

YOU'LL WISH IT WAS ALL OVER: THE BIBLIOGRAPHIC CONTROL OF GREY LITERATURE WITH REFERENCE TO PRINT FOOTBALL FANZINES

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Match report:

This paper examines the history of the fanzine; considers its status as an item of grey literature and discusses the problems encountered by amateur fanzine collectors, experts and librarians in tracing and managing titles. Case study material based on a piece of qualitative research carried out in the Lothians illustrates the difficulties in bibliographic control with particular reference to the football fanzine.

[Like all reports of matches, this is not the same as seeing it live - Ed.]



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Kick-off: introduction

Hornby (1992) states that the "way the game [football] is consumed seems to offer all sorts of information about our society and culture." Since the mid-1980s self-published football fanzines have become an element of this consumption of the game and may be used as research material. However, this assumes that they are accessible: as informal publications fanzines can be difficult to trace.

The home team: fanzine history, publishing channels and use

Little formal research has been devoted to fanzine publications. Most of the work completed discusses fanzines in the context of the sociology of sport or sub-cultures.

The adoption of the term "fanzine"

The use of the term "fanzine" can be traced back to 1949 in the United States, when it referred specifically to magazine publications for science fiction fans. Three decades later, and on the opposite side of the Atlantic, the term was re-invented extending the subject area coverage to include soccer and music, and acknowledging authorship by the fans as well as for the fans (Shaw, 1989).

Fanzines as the alternative press

Considering music publishing in particular, Cross (1981) has identified fanzine writing as a "form of journalism that has grown to act as an alternative to the main organs of communication ... [Fanzines] have come into being to fill a gap created by the shortcomings and limitations of established papers". The alternative press can voice opinion and mobilise readership. For

example, Haynes (1995) describes the part that The Proclaimer played in the "Hands off Hibs" campaign, which fought off the threat of the 1990 £6.1m take-over bid of Hibernian by Wallace Mercer, the chairman of rival Edinburgh team Hearts. Cross (1981) lists the main features of music fanzines as characterised by variable formats; limited circulation and few and informal distribution channels. This is also the case with regards to the alternative press for football (Barnes, 1991).

Fanzine production and distribution processes

In the 1970s fanzine publishing was a low-tech process making use of whatever facilities were at hand from carbon paper to flatbed duplicators (Roberts, 1978). Recent developments in technology and increased accessibility to such facilities allow authors to produce their copy using personal computers and desk top publishing software (Haynes, 1995). Football fanzines are sold through specialist shops, by mail order and at some football matches (Shaw, 1989 and Haynes, 1995). It is estimated that there are about 1000 football fanzine in the UK (Haynes, 1995) and most sell between 200-2000 copies (Lacey, 1989). Fanzines can also appear in formats other than print. For example Moores (1981-2) produced an audio fanzine on music and in the past eighteen months web sites devoted to football teams have been established.

Fanzines as formal information sources

Few writers address the issue of the fanzinerepresenting a formal information source. Of those who have done so the comments only hint at the likely possible use and acceptance of fanzines as such. That academics are interested in them may be seen as a sign of acceptance: "fanzine culture... may well be studied in decades to come as an important part of late 20th century history" (Hill at the 10th British Society of Sports History Conference quoted by Wood, 1992). Fanzines can be used for teaching purposes, as is the case at the Manchester Institute for Popular Culture at Manchester Metropolitan University, which maintains a large football fanzine archive built up with donated material (Haynes, 1995).

Teams in the grey literature league: characteristics of grey literature

Grey literature: definitions

It is an interesting co-incidence that the term "grey literature" acquired general currency in the library community at about the same time that fanzine publishing took off in Britain (Auger, 1989). However, the type of publications to which the term refers have been described by other means over their longer history (from the early 1900s or the 1940s according to Marsh (1992) and Auger (1989) respectively). Schmidmaier (1986) provides an interesting quotation from the 1920s:

"no librarian who takes his job seriously can today deny that careful attention has also to be paid to the 'little literature' and the numerous publications not available in normal book shops".

In terms of production grey literature publications are non-professionally laid out and formatted (Auger, 1989), and rapidly published (Carroll, 1994). They contain material which is non-conventional (Marsh, 1992) and not subject to public peer review (Carroll, 1994). There is poor bibliographic information on these publications, making them difficult to identify and obtain through the usual channels (Auger, 1989).

Grey literature: sample publications

Many types of publication may be categorised as grey literature. Auger (1989) identifies "reports, technical notes and specifications, conference proceedings and pre-prints, translations, official publications, supplementary publications and data and trade literature." To this list might be added newsletters for specific communities, theses and dissertations (Marsh, 1992). The new generation of electronic sources accessible over the Internet spawns a further set of "publications" exhibiting the features related to production, content, distribution and accessibility as outlined above (Carroll, 1994). As far as fanzines are concerned, these have been identified more specifically in the literature as sharing the characteristics of other grey

literature publications by authors such as Roberts (1978) and Johnson (1986).

The "invisible grey" strip: grey literature and bibliographic control

Bibliographic control

Bibliographic control refers to the "development and maintenance of a system of adequate recording of all forms of material... which add to the sum of human knowledge and information" (Davinson, 1982). Auger (1989), amongst others, observes that "grey literature has always been criticised for the complete absence or inconsistent application of any means of bibliographic control". Improvements in the quality of information provided by the publishers of grey literature would make tracing and accessing the sources easier (Knowles, 1981). The inaccessibility of collections through poor or non-existent bibliographic records render huge collections of information sources useless.



Bibliographic control and fanzines: case studies

There exist published case studies on the application of the principles of bibliographic control to fanzine collections. The cataloguing and recording of alternative press materials at the University of Connecticut is hindered by a lack of publishing information (Cross, 1989). Marseilles Public Library staff encountered acquisition problems in building up their special collection of comic books and fanzines and were forced to develop complementary acquisition and cataloguing techniques (Faur, 1982).

Bibliographic control and football fanzines: lists

Redhead (1987) points to the football fanzine archive at Manchester Metropolitan University (then Manchester Polytechnic). The catalogue for this private collection can be considered as a tool of bibliographic control. *Every Tom, Dick and Harry* provides an alphabetical listing of football fanzines and allocates them into one of five publishing categories: (1) seen regularly; (2) known to be still in existence, but not seen lately; (3) suspected defunct; (4) defunct; (5)

rumoured to have once existed. The general football fanzines such as *When Saturday Comes*, *Off the Ball* and *The Absolute Game* provide listings. More general interest magazines, such as *442*, review fanzine publications.

[A *Football Compendium*, compiled by Peter J Seddon, published by the British Library, 1995, includes a section on fanzines - Ed.]

1994/5 season enquiry: researching fanzines in the Lothians

The fixture: research project

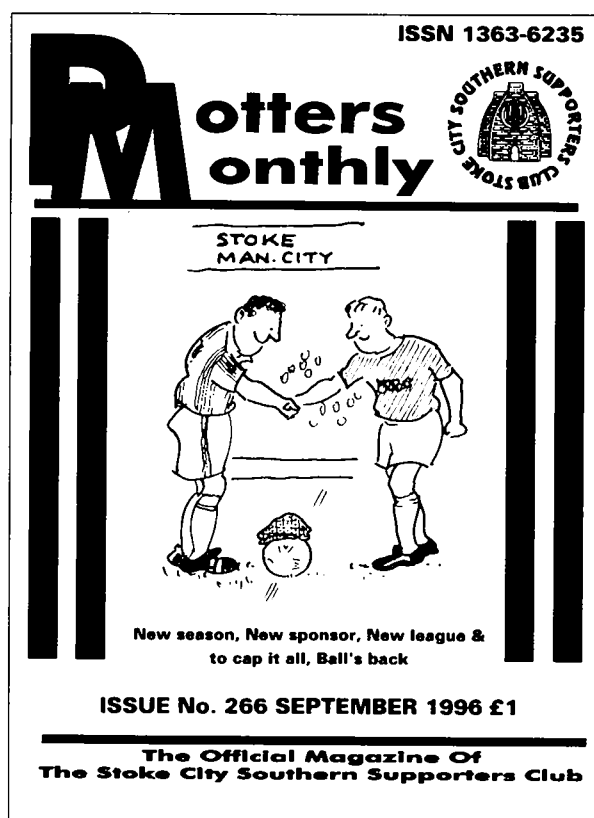
A small scale investigation completed in 1995 examined the problems associated with tracing and managing fanzine titles. The main aims of the project were to discover (a) how football fanzines could be identified, located, acquired and maintained; (b) the role football fanzines may play as a formal information source and (c) whether more could be said of the history of football fanzines. Data was collected through

Fig.1: Examples of format

Source: Every Tom, Dick or Harry

024	NEWCASTLE UNITED: The Mag £1, Unit 12, 25 Low Friar St, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 5UE	Longton, Stoke-on Trent ST3 6SB	Rd,
PO	The Number Nine 50p, 27 Laburnum Ave, Heworth, Gateshead NE10 8HH	PRESTON NE: Vernon's Two Left Foot £1, 50 Langden Crescent, Bamber Bridge, Preston PR5 6NE (cheques to A McDonald)	Wal
St,	Talk Of The Town £1, 3 Wansford Way, Whickham, Newcastle-upon- Tyne NE16 5SP (cheques to D Graham)	Pie Muncher £1, 10 Esplanade, Preston PR1 4PJ	50p
£1,	Half Mag, Half Blacoff £1, 14 Herdford Close, Whitley Bay, Tyne & Wear NE25 9XH (cheques to D Jameson)	Deepdale Ridge 50p, 4 Church Ave, Penwortham, Preston PR1 0AH	4YV
ent/	The Giant Awakes £1, 82 Greenlands Rd, Redcar, Cleveland TS10 2DH	Preston's Pride And Joy £1, PNEISA, London Rd, Labour Club, Preston, Lancs (cheques to PNEISA)	SHI
91	Teen Army News 80p, PO Box 47, Heaton, Newcastle on Tyne NE6 3YV	QUEEN OF THE SOUTH: Nightmare On Terraces St 60p, 5 Janefield Terrace, Park Rd, Dumfries DG2 7TU	Cre
ret:	NEWPORT AFC: Pyramiddle 50p, 61 St Edwards St, Newport NP9 4GG	The Alternative Queen's Speech 60p, 27 Loch Rd, Dumfries, DG2 9JF (cheques to Ross Corbett)	Mag
O	Homeward Bound 50p, 34 New Pastures, Newport NP9 3GF	QUEEN'S PARK The Web 60p, David Martin, 182 Townhill Rd, Hallhouse, Hamilton 3	DL
ox	NORTHALLERTON TOWN A Dream Too Far 50p, 19 Knots Bottom Way, Northallerton DL6 1JF (cheques to S Kelly)	QPR: In The Loft £1, 24 Woodham Rd, Catford, London SE6 2SD	SHR
010	NORTHAMPTON What A Load Of Cobblers £1, PO Box 36, Castle Donington, Derby DE74 2XS	A Kick Up the Rs £1, Beech Lodge, Massey House Farm, Hollinwood, Whixall, Shropshire SY13 3NL	See
id	NORWICH CITY: The Chizzen 50p, 17 St Mary's Close, Attleborough, Norfolk, NR17 2ED	Ook, I Think It's My Groat 20p, 42a Graham Rd, Mitcham, Surrey CR4 2HA	STE
le	Liverpool Are On The Tole Against 70p, 18 Drake Close, Steepletower, Hethersett, Norwich NR9 3JS (cheques to I Lindsay)	Beat About The Bush £1, 2 Rectory Close, Bracknell, Berkshire RG12 4BD (cheques to J Wild)	50p
lan	A Fine City 50p, 39 Stanhope		Sten
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well with other archives held by the Library, such as those of the Scottish Football association. The fanzine writers held the view that work of high quality, no matter the status of the journal in which it appears, was worth considering seriously. Library staff and experts commented on the uniqueness of material held within the photocopied pages: where else can information written by and for fans on the most topical issues be found? That fanzine material is quoted in books on football, has influenced mainstream sports reporting and contributed to changes in the presentation of football comment in other media such as television (eg: *Fantasy football league*) shows the broad acceptance of the information format, argued writers and collectors alike. Library staff were more cautious on the format's acceptance, highlighting their continued practice of considering fanzine publications as grey literature and referring to the unprofessionally produced, and sometimes deliberately offensive, material that makes its way into their collections.



The team's past: further information on fanzine history

In the course of the study further information on the history of fanzines emerged. One expert suggested that fanzines may date back as far as the seventeenth century if pamphlets reporting scandal, feuds and gossip could be counted as such. Meadowbank Review was identified as the first football fanzine in Scotland. Fans of small and non-league teams appreciate their fanzines as the only place to read about their club.

Post-match analysis: conclusions

This research project demonstrated that few pointers to the artefacts of football consumption, such as fanzines, makes it difficult for serious supporters and researchers to draw on a wealth of information. Since fanzine titles appear, disappear, resurface, change name, share editors, point to imaginary authorship and replicate club coverage it is not surprising that there are claims of a loss of important primary source material by those who try to track them. Yet this is part of the appeal of print fanzines both to the writers, who regard themselves as alternative, underground reporters, and to collectors as archivists of the unusual: the "elusiveness of fanzines ends up being their seductiveness for the die-hard collectors" (Haynes, 1995). Joining the writers and collectors are those who enjoy fanzines as a print extension of the oral traditions of football. It might be argued that in a time when supporters are suffering from the commercial glare of media-saturated sponsorship, along with stories of corruption, amateur fanzines offer welcome grey shade. Grey literature in (or on) the football field contributes to an intellectual heritage and efforts towards improved bibliographic control, taking into account the difficulties described, serve to render the shades more distinct.

Fig.3: Potters Monthly: a fanzine with full credentials: ISSN, issue number and date

On the bench: acknowledgements

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