

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE

Zines and Alternative Publications in First Year Writing

A graduate project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts in English

By

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Table of Contents

Copyright Page	ii
Signature Page	iii
Abstract	v

Abstract

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Where the teaching of First Year Writing is concerned, developing coursework that students find valuable is a daunting task. Considering that many students in these courses are neither interested in pursuing writing after the completion of their compulsory college-writing class, nor are they English majors, students' attitudes regarding writing tend toward the apathetic. Instructors of FYW courses must therefore inspire students to engage actively in writing exercises that hold some value beyond the classroom: for many students, the production and distribution of zines and chapbooks as part of FYW coursework serves that purpose. These small, independently produced works of art and writing require thoughtful planning, outlining, drafting, and revising (key aspects of recursive writing), prove valuable in raising awareness of differing perspectives by engaging students' voices and acknowledging their diverse backgrounds, and serve

students well in terms of developing a sense of purpose. What's more, zines and chapbooks can be tailored to require research, persuasion, and thoughtful presentation and design; their replication and distribution is simple, and provides students the opportunity to participate directly in a compelling writing community. This project seeks to better understand how students' perspectives regarding the incorporation of zines and chapbooks as course materials and writing projects in FYW may serve to improve their perspectives regarding writing.