

**Documentary****A Hundred Dollars And A T-Shirt***Microcosm Publishing*

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• Mike Pathōs

The internet pretty much killed zines. Now that we can all go on endlessly about anything online, why would anybody bother going to the trouble of printing and publishing fringe ramblings on paper?

Many zines migrated to the internet becoming mostly small-readership personal blogs, though a few such as BoingBoing grew dramatically through online readership. Of those zines that didn't migrate to the internet, a few expanded beyond their zine roots into large-circulation glossy magazines (e.g., Giant Robot and Bust) or shifted to graphic novel or book format, but many more simply stopped existing.

Therefore, it's surprising how vibrant the zine scene looks in this DVD, subtitled 'A Documentary About Zines in the Northwest US', and which concentrates mostly on the Portland community in interviews with around sixty writers. There's a little bit about the history of zine culture (zinesters claim Thomas Paine and Benjamin Franklin as their own, along with sci-fi fan publications dating back to the 1930s, and '70s punk zines, but it was in the '80s when inexpensive photocopying became widely available that zines began to proliferate across the United States, reaching an apex in the '90s), a fair helping of commentary about the whys and hows of zine production today, and a wrap-up concentrating on contemporary venues for zine sales (unlike the internet, on which it costs virtually nothing to publish, zinesters still need to find some way to cover their manufacturing expenses).

The DVD itself has low production values: poor audio quality throughout, and almost YouTube-'quality' video. It also totally fails to explain why anybody should be interested in this scene besides people who are already in it. Maybe it's one of those 'if you have to ask, you don't need to know' type situations. Anyway, no time to ponder this now - I'm off