

UC Santa Barbara

becoming undisciplined

Title

Call for Zine Submissions — *touching:blackstudy*

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Call for Zine Submissions

touching:blackstudy

Submit by May 10th, 2022

For graduate students, being disciplined into institutional processes of knowledge production is a core function of our professional training. Given our intellectual and political commitments, we often simultaneously try to resist forms of disciplining and other harmful demands the university makes of academics—particularly those of us for whom academia was not built for. This period of our (inter)disciplinary training is also a moment of ongoing racial, gendered, and ecological violence; of precarity and crisis. In this moment, we recognize the need to reimagine together what transformative knowledge production may look like in our own practices. A desire to acknowledge these huge tensions in community with each other inspired a zine *becoming undisciplined* (2019) in which fifteen black graduate students and artists shared essays, poetry, art, and photography.

Since then we have been faced with ongoing struggle for black liberation in the midst of a global COVID-19 pandemic that has exacerbated existing social inequalities. This reality has had immense impact on the lives of black people. For many of us black folks who study aspects of black life, the multiplied challenges of antiblackness during a pandemic have taken a toll on us in ways sometimes difficult to even name.

In this zine project we give ourselves space to reflect, check-in, mourn, reconnect, be curious, or just *be ...* after all the past two years have brought. This is a space to share what we feel must be shared about living and studying black (gender, sexuality, intimacy, and life) in environments of crisis.

We aim for this zine to not only open up lines of thinking—physically, intellectually, emotionally—but also to be a space of affirmation and affective release, a place to vent or scream or cry or laugh or think in whatever form feels right. Many of us have found it hard to sustain ourselves within institutions and environments built on disregard. We want to honor the reality that black people have long lived, touched, connected, and imagined otherwise within spaces of neglect. That many of us will continue to do so out of necessity. That our ways and experiences of doing so are too often shaped by violence and hardship. But that, still, we deserve to sit with that interior realm of us, black people, that Kevin Quashie explores as *quiet*: “a metaphor for the full range of one’s inner life—one’s desires, ambitions, hungers, vulnerabilities, fears.... the interior—dynamic and ravishing—is a stay against the dominance of the social world; it has its own sovereignty” (*Sovereignty of Quiet* 6).

In this spirit, we invite black graduate students, independent scholars, and artists to submit creations on topics related to, but not limited to, any of these suggested areas and questions:

❖ **Black touch, intimacy, desire, study:**

How does black sexual knowledge help us map new ways of being in and after pandemic times? What does the disobedience of black scholarship, pedagogies, and praxis teach us about intimacy, desire, and touch? What is it like to do black study while it is more dangerous to touch and connect in familiar ways? How might a focus on touch help us think through feelings of disconnection: from black study, life, and being?

❖ **Understanding antiblackness, violence, crisis:**

What happens to our understanding of antiblackness if we put sexualities at the center? How might we recognize the centrality of gender and sexuality as lenses through which to study the devastating and violent impact of white supremacy and structural violence? How may centering black feminist and queer practices help us think through, about, and outside of pandemic frameworks?

❖ **Connecting to our life/work:**

How are people sitting with exhaustion, uncertainty, and violence? How are these impacting motivation for / the urgency of our efforts to affirm black life and sexuality? What is it like doing “the work” of affirming black sexuality while that work is commodified? How do anti-work, critical and abolitionist university studies, or other perspectives inspire alternative visions of black study?

We welcome submissions of a variety of formats and genres such as:

- Essays
- Poetry
- Fiction
- Short stories
- Visual art
- Photography
- Comics
- Collages
- Crafts
- Interviews
- Book/media reviews
- and more!

We especially welcome **shorter pieces** (about 750-1500 words for written submissions) knowing that it is hard for many people to be motivated for or commit time to additional projects. The deadline for submissions is **May 10th, 2022**. Please submit at forms.gle/Lx3Puk6foiHARSxf6. The zine is planned for release online and in limited print run in late Spring.

You may share questions or comments by emailing amonithompson@ucsb.edu, mariahwebber@ucsb.edu, and victorian@ucsb.edu. This project is organized by feminist studies graduate students with assistance from the Black Sexuality Studies Collective and Feminist Futures initiative at UC Santa Barbara.