials needed: have some thoughts, write them down, draw them out, copy / paste, scissors, gluestick, scan, copy, staples, you get it... and ta-da, a booklet or pamphlet or comic of your very own. Pass 'em out. Spread the word. The power has been inside you all along. Here are some we've read recently:

After The Deluge, Vol 3 – Against Me

delugepodcast.com 20 pages – \$10

The Deluge is a zine companion to a podcast about songwriting, albums and artist interviews, and I'm a sucker for music zines. Previous issues dig down on Jackson Browne, and Bright Eyes. As a contrarian I really like the first three picks. These are three artists you won't find on the same mixtape. In the podcast, Justin goes album by album through the whole Against Me! discography with different guests. He hits all the No Idea releases through everything on Fat Wreck Chords. In the zine Cox tackles the highlights. He writes reviews for all the major releases starting with "Reinventing Axl Rose" in 2002, all the way through "Shape Shift With Me" in 2016. He pulls no punches addressing the album "Gender Dysphoria Blues" and his intent not to make a "token trans episode."

He loves this band, but they recorded their last non-album tracks shortly after disbanding in 2018. Cox doesn't write about it in the zine but Against Me recorded a cover of the Jim Carroll Band's song "People Who Died" for the compilation album "Songs That Saved My Life" on Hopeless Records. That's a fine place to hit pause.

Hiroshima Yeah! #196

donbirnam@hotmail.com 8 pages – donation

While Mark Richie has published other zines (ex: What Colour Are Your Pyjamas?, Puppy Power, The Furry Terminal and Sniper Glue) Hiroshima Yeah! has been his longest running zine. It was founded back in 2005. The monthly zine features poetry and prose with a mix of film, book and music reviews. He has a few co-contributors to keep that brand of chaos crisp and fresh in every issue.

Believe it or not, the real winner here is the poetry. These short Bukowskian poems are just as proletarian and twice as readable. I want a compendium. Other contributing writers like Simmons are just as good. His screed on the band Deviation Social is inspired insanity. I use the word "screed" here very deliberately. I considered the word "rant" and no, I think we do need to punch up the language a bit to convey the level of transgression. In comparison, Richie's record reviews here are more impressionistic. You need to read them all and meditate a bit to take it in. Drink a pint and it might start to make sense.

Richie has been zine-making since at least 1987. That might be why he's printing his paste-up designs on full pages of A5 in black and white. Hiroshima Yeah! takes me back to the best parts of the old times; using a knackered copier in the back of a chemist's shop, smelling hot toner and paying 5¢ a page. Breathe deep my friends.

Fighting Where We Stand

itsgoingdown.org 36 pages – Free Download

The history of political resistance requires first that someone records that history. You cannot trust a school textbook approved by the state of Texas to do it justice. So it becomes incumbent on activist groups to write their own histories. For that reason alone I find history zines irresistible.

This zine's timeline starts shortly after a neo-nazi with the Traditional Workers Party (TWP) threatened the lives of anti-fascists from the podium at the RNC. But the content of the reporting focuses on street-level activities. Despite frequent violence at previous TWP rallies, the city of Sacramento still granted their event permit. Sac PD were even dispatched to protect the Nazis. Naturally they were greeted by anti-fascists at every turn.

I'm writing this only days before the first episode of Trump, season two is about to air. So the timing is right to revisit the chaos and white supremacist violence that defined season one. I'm not optimistic about the years to come, but the words "Fuck Nazis" are as American as apple pie; and it's good to see our old fashioned, wholesome values in today's youth.

Burn Down The Animal Pharm By Lint Lobotomy

warzonedistro.noblogs.org 8 pages – free download

There ain't nothing wrong in the world with a short zine. Say what you came to say. There's no need to summarize what you intend to say or review what you already said. Down with the oppressive colonialist structure of introductions, conclusions and exposition!

Burn Down the Animal Pharm is a collection of several micro-essays; most published for the first time. It actually makes for a very readable zine, even if they don't all directly serve a single narrative. The writing is personal, loose and natural, unburdened by rigid structure. In rendering his thoughts so directly, Lint Lobotomy reminds me of Meditations by Marcus Aurelius. May his works also last two thousand years, and be recorded on parchment by future holy scribes.

Radio Dies Screaming – Issue #1

radiodiesscreaming.com 44 pages – \$6

What a great zine name. I wish I had thought of it first. I've read a dozen different zines by Jay Hinman. The most galling thing about Hinman is that he's always right. His taste in rock n' roll is impeccable. When he tells me that a band is exciting and brain-erasing, he's right. When he recommends a radio program on KDVS, he's right. When he reviews a mix tape, he's still spot-on. His interviews unearth things I needed to know and his record reviews reveal a whole playlist of the records I need to hear.

Hinman is a scholar of obscure zines and underground sounds. He ruminates and prognosticates with a refined, mature palate. He's like some kind of garage rock wine connoisseur. I read every word of every page and listen to every damn record. Hinman always seems to find cool underground bands before I do. I'd call it jealousy but I think I just want to be Hinman when I grow up.

Wisblood #67

fuzzybunnyflatbunny@ gmail.com 18 pages – postage

This is one of the most colorful envelopes I've ever received in the mail. So a big thank you to Mr. Fishspit, and any of his co-conspirators, be they real, imagined or pseudonymous. The subtitle here is "The Shock Treatment Issue" and he means that literally not figuratively. On the inside of the cover is a drawing of a person, supine, wearing the headgear and mouthguard ready and braced for 800 milliamps of DC current to pass between the electrodes through their brain. It's unsettling. What follows are pages of first person, stream of consciousness writing about the author's personal experience with Electroconvulsive therapy (ECT).

ECT damaged his memory, but not so much that he can't write about it. And in writing about it he can share an experience in his life which is incomparable for most of us. ECT is a temporary destruction of the self; a hard reboot. His narrative is spotty and it's no wonder. But It also saved him from suicidal depression. This was a challenging read not because of the stream of consciousness writing. It was challenging because it spoke a kind of truth we all rarely hear, shining a light in a place we usually choose not to look. Now I can't look away.

The Ozarks Agrarian News #47

ozarksagrarian@ protonmail.com 16 pages – 8 issues, \$20

Because of my age, I think of these folks as hippies and there is an inherent virtue in hippies... they build stuff. They can roof a barn, they can weave a blanket, they can shell and dry beans, they can write a zine, they can compose a song, and then organize a concert. Hippies build compost bins, gardens, co-op coffee shops, and boutique publishing companies. Hippies know when to plant garlic. Hippies contribute to the community and for that we should give our thanks.

Ozark Agrarian News (OAN) reads like a farmers almanac of sorts. The tradition of agrarian almanac periodicals can be traced back to the 1600s. In other words, OAN and its hand-made aesthetic draw on a rich agrarian tradition.

If they are to be the last of the small-scale farmers, that won't be a surprise. Hippies have an enduring value system that cannot be extinguished by industrialization, the political winds, or the weight of generational change. I usually won't directly endorse a zine but in this case I must. My partner, a life-long organic farmer, rated their tips and instructions highly. We will be subscribing.

Dishrag #3

ratghostzine@ gmail.com 20 pages – \$3

Sean Farley describes his local Franco-American club as smelling "like old cigarettes and \$4 beer." I can confirm the one in my old neighborhood smelled the same way. We are both Yankees by birth, and that ethnicity comes with a heavy burden of misanthropy and miserly cheapness; it's in the blood.

The warning on the back reads "This zine contains items of a personal nature including: poetry, comix, tales of woe, sexual escapades, romantic doldrums..." The list goes on. It's a perzine with a mostly comic format with very little out of bounds. It gives this perzine more depth than most.

To quote Farley again “Nothing useful stays clean.” He meant it metaphorically, but it’s real, so very real: not your tools, not the fork or plate, and not your hands or your soul. I’ve been thinking about it for days. Ashes to ashes bubbeleh.

Murder & Mayhem – Summer 2024

treyoftoday@ yahoo.com 18 pages – free pdf

After the unfortunate discovery of clown porn in the last issue I am afraid to scan any of Trey’s QR codes. He is a man of questionable tastes and he scares me a little. I also feel like Trey is the kind of person who would put unsavory things behind QR codes just to screw with people, and then laugh at their discomfort.

Trey writes mostly about bands and shows but the genres were more varied than the last issue. Amongst the punk and hardcore were synth bands, newwave, and to my surprise, even pop. He unironically recommended two genuinely tuneful bands: Geeked and Teen Mortgage amongst his preferred d-beat bands.

Trey would probably be offended by that characterization. Please don’t take that to mean that Trey is a changed man. Trey has not changed. There is still clown porn. Trey still gets drunk and emails 20-page scum punk screeds to his favorite MRR writers. I like his zine but I am glad Trey does not have my address.

Out From The Void #7

outfromthevoid@ yahoo.com 30 pages – \$5

I’ve reviewed a few issues of this top notch zine. Let’s review the basics. Brenton Gicker is a mental health crisis worker, emergency medical technician and registered nurse. His approach to the topic is professional, but never academic. He zooms in on the missing persons of western Oregon. He collects stories with the names of people and places and the people left behind and the places where the bodies are found. It can be morbid but he’s also trying to do good in the world.

Murder has about a 57% conviction rate in the US. But that’s just the national average. But that rate also varies by race and gender. If you are a white victim in Missouri, the conviction rate for your killer is 78%. But if you are black it’s only 55%. In Oregon the delta is about 10% apart. The numbers get uglier from there. So it’s no surprise that Gicker has alot of material to work with. But Gicker does not fixate on the politics as much as I do. For Out From the Void it’s just article after article, name after name, face after face and the underlying narrative voice: please do not forget us.

Portal Guide

instagram.com/jasonhendersoncox \$10 – 20 pages

Missoula, MT is a growing city of over 77,000 people. You wouldn’t know it from this zine though. These images evoke decrepit rust-belt cities, and old mill towns with listing buildings creaking in the wind. Jason Cox documented their disused doorways, “portals” in his nomenclature.

The intimation here is that these doors lead to liminal spaces beyond the back alleys and parking lots where the photographs were taken. If you’ve ever cut through an alley at night, you’ve seen these doors, glowing in the yellow sodium vapor light, looking

otherworldly, inviting you to escape the matrix. Don't knock on the door if you don't want it to open.

Ear of Corn – Issue 58 & 59

foodfortunata@ hotmail.com 22 pages – \$2

This zine's mailer came with some flyers for death metal zines, the kind with no internet presence and an anonymous PO box. The music Food reviews is almost as obscure; cassettes from record labels with a residential street address. Food goes places other music journalists are afraid to tread. Don't get me wrong, there are some bandcamp artists mixed in. But be aware, Food has mapped and visited parts of the underground you've never imagined.

Food is a mysterious person. He writes faster than me, so between reviews two or three more issues may come out. Thankfully I read quickly enough to keep up. Issues 58 and 59 of Ear of Corn are very much in the same vein as the last several: music reviews, band interviews, and zine reviews. He even has a review of Slingshot issue #140. Muchísimas gracias Señor Food. Reciprocity is the basic currency of civilization.

Papercore #12

papercore.noblogs.org 44 pages – 3€

This zine began as a project between friends in France and Spain. This issue was printed in Marseille, France, and earlier issues were printed in Toulouse and Bilbao; so you might ask why it's written in English. Its publishers wanted to make a collective, open-contribution zine; so with some irony, the choice of English serves its inclusive nature. English is far from the most common native first language, But it's the most-popular second language with 1.1 billion speakers. The Papercore crew says "...we choose to use the English which is understandable for ourselves." As many writers are not native English speakers the wording is sometimes awkward, but instead of distracting, it adds authenticity to its voice.

The content here is fabulous, and it really delivers on its promising subtitle "International Punk Zine." There are scene reports from Argentina and Chile. It has multiple first-person tour diaries and reports on the Mordor festival in France, the Izero festival in Poland, and Rozzfest in Italy. The Yarostan tour diary reads like a lost work of Camus.

The zine cools down in the last few pages with record reviews, and finally on the last page a top 11 of the year and the playlist they listened to while doing the issues layout: Drive Your Plow Over The Bones Of The Dead, Brux, Hiverlucide, Limbes... They do not leave quietly. The whole zine makes you want to get in the van and tour Bulgaria, read Céline and smoke a lot of cigarettes. Where have you been all my life?

Thoughts of You #1

denniswilsonzine.tumblr.com 48 pages – \$4

This "zine" is basically a proper glossy magazine. I don't mind reading things that don't leave ink on my fingers. This is a Dennis Wilson & Beach Boys charity fanzine, so I shouldn't be surprised that it's a tad more upscale than average. But at the same time the fonts are huge and there is a ton of white-space in the layout, kind of like a

large print edition for senior citizens. This could have been fit into a zine 75% smaller, but it wouldn't have been as pretty.

Editor Jenna Applesed asks and answers the question: what do the Beach Boys mean to you? It makes this into a perzine variant instead of the more standard fawning teens' rock star worship. There has been all too much ink dedicated to that nonsense.

I review so much political and punk rock fodder that it's easy to forget that fanzines are actually the OG of the zine scene. The first zines, arguably date back to the 1930s and 40s mostly around science fiction and pop music fandoms. To that end, there have been numerous Beachboy-themed one off publications going back for decades. It makes this one oddly retro, but also makes it feel inevitable, like another Beach Boys release. They say you die twice. Once when you stop breathing and the second, a bit later on, when someone says your name for the last time.

Fault Lines

notabeanie.me 8 pages – \$6.50

This is a minizine which came in a mailer with a few other minizines, notably Kishotenketsu, and some earlier publications. This one opens with a few short lines about disaster porn which is timely to say the least. I think I liked Notabeanie's full-size zine, This And Other more. It's so hard to say what you're going to say in a tiny space. The larger format lets you stretch that prose and get limber.

On page 14 she writes "I'm a little rusty and by rusty / I mean depressed..." You can connect to human moments like that sometimes, in the morning light, when the timing is right. (That rhyme was accidental and not an homage.) Notabeanie avoids rhyme in general to favor homonyms and word play which is more playful and engaging. As you may remember, James Kochalka warned us all not to take this life thing too seriously.

Gutter Bravado #5 & 6

instagram.com/themobilizationfairy 32 pages – \$8.88

Mindi sent me issues 5 and 6. The former is so personal I'd struggle to share such things and so I'm going to focus on No. 6 here. It opens with the classic AA gambit that a recovering alcoholic should not make major decisions in the first year. Mindi then lists off the major decisions she made anyway. She casually mentions the death of her brother, her alcoholism and her ankle monitor, her felony probation for resisting arrest. Then while pregnant, arranging to put her baby up for adoption.

Slowly it dawned on me that this wasn't a standard perzine, this was the very rare subgenre of the confessional perzine. The confessional perzine always starts with the admission that they have fucked up. But we are not all Catholics and this kind of confession doesn't require forgiveness anyway. You can testify and not truly believe, just as you can forgive and not try to forget. We're all still in the long, hard process of trying to believe ourselves.

This is the hardest stuff to talk about and Mindi is writing it the fuck down. People go to their graves without saying this stuff out loud. It's like what Hank III said about Luke the Drifter. "...a lot of people didn't understand the Luke the Drifter side. That's

a dark side, man.” But Mindi made it. She’s carrying a 1-year metallic sobriety coin in her pocket today and she can talk about it.

If there’s still a post office by the time you’re reading this send us a copy of your zine at:

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The Ted K Archive

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<<https://slingshotcollective.org/issue-142spring-2025/>>

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