

**Salem State University**

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**From the Selected Works of Dawn Stahura**

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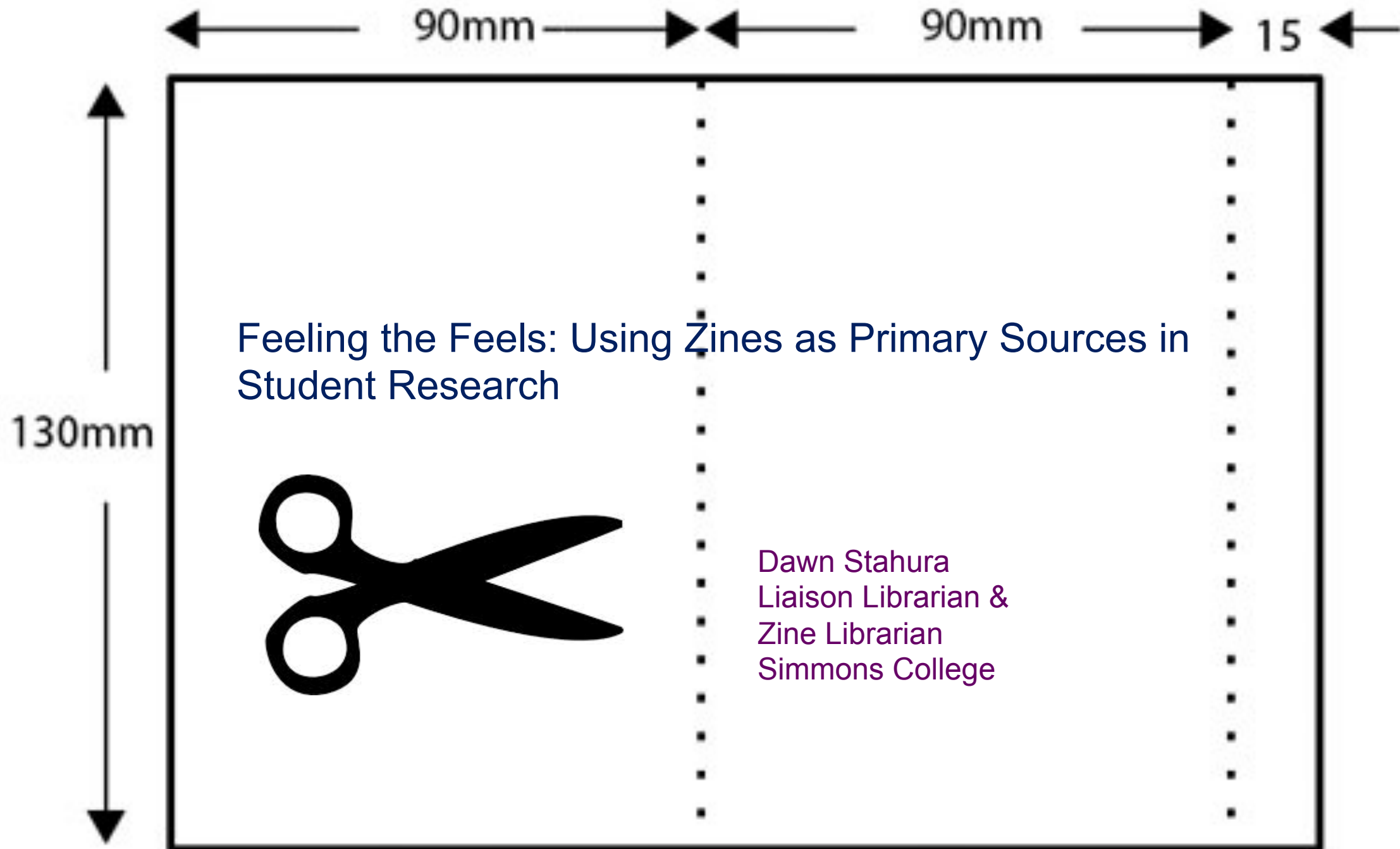
October 16, 2015

## Feeling The Feels: Using Zines As Primary Sources In Student Research

Dawn Stahura, *Salem State University*



Available at: <https://works.bepress.com/dawn-stahura/5/>



← 90mm → ← 90mm → 15 ←

think this is the gospel. There is so much racism in public health, and so many health disparities. I just want you to know that every thing you read is not a FACT ok? Statistics don't explain the whole story. I just don't want you to think that this stuff is the gospel.

130mm



ALL my Best Friends have Herpes:  
COCOA/PUSS zine #2



90mm 90mm 15

130mm

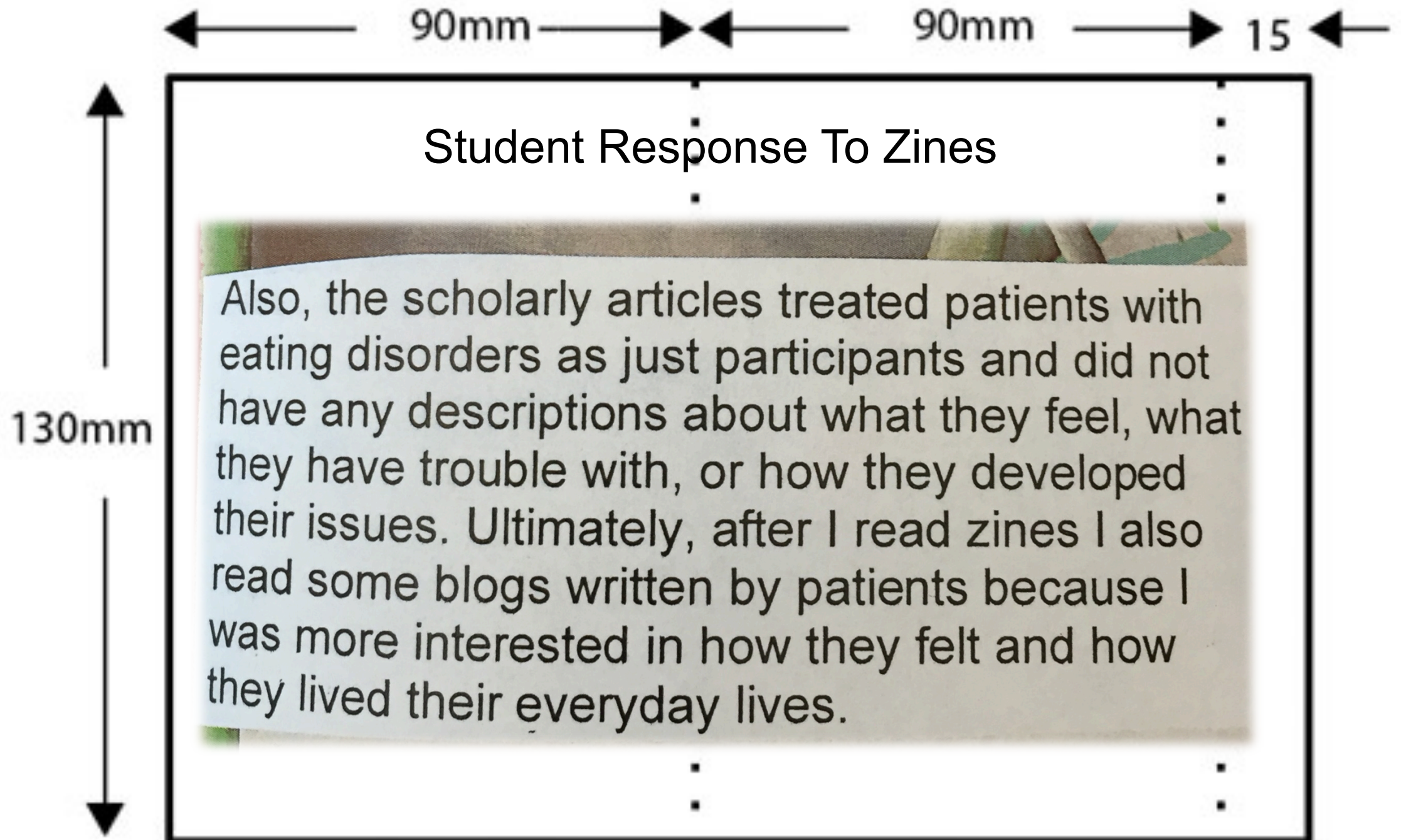


chronic disease.  
body become associated with the

Trigger Warning! This zine addresses issues of  
body image, eating disorders, and sexual consent.  
I cannot stress enough how important you are in  
this world so please take care of yourself.

this zine around the





90mm 90mm 15

130mm

BIKINI KILL



GirlPower

## REVOLUTION girl STYLE now

**SHARE INFORMATION** with someone who is interested. Say you know how to play guitar, ask your girlfriend if she'd like to learn to play so that you could jam together. If she wants to, help her learn in a supportive and non-threatening way. (Avoid calling her dumb or expecting her to learn super fast)

**ENCOURAGE IN THE FACE OF INSECURITY.** No matter how great your accomplishments, recognize that you are not a magically designated "special" person. Yes, you are living your own individual history to your work and you are super cool - but, being elitist makes it hard for others to join in on the fun.

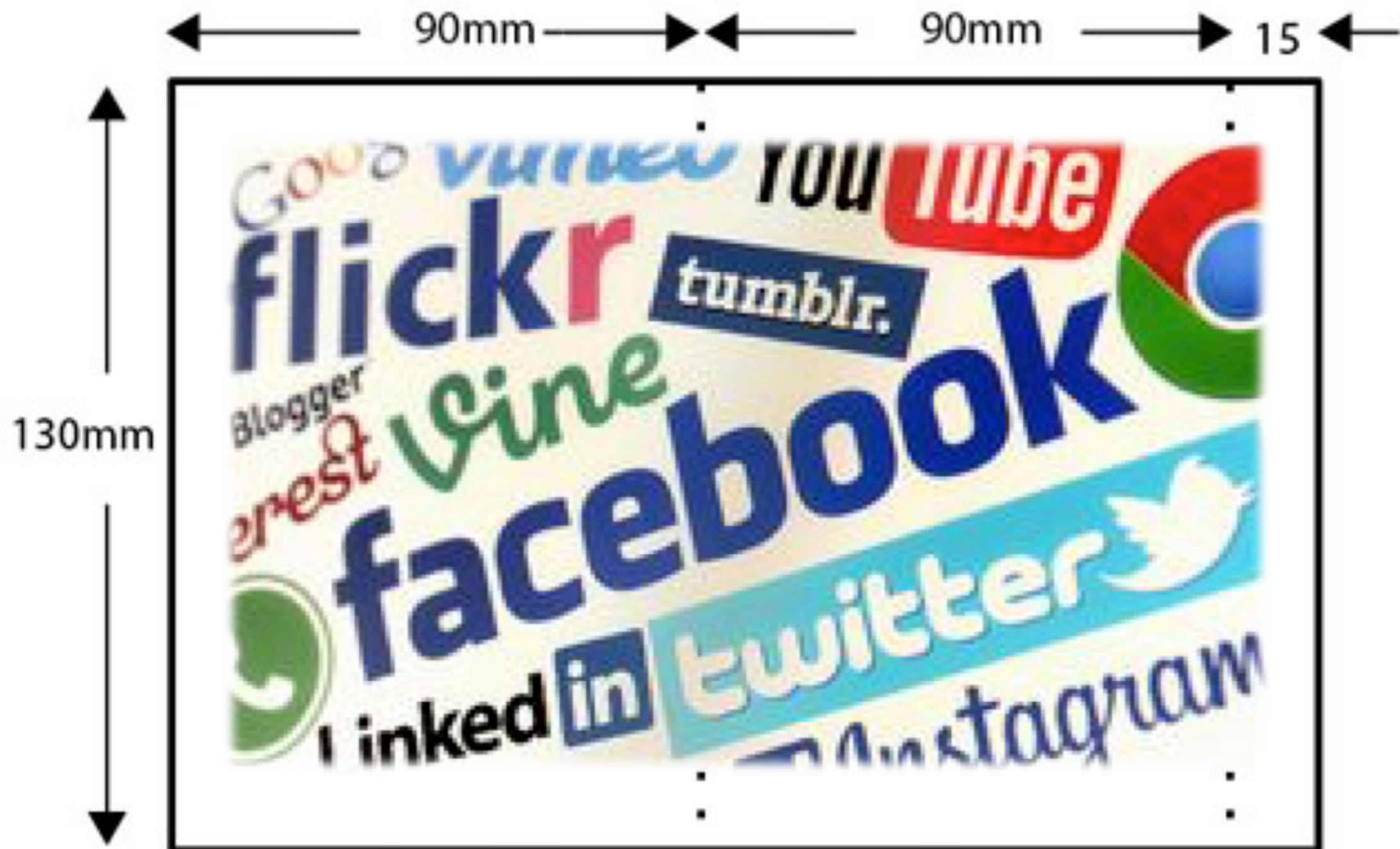
**BE FORBODEN** that includes more than just hetero sex. This can be queer fl sex or boy + boy sex or hetero sex where more than just dumb conversation & fucking take place. If video is your medium of choice, you could have the actors acknowledge the camera's presence and the fact that they are being watched. Portray women as people who're three dimensional and have desires, ... are not always the object of desire or fake sex crazed nymphs. Let the audience know the people are real by showing them doing other things together besides fucking. You could also make porn real easy by masturbating in front of a camera on a tripod. Loving oneself is cool.

**KNOW YOUR PRIVILEGES** given to you as a member of an "ideal" group. If you are any of these categories then you get a certain amount of privilege from them: White...Male...Adult...Christian...Young...Heterosexual...Not eating...American...Young. Learn how your behaviors & privileges affects people who do not fall into the same categories as ... Listen to people when they talk to you.

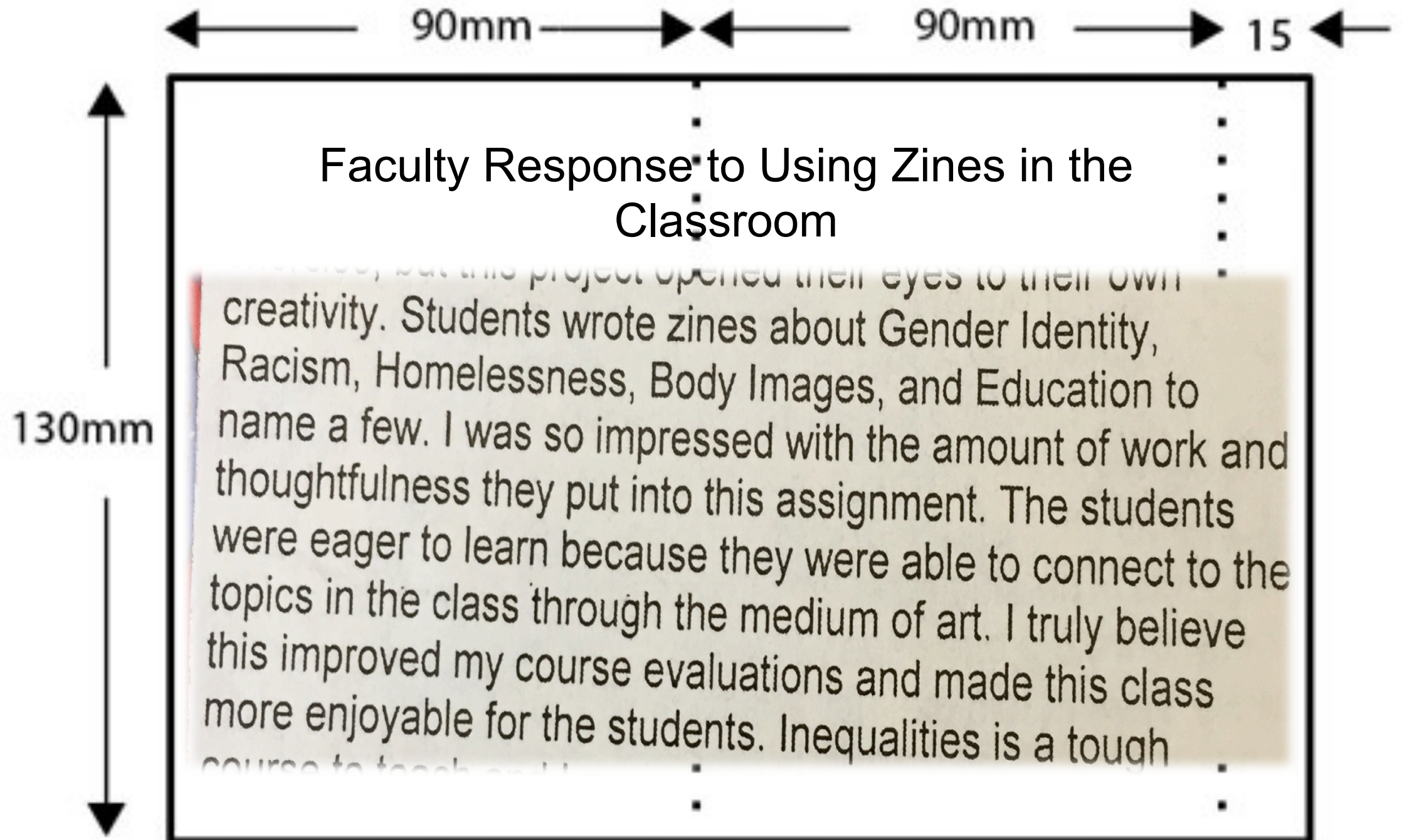
Be happy, only when you are  
the only one who is happy  
in the world, that is the only  
way to be happy. Be happy  
in the world, that is the only  
way to be happy.



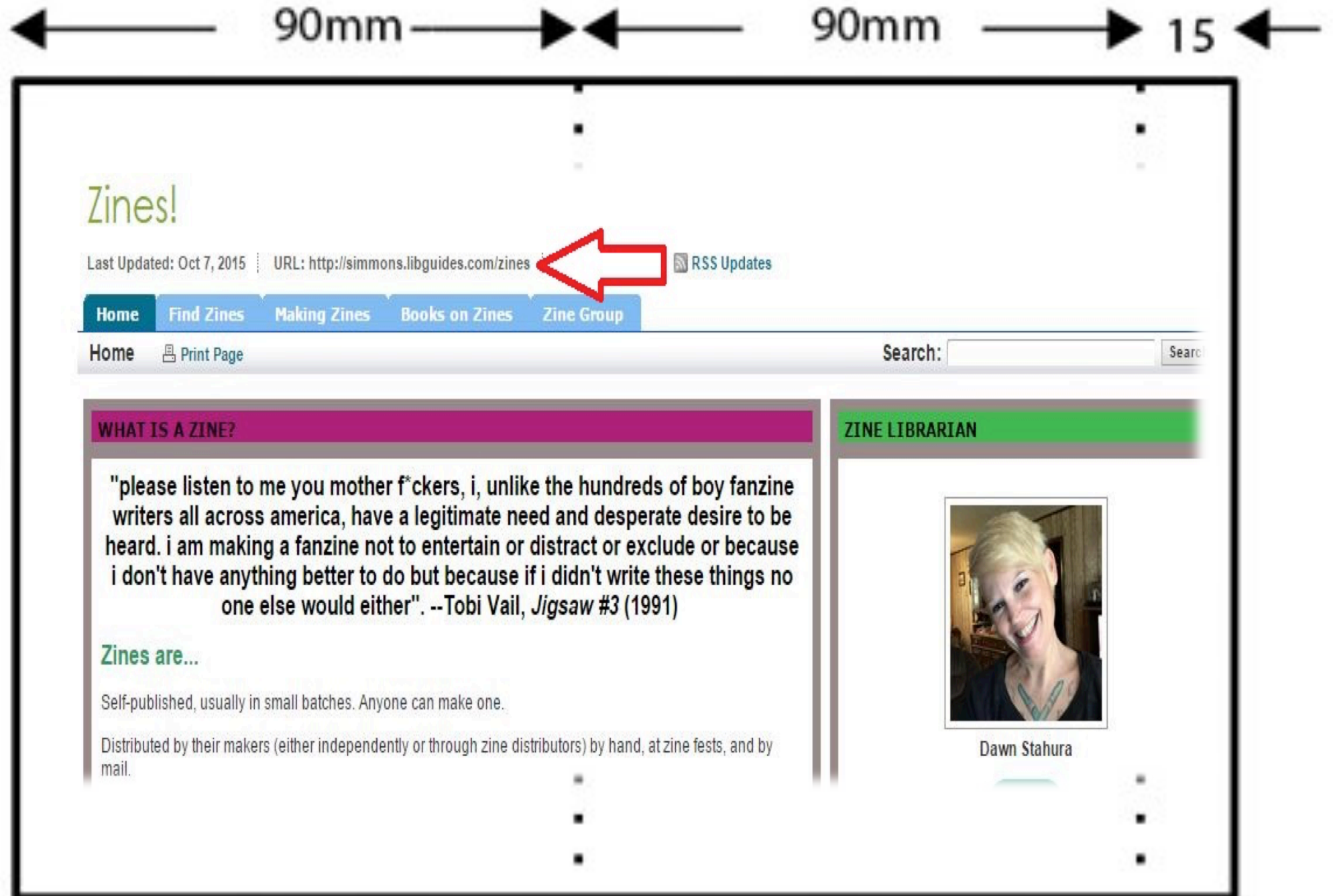








130mm



## **Dartmouth Library October Conference**

### **“Feeling the Feels: Using Zines as Primary Sources in Student Research.”**

A year ago I started the Zine Collection at Simmons with just \$100.

A year ago I decided to approach one of my Sociology faculty members with the idea of incorporating zines in her class. She and I are both from the Riot GRRRL era and produced our own zines. She was game. We decided to test pilot zines with her Inequality course which has a mixture of sociology students and nursing students. We hoped this would allow her students to connect more with the material.

Why zines?

Zines give a unique glimpse into our research in a way nothing else can.

Why?

We are more than just statistics.

I always tell students to remember that when they are glossing over the methodology section because it is boring to read, that those participants, those numbers are actual people. People who joined the study or clinical trial for a specific reason.

Maybe they are a young breast cancer survivor.

Maybe they have AIDS and want to try a new pharmaceutical drug.

Maybe they are anorexic and out-patient care is not working.

I'm not saying that statistics are not necessary.

They are. They paint a much needed picture.

But they are not the only color we can use.

We need stories.

We need that human element that ties us to the research.

Zines do that.

Using zines as primary sources allows students to experience the topic they are researching in a real way.



Students come to understand what it means to have AIDS from someone who is writing about it in their zine.

These are the stories that are not censored. They are deeply personal.

Zines therefore live in a different landscape than the scholarly articles we have our students find and the popular magazine articles they read on the side.

Zines have no gate-keepers yet you won't find a more authentic resource. They are kept legit by the desire for the zinester to share their story, to help someone cope with the same topic, or to connect with others to form solidarity and a sense of belonging.

It is a community of creators. A community of primary source creators.

They are the pathway to understanding complex and challenging subject matters.

They provide unique voices and perspectives that are not reflected in mainstream media or in databases and reference books.

Students understand primary sources when discussed in this way because they are already creating their own primary sources with each tweet they send, each FB update, each new tumblr post. They just don't articulate it in this way.

But once that light goes off, they get it.

So what about Saher's class?

The students broke up into groups and each chose topic under the umbrella of inequality. Some wrote about homelessness in Boston, others wrote about living with disabilities, and then there were zines about racism and non-gender binary.

Based on the students' reflective papers, they all loved creating zines and found it very challenging yet rewarding because they were able to articulate their research in a way that impacted more than just their professor. Their zines could be passed around, sent to distros, or left in random places. They could also be used as teaching tools at rallies and protests.

Because zines are something everyone can do, there is no technological barrier to their creation thereby allowing anyone with a desire to make a zine to do so and contribute to the conversation that is happening around them. To critically think about what they are consuming and then critique it by adding their own thoughts.

It's research for everyone.