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Teaching for social change: introducing 'scrapbooking' as a pedagogic approach towards ending gender-based violence

Article

Accepted Version

Walling-Wefelmeyer, R. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0009-0004-8609-8375, Johnson, K., Westmarland, N., Dhir, A. and Lyons Sumroy, A. (2023) Teaching for social change: introducing 'scrapbooking' as a pedagogic approach towards ending gender-based violence. Journal of Gender-Based Violence, 7 (1). pp. 128-145. ISSN 2398-6808 doi: 10.1332/239868021X16661126604534 Available at https://centaur.reading.ac.uk/114114/

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To link to this article DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.1332/239868021X16661126604534

Publisher: Policy Press

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Title:

Teaching for social change: Introducing 'scrapbooking' as a pedagogic approach towards ending gender-based violence

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Abstract:
This paper introduces and evaluates 'scrapbooking' as a critical pedagogic approach to gender-based violence (GBV). This approach is inspired by the rapid development of conceptual and methodological tools for researching violence and abuse and the need for their translation into transformative teaching. Drawing on a feminist methodology of 'research conversations', but original in its development of 'pedagogic conversations', this research advocates further empirical attention to GBV teaching and presents its own four 'lessons learnt' from experimenting with scrapbooking. Scrapbooking is argued to facilitate not only the translation of gender-based violence research into teaching, but also affective and embodied consciousness-raising and continuum-thinking in both students and tutors.

Key words/short phrases:
pedagogy, education, scrapbooking, gender-based violence, transformative learning

Word count:
8423

Key Messages

1. This paper calls for more research on the teaching of gender-based violence, and it outlines a research methodology of 'pedagogic conversations' with which to productively begin.

2. A pedagogic approach of 'scrapbooking' – a process here of engaging reflectively with violence and of identifying, collating and annotating 'scraps' on the subject – is found to aid in addressing gender-based violence.

3. With the right structure and support, scrapbooking facilitates continuum-thinking and the in-depth analysis of sometimes quite unexpected materials, allowing students and tutors to connect up everyday ideas and experiences of violence across spaces.

Introduction

Transformative pedagogies rooted in everyday life and dedicated to social change are critical for addressing gender-based violence (GBV). This article outlines and evaluates the use of scrapbooking as one such pedagogy, drawing on its application as a modular learning and assessment tool in a UK university undergraduate programme. This pedagogy is inspired by the rapid development of conceptual and methodological tools for researching violence and abuse and the need for their translation into teaching. In this paper we[1] take up this task of translation and explore how adopting and experimenting with critical pedagogic praxis can not only support teaching as a 'practice of freedom' (hooks, 1994) but can also advance the field of GBV and integrate it into broader studies of interpersonal violence and the wider social sciences

Certainly, GBV educators can contribute much to perennial debates on how best to support qualitative shifts in learners' perceptions of and engagements with the world. This research reflects the broader movement of the discipline of transformative learning away from modernist divisions of mind/body and reason/emotion (see Lange, 2015 for a history) and towards a praxis that is relational, affective and embodied (see, for example, Formenti and Jorio, 2019; Lange, 2018). Moreover, this paper evidences the argument that creative multi-modal learning aids distinct transformations in students' understanding (Wandera, 2016). It also supports the argument that student engagement with varied sources of information -

for example, DIY and other self-made publications (Capous Desyllas and Sinclair, 2014) - offers them critical opportunities to deconstruct power hierarchies.

However, this paper is particularly unique in advocating a scrapbooking approach that not only facilitates the critical integration of varied information sources and artistic mediums, but that also platforms students' own scrapbooks as themselves important publications or 'socially active texts'. This practice is critical for valuing students' own creativity and experiences of gendered violence.

Scrapbooking pedagogically, in the form here of a scrapbook and accompanying reflective essay, aims to facilitate the affective and transformative 'click' (Firth and Robinson, 2016) or 'snap' (Ahmed, 2017) key to consciousness-raising. Through identifying, collating and connecting 'scraps' – experiences and discourses of violence and abuse manifest in everyday phenomena – students snap into the 'continuum-thinking' (Boyle 2018) necessary for critical analysis of gendered violence and social change. Here, students situate the specificity of each scrap in relation to each other and to critical literature, as well as to their own affective responses and those of their peers, tutors and wider networks. As such, this paper has much to offer readers concerned with positional and power differentials between not only tutors and students but also between students of differing backgrounds. In fact, we argue that a pedagogic approach which harnesses fun and creativity as much as discomfort and conflict is one through which not only the 'oppressed' (Freire, 2005) but also perhaps the 'oppressing' might feel transformed. We open this paper with the design of this pedagogical approach and then the methods of its evaluation. Finally, we present the findings from its empirical assessment as four 'lessons learnt'.

Our Pedagogic Approach: Integrating and Advancing the Field[2] of GBV

Despite a long and contentious history of marginalization within the broader social sciences (see e.g., Walby 2012), research on interpersonal and gender-based violence has expanded and revolutionised rapidly, advancing such critical tools as naming praxis, gendered and intersectional analysis, and everyday and continuum-thinking. However, Downes, Kelly and Westmarland (2014) suggest that the labelling of violence and abuse as an inherently 'sensitive' subject concerning 'vulnerable' people has led to additional obstacles for UK researchers seeking ethical approval. A similar process can be said to have shaped the teaching (or rather the lack of teaching) on interpersonal violence and abuse in undergraduate curricula. Until recently, it has often been dismissed as too 'niche' or 'distressing' a subject to run an undergraduate module on in the UK and, at the time of writing, we know of just two UK universities running dedicated undergraduate modules on the topic. Researchers and educators have an exciting opportunity therefore to challenge this thinking and to consider how the sharp increase in national and international awareness about violence and abuse might shape the ways in which we teach or *start* to teach the subject. In this paper we propose an approach to teaching about GBV which draws debates within the areas of transformative and affective learning together with innovations in GBV research.

In developing a new module called 'Sociological Approaches to Violence and Abuse' we chose as the assessment method an annotated scrapbook and accompanying reflective essay. Students were tasked with exploring how a particular form of violence and abuse is regarded and constituted in their everyday lives, in, for example, conversations, social media streams, the news, film and fiction. Students chose topics that were broadly linked to the course content, such as coercive control, sexual assault on campus, and men's experiences of domestic abuse. Over the nine-month course, students were supported in

finding, collating and annotating everyday 'scraps' of information, organising them thematically and connecting and critically analysing each scrap in relation to relevant literature.

We had several motivations for this particular approach. Firstly, we were concerned with how power is reproduced through the 'banking' conceptualisation of knowledge as something to be 'deposited' into students' minds (Freire, 2005). We realised the need for a transformative teaching design that would expand our conceptualisation of knowledge and also locate it within a critical dialogue between students, tutors, and their/our everyday lives - echoing also Kelly's (1988) continuum of sexual violence, with its linkages between the 'horrific' and the 'everyday'. In doing so, we wanted students to become critically aware of ideologically-informed understandings of abuse, and relocate these into scrapbooks and classroom sharing where they could be safely and critically contextualised and challenged – the personal being the political *and* the academic. Indeed, we wanted to support them in developing a critical consciousness and language for oppression (Freire, 2005) that would allow them to apply a sociological lens to GBV outside the classroom and participate in social change.

We used 'scraps' to encourage students to consider broad powers and processes at work, whilst centring the specificity of their experiences and found materials. Scraps can thus be understood as ephemeral, often mundane remnants or moments of the everyday which are nonetheless rich in traces of social life (Walling-Wefelmeyer, 2021). These salvaged fragments offer accessible orientation points for an engagement which, by their very nature, require broader concepts to be contextualised in the political-personal. As a key part of Freirean (1970) dialogic method, students could therefore educate us as tutors on what

matters and where, sharing scraps from a variety of unexpected sources, and collectively and dialogically building up a picture of the problem. With increased awareness of sexual and domestic violence experienced on university campuses and related grassroots student activism in the Global North (see the *Violence Against Women* special issue edited by Lewis and Marine, 2019), their educating us felt particularly crucial.

When it came to encouraging students to adopt a variety of tools for analysing their scraps, we also wanted to take seriously Ahmed's (2014) concerns about citational practices which keep power intact and address the de-legitimisation of radical work and ideas which do not always conform to academic styles or canons (hooks, 1994). Certainly, the 'queerying' tool is used increasingly to challenge the gendered and binarized categories that much existing analysis in the field of GBV relies on (Patterson, 2016) and that shape the 'public story' of interpersonal abuse (Donovan and Barnes, 2020).

We wanted students' annotations to therefore be rooted in and supported by critical frameworks and asked that the scraps be analysed using three core concepts: gender, power, and intersectionality. This was intended to challenge the classroom aura of political neutrality (hooks, 1994) and introduce them to liberating, anti-oppressive frameworks. Engaging these particular three was to encourage students to grapple with the specifics of each individually before ultimately 'complicating gender-only power frameworks' (as in McQueeny, 2016). We wanted to facilitate free-thinking about injustice and interpersonal violence more broadly, whilst ensuring that rich conceptual developments taking place in and around the fields of GBV and intersectionality (see Collins, 2019) were not lost or simply reinvented.

Centring multi-culturalism was also key to designing this module and we wanted to support students in finding both scraps and literatures from across the world. As such, we drew on techniques for managing and decolonising the problematic history of sociological thought: to contextualise and 'provincialise' the so-called canon and to pluralise concepts and literatures (Curato, 2013). Theories themselves could therefore be conceptualised as 'scraps' in order to encourage students to piece together a range of ideas and to better recognise the partiality of their own analyses.

Certainly, scrapbooking seemed to be a particularly cogent tool for realising our pedagogic principles. Our approach was informed by the established benefits of creative teaching practice for learning about intimate violence (Meier, 2016) and immersive feminist techniques aimed at consciousness-raising (Fahs, 2011). It was also informed by methodological developments in the field of GBV, and the application of creative and multi-modal victim-survivor-friendly tools for researching daily experiences and understandings of sex, relationships, violence and culture (for example, Walling-Wefelmeyer, 2022; Christensen, Caswell and Trout, 2020; Renold, 2018).

Facilitating data collection with victim-survivors across mediums, materials and contexts is necessary to 'join up some of the dots' of how violence works (Walling-Wefelmeyer, 2019). Mobile scrapbooks, or mixed media books, with their potential to house a variety of materials found and organised by creators, aid participants themselves in joining up the dots. Certainly, the following finding from scrapbooking's methodological application excited us about its pedagogic possibilities:

> Scrapbooking is found to offer a unique form of consciousness-raising and catharsis, aiding participants in identifying, connecting, and contextualising both experiences of

> men's intrusions and their own situated or desired responses. The design of scrapbooking – used here to collate diverse materials with built-in phases of interpersonal sharing – can provide a supported complement, or perhaps alternative, to other methods of understanding and addressing intrusive and oppressive practices (Walling-Wefelmeyer, 2021: 22).

Depending on needs and preference, students could use either a physical analogue scrapbook or an electronic tool such as *Word, Powerpoint, Pinterest* or *Tumblr*. Their scrapbooks needed to contain between forty and eighty scraps drawn from a range of spaces and analysed via annotations. The aim of annotation was to identify critical and lateral commonalities rather than to prioritise linear structures, an approach inclusive of growing awareness of neurodiverse learning and engagement styles (for example, Acton and Huijg, 2020). Indeed, in grounding analysis in the specificity and materiality of the scrap – starting with questions like: what is it, where is it from, what is it doing? – we hoped students would be supported in *building up* a themed analysis rather than begin with the more remote task of designing an overall essay plan.

What is more, we wanted them to explore the process of scrapbooking and consolidate some of its goals, by setting them the task of a 2000-word reflective essay. Being asked to think reflectively throughout the process and collate those ideas together into the essay – rather than produce it towards the end of the module – was intended to solidify the scrapbook as transformative work, centring experience as a way 'to know' (hooks, 1994). We wanted students to thus think reflectively and reflexively about the process of knowledge production and how their thoughts and feelings about the theoretical content and themselves had changed throughout the process. In fact, we wanted them to show us

how best to assess any changes in their understanding, a more student-led approach to tranformative learning assessment built around their own ‘meta-theory of self-in-context' (Formenti and Jorio, 2019: 223).

Finally, the general teaching and learning style of the course was designed to nurture curiosity and awaken their sociological imagination. Students attended a weekly lecture outlining different forms of violence and abuse and were introduced to key theorists in the field. We hoped that students would engage with the specificity of different forms, whilst also connecting them to each other on continuums that allow ‘us to understand connections whilst nevertheless maintaining distinctions that are important conceptually, politically and legally’ (Boyle, 2019: 19). Students also attended a fortnightly workshop to work on their scrapbooks and reflective essay assessments. Here, students were tasked with bringing scraps and scrapbooks for discussion in smaller groups and with their tutor. This was intended to generate peer-to-peer education and shared transformative ‘click’ (Firth and Robinson, 2016), or feminist ‘snap’ (Ahmed, 2017), moments. Clicking or snapping might be best understood as emotive moments of consciousness-raising, where individual oppressive experiences are understood as connected and changeable. In turn, this understanding leads to a deeper and broader appreciation of the topic.

We posited that such consciousness-raising could be best achieved for students and, indeed, tutors through collating individual experiences and discourses *across* spaces and mediums and amongst peers. We argued that engaging reflectively with violence and abuse would empower students to draw on their emotions and experiences as tools for knowing (hooks, 1994). We hoped that emotive and critical attention to both the specificity and

commonality of ‘scraps’ would aid the continuum-thinking necessary for creating social change.

Research Methods

In order to assess the usefulness of scrapbooking as a pedagogic tool, the lead author conducted ‘pedagogic conversations’ with the teaching team (three of the remaining authors) over the course of the module:

> Unlike an interview, all participants in [a research] conversation are involved in the active construction of meaning, with analysis taking place co-currently rather than as a separate, individual event. The dynamic of power shifts throughout the conversation as participants exchange, develop and bounce ideas between one another, rather than the one-way exchange of conventional interviewing or even more participatory designs where, though participants interact with each other, the structure and content remain defined by an outside source (Vera-Gray, 2020: 63)

Teaching is greatly under-researched in the field of gender-based violence and we saw considerable merit and originality in extending the (aforementioned) feminist methodology of ‘research conversations’ to the dynamic process of pedagogic experimentation. Indeed, these conversations were informed by authors’ ongoing experiences of teaching the course and, in the case of Kelly and Nicole, integrating it into the wider curriculum and participating in student queries and processes of evaluation. Notes were made summarising the co-constructed meanings and then fed back to each author for further reflection. The introduction of Asha, a student from the course, at the end of its completion, opened up and furthered meaning and analysis. We were keen to involve Asha because of the value of including experiential knowledge from a different standpoint. The methodology and writing

of this paper therefore reflects the ongoing, processual, and iterative nature of conversations and of co-constructing meaning.

Findings: The Lessons Learnt

In view of the processual nature of our methodology, we present our findings as 'lessons learnt'. This approach allows us to address achievements, issues and solutions simultaneously. As such, the findings are presented here in a format that both highlights the ongoing nature of 'pedagogic conversations' and experimentation but also provides readers with clear and concrete outcomes of its application.

1. Scrapbooking as emotion work: Students feel their way to everyday and intersectional continuum-thinking

> *'One student wanted to explore male entitlement in everyday life and he came back to me like "God, there is so much, it is not containable. There are all these themes, it is everywhere" and that was cool, I could tell something had clicked for him.'* Interviewee 1

We found that students (and tutors) often responded emotionally to the sources and scraps shared in classrooms. We recognise this emotional engagement as critical and to be encouraged. In fact, scrapbooking lends itself to what has been called a 'pedagogy of discomfort', one requiring students to draw on emotions, address their privilege and confront their position in maintaining inequalities (Connelly and Joseph-Salisbury, 2019) . For example, many students were shocked and surprised by their own struggle to name the black women who have been murdered thus far by police officers in the USA, despite their ease in naming black men murdered (a filmed activity devised by Crenshaw, 2016 and shown to the students). Here, students' discomfort facilitated meaningful realisations about

public silence on black women's experiences of law enforcement and also how their own particular situation (typically white middle class) meant they rarely considered police violence, never mind remembered the women's names. Uncomfortable encounters with unawareness were therefore made *manageable* and *productive* by being not wholly *individual*, an experience both shared by other peers and connected to political processes. Indeed, this process proved crucial for facilitating and sustaining a key stage of critical self-awareness and allyship, 'acknowledging bias' (see, for example, Gates, Bennett and Baines, 2021) Equally, students *with* lived awareness of, for example, racist and sexist violence appeared to welcome these topics being made personal-political; that their peers were challenged, and their own survivor experiences were posited as valuable knowledge. Emotion was thus not so much evoked for its own sake but rather to 'clarify our socio-political realities' (Connelly and Joseph-Salisbury, 2019: 1034).

Indeed, in this example, students were supported in contextualising their reactions using the literatures provided on black women's experiences of anti-racist and feminist work (Crenshaw, 1991, for example) and with the materials and experiences shared by other students and also tutors. It was this process of connecting and contextualising 'scraps' which greatly enabled consciousness-raising and limited the avoidance that might well result from students' initial discomfort. Moreover, it enabled us to both centre and value survivor experiences, whilst also breaking down boundaries between tutors and students. For example, one author, Alishya, shared her experiences as a South Asian woman, a sharing method also employed with great success by Danowitz and Tuitt (2011). It took time for students to adapt to this method of teaching, but it was reassuring and rewarding to observe, for example, men enquire in workshops about the experiences of women present and to connect up these individual accounts into a wider sexist continuum.

However, managing the differing positionalities of students in a classroom proved complex. On the one hand, the multiple 'voices' of varied scraps provided context and solidarity for students to clarify their experiences without perhaps feeling they were defending these alone to an unfeeling and disbelieving majority. We also saw how engaging with varied scraps allowed some students to rely less on their peers for information and to better 'educate before engaging' (Gates, Bennett and Baines, 2021). On the other hand, realising the ideal of dominant groups 'educating before engaging' proves challenging in a classroom context orientated around sharing and tacit peer group politics. Moreover, what feels critical and safe to share in an engaged conversation may feel considerably different when confronted with those peers in different contexts. Certainly, we might advocate against a 'banking' model of education between tutors and students (Freire, 2005), but knowledge about one's peers has currency in certain contexts outside the classroom and its exchange might even feel justified as 'educating' others about issues of inequality and abuse.

Creative processes like scrapbooking can aid survivors in making sense of their everyday lives. For all students, it was a critical introduction to the politics and ethics of disclosure and an opportunity thereby to explore literatures around survivors' own preference for how sharing should work in research, legal and everyday contexts (see, for example, Campbell et al. 2010). Indeed, for educators concerned that attention to everyday ideas and discourses of violence and abuse might decentre attention to victim-survivor *experiences* of violence and abuse, we argue, first, that many students are in fact survivors learning to centre and validate their own experiences through the process of scrapbooking and, second, that the process opens doorways for all students to live and empathise with what victim-survivors experience in daily life.

Furthermore, it might be argued that a wider educational aversion to emotion reflects an enduring and highly gendered idea of emotion as *chaos*: unbridled feelings spilling all over the place. In our teaching we found it critical therefore that emotion was not set up as oppositional to the academic literature students were expected to read and cite – feelings to be 'got over' in order to get on with the task of analysis – but rather as a reality across the everyday scraps they encountered and collated. In practice, these scraps included, for example, emotive and evocative domestic violence campaigns or clips from TV shows, amongst literatures produced by 'wilful subjects, feminist killjoys, angry black women' (Ahmed, 2010). Moreover, the reflective essays were specifically structured around the idea of students' changing emotional engagement with the topic as a form of knowledge. The essays thus provided an opportunity which students took to explain how emotions had helped them to identify (or not) their own position in relation to the injustice and experience of violence and abuse.

Emotion was further harnessed in the module through the creative nature of scrapbooking. Various scholars (for example, Walker and Palacios, 2016) have pointed to the power of the arts when adapted to a learning environment. Scrapbooking was certainly an immersive experience for many: they had to seek out and arrange their scraps, making decisions about what to show us and how. This process meant that students' emotional responses to topics of violence were *embodied* in the creative practice of scrapbooking, rather than being easily distinguishable from other forms of learning. As emotion work, scrapbooking is thus *embodied* work, encouraging a situated engagement with the topics of violence and abuse. Communicating experiences creatively can also offer some survivors a degree of catharsis, and self and social intergration (Brison, 2002). Nevertheless, students needed reassurance that they were not being assessed on the aesthetic merit of their scrapbooks.

Futhermore, it is important to note that numerous students experienced considerable anxiety about how scrapbooking would work in practice, particularly as a new form of assessment on which their wider degree results depended. It certainly is a challenge to centre deep and embedded learning within wider higher educational contexts that favour short-term performances and indeed the ‘assessment arms race’ (Harland et al. 2015). It is for this reason that tutors may need to provide clear and extensive guidance and reassurance on how student processes of learning (scrapbooking) result in outcomes that are assessed (scrapbooks and reflective essays). However, perhaps more importantly, tutors would do well to acknowledge the paradox of 'marking’ transformative learning, and share with students the ‘cracks’ in their understanding (Searle et al., 2021). For some of us - new and precariously employed tutors - the kind of confidence and institutional culture required to share vulnerability did not always feel easily come by.

It is important to note here, however, that most students greatly enjoyed the process of scrapbooking and found it a freeing way to engage with theoretical and critical thinking (compared to the typical essay format.) Evidently, it is worth persevering with alternative forms of higher education learning and assessment, despite initial and ongoing anxiety from students (and even colleagues).

A relaxed culture of ‘come and go as you need’ was also adopted to aid student self-care. We did not prohibit the use of mobile devices in class, and students were encouraged to dissociate from the content if they needed a break but did not want or need to leave the room. Indeed, to truly enable students to act on their needs and to lessen the social significance of, for example, a student leaving the room ‘early’ and thus signalling their ‘distress’, we recommend Acton and Huijg’s (2020) guidance for a relaxed pedagogy. Their

identification of an 'up-tight' (neoliberal) pedagogy which puts enormous pressure on students to 'sit still' has real application to teaching about violence and abuse which are embodied realities for our students. Being messy and creative and adopting this relaxed pedagogy means that concerns about the emotional work of addressing violence and abuse or of engaging in an unusual learning and assessment tool can be better unpacked from the emotional difficulties associated with 'up-tight' ableist education more generally.

2. Scrapbooking as empowerment work: Transforming self and social understanding

> *'Whatever's happening outside in the world – in their lives, the news, the university – they can link their studies to it. It is allowing the 'personal is the political', to make some connections – instead of pretending there are not those connections there – in a useful, not necessarily painful way. We focus too much on the negatives of making those connections.'* Interviewee 2

We found that an empowerment approach to teaching is greatly facilitated by scrapbooking. Indeed, students chose the medium of their scrapbook, the types of scraps they focus on and the topic of violence and abuse they investigate. As Bragg and Buckingham (2008:11) discovered in their work with children finding and organising media representations of sex and relationships, this kind of self-led practice enables people to 'make judgements about what they did or didn't "need to know"'. The individualised and self-directed nature of their topics also helped to minimise perceived competition between students.

Moreover, we centred the scrapbooking process around *everyday ideas* of violence and abuse, in order that students may identify discursive practices *of which they are part and thus positioned to resist*. This meant that attention to their own specific social situation was centred in the teaching design, and, from which, scrapbooking followed as a process of self-

directed investigation. Those students who seemed to engage best recognised it as a distinct form of empowerment work. Indeed, these students took to their scrapbooks and the reflective essays as opportunities to identify and challenge 'the public story' (Donovan and Barnes, 2020) about their topic and to create different 'meeting points' (Ahmed, 2014) through a variety of everyday literatures and sources. Paradoxically then, this approach facilitates their own understanding but also enables a *de-centring* of student 'voice' through *centring* plural and community perspectives on the subjects (see also Christensen, Caswell and Trout, 2020). This multiplicity is critical for working with groups with relative power inside and outside the classroom. However, it was not always clear where students were critiquing or endorsing a dominant view. Indeed, their presentation of a 'public story' through varied sources sometimes masked their own prejudices. This issue proved particularly relevant for students concerned with recognising that men could be victims of intimate violence and whose scrapbooks leaned into anti-feminist rhetoric rather than perhaps interrogations of gender norms or the 'ideal victim'. The reflective essays proved necessary then in clarifying the students' own relational positionality.

However, student feedback suggests that together, the essay and scrapbook generate too high a workload when compared to other modules. But what goes and what stays? If the essay is to be removed altogether, educators must think carefully about how best to understand students' positionalities and transformative learning throughout the scrapbook. Students could be required to organise scraps explicitly into affective themes that cover their experience of engaging with them. They could also be prompted to return to several scraps at the end of the process and illustrate how their understanding of them and the wider topic has now changed.

Certainly, students required a mixture of theoretical guidance and flexibility. In practice, we found this approach to be a useful way of integrating the often-marginalised field of GBV and applied developing concepts from the field to resist the wider tendency to draw on GBV research primarily to outline the scope of the issue (e.g. sharing policies and statistics on violence). Indeed, we found that students really took to these tools and were able to move beyond an idea of gender-based violence research as simply describing the issue and into paradigmatic and political conceptualisations.

However, *the very idea of scrapbooking as emotion work does not necessarily make it empowerment work*. Students were tasked to reflect on and share their emotions, knowing those reflections would be read and marked by tutors. Here, 'feelings rules' (Hochschild, 1979) overlap with assessment criteria, and tutors advocating theoretical 'queerness' or 'messiness' does not necessarily mean transcending normative ideas about how personal 'growth' or 'empowerment' should appear. There is a valid concern here then that we are disciplining students into regulating and presenting their interiority in a fashion which we feel makes 'good' students and social citizens (Rose, 1999). We therefore recommend that these very issues are addressed explicitly in the assessment criteria for reflective essays. It should be highlighted to students that, whilst we are keen to facilitate the transformative 'click' or 'snap' of consciousness-raising, we recognise that these might not be articulatable transformations – a simple and linear 'ignorance to emancipation' model – and neither might they be complete. A group session defining transformative learning and co-developing its criteria might mitigate these concerns and generate fruitful insights.

Furthermore, encouraging 'imagined dialogues' is critical to liberatory pedagogy (Holmes, 2010: 147) and we felt we largely succeeded in facilitating students' dialogue with

themselves, their everyday lives and each other. However, the one-sided nature of higher education assessments risks reinforcing rather than breaking down the 'teacher-student contradiction' (Freire, 1970). Thus, despite scrapbooking being experienced by many students as a transformative process, the scrapbook and essay as *assessments* represented a barrier to a mutuality of emotions and further compromises its potential to create social change.

However, Boler's (1999: 3, original emphasis) distinction between 'feeling *power*' and '*feeling* power' might help to articulate one way in which scrapbooking in an assessment context is nonetheless empowering and transformative. Understanding 'resistance…as a version of *feeling* power' (Boler, 1999: 4, original emphasis), where feeling oneself to be the subject of power may be what moves one to resist it, some students themselves recognised the power imbalance in the expectation that they emotionally share and reflect with a tutor who need not do the same. They explicitly challenged student-teacher relationships in their reflections – engaging in a meta dialogue with us – and the scrapbook and essay became ultimately transformative for them. Students should therefore be explicitly encouraged to do so and perhaps to provide feedback throughout the course on how they feel the student-teacher hierarchy might be addressed. We also recommend that tutors consider completing a scrapbook themselves and sharing this with students for greater mutuality and breaking down student-tutor distinctions. Each tutor did in fact share a scrapbook page with their class early on in the process, but this was more to introduce students to the process of annotation than to create shared vulnerability. Furthermore, no extract of a reflective essay was written or shared by us.

Finally, for all the significance we have given to students determining their own topics of study, we found that they would in fact benefit from the structure and support of a choice between a limited number, given the struggle of many to apply the three critical lenses and deal with the day-to-day reality of finding, compiling and collating scraps. Limiting topics does not mean limiting geographic contexts, however, and students may still be transnationally or nationally specific in their scraps. Here, we also recommend a targeted workshop on how attention to men's experiences of victimisation is critical to address, but how certain arguments about their 'neglect' are also used to undermine feminist work (see, e.g., Venäläinen, 2020), and of course men victim-survivors themselves. It offers an opportunity to engage students in the urgent task of breaking down binary distinctions around violence (e.g. man/woman, perpetrator/victim), whilst simultaneously addressing the alt-right backlash against advocates and activists in the field of gender-based violence.

3. Scrapbooking as opening to the unpredictable: Students share unexpected materials

> *'It allows you to use more materials to apply theory to than an essay: photos, snippets from Netflix and real-life application. You get really good generalisations. When we're marking them, we find out new things ourselves.'* Interviewee 3

Scrapbooking grounds us in the materials and encounters which make up our students' worlds. An invitation to collate and present these is an invitation for them to inform and surprise us with the many moments and spaces in which ideology manifests. Nevertheless, this invitation to students is not without issue and surprises are certainly plenty. Are we as tutors actually prepared for the content they share? Will we even know what the scraps are that we are presented with? Digital and internet technologies develop quickly and contextually, with globally popular applications like *Tik Tok* only available outside China

since 2017 (Roose, 2018) or downloads of *Houseparty* skyrocketing under COVID-19 restrictions and lockdown conditions (Brown, 2020).

A critical scrapbook will of course contextualise its contents, pointing to the conditions of both their creation and use. In practical terms this might mean the student identifying the *Twitter* user whose tweet is presented in the scrapbook and reflecting on the user's positionality. It might also mean providing information on the user's general engagement with *Twitter*, the tweet's timing in local and global events and how it was subsequently shared, by whom and why.

Nevertheless, students feel that space for contextualisation is limited in an assessment concerned primarily with critical analysis and they often confused contextualisation with a thorough bibliography or working hyperlinks. This consideration might necessitate centralising contextualisation in the assessment criteria and helping students to better comprehend it as a *key component* of critical analysis across subjects (Nikitina, 2006). Indeed, contextualisation identifies the processes and powers which shape certain scraps into being.

Assessing students' scrapbooks proves difficult more generally, not only given the personal materials they share but also the personal nature of the *mediums* they use. It is certainly problematic to instruct students to draw on their 'everyday lives' and then be surprised and even disappointed when, for example, a student's scrapbook comprises mostly *Instagram* posts. *Instagram* may in fact be the extent of their engagement and tutors are on contentious grounds when we dictate what their everyday interactions should be. Clarity over terms is evidently needed, as is a sensitivity to the differing resources available to students and exposed to each other through scrapbooking

Indeed, scrapbooking as a research methodology does not demand participants provide 'more more more materials' but creates better access to the materials they *already* use and thus their situation in the world (Walling-Wefelmeyer, 2021). However, we argue that scrapbooking *pedagogically* demands students be critical and reflective, situating their world *in relation* to others and, to paraphrase Bragg and Buckingham (2008: 12), 'moving' their world on.

As such, tutors need to be clear about their use of concepts like 'everyday life', 'society' or 'culture'. For example, whether 'everyday life' is a literal window on their daily activities or more conceptually 'the everyday [as] the accumulation of 'small things' that constitute a more expansive but hard to register 'big thing'' (Highmore, 2011: 1). Such distinctions might greatly impact the scraps students share and can be used as a critical point of departure for reflecting on some of the key concerns of sociology more generally (Adler et al., 1987): what is society, does it exist independent of the daily interactions that comprise it? Tutors working in curriculum contexts can thus constructively connect the scrapbooking of violence and abuse to students' other subjects.

For students tasked then with drawing on a wide variety of scraps, this may mean searching for rather than 'miraculously' finding them. Indeed, students express considerable concern about how to 'find' scraps and tutors may need to recommend specific approaches tailored to different types of violence and abuse and geographic contexts. For example, a student focusing on the abuse of bisexual people by their intimate partners was encouraged to explore resources of both generic and more specialist national domestic abuse services. They were instructed to think about bisexual activism and communities more generally,

investigating popular LGBTQIA+ magazines or following social media hashtags like #MeQueer, #BiFurious or #StillBisexual.

Searching for scraps may well lead to students generating them. For example, one student sent out a thought-provoking *Snapchat* message to friends asking for their views on human abuses of non-human animals. Should we care about the distinction between searching for and generating scraps? Reflective essays offer students the time and place to consider this distinction and its implication for the very definitions of culture, society, everyday life and even scrapbooking that their assignment is orientated around. Indeed, this distinction may offer a useful introduction to the onto-epistemological debates around objectivity/subjectivity (Westmarland, 2001) which still shape the field of GBV and, indeed, its marginalization within the wider social sciences.

Rather than reacting solely to the imposition of ideology in everyday life, students are participating in and creating cultural meaning through their very assignment. It is therefore important to offer them the necessary structure – a clarity of concepts, centring the role of contextualisation, advice on how to find scraps and highlighting the purpose of the reflective essay – from which they can find, search for and create the unexpected.

4. Scrapbooking as facilitating rippling but bounded social change

> *'It is something physical that other people can see. You might not show your mum, your flat mate, your brother an essay that you'd written, but it* [the scrapbook] *can be awareness raising beyond the individual.'* Interviewee 2

We join Joseph-Salisbury and Connelly (2019:12) in their argument that 'socially active forms of assessment … should have utility beyond the university setting'. Having identified

the unpredictable materials, emotional work and empowering potential of scrapbooking, we now turn our attention to what utility it facilitated beyond the university workshop and lecture contexts. We anticipated that this might be considerable, given the module's focus on observing and addressing students' immediate worlds.

In practice we found that scrapbooking did indeed have substantial 'ripple effects'. Fahs (2011: 500) describes this rippling effect best perhaps in her amazement at 'just how much students enjoyed *talking about the assignment to others*. This gave the assignment momentum, power, and efficacy as a pedagogical tool for feminist learning.'

This was certainly the case for our own pedagogical approach, with individuals not only, for example, engaging their friends, family and housemates in challenging conversations but also taking part in campaigns such as Everyday Sexism or attending events we recommended outside the classroom. These events included one on coercive control for International Women's Day. What is more, the module's focus on the everyday and the scrapbooks' capacity to house mixed media, allowed students to engage their networks in critiquing and addressing aspects of, specifically, *university* life. Fahs (2011: 499) observes how the assignment of either growing out or removing body hair made 'visible the networks of social control in students' lives'. For us it seemed that problems with the 'laddish' norms of university (see, for example, Phipps and Young, 2015) became clear to many students and their wider networks through scrapbooking.

Indeed, some participants chose subjects that felt very important and personal to them, with one student focusing on domestic violence, for example, and keen to share their scrapbook with their parent who had been victimised. This really underscored scrapbooking as a pedagogic praxis centring survivor experiences and knowledge. With students' own

experiences and lives legitimised as worthy of sociological scrutiny, some felt supported in the task of slowly and often indirectly identifying themselves as survivors to others and educating them on what that means. As Connelly and Joseph-Salisbury note (2019: 1037), academic environments can limit the possibilities of producing a 'socially active text' through denying students an audience for their writing. Here, however, and in comparison perhaps to conventional essay style formats, students were better able to *create* audiences.

Whilst this rippling effect of scrapbooking is thus vital for both survivor empowerment and also integrating students' learning into their ongoing everyday lives, non-student input in scrapbooks might be considerable and difficult to both ascertain and fully honour. Secondly, engaging in noticeable projects can prompt difficult conversations and put people at risk in already abusive situations . To some extent, this issue is beyond the scope of the tutors to address – other than of course to offer caution and provide safe spaces for students to disclose – as it pertains to the reality of students' lives. Nevertheless, it is worth thinking of scrapbooks and reflective essays as learning tools which may open students up to intense, conflicting and challenging interactions and responses and which also engage their networks to varying levels of usefulness and influence. Similarly, it opens junior (typically female) staff up to increased student disclosures, pastoral care, and sometimes advocacy with other parts of the university.

Nevertheless, and despite the rippling effects of scrapbooking, we argue that it was to some extent 'bounded' in what positive social action it could directly facilitate. Connelly and Joseph-Salisbury (2019: 1037) describe bounded social change as 'social change that is imaginatively bound by the constraints of the students' immediate environment: the neoliberal university'. As we have already argued, scrapbooking as emotion and self-

empowerment work was constrained by the tutor-student hierarchy and by the inevitability of assessment marks mattering for wider degrees and job 'prospects'.

Whilst the positive ripple effect of scrapbooking was certainly bounded, it is important to note how attention to everyday ideas and the longer-term and mixed media nature of scrapbooking – compared to the individual sessions provided by Connelly and Joseph-Salisbury (2019) – may have created wider boundaries, as it were. Indeed, different teaching tools constitute *different* boundaries, even if these are all ultimately constrained. However, the gendered politics by which scrapbooks are often trivialised as a women's 'domain' and as a 'craft' or 'decoration' rather than an 'art' (see Christensen, 2011) may of course play a part in how scrapbooks are received and what work they can do as socially active texts. An introduction to the history of the medium offers opportunities for students to question assumptions and to explore the possibility of even reclaiming or subverting the idea of 'scrapbooking' and the gendered nature of its emotion 'work'.

Conclusion

This paper has introduced and evaluated scrapbooking as a pedagogical approach – a process here of engaging reflectively with violence and of identifying, collating and annotating 'scraps' on the subject. Far from being too 'distressed', our students seemed to welcome the opportunity to be challenged and to challenge their social worlds. Some survivors told us that the process of scrapbooking had helped them politically and therapeutically, and many had shared them with family, friends, or housemates to expand the 'spaces' in which violence and abuse can be discussed.

More specifically, this paper has argued, that with the right structure and support, scrapbooking facilitates continuum-thinking and the in-depth analysis of sometimes quite

unexpected materials, allowing students to thus connect up everyday ideas and experiences of violence across spaces with wider social processes and forms of oppression. Likewise, scrapbooking has been shown to be specifically emotion and empowerment work and this paper advances understandings of affective transformative education and the importance of personal-political-academic learning techniques. Certainly, scrapbooking has ripple effects into students' wider networks and everyday lives, but whatever radical potential it might have to create social change is somewhat bounded by neoliberal higher educational contexts. Nevertheless, we have offered some suggestions of how this transformative potential might be harnessed in order to, for example, address student-tutor relationships and student hierarchies, and further the possibility of scrapbooks and reflective essays as socially active texts.

We end here with a conclusion that may prove increasingly poignant as work to address gender-based violence is undermined across the globe. The high (and continuing) demand for this course reveals a student body eager to address violence and injustice. If their critical scrapbooking has taught us anything, it is that creative and reflective pedagogies which contextualise gender-based violence and people in their everyday lives, are ones which can empower them to act in the interests of us all.

Notes

[1]At the time of undertaking this research, we are a group based in Sociology at Durham University and comprising one student (Asha) who took the course, two doctoral researchers who each led one of the workshop groups (Rosa and Alishya), one assistant professor (Kelly) and one professor (Nicole) who taught the course.

[2]The field is large. Given our own areas of expertise, we pay particular attention to UK contexts, to the sexual and domestic abuse of women and children by men and to LGBTQIA+ experiences of intimate partner abuse.

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The Authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

Acknowledgements

Many thanks to all the students who have undertaken this module since its inception.