

BLACK INSTINCT:
THE SURVIVAL KIT FOR THE BLACK AND MARGINALIZED
AT A PREDOMINANTLY WHITE INSTITUTION

by

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ABSTRACT

This autoethnographic archive encapsulates my intersectional experiences navigating predominantly white institutions (PWI), including Texas Christian University and studying abroad. Through the theoretical frameworks of Black women's rhetoric and muted group theory, I questioned the preparedness of Black women college students in culturally exclusive environments, I interrogated how race, ethnicity, nationality, and gender has equated to the absence of my transnational identity as a Black American woman, and I examined how the mutation of Black women affects discourse and experiences in the academy.

By examining Black travel narratives, I use zines as a rhetorical device to analyze how memory influences Black women's historical and transnational identity and storytelling while navigating PWIs. This zine collection encourages literary autonomy and enables scholars to question how systems play a part in the power dynamics of marginalized and dominant groups, and serves to protect Black women's identities, bodies, and language while studying abroad. This archival method justifies the use of zines and digital platforms as alternative forms of research to empower Black women and marginalized people to document our experiences.

TCU's relationship with the global community exposed the necessity for enhanced preparation for Black women, in navigating PWIs—including study abroad processes and environments that are culturally exclusive. I identified a rhetorical deficiency in resources that overlook Black women's needs and upholding barriers that prevent them from accessing opportunities, and oppose non-linear and community-based research. In short, Black women's rhetorical expressions challenge the norms of traditional research to make space and provide opportunities for Black women to navigate predominantly white spaces.

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