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Digitizing zines: Spreading resistance discourses in the digital era

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Abstract

Zines are grassroots publications that have long served as media of cultural and political resistance, traditionally circulated in material form within relatively small and tightly bound communities. With the advent of the internet, however, the scope and visibility of zines have expanded well beyond spatial and temporal boundaries, reducing production costs while simultaneously amplifying the reach of counter-hegemonic discourses. This study investigates how zines operate simultaneously as subject and as power within digital contexts, drawing conceptually on Michel Foucault's theory of knowledge and power to frame the analysis. A mixed-methods design was employed, with 85 zines purposively selected from a population of 568 titles, determined through the Slovin formula with a 10% margin of error. Data were examined through a narrative approach, supported by AI-assisted text analysis, allowing for both qualitative interpretation and systematic computational support. The findings reveal that digital environments not only reinforce the omnipresence, omniscience, and omnipotence of resistance discourses but also transform the dynamics of knowledge production, positioning zines as effective vehicles for disseminating counter-discourses. By operating as both disseminators of resistance (subject) and as agents shaping collective truths (power), zines highlight the shifting relationship between grassroots media and structures of authority. Limitations and recommendations for future research are also discussed.

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Introduction

Zines are small publications, produced in limited quantities, and circulated within and outside communities according to the collective's and communities' capacity. This is, at least, how zines are often portrayed. Yet, zines are far more complex than their physical form suggests. Over time, they have undergone significant changes in meaning and usage. Legendre (2023) categorizes their evolution into three distinct periods: the early era of the 1930s to 1940s, marked by science fiction fanzines; the period of transformation during the 1970s to 1990s, when zines became a medium for punk and post-punk countercultures; and the contemporary period, in which zines are often characterized by graphic and artistic forms. Importantly, these shifts have not erased the production of zines from previous periods.

The global proliferation of zines has continued to increase. Baker and Cantillon (2022) explain that zines serve as community archives, amplifying voices within the community. They can also be understood as spaces for sharing stories that strengthen individual bonds. Robinson (2018), however, offers a different perspective, identifying zines as historical sources and as a medium for disseminating research, as demonstrated by *Punkademics*. *Punkademics* or punk academics refers both to a term of self-identification among some scholars researching punk topics or adopting a punk lifestyle; and to a book of the same name edited by Zack Furness. While Baker and Cantillon as well as Robinson highlight similar functions, Robinson emphasizes the function of zines for critical knowledge production. Zines emerge as an alternative canon, filling gaps left by traditional learning methods in the pursuit of social activism.

Social activism has profoundly influenced the development of zines, particularly during the punk and post-punk eras. The creation and circulation of political paper zines evolved into a medium of resistance, driven by autonomous and self-sufficient practices. This aligns with Stangler and Maxwell's (2012) assertion that zines articulate anti-hegemonic and anti-mainstream perspectives through creative Do-It-Yourself (DIY) methods. Punk ethos positioned zines as a locus of alternative knowledge, opposing dominant aspects of life; anti-mainstream values, intimacy, and intensity within the DIY ethos (Watson & Bennett, 2021). The DIY approach allows anyone to become an agent of cultural production by, rejecting the neoliberal monopoly on art, media, andcreative practice. It fosters intimacy by emphasizing personal voices as well as empirical or emotional experiences, cultivating awareness among readers through zine practices. Within traditions of social activism, disseminating critical discourses is essential, as cultural hegemony must always be interrogated and challenged. Numerous academics have therefore explored the relationship between zines and identity, counter-culture, counter-hegemony, and critical media pedagogy (Bennett, 2022; Bold, 2017; Creasap, 2014; Etengoff, 2015; Nijsten, 2017; RADWAY, 2016; Scheper, 2023; Tong, 2020).

Despite recent technological advances, the zine subculture, popularized by handmade creations on folded A4 paper, has not disappeared. Adapting to the digital shift, zines have become increasingly accessible, enabling individuals to participate both as cultural producers and as consumers This is because cyberspace and real space can no longer be separated (Akmal & Coulton, 2018; Swara et al., 2023; Zufar & Airlangga, 2021; Zufar & Sari, 2021). Even so, cyberspace and real space still require mediation through devices. The extent of such mediation is visible in data on screen exposure. According

to GillPress (2023), the global average daily screen time is 6 hours and 58 minutes. In Indonesia, however, Statista (2023) reported that in the third quarter of 2023, Indonesians spent an average of 7 hours and 38 minutes per day on screens, with 3 hours and 11 minutes devoted to social media. This higher-than-average exposure highlights the potential of social media as a platform for spreading discourse, including through electronic zines (e-zines). E-zines, which are no longer confined to print form, make critical discourse more widely accessible in time and space.

The proliferation of the internet has caused a shift in literary practices (Wright, 2001). Underground literary communities, including zine enthusiasts, use digital platforms to seek new and obscure works. Readers benefit from the diverse knowledge contained in zines, while activists gain the ability to disseminate content more broadly. Wright (2001) contends that the internet provides a platform for widespread zine dissemination, thus amplifying voices from the margins, and enabling e-zines to compete with mainstream e-magazines.

This article argues that e-zines facilitate the practices of archiving and the dissemination of specialist knowledge. Putra (2023) links zines to anarchism in Indonesia, noting how anarchist networks from abroad were adopted by local punk communities and developed into social movements. Tong (2020) demonstrates how zines functioned as tools for spreading critical knowledge during the Umbrella Movement in Hong Kong, effectively eluding state monitoring. Similarly, Watson and Bennett (2021) highlight the experiential dimensions of zine readership, showing how zines engage and resonate with various audiences.

What distinguishes this study from prior work is its focus on Indonesia, where the digital archiving of zines has emerged as a significant phenomenon (Putra, 2023; Tong, 2020; Zufar & Airlangga, 2021). This research explores how archived e-zines facilitate the dissemination of critical knowledge and extend the reach of counter-hegemonic discourses. In doing so, it employs Michel Foucault's theory of subject and power (Castro-Gómez et al., 2023; Foucault, 1982, 2008, 2010, 2012; Gordon, 1980; Portschy, 2020), which conceptualizes knowledge and power as omnipresent, mutually determining, and embedded in discourse. This theoretical perspective stimulates an examination of how zines operate simultaneously as a subject, when circulating discourses of resistance, and as power, when those discourses are received as truth by readers. Additionally, this study incorporates AI tools to analyze zine content, which themselves may be understood as a new form of subject and power, alongside the researcher and the state. Given the rarity of such studies in Indonesia, this research seeks to fill a critical gap by examining digital archiving, AI-assisted analysis, and the novel proliferation of zines in the digital era.

Method

This article employs a mixed-method approach (Clark et al., 2021; Creamer, 2023; Creswell, 2021; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011), integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The quantitative stage was used to determine the sample, while the qualitative stage was employed to conduct a more in-depth analysis of the selected data.

The data sources for this study was a digital zine database compiled from the Twitter (X) account @meme_posser, which contained 568 zine titles. Given the large population size, Slovin's formula was applied to calculate a representative sample,

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

$$N = 568$$

$$e = 0{,}1$$

$$n = \frac{568}{1 + 568\,(0{,}1\ x\ 0{,}1)}$$

$$n = \frac{568}{1 + (568\ x\ 0{,}01)}$$

$$n = \frac{568}{1 + 5{,}68}$$

$$n = \frac{568}{6{,}68}$$

$$n = 85{,}03$$

$$n = 85$$

Figure 1. Slovin's Formula applied

Source: Provided by the researchers (2024).

resulting in 85 zine samples (rounded from 85,3) (see Figure 1). To refine the selection, purposive sampling was used. Purposive sampling allows data to be chosen according to predetermined criteria (Clark et al., 2021; Creswell, 2021; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). In this case, the criteria required zines to contain resistance or critical discourses.

Once the sample was determined, Artificial Intelligence (AI) was employed to assist in data processing. AI was integrated as a tool to develop a novel methodological approach, given its ability to detect patterns, themes, and relationships that may be less apparent when using conventional methods (Chubb et al., 2022; Ekundayo et al., 2024; Rossi et al., 2024). The AI-assisted procedure began training the model to function as a critical reader, after which zines were randomly assigned until 85 valid samples were confirmed. The AI then generated preliminary previews of the selected zines, which were reviewed to ensure conformity with the selection criteria. Validated samples were re-analyzed to confirm the accuracy of their summaries, and the final summaries were subsequently narrated through a narrative approach.

The qualitative stage of the study employed narrative research, which is intended to capture stories and subjective perspectives embedded in the data (Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2002). An analysis was conducted using this approach, focused on identifying resistance or critical discourses expressed in the zines, many of which articulate counter-hegemonic and explicitly political perspectives on social and cultural phenomena.

To ensure credibility and validity, this study adopted Hirsch's (1967) concept of self-confirmability as a data validation strategy. Confirmability testing functions as a measure of objectivity, verifying that the results are grounded in the research process rather than in researcher's bias. In practice, the process began with a critical review of the AI-generated readings, followed by interpretive analysis conducted by researchers. Findings are considered valid

if they can be traced and justified through the methodological procedures employed (Mamik, 2015).

Results and Discussion

The AI-assisted reading of zines

The process of using AI to read zines proved both promising and problematic. Before any analysis could occur, the AI had to be trained to recognise and interpret zine content. At a basic level, it needed to detect whether a zine contained critical or resistance discourse, either explicitly or implicitly. However, not all files could be processed successfully. Technical limitations often prevented the AI from interpreting material comprehensively.

Two recurring issues emerged. First, some zines were flagged as "contentless." This was largely due to poor file quality or the AI's inability to recognize images embedded in PDF files. Applying Optical Character Recognition (OCR) partially mitigated this issue by converting images into machine-readable text. Without OCR, the AI frequently generated empty or fragmented responses (see Figures 2 and 3). Second, the AI occasionally misinterpreted content. For example, when attempting to interpret the contents of *Akar Rumput* [Grassroots] Zine, the system produced four different editions even though only three existed. It also framed the zine as a socio-political critique, although the content focused exclusively on football culture, particularly *Persib Bandung* supporters, but did not contain inherently political discourses

These cases highlight AI's interpretive inconsistencies. At times, it analyzed each edition of a zine separately; at other times, it summarized multiple editions into a

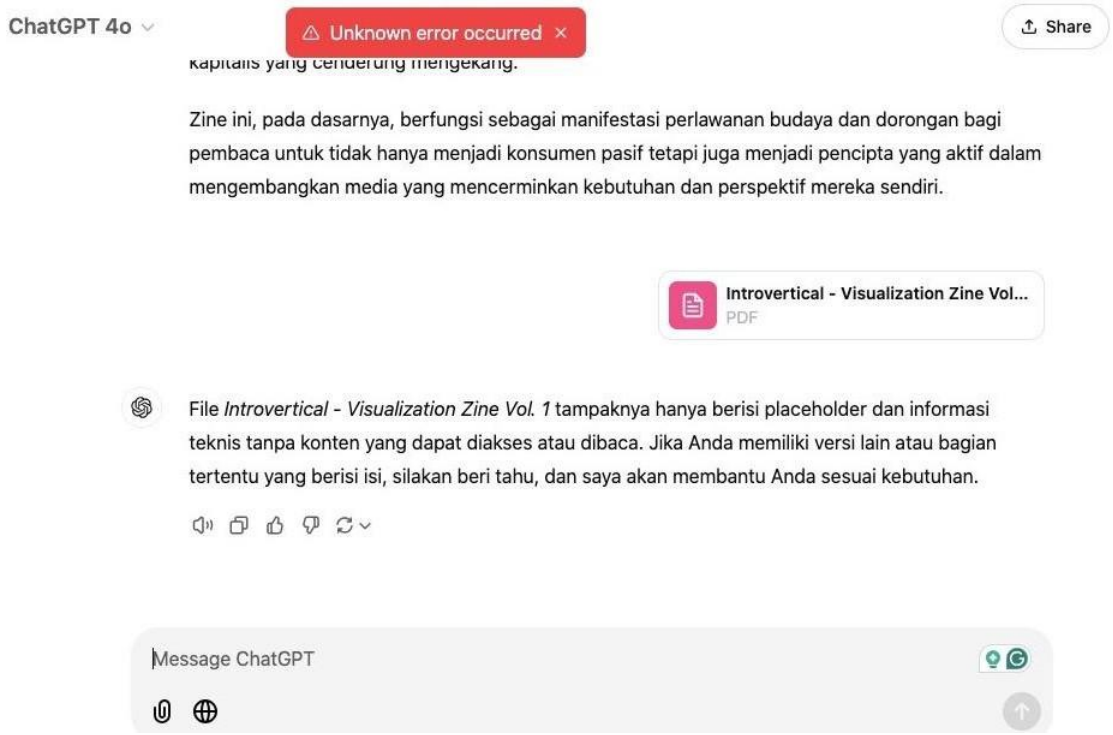


Figure 2. Error encountered during file upload process

Source: Provided by the researchers (2024).

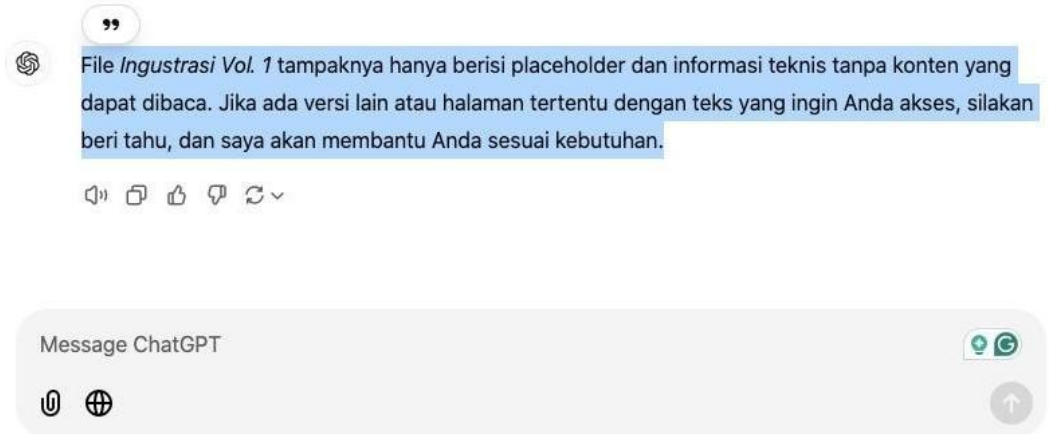


Figure 3. Example of a zine file unreadable by AI

Source: Provided by the researchers (2024).

general overview. While such variability demonstrates the adaptive nature of AI, it also underscores the need for human oversight. The researcher's role becomes crucial in verifying AI outputs, correcting misreadings, and refining interpretations. Ultimately, the process revealed that AI is more than just a passive tool: it actively shaped knowledge production, thus penetrating the web of subject–power relations.

The AI reading aggregation

Despite its limitations and occasional errors, AI proved capable of reading and articulating the zines collected from the Twitter account @meme_posser. Way (2024), for instance, examines the zine-making process through the experiences of an aging group of punk women, exploring how they conceptualize punk. By situating her analysis within core punk values such as DIY ethics, community, subversion, and political awareness, she reflects critically on both the methodology and the challenges of using zine-making as a research method. Drawing on this perspective, the present study adopts the concept of subversion as a framework for identifying resistance discourse within both the zines and AI's interpretive process.

AI can be applied in diverse contexts to automate tasks, but it is essential to recognize that "AI" encompasses a wide range of approaches, techniques, and commands, each dependent on the type of task being performed (Köbis et al., 2022). Commands, in particular, serve as crucial instruments in shaping knowledge production through data processing and analysis. From the AI reading process in this study, the researchers assigned the narrative results to three primary categories: socio-cultural, socio-political, and socio-economic. However, because many zines spanned multiple themes, a fourth category–mixed–was added to accommodate more complex or hybridized content.

AI reading algorithms contain a degree of autonomy in processing and interpreting data (Hofkirchner, 2021). While this autonomy demonstrates AI's evolving capabilities, it also renders technology vulnerable to potential misuse for specific interests. To address this concern, the researchers reassessed AI-generated outputs to ensure coherence with human interpretation and to verify the aggregation of results.

The zines analyzed in this study combine text and visuals to convey ideas through poetry, opinion essays, criticism,

reflections, and expressions of both past and future grievances. These works blend artistic expression with critical thought, using imagery, typography, and distinctive layouts to create a visually stimulating experience that invites readers to think beyond conventional boundaries. Across the aggregated dataset, the themes consistently revolve around self-liberation and the re-evaluation of global, national, regional, and local realities shaped by chaos, instability, and uncertainty.

Within the socio-cultural category, zines focus on art, culture, and social critique. They include poetry, opinions, illustrated stories, and reflective essays that explicitly address struggles against hierarchy and domination—both social and personal. A significant number also explore subcultures and music genres such as hardcore, punk, metal, and emo, tracing their evolution and influence. Many writers adopt a stance of resistance against capitalist cultural systems, advocating for more authentic modes of living beyond the logic of individual accumulation.

The socio-political category comprises zines that call on readers to resist repressive social orders and reclaim individual autonomy. These texts address a wide range of social and political issues, from critiques of imperialism to calls for solidarity with marginalized groups. They also criticize the commodification of everyday life, including public spaces and daily routines, which they portray as monotonous and alienating. Several zines highlight the anarchist movement in Indonesia, describing its challenges and practices, including protest tactics, acts of sabotage, and the distribution of radical literature. Others emphasize small-scale resistance strategies, such as challenges to hierarchical structures in the education system.

The socio-economic category includes zines that encourage reflection on the conditions of modern life, present critiques of capitalism, and explore labor exploitation. Some also document past student demonstrations in Indonesia, offering both historical reflection and inspiration for ongoing resistance.

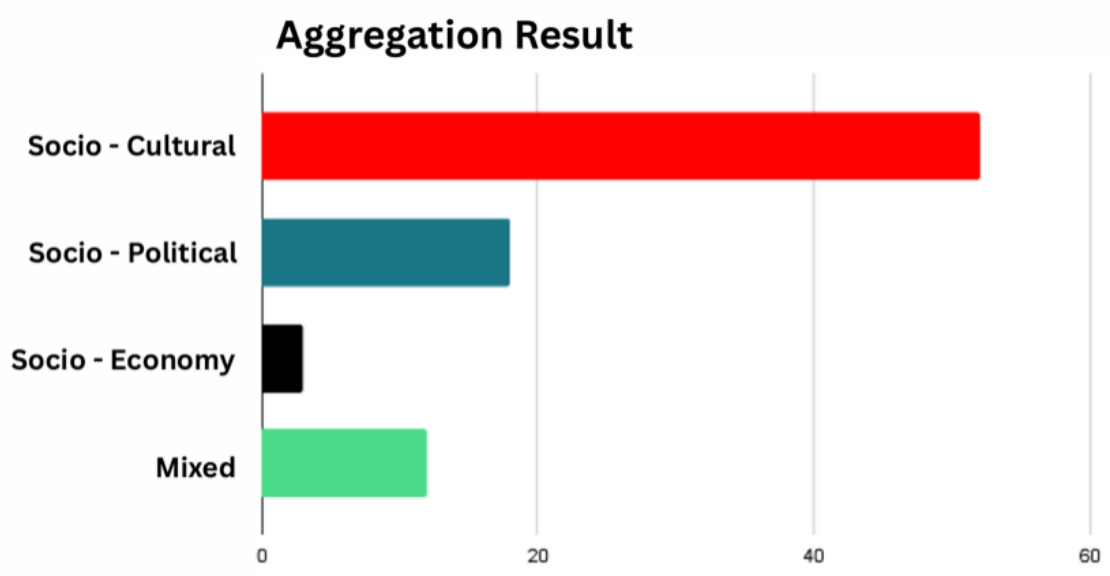


Figure 4. Aggregated dataset of 85 zines

Source: Author's elaboration based on research data (2024).

As noted previously, there is significant thematic cross-over between the cultural, political, and economic categories, as they are all socially embedded in one another. Zines reflect this entanglement through their critical commentary, which extends from subtle modes of anti-conformist expression to explicit support for activist resistance.

Zines, AI, and the dynamics of subject–power relations

In Foucault's framework, subject and power are inseparable. His approach operates across both socio-ontological and epistemological dimensions, influencing disciplines from the social sciences to the natural sciences (Castro-Gómez et al., 2023; Harcourt, 2021; Lee & Wei, 2020; Manca, 2024; Portschy, 2020; Schubert, 2020). His work provides a distinctive and useful lens for interpreting social phenomena.

Foucault's approach builds on the fundamental ontological concepts of Descartes and Kant. He engages with both their questions and answers about what constitutes a subject. Borrowing from Descartes, the "I" (self) is understood as both unique and universal, yet essentially ahistorical, applicable to anyone, anywhere, at any time, as long as the act of thinking defines the self. By contrast, Kant's conception of the subject is situated within a precise historical framework. Building on this distinction, Foucault (1982) not only reassesses the concept of the subject but also redefines philosophy itself as a critical analysis of the world. This involves problematizing the notion of time and questioning who we are within each historical moment.

Unlike his predecessors, Foucault resists placing the subject at a fixed starting or endpoint. Instead, he emphasizes the necessity of both macro and micro level

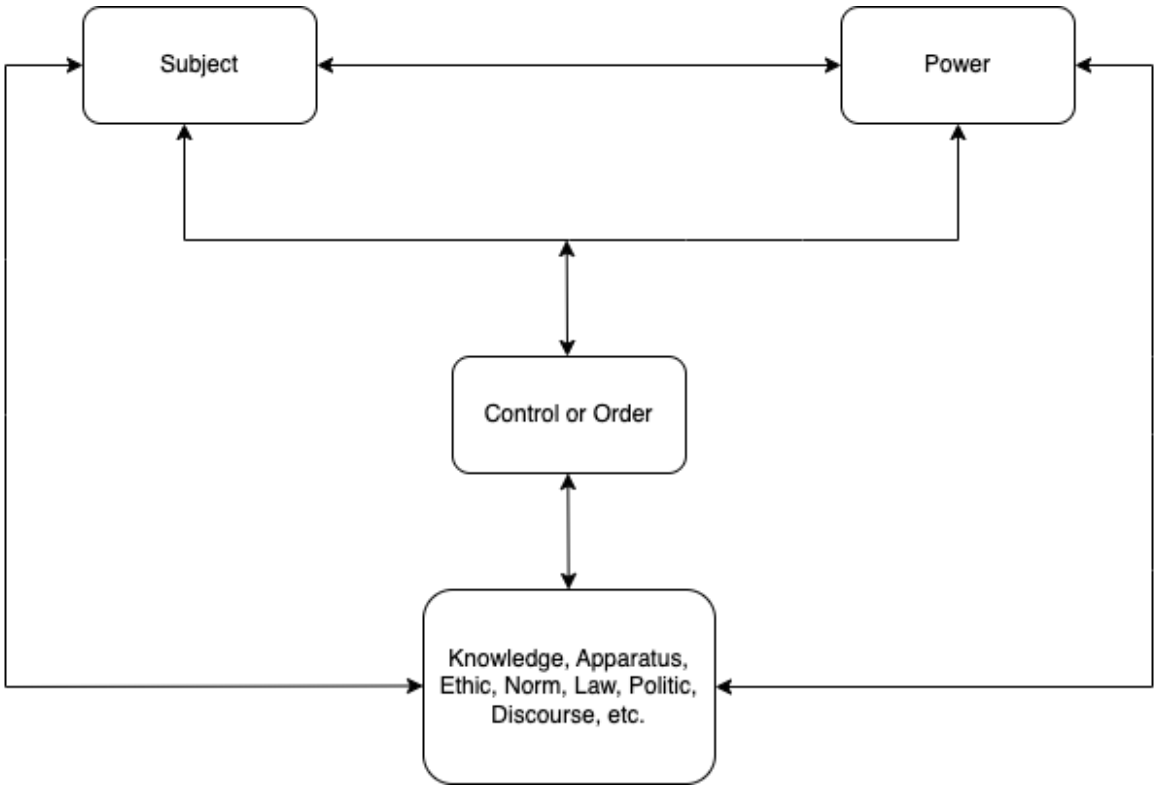


Figure 5. Aphorism illustrates subject and power
Source: Provided by the researchers (2024).

perspectives (Foucault, 1982; Gordon, 1980). He alsocautions against isolating phenomena, noting that knowledge production has long fragmented the subject—either from itself or others.

Fragmentation results in a process of objectification (Foucault, 1982). For example, dichotomies are instilled between the insane and the sane, the sick and the healthy, the immoral and the moral. Yet such binaries cannot be neatly separated, as they remain inherently relational—each domain exists in constant interplay with its internal entities. Foucault illustrates this through the domain of sexuality, where humans come to recognize themselves as subjects of sexuality. At this stage, the discussion identifies what the subject is, without yet addressing the question of power. Importantly, Foucault (1982) expands the category of the subject beyond human beings to include any entity capable of producing or being situated within networks of relations, production, or signification. This analysis provides an opportunity to broaden and redefine subjectivity itself.

The matter of power required further problematization. Foucault (1982) recounts being struck by a journalist's question: "Why has the concept of power emerged as a central concern today?" His response was to move away from traditional approaches that understood power either through legal frameworks ("What legitimizes power?") or institutional forms ("What is the state?"). For Foucault, these failed to capture the complex lived realities of power.

Foucault emphasized the antagonistic nature of power relations, which continuously generates binary oppositions within social structures. He interrogated (il) legality, gender, kinship, methods of control, medicine, and bureaucracy, thus revealing that power is not concentrated but dispersed, operating in capillary-like ways through the fabric of society (Gordon, 1980). Crucially, there can be no subject without power, and no power without subjects. As Foucault (Foucault, 1982) observes:

> *"Forms of power in everyday life categorize individuals, mark them with their individuality, attach them to an identity, and impose a law of truth upon them—one that they and others must recognize. This is the form of power that turns individuals into subjects. The term 'subject' has two meanings: being subjected to others through control and dependence; and being bound to one's identity by belief or knowledge. Both meanings indicate a form of power that subjugates and makes subject."*

Subject and power must always be understood as mutually constitutive. Figure 5 visualizes this relationship; arrows connect each box to illustrate how control, order, knowledge, and discourse function simultaneously as subject and power. The diagram should not be read linearly from top, bottom, or center, but aphoristically, which means recognizing the interconnectedness of all components.

As such, zines should be understood as challenging dominant power relations by positioning themselves as a counterpoint within binary structures. They disrupt dominant discourses by providing counter-narratives (Bennett, 2022). Yet, as Foucault (1982) explains, knowledge itself yields to pre-established power structures. The inclusion of AI further complicates this dynamic. AI emerges as a subject that produces power–particularly in its reading and articulation of zines–while researchers, in turn, contest AI's interpretive authority. Thus, multiple forms of subject–power relations coexist simultaneously, the zine as text, AI as reader, mainstream knowledge as object of critique, and the researcher as interpreter.

Omnipresence, omnipotence, and omniscience of subject and power

Omniscience not only shapes the world and its realities but also establishes rules of engagement, determining both the game and its players. At the intersection of power, knowledge and presence, the productivity of data-driven technologies becomes visible. Digital technologies generate tangible realities through their interpretation of data, code, and algorithms embedded within social and cultural relations (Ahmad et al., 2021; Akmal & Coulton, 2018; Berry, 2011; Presner, 2010; Swara et al., 2023; Zufar & Airlangga, 2021; Zufar & Sari, 2021). This study's investigation of zines in the digital era highlights the emergence of new entities that embody both subjectivity and power in unprecedented ways. Among them is AI, which began to take recognizable form around 2019, though its origins can be traced back to the 1950s (Crawford, 2021).

Foucault (1982) reminds us that power is diffuse, pervasive, and embedded in all social interactions. This condition reflects the omnipresence of subject and power. Power does not simply exist as a static force but is continuously produced through every social relation. It originates everywhere; not because it dominates everything, but because it is inherently omnipresent. Building on this, the present study highlights how AI, zines, and researchers' interpretations intersect as forms of subject and power, manifesting what Hirsch (1967) terms self-confirmability: the embodiment of power through knowledge.

Zines exemplify this dynamic. Produced by both collectives and individuals, zines serve as tools for transmitting information through textual and visual forms—thus embodying the power of their authors. As a form of alternative media, they disseminate knowledge that is not circulated through mainstream channels. The strength of zines lies in their informality; use of accessible vernacular language, irregular publication schedules, small print formats, and simple layouts that privilege content over form (Wright, 2001). These features make zines popular among grassroots activists, alternative subcultures, political advocates, and other individuals living on social margins.

A plethora of zine subgenres exists, covering a wide array of social, economic, political, cultural, and global issues, as well as personal interests. Prior to digitization, a limited run of printed paper zines would be distributed and circulated among niche spaces, reaching target audiences ranging from underground activists to art enthusiasts. According to Foucault (1982), for any phenomenon to materialize as both subject and power, four conditions must be met; first, it must be recognized as existing; second, it must establish a plan or strategy–what he terms an apparatus; third, it must be perceived as legitimate by others; and fourth, it must be reiterated continuously within social relations. Zines fulfil these conditions through their editors, contributors, illustrators, and designers, all of whom constitute apparatuses that construct subjectivity and extend power outward.

Through this apparatus, the knowledge disseminated by zines acquires omnipotence and omniscience, while their independent circulation makes their omnipresence visible. In this sense, zines empower individuals–regardless of their background and available resources–to create knowledge and exercise power. Embedded in DIY ethos, zines pose a challenge to established power, promoting critical thinking and discourses of resistance against exploitative, capitalist systems (Castells, 2004).

Parallel to this, AI has become increasingly integrated into everyday life, offering the capacity to process vast datasets with remarkable speed. Yet, AI remains

limited by its inability to grasp emotion, context, or subjective experience. It functions only through commands, and its knowledge derives exclusively from available digital resources, making it vulnerable to error and distortion. This duality raises a central question; if knowledge is power and power is knowledge, can AI itself become both subject and power simultaneously through its engagement with resistance discourses?

This question guided the researchers' use of AI in analyzing 85 zines. The categorization process revealed that 52 zines addressed socio-cultural themes, 3 zines focused on socio-economic issues, 18 zines discussed socio-political concerns, and 12 zines spanned a combination of all three themes. For example, AI interpreted the content of Aksara Merdeka [Freedom Letter] as a discourse of resistance against oppressive social structures. According to AI, the zine critiques capitalism, globalization, and technological control. While AI found that the zine strongly promoted the themes of political resistance, the researchers' interpretation emphasized environmental concerns and urbanization issues, revealing the technology's blind spots.

Such discrepancies highlight a critical point: readers encounter multiple interpretations—the AI's, the researchers', and potentially their own. Each interpretation constitutes a distinct subjectivity and a locus of power. Recognition of these divergent readings affirms Foucault's vision of power as omnipresent in social interactions.

Further examples underscore the limitations of AI. *Dewan Pengangguran Revolusioner* [Revolutionary Unemployment Council], a socio-economic zine advocating workers' rights, was accurately read by both AI and researchers as a sharp critique of exploitation and poor labor conditions. By contrast, Adolescents Vol. 1, produced by students of Mercu Buana University, revealed AI's inability to narrate visual-heavy content. It overlooked mentions of the band *Pancaras* and failed to capture the

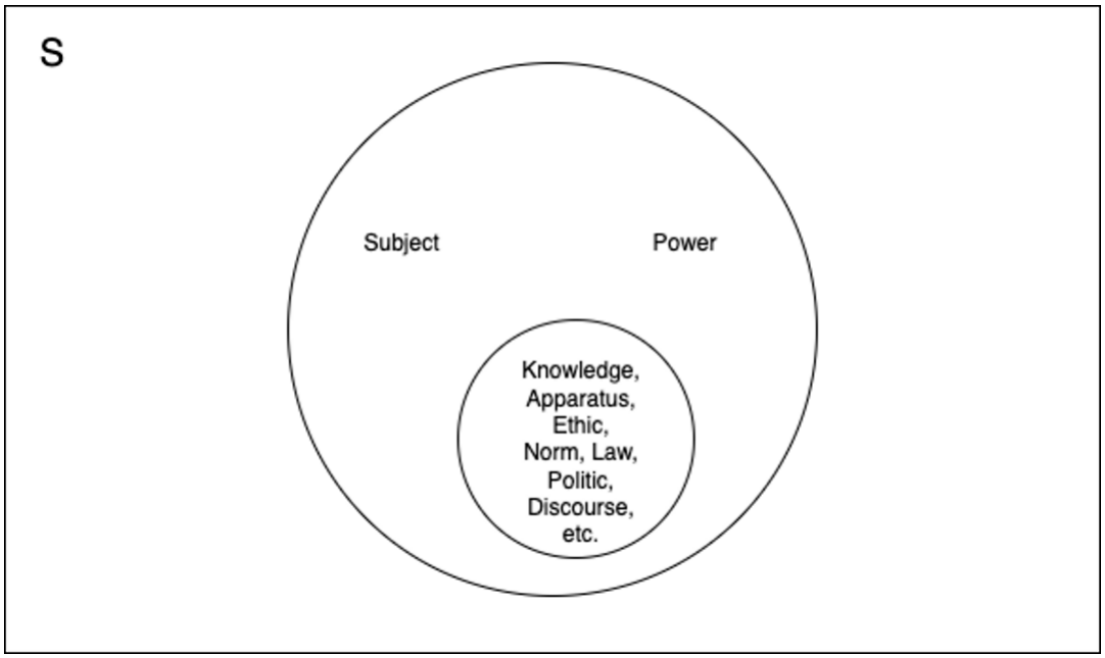


Figure 6. The components of the omnipresence, omnipotence, and omniscience of subject and power

Source: Developed by the authors from primary data (2024).

zine's strong emphasis on music, reducing its reading to themes of adolescent identity. Similarly, in Above Vol. 1, focused on the hardcore punk subculture, AI misidentified interviews that did not exist and recognized only one contributor while ignoring others. These cases confirm that AI struggles with media wherein layout, imagery, and aesthetics are integral to the construction of meaning.

Across the dataset, AI's readings reduced many values and entities, producing accounts that were often inaccurate and lacking nuance. Nevertheless, it was effective in creating a new form of knowledge—and thus a new form of power. Power, as Foucault (2010) argues, does not originate externally but emerges from relationships, structures, and discursive practices. Knowledge itself is a product of power. In this study, AI functions as a subject that reshapes resistance discourses, yet its authority remains contested by researchers and readers alike.

Figure 6 illustrates this dynamic. If "S" represents the realm, the two circles within it can be understood as society. Within society, interactions give rise to social and power relations, which in turn generate knowledge, ethics, norms, laws, politics, apparatuses, and discourses. Every individual–even sub-individual (Gordon, 1980)–thus has the potential to become both subject and power. Sub-individual refers to Niedsche's discussion regarding Herkunft. Perlman (2025) argues that Foucault's concept of the sub-individual encompasses the various factors that construct an individual's identity or personality. For example, the labeling of foreigners as bule illustrates how social recognition operates discursively. In this sense, the broader discourse surrounding the recognition of the bule constitutes a form of the sub-individual.

When entities such as zines, AI, researchers, or states occupy this social space, they too generate relationships of power, which continuously interact with one another and enable new forms of knowledge, ethics, norms, laws, politics, apparatuses, and discourses. Over time, these interactions produce new subjects and new forms of power. This recursive process validates Foucault's claim: subject and power are inseparable, characterized by their omnipresence, omnipotence, and omniscience, and perpetually entangled in antagonistic relations.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that zines are not merely forms of alternative media but active sites of cultural production and knowledge generation where subjectivity and power are continuously produced and contested. Through both human and AI interpretation, zines emerge as dynamic entities that generate counter-discourses, shape perceptions, and challenge dominant narratives. While AI lacks will, emotion, and genuine social interaction, it nevertheless functions as a form of subject and power by producing knowledge in response to commands. This interplay between zines, AI, and human readers highlights the multiplicity of power relations in the digital age, extending Foucault's notions of omnipresence, omnipotence, and omniscience into contemporary contexts.

The novelty of this research lies in bringing together critical discourse analysis, zine culture, and AI-assisted reading. By juxtaposing AI interpretations with human analysis, this study not only exposes the limitations of algorithmic reading but also demonstrates how AI itself becomes entangled in the production of subjectivity and power. This methodological contribution offers a new lens for examining resistance discourses, particularly as digital tools increasingly mediate knowledge production.

Nonetheless, this study has several limitations. First, the use of AI for zine interpretation remains constrained by technology's inability to fully capture visual nuance, emotional tone, and contextual meaning. Second, the scope of analysis was limited to 85 zines drawn from a specific digital archive based in Indonesia, which may not represent the broader diversity of zine cultures. Third, the study focused primarily on researcher and AI interpretations, leaving out other important actors, such as archivists, artists and media practitioners, activists' communities, and zine consumers who likewise shape discourses of resistance.

Future research could address these limitations by expanding the range of zine archives examined, including fieldwork with producers and readers, and testing newer AI models to evaluate how technological advances reshape interpretive possibilities. Further inquiries might also explore how the state, institutions, or digital platforms function as subjects and power in relation to zines, and how readers' engagements translate into concrete practices of resistance. In this way, the study opens a path for more comprehensive investigations into the evolving dynamics of knowledge, subjectivity, and power in both physical and digital spheres.

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Declaration of Ownership

This article is our original work.

Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest to declare in this article.

Ethical Clearance

This study was approved by the institution.

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