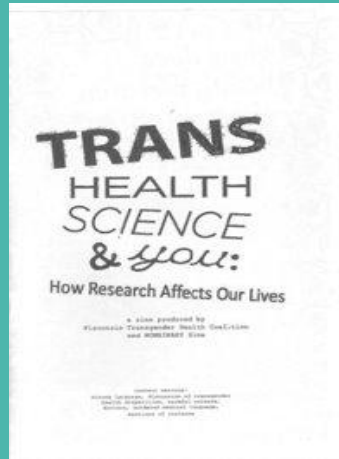

Applying Critical Pedagogy and Zines in Library Instruction to Support Student Wellness

María Evelia Emerson
Student Success Librarian
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
memersn2@illinois.edu

- Short for fanzine, which was a combination of fan magazine
- Zines are self-published, DIY creations
- Zines are often traded or sold cheaply and produced in small-runs
- Not created to make a profit

What are zines?



- Creativity is healing
- Creates a safe space
- Forms a community
- There is basically no wrong way to make or engage with a zine
- Can provide vital information that is missing from the mainstream media and publications
- Creates a sense of control

The Purpose of Zines

"Stories differ from advice in that, once you get them, they become a fabric of your whole soul. That is why they heal you."

-Alice Walker

Zines in the Library

Social Justice Zine Collection

- Mainly perzines (personal zines), as well as political, about social justice topics
- Circulating to encourage student engagement with library
- Goals of collection
 - Promote student well-being
 - Fill gaps in library collection
 - Use collection in and out of the classroom

Zine Cart in Main Library

- Free for students to use while in the space
- Make a zine, take a zine box

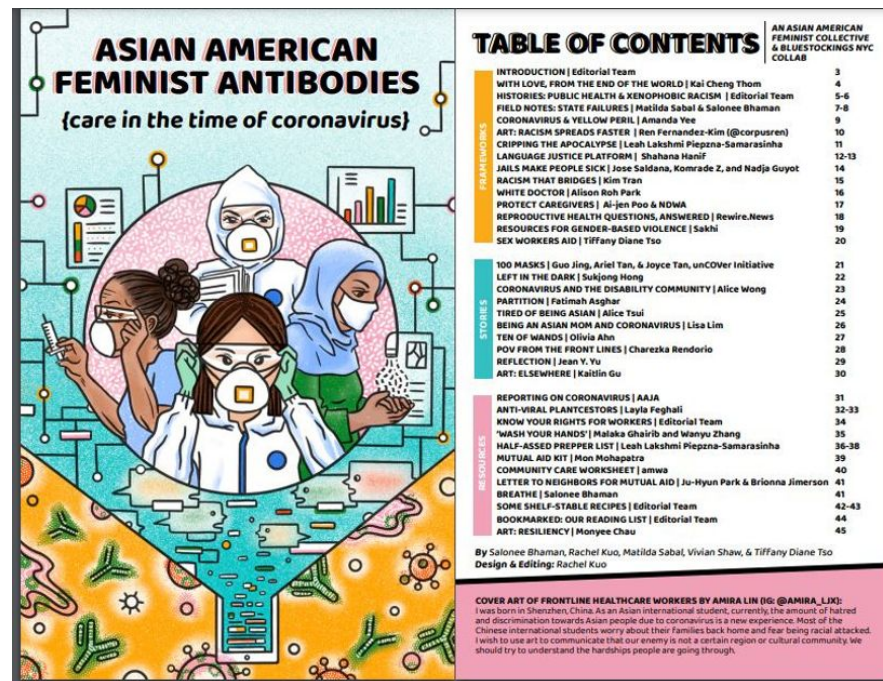


Zines and Student Wellness through Instruction

- Validates student experiences and knowledge
- Creative outlet, which can lead to healing
- Builds community
- Encourages critical thinking about the relationship between research and power structures
- Zines are more accessible to many students, and helps them feel more comfortable engaging with library materials

Student Wellness Zine Program Example

- COVID Artifact Zine
- Reflection opportunity for past 5 years since the pandemic
- Low-key tabling events for the campus community
- High participation



Bhaman, Salonee; Kuo, Rachel; Sabal, Matilda; Shaw, Vivian; and Tso, Tiffany Diane,
"Asian American Feminist Antibodies: Care in the Time of Coronavirus" (2020).
Cross-Cutting Analyses. 9.

Future Directions

- Expanding collection to other libraries
- Expanding in more Rhetoric classes
- Make zines easier to find in the collection
- Continue zine workshops and classroom lessons
- Zines are always important-but especially right now



Discussion Prompts

Have any of your institutions integrated zines into student wellness programming, and what outcomes or feedback have you observed?

The freedom of zines can be overwhelming to some students. How can academic libraries support these students without limiting expression?

What challenges arise
when balancing
advocacy, activism, and
emotional labor in zine
programming tied to
wellness?

What are some best practices for preserving and sharing zines that may contain vulnerable or activist content?

In what ways have you
seen zine in the
classroom or programs
foster a sense of agency,
empowerment, or healing
for students?