Long Letterpress

"HISTORICAL" LETTERPRESS
EXTENDED INTO THE
🚀 2ND HALF 🚀
OF THE 20TH-CENTURY

A visual "long history of letterpress":

Examples* of historical letterpress cuts (image printing blocks)
showing things you might not think of as existing,
when letterpress was still being used for popular & commercial printing
(rather than the craft & art uses persisting today).

⏳ 👩‍🚀 🕹️ 📻 📺 🎙️ 🖨️ 🖼️ 🎥 ✈️ 🖨️ 🍕 ⏳
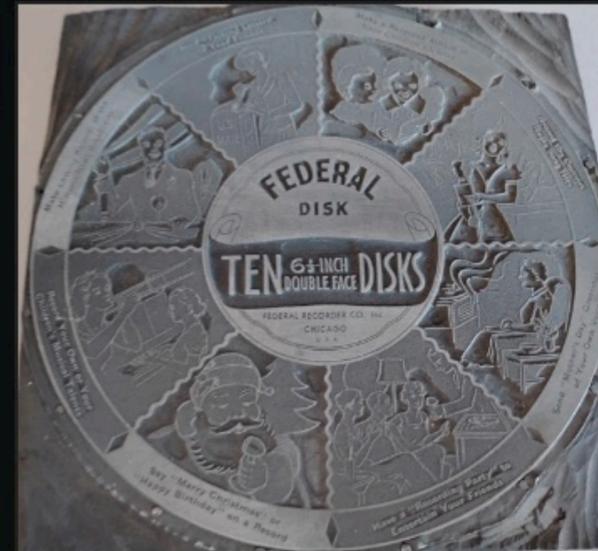
GALLERY

| All | TV | Computing | Data | Machines | Modern Brands | Science | Space |

AIR CONDITIONED

FEDERAL DISK
TEN 6¾-INCH DOUBLE FACE DISKS

The Star of our Annual Sale

DATASTAT

Pixels, paper, politics: a digital humanist booklab with an intersectional transfeminist frame

Mar 25, 2025 • Amanda Wyatt Visconti

The following is an accepted proposal I submitted to the international Feminist Media Histories *journal special issue on **"Craftwork within the Digital"**, guest-edited by Christina Corfield and Whitney*

Limited Letterpress:
Tools for Not-Enough Text :D

For when you only have 1 x A-Z type on hand (or an otherwise limited number of letterpress sorts,) these tools can help you figure out what you can print in one pass.

Coded by Amanda Wyatt Visconti as they find themselves needing little bits of code to aid printwork; deliberately 90s design.

Synonym Finder

Finds synonyms for the word you input, removes any that use any letter more than once, then displays the rest. (Only works with single-word inputs, not phrases.)

Useful if you only have A-Z type, 1 sort per letter, on hand—but want to letterpress print without needing to make multiple passes moving letters around in between and hoping you register things correctly so it looks okay.

[Type a word] [Find that subset of synonyms]

Use up some of your remaining letters

Enter the letters/word(s) from your 1xA-Z type you're planning to use, to see which letters of the alphabet are left for other uses. Then paste those letters into a tool like Unscrambler (choose "all dictionaries") to see possible words you can make from those letters.

[Enter a word] [Find Unused Letters]

Keywords from partial alphabets (aka I can haz keywords, not sorry)

Sometimes sellers offer inexpensive sets of characters that don't have all A-Z sorts; I'm particularly thinking of when they offer something like 7-12 letters (e.g. "CCDFFLLNOZ" or see example screenshot below from Ebay), for this tool: when you want to know whether one of the words you a care about (a "keyword") is spellable, if you buy the set. Thumbs up means it's spellable with your entered letters; thumbs down means you're an awesome person but can't spell the words you entered with those letters.

Version for others to use (you enter what keywords to look for)

Type the letters you have available:

[Enter letters here]

Type the words you want to check (separated by commas):

[Enter words here] [Check]

Amanda's version (just words Amanda cares about)

(Other folks, this part just checks letters against my personal list of frequently used terms. You can run it if you think you may be interested in similar terms, I guess?)

Amanda Wyatt, type the letters you have available:

[Enter letters here] [Check]

ABOUT THE HOME FOR BROKEN WOOD TYPE

I love how wood type carries the story of its human use; broken type is part of that visible story of our printing communities.

IF YOU HAVE PIECES OF BROKEN WOOD TYPE YOU AREN'T USING: *PLEASE EMAIL ME!*

I'll pay for shipping to get these to a good next home in my broken-type collection (and send you a print made from broken wood type if you're interested & I have any left). I'm interested in all kinds of broken wood letterpress type: they *really don't* need to have all the pieces of a whole sort, be an identifiable typeface or character, nor be mendable. Send me your unfathomable type-high wood shards, as well as things broken but closer to original form :) I'll take better photos of them, too—most of the current gallery is from type I didn't have a chance to photo up close before a winter storm closed the studio.

In early 2026, I started **a broadside print project using Penland School of Craft Letterpress Studio's broken wood type**. I then cleaned a case to make a new safe storage home for them that suggests mending, gently printing, and preserving rather than tossing into the dreaded Hell Bucket (Penland's is a whole bucket, not a jar/box; love it). I'll be printing with more broken wood type, including to encourage folks not to discard it. I'll also document the different ways different kinds of wood type has broken (e.g. material, character, typeface, size, ???), and get practice mending and protecting such type when it's in mendable condition.

In case anyone is worried—no type is being deliberately broken! 😱 I have a background in book history, librarianship, and preservation. Any type that looks at risk of further breakage is *not* being printed with. Printable broken type is treated with extra care—e.g. not overtightening the quoins, attending to what the broken edges are against, etc. My goal is type preservation over print use <3. When a sort's printing time is done, it still has beauty, a story in its fingerprints and dings, and a reminder that much of our cherished letterpress equipment is rapidly aging and no longer replaceable (at least in quite the same way, same history and makers, etc.).

Enthusiastic Type

HOME FOR BROKEN WOOD TYPE

DON'T THROW AWAY YOUR BROKEN WOOD TYPE!
I CAN **GIVE IT A GOOD HOME**...

SOON: Wolfproof Press (letterpress prints store & portfolio)	SOON: *Letterpress for All!* tutorial zine series (free)
💝🪵 Home for Broken Wood Type	🏳️‍⚧️🖨️ TRANSPONDER: DIY Historical Queer Letterpress
⏳👨‍💻 Long Letterpress: when letterpress & computers were both common	🔍🍭 Letterpress Candy: beautiful, funny, weird letterpress printing-block gallery
🖼️🗣️ All Sorts: Multilingual Letterpress Type	📖👀 #TypeGoals: Gallery of Good-Lookin' Movable Type
✋🧱 Limited Letterpress: Smol online tools for setting not-enough-type	🏳️‍🌈📚 *Queer Book History* zine (free)
✍️🎨 Book history & arts blogging	👀📃 SOON: Movable Feast: 👀 Type Collections Online 👀

All Sorts
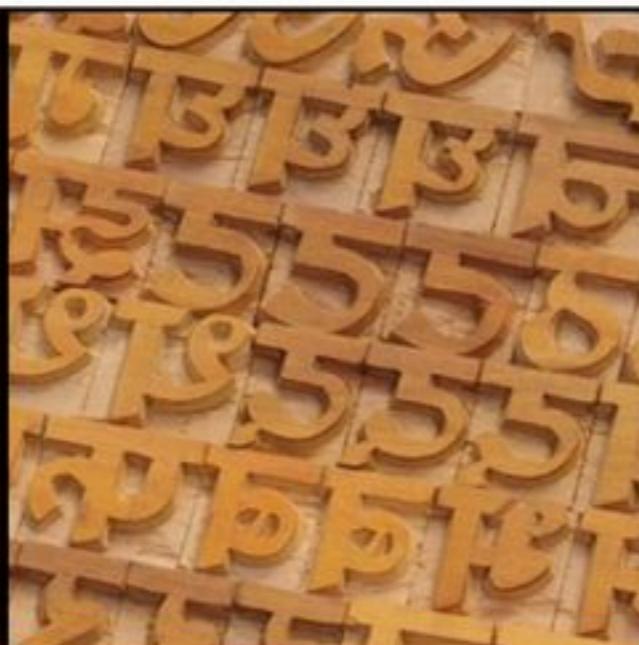
MULTILINGUAL & MOVABLE!

Photos of movable type in a variety of scripts & variants, not limited to Latin.

(A "sort" is one physical unit of letterpress type, e.g. an "x").

Mostly screenshot from online auctions. For a gallery of particularly beautiful-looking type, see #Type Goals.

Devanagari (Example 1)

Devanagari (Example 2)

Hebrew Wood Type (Example 1)

Hebrew Wood Type (Example 2)

ZINES

Curated by Amanda Wyatt Visconti, Director of the Scholars' Lab

As part of the UVA Library's mission to make information accessible to all, zines provide a low- or no-cost way to author and spread knowledge and creativity, which is why we host a public zine distro, plan zine-making workshops and events, and archive campus zines.

People often picture zines similar to their 20th-century origins as free collaged and xeroxed paper booklets about subcultures, including punk music and the Riot grrrl movement; fandoms, including for mid-century sci fi; social justice and marginalized experiences; or their earliest precursors, especially the Harlem Renaissance's "little magazines." Today, creators make "zines" that vary widely in how they look and what they contain—but most zines stay true to the form's original vision: radically low-barrier authoring, publication, dissemination, and reading.

This exhibit showcases a slice of that variety: zines are less about the visible object and more about a DIY (do-it-yourself) ethos of no-gatekeeping making and sharing art, information, and knowledge. The examples in this case are just a few of the many ways zines can look. Despite their differences, what similarities do you notice?

My favorite thing about zines—and why I think they are important, especially in this moment—is how accessible they can be. Anyone with access to paper and a pen can make a zine and circulate it without dealing with a publisher's gatekeeping. Zines don't need to look good to be effective—there are great zines that are just scrawly penned thoughts on white paper! So many zines are free, in a world where most things (including knowledge!) cost money.

As a librarian, free zines mean I can display authors and topics from our public space amplifying more authors, more experiences, and more topics our community cares about or needs to know than we can with just books—especially where racism, transphobia, and other violence and systematic disenfranchisement make it hard for people to author, publish, and widely share in book form.

ANALYSIS
422
1,711
137
27
4 vs 164

bart

BAD ART + retro TECH

Technologies aren't only *digital*—they're anything applying knowledge toward practical solutions. The printing press & the telegraph; wheelchairs & glasses; crosswalk paint & pencils are technologies. Taking this broad view of "tech" helps us keep a critical & ethical mindset: who does this help or harm?

The digital humanities, too, is about more than just *digital* work—it embraces experimental approaches to tech and culture. DH no longer uses punch cards or CD-ROMs. Websites won't always be our primary format, either. What holds across time is a critical, creative, & ethical approach to tech—and a radical openness to experimenting with what methods & forms can best help us pursue our research questions.

B.A.R.T. (Bad Art, Retro Tech) is a chill working group exploring what hands-on experiments using retro tech can teach us about the intersection of critical tech & culture.

We're taking a **"bad art"** approach to get there—a willingness to explore creative methods without being "good" at them, to make quick or tiny art, to value personal learning & pleasure in the creative process over the perfection of its product. We hope the framing of "bad art" frees us to enjoy creativity without comparison.

Our final outcome: a collaboratively written, letterpress-printed, poster-size manifesto on creative, critical, experimental approaches to knowledge-building & sharing. Working group participants will all take home a copy.

What can art, craft, & making teach us about critical technology & culture?

We're starting with some pre-digital technologies of text & communication, but are eager for more ideas & methods you suggest we explore.

2026 explorations:
- Jellygraph (hectographic) printing
- Letterpress printing with wood type (tabletop cylinder & screw presses)
- Lofi screenprinting
- Zine making

Additional explorations might include: Geocities-style early 90s web design, letterpress printing with lead type on the big Common Press & a small platen press, mimeograph, spirit duplication/"dittos", pneumatic tube messaging, amateur radio, USB & microcomputer minimal computing, risograph, MUD writing, lino carving, ???

TRANSPONDER PROJECT

DIY QUEER HISTORICAL LETTERPRESS

EX LIBRIS

COLLECT · REMAKE · CREATE

TRANS BOOK HISTORY

made by a trans printer!

Camp

Explore > Queer Letterpress

My collection of historical queer/queered letterpress cuts & catchwords, plu ... **More**

All Queer Blocks   Historical Queer Blocks   DIY (New) Queer Blocks

---

Person in dress & person in cowboy attire awarding...

Person in dress & person in cowboy attire awarding each other

Queer buggy (2 men in carriage)

Queer buggy (2 men in carriage)

Masquerade couple

Masquerade couple

Two men on tandem bicycle

Two men on tandem bicycle

"A real American boy!" with boy image

"A real American boy!" with boy image

"Camp" in word bubble

"Camp" in word bubble

"Made by a trans printer!" catchword

"Made by a trans printer!" catchword

"DON'T MISS"

"DON'T MISS"

"An Honorary Fellow of"

"An Honorary Fellow of"

"Your Choice"

"Your Choice"

---

nature's best

printed by a TRANS printer!

LETTERPRESS CANDY

INTERESTING LETTERPRESS ARTIFACTS TO 👀

A gallery of historical letterpress artifacts that I found interesting in some way: beautiful, odd, ???. Most are cuts (images printing blocks), but some are literal belt buckles with printing presses on them, because ??? (I assume these were for employees or prospective buyers.)

These photos mostly aren't of cuts I own, except for ones tagged "mine" (use the filter buttons to see these). Most are just screenshots items I've seen online that aren't in particular museums/archives, no maker attributed.

All | Belt Buckles | Lil Friends | Mine | Pretty | Queer | Retro Tech

CANNED FRUITS

AMP FLAMBEAU

PAPERMAKER

AHAM! JUST A MOMENT PLEASE

Staring at a spider on a string, in the second cut

LKHGFDCB ZYVUTPN

Icy movable type

The SWORD of DAMOCLES
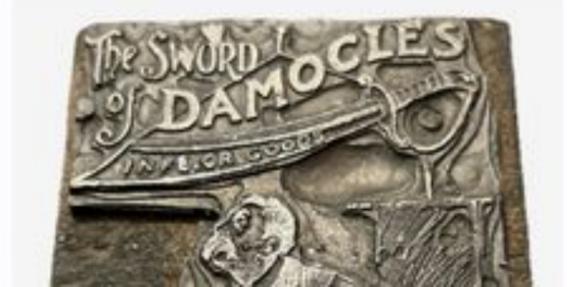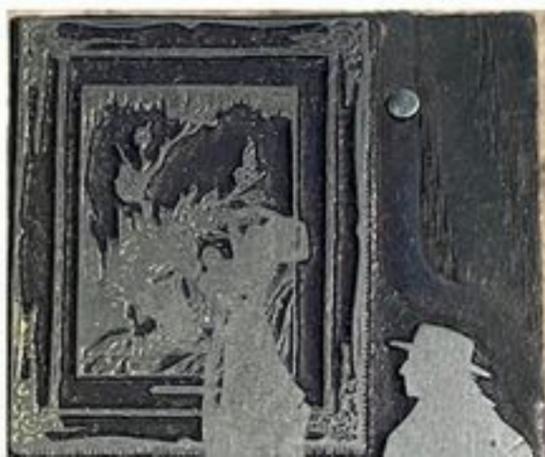
BROK⚡E⚡N
WOOD TYPE

USING, MENDING, SAVING
"BROKEN" LETTERPRESS WOOD TYPE

View Gallery	About Collection	Broken Type Prints

GALLERY

All   Penland   Visconti

PENLAND

PENLAND

PENLAND

PENLAND

PENLAND

PENLAND

PENLAND

PENLAND

PENLAND

ZINE BAKERY

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Project Website
ZineBakery.com

Exploring zines for DH research, methods training, & scholarly communication

You might be picturing zines as their 20th-century origins: collaged, xeroxed, free paper booklets on subcultures, social justice, marginalized experiences; or their earliest precursors, like the "little magazines" of the Harlem Renaissance. But today, creators make "zines" varying widely in format, from 100+ page tiny books to digital-only creative websites. Content varies widely: comics, tutorials, scholarly or personal essays, collage, creative writing, news, & more.

However they look, most zines stay true to the form's original vision of

"radically low-barrier
authoring, publication, dissemination, & reading"

Zines are a welcoming, inexpensive, and effective format for do-it-yourself scholarly communication, friendly teaching of digital research methods, and public humanities outreach — as well as an opportunity for data analysis and other DH explorations.
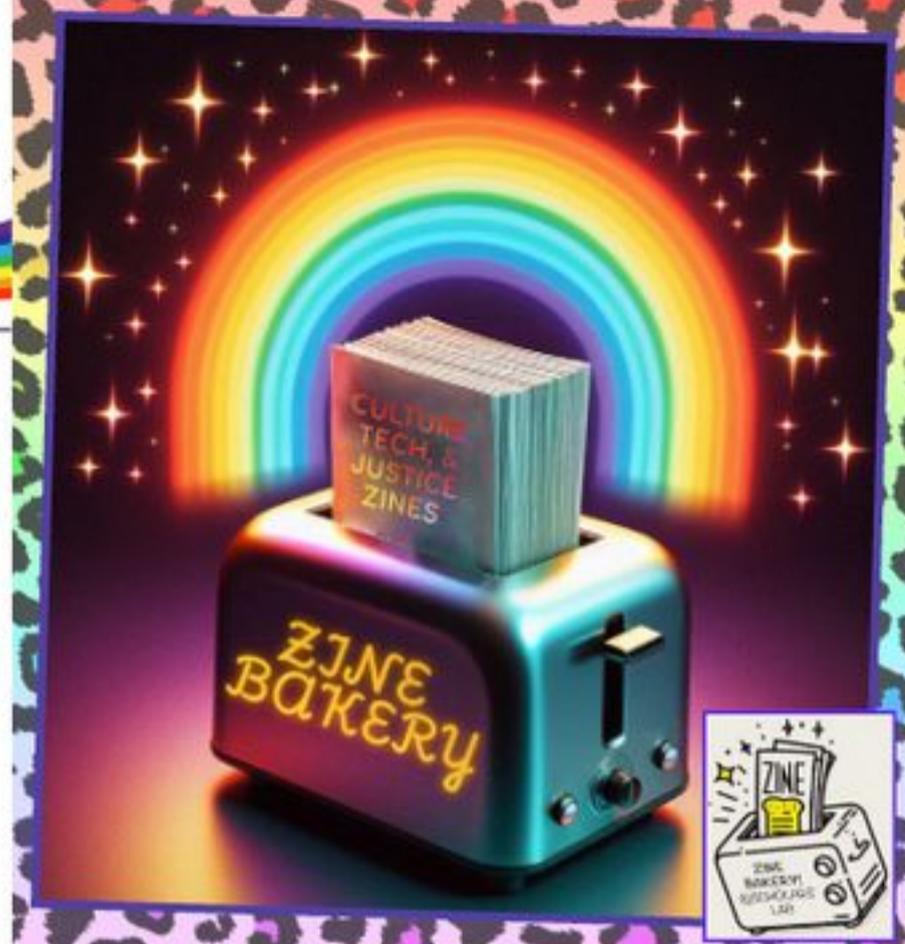
The *Zine Bakery* (ZineBakery.com) is a digital humanities project **collecting**, **amplifying**, **researching**, & **authoring** zines, with an emphasis on *free, resharable zines* & zines about *culture, tech, & justice*.

DH scholarship + zines!

1. **Relational database** powering a public catalogue of zines; 40+ explicitly DH-focused, & another 110+ zines in adjacent areas like feminist tech, coding tutorials, AI, & data science. 60+ metadata fields per zine 😊
2. **Python** image processing ➡ info viz "zine-cover quilt" 🧵
3. **DHy research blog** on zine theory & practice, e.g. the technical aspects of dataset-building & catalog design 🛠
4. **Digitization** — & **digital preservation** of precariously-online zine files 📁
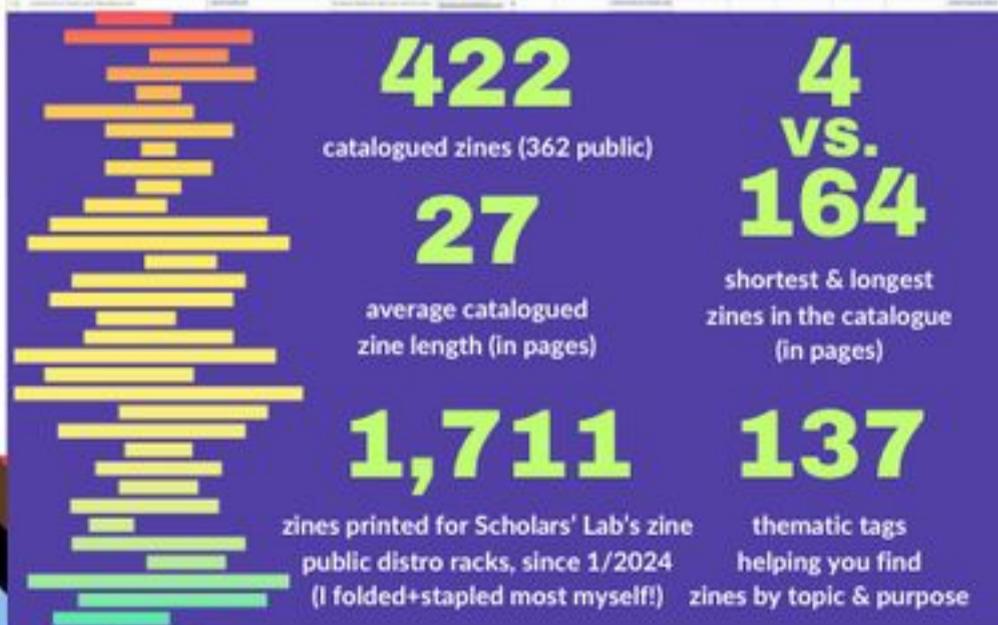
Catalogue backend

This background image is a screenshot of some of the 60+ columns of metadata powering the public zine catalog interface.

Zines for urgent advocacy

1. **Community**: comfort, access, organizing
2. Lo-fi / sneakernet forms & transmission **evading** surveillance, censorship, violence
3. **Marginalized** knowledges; **crisis** response guides; urgent tutorials

This QR code links you to **browse & read** all the free-to-read zines in the catalog.

422 catalogued zines (362 public)

27 average catalogued zine length (in pages)

4 vs. 164 shortest & longest zines in the catalogue (in pages)

1,711 zines printed for Scholars' Lab's zine public distro racks, since 1/2024 (I folded+stapled most myself!)

137 thematic tags helping you find zines by topic & purpose

Tiny slice of the tag-schema-organized zines

KNOWLEDGE FIELDS (TECH & NON-TECH)

design	coding	AI	science & printing	feminist tech	critical tech	history of tech, communications, media

Things disappear*
from the internet.
* sometimes, are deliberately disappeared

Care about stuff on the web?
- art zines
- fan fic
- videos/tiktoks
- photo galleries
- social media hashtags
- departed loved ones' posts
- museum & archival materials
- that we have always existed
- what really happened
- cultural memory
- human rights
- resistance
- anger
- joy

You need to act to archive it.

Anyone can do it—this zine shows you how.

DIY Web Archiving Zine
Dombrowski, Kijas, Kremer, Walsh, Visconti

1 of Scholars' Lab's 2 public zine racks.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

#TYPEgoals

GO TOUCH ~~GRASS~~ LEAD.

Photos of beautiful movable type.

Just a little garden of lovely type to rest your eyes & mind with.

Screenshot from online auctions.
For beautiful letterpress cuts, see **Letterpress Candy**.
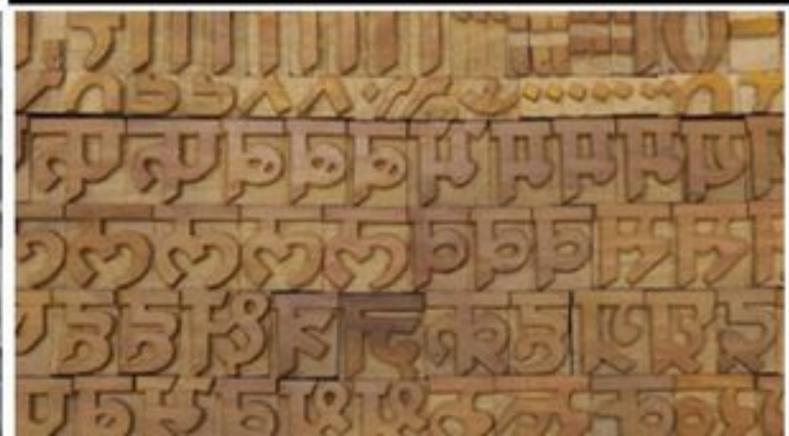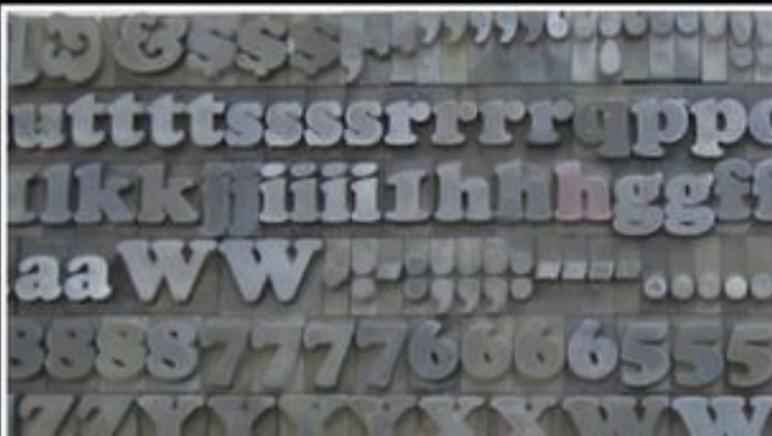
☐ HIGHLIGHT MULTILINGUAL TYPE

Antique American Serif

BIT Type (Bungee Inline Tweaked DIY Lasercut Personal Collection)

Ben Franklin Initials (Personal Collection)

WTF IS THE
RADICAL
INDOCTRINATION

SUPPORTING AND
QUEER AND
QUEER AND
TRANS YOUTH
WHO YEARS OF
THEM TEACH

STENCIL PRINTMAKING

My letterpress type inventory checker

Private key info ████████████████████████

```
1. ████████████████████████████████████████
2. ████████████████████████████████████████
```

Airtable API Token:

██

Base ID:

██

Oh boy! Load type inventory!	Clear saved settings

Check your text vs. type

```
-- Choose a typeface --
✓ BIT (Bungee Inline, Tweaked) (TBD)
Franklin Gothic Bold (24pt)
```

Text to typeset:

```
Cookie!?
```

☑ Allow upper/lowercase substitutions

[Check type sorts availability]

Results for BIT (Bungee Inline, Tweaked)

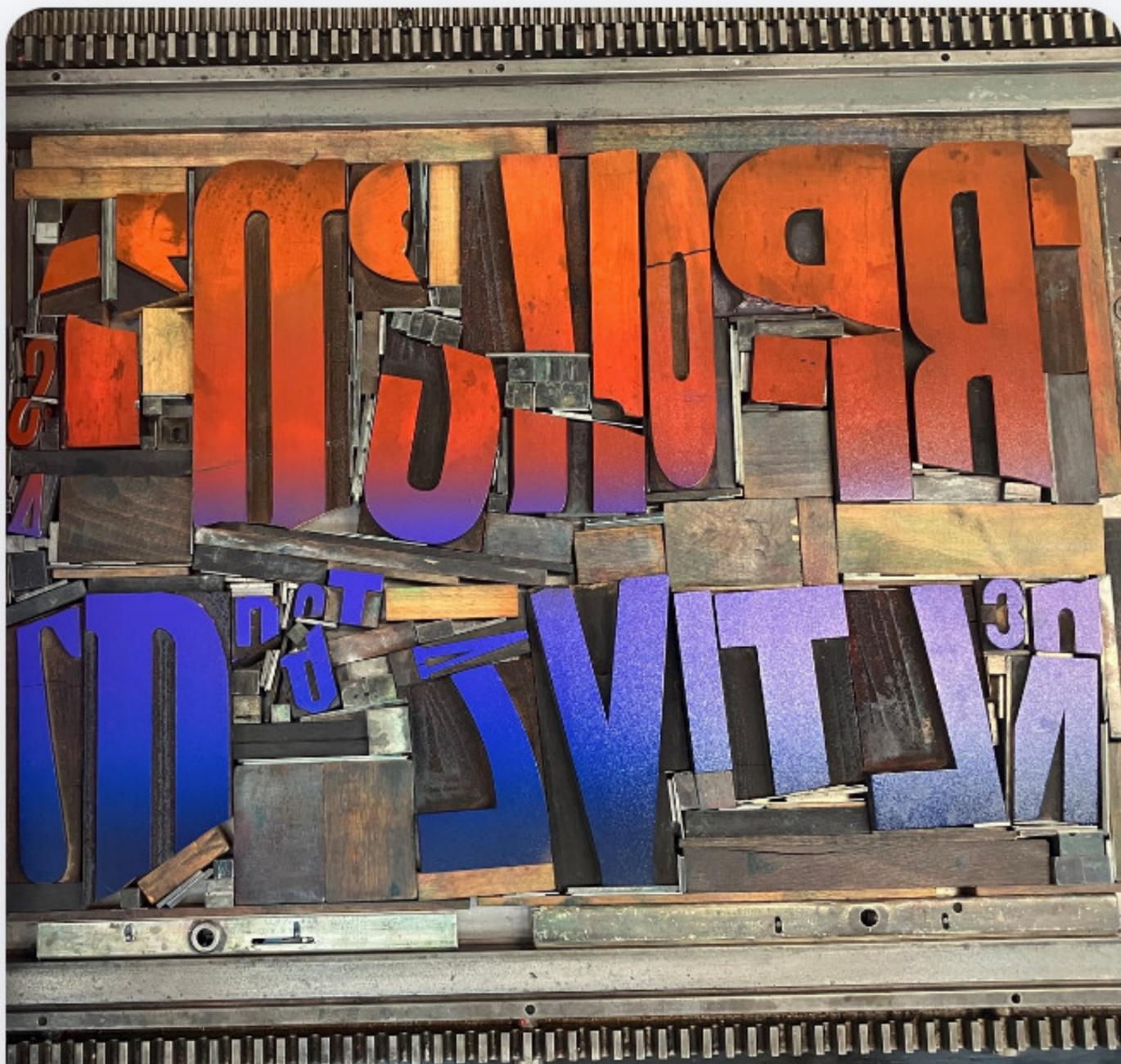*Case-insensitive mode: uppercase and lowercase can substitute*

C o o k i e ! ?

Character Counts

!: need 1, have 1   **?:** need 1, have 1   **c:** need 1, have 1 (1 upper + 0 lower)
e: need 1, have 3 (3 upper + 0 lower)   **i:** need 1, have 2 (2 upper + 0 lower)
k: need 1, have 1 (1 upper + 0 lower)   **o: need 2, have 1 (1 upper + 0 lower)**

✗ **You do not have enough type for some characters (shown in red above)**

PRINTING (CAREFULLY) WITH BROKEN TYPE

This broadside will eventually include further text, but a harsh winter storm ended the Winter 2026 Penland artist residencies early, so the rest of the print is delayed. It currently contains only text made using broken wood type from Penland, arranged to say "'Broken' is a relative term".

Back to Main Site	Contact	About
Gallery	SOON: Conservation research	SOON: Mending

KOREAN JOURNAL OF DIGITAL HUMANITIES

#DHmakes: Baking Craft into DH Discourse

Abstract

This paper traces the history and development of the collaborative #DHmakes initiative to bring crafts into the mainstream of Anglophone digital humanities, starting in 2022 but building upon earlier calls to bridge the maker / craft divide. It argues for the importance of this work within digital humanities as a way of reconnecting technology with its textile roots, while also recognizing the creative and intellectual potential found in feminine-coded craft praxis. The history of different phases within digital humanities is often poorly docu - mented. By recording the development of this recent movement – already a challenge fol - lowing a mass exodus from Twitter, where much of these conversations initially took place – this paper captures the origins of an important moment in the field, as "digital humanities" was coming to understand itself more capaciously than the "digital" alone would imply.