

**Original Project:** *print and the relational aesthetic*

**Original Intent**

My original intentions with this project were to navigate the terrain of environmental art making. I wanted to investigate what it would be like to make things while conscious of the potential toxicity of my materials. Furthermore I set out to explore a relational aesthetic, in attempts to avoid a solely self-interested and solipsist methodology of art making. The final aspect of my original proposal involved a continued exploration of the book. How might the book be used to navigate the content I am interested in making work about?

**Process**

*Summer*

During this past Summer (2015), I was able to participate in the course Intermediate Printmaking with Dean Dass. It was critical that I was able to work in the studio this past summer. I was able to expand my technical printmaking skills with not as many students around, therefore providing a more intimate working space. I was able to hone in on my bookbinding skills, as well as learn how to use the large inkjet printer. My final project was a narrative zine entitled *Fri-Sun* that told the story of a three day period. In it, I incorporate hand laminated paper printed with the inkjet printer. I also was able to develop a more articulate artistic vocabulary for navigating the book. Also during this time is when I realized that my interest in ‘environmentally-friendly’ print practice was more an aversion to exposure to the chemical materials in printmaking. A Xerox is not necessarily more or less good for the environment. For example, the production of a Xerox machine probably involves some sort of harm to the environment. It is not that I wanted to find the most environmentally conscious way of making art but rather I did not personally want to expose myself to oily and sometimes toxic inks and solvent soaked rags.

During this time is when I began further research into the history of the zine and its current historical position in society.

*Fall/Winter*

This past Fall and Winter I was busy writing and developing my thesis for my Distinguished Major in Printmaking. Since the summer course, I had found that I what I really enjoyed making were zines and books. The book offers a direct intimacy with a viewer or reader that I value. So I continued to make a new zine, producing a few each month. By now, I have produced nearly eighteen different zines and small books that will be in my thesis show in April, titled “somewhere/elsewhere”.

This grant has allowed me to be more experimental. Because of the money I was granted, I was able to order copious amounts of different high-quality archival paper to make larger editions of my zines, in edition sizes of 50.

### **Project Outcome**

My project this year has gone well. Although I have deviated a fair amount from my original intentions of creating a relational aesthetic, I have been able to wholeheartedly pursue an intense investigation of the zine. While my ideas about what a relational aesthetic were broad and sweepingly idealistic, I think what I sought after with a relational aesthetic was an attention to community. And by quoting the zine as genre, I think I have touched on this concept.

In February I was able to complete a collaborative zine project called *Losers Aren't Lost*, where I posted flyers around town calling for submissions. I was able to open a PO Box to receive these submissions, and in turn could produce an edition of 25 and give the copies to participants.

Finally, I have editioned about eighteen different zines, in varying edition sizes. And have built bookshelves and furniture for my thesis exhibition this April. Not only have I been able to experiment extensively, I have learned a lot along the way. I am thankful to all of the supporters of the Miller Arts Scholars program, with a special thanks to Sandy and Vinie Miller and Evie and Stephen Colbert.

### **Images from Ruffin Gallery Install “somewhere/elsewhere”**



