

This paper forms part of a larger research project in which we are building up resources to support the teaching of ancient texts dealing with difficult and sensitive issues. In this brief paper we will share with colleagues the methods employed to support students on our new Masters' level module on Gender and Crime in Ancient Greece which covers topics such as rape, infanticide, domestic violence and 'honour' killings.

While we had some awareness of potential issues from our past teaching experiences, our methodological approach in this new module, which includes the use of cross-cultural and input from colleagues working in criminology and modern British history, is intensifying the difficulties by breaking down the distance between modern conceptual frameworks and experiences of crime and those of the ancient Greeks. For most students personalizing the issues can be a positive experience causing them to engage more fully with the ancient material by applying their own experiences and understanding. For others dealing with these issues in class is immensely difficult. To help support those students who may have difficulties dealing with difficult discussions on topics which have affected their own lives, we have put in place resources citing relevant literature and websites offering support on various issues (rape, domestic abuse etc) on the module's page on the university's virtual learning environment.

The issue of staff training to deal with students suffering difficulties through studying sensitive topics is also pertinent. While students have access to counseling services, it is also vital that academic staff are well equipped to deal with such students supportively and sensitively both in a classroom environment and in one-on-one tutorials. The university has agreed to offer such training to staff in our area and we will report on the outcomes of this training.