**Extended Foreplay in a Time of Discontent**

In February 2008, the first marine wounded in the Iraq War, Eric Alva, comes to speak at a conference at the University of Illinois. The conference is not overtly dedicated to issues of war, militarism, or even foreign policy. The annual event entitled, Midwestern Bisexual Lesbian Gay Transgender Ally College Conference self-proclaims a focus on “issues pertinent to the LGBTA community, as well as the broader social justice community as a whole”. Given this agenda, the conference organizers pick Alva, a seasoned HRC representative, to give the Friday keynote speech on one of the most important issues for the LGBTA community - the right for gays to serve in the military.

Alva, ex-military man and burgeoning LGBT activist celebrity, is met by an auditorium full of applause on the first evening of conference events. Support resounds from all sides as this national hero takes the stage. Most of the audience revels in Alva’s triumphant sacrifice for his country. He has lost limb, but not life. He has turned his traumatic experience into productive liberal LGBT equal rights rhetoric. He is not a cripple, he is an LGBT activist, and a compelling one at that. Alva represents the triumph of the gay spirit. Even in the face of LGBT discrimination, he perseveres. He also fails to mention a word about racial or disability discrimination throughout the course of his speech. Eric Alva is a crowd pleaser, but not everyone is pleased.

After enduring the 40 minute speech, a group of four students hurry to the microphone for first chance at questioning. Myself among them, we proceed to interrogate his positioning as an anti-war, pro-(gay) military activist. First Question: “Why should I, as a queer woman of color, or any person who has endured abuses by the state, support the project of advocating for the
right to take on the role of the oppressor, by joining the military and participating in state-sponsored violence”.

Alva dodges the question by quoting Martin Luther King and lays blame on everyone’s favorite go-to-guy, Mr. George Bush. Publically criticizing President Bush veils the necessity of an institutional critique. We all need someone to blame. The symbolic value of George Bush as village idiot goes over more smoothly than an interrogation of American democratic ideals. The crowd rejoices even as no answer is given.

The second question is delivered more directly to Alva, asking him to hold himself culpable for the violences perpetuated by US imperialism. It is delivered with anger and received in much the same way. He lifts up the leg of his pants, raps on his titanium prosthetic leg (which is adorned with American Flag stickers), and shouts, “I lost my leg so that you could have your voice!” Mr. Eric Alva did not sacrifice his leg for himself. He sacrificed his leg for the inalienable civil rights upon which this country is founded. The boos get louder. Faces contort. The scene amounts to about hundreds vs. six. We get out before it gets ugly.

As we stand outside dimly lit by Follinger Auditorium dome lights, we dig into shopping bags filled with zines. We have only one hundred copies but we pass them to anyone who will take one. Audience members pile out of the auditorium and within a half hour our bags are empty. It is the first time we distribute our self-made zine, Extended Foreplay and what an interesting venue Follinger Auditorium becomes on this evening.

I choose to include this personal story for a number of reasons. LGBT identity politics activism, homonationalism, and questions of privilege all arrive front and center. But most importantly, it is vital to consider Alva’s quote and all the work it does. What kind of voice is he referring to? How is loss being indexed to civil liberties in his statement? I do not think that Alva means one lost leg equals freedom of
speech. But, his statement attaches a particular valence of freedom to a violently restrictive nationalism. Those supposed inalienable rights to opinion and choice are in need of protection. And we are to be grateful for those who do the protecting. Alva’s statement marks clear distinction between “you” and “I” while it ultimately hinges on the collective imaginary of an American “us”. Homonormative LGBT activism does not concern itself with destabilizing the already shaky claims to American citizenship. Dissenting opinion is allowed until it questions the coherence of that collective American “us”. It is allowed as long as it remains opinion and not public critique of US imperialism and the participation of LGBT politics in that imperialism. How is this freedom of voice regulated by the very same mechanisms that give it such esteem within American democracy.

Is the voice that Alva protects, the same voice offered in the pages of Extended Foreplay? In some ways yes, but in other ways no. In order to sift through the zine’s meaning, we can start by mulling over the most basic questions. What is Extended Foreplay? And why is the voice of Extended Foreplay even important? As a question related to organizing strategy, what work does the zine do? How might we read the zine as a political project, both in content and process? More directly related to this course, where does Extended Foreplay in with a local queer culture? And what conclusions can we draw from Extended Foreplay that might enable more productive critical engagements with what we imagine as queer activism?

It becomes extremely important to situate the text within the spaces (both literal and figurative) that it is produced and distributed. On that evening, the first Extended Foreplay found itself responding to a particular environment. The text itself can be conversational and malleable because context alters the meaning. In order to analyze the significance of the zine, I draw on a textual analysis, autoenthographic memoir, and ethnographic interviews. Doing so allows insight into the discursive content of the text and the meaning making process of the text. The written content provides one lens to contextualize the presence of Extended Foreplay. But if we hinge the analysis solely on text, we lose
the rich interpretations and experiences offered by its contributors through interview. I think not necessarily about audience response, but I choose to focus on the people involved in its production. What did the zine mean to them and where does the zine fit in their organizing methods? There has not been a new issue of the zine since June 2008, but I want to read *Extended Foreplay* as both past and present in order to pull out an analysis that disrupts a linear approach to archival process. By thinking about the zine as both a tangible cultural production and an intangible meaning making process, we contribute to a larger discussion about queer politics that locates the political relevance of what it means to ‘be’ and to ‘do’ queer in a more complicated imbrications with multiple power networks. *Extended Foreplay* regards itself as a queer text. Given this, how might we queer our approach to reading and analyzing it? In order to better understand where *Extended Foreplay* fits in as a queer cultural production, we must position an analysis that simultaneously thinks about the people involved, their motivations and influences as well as the text as discursive and material archival evidence.

"What the fuck is this community. This gay community. That is so espoused. Gay community, gay community. What does that mean when three dykes and this other kid get booed for being radical...for critiquing? oh my god. It was, it was so disheartening. But then at the same time then extended foreplay became so important. And the fact that we had all experienced this together was really important."

There is plenty of room for critique of homonational LGBT activism on this campus, but instead I want to shift focus to what I see as a resistance to that kind of organizing. Complicit as that resistance will always be, *Extended Foreplay* shifts focus from LGBT identity based issues to a more effective queer activism. To clarify my usage of the term queer, I look to the many ways it has been used by feminist and queer theorists. A queer sensibility promotes a politics not of transcendence, nor of repudiation of past histories, but a politics which invests itself in the project of challenging what we consider a normative reality. Queer runs alongside non-normativity, perversion, deviance, shame. In many ways, queer reads as ‘Other’. Queer does not deny identity but rather exposes the inconsistencies of identity politics. In configuring a queer analysis of sexuality and its implications, one must also consider the power dynamics which present themselves in a number of raced, classed, and gendered ways. As agents of
queer analysis, we need to take responsibility in transcribing the complexities that race, class, gender, and national identity offer to a sexual identity. Although always rooted in questions of sexuality, queerness can not be relegated to a realm of LGBT politics. In many ways, the most interesting queer projects find themselves in some opposition to the liberal US LGBT rights based movement. Queer also grows out of the very scholarship and activism that it complicates. It this sense, the usage of queerness is already tied up in its history alongside LGBT-ness. Implicitly, queer theory and queer political identity is often tied up in Western frameworks of knowledge and classification. I do not want to unproblematically replicate these frameworks, but I find the term to be particularly productive in this context. As the quote above reiterates, gay community and for that matter, all community might benefit from internal critique of the political boundaries that communities mark out.

“We agreed in the beginning we weren’t going to police each other in the sense of you can only write about this or this issue is only going to be about that. No one ever wrote anything bogus but I feel like if they had, we would have been able to talk about it. To me that’s better than being like this is super radical and you can only write super radical stuff. Cause that’s like anti-educational...if you like already expect everyone to know everything and there not a space to say this is interesting maybe we could have thought about it this way instead.”

In January 2008, I met with friends in the University of Illinois Union Colonial Room. In hand, I carried an old edition of a feminist student zine entitled, Pandora’s Rag. I passed it around as we ruminated on the idea of making our own zine, possibly a reincarnation of this forgotten publication. I was met with an unexpectedly distinct disapproval of Pandora’s Rag. A relic website of its former existence highlights the zine’s mission statement, “This is a magazine through which we are experiencing and defining our own conceptualizations of feminism with the hope of educating and promoting awareness to those willing to hear our voices”. They hated it. Somewhere between a boring newsletter and dwindling 3rd wave riot grrl nostalgia, the zine did not really inspire folks in the way I had imagined. Thinking back, it was as though feminism as a noun had lost its appeal and feminist as an identity was becoming more and more contextualized by the imperial feminists we had been learning
about in school. By the end of the meeting, we had arrogantly decided we were cooler and we could do it better. We had thought of a title even before the end of that first meeting. *Extended Foreplay* had been called into existence even before we really knew what would happen with it.

The first issue of *Extended Foreplay* includes a table of contents that designates no page numbers or topics aside from “Radical Queer Feminist Stuff (All Pages).” On the table of contents page, there is also a purpose statement. It simply reads, “Fuck Yo Shit Up. Maybe?” The second issue table of contents states “Sass….pg. ALL” and the third presents us with “Awesomeness….All pgs.” We can read this as a disruption of traditional magazine type publication. Zines are independently produced and distributed at low cost. Zine making typically attaches to a sub-cultural underground aesthetic. As Adela Licona writes of feminist zines, “they can be irreverent, parodic, utopian, and imaginative, thus in a sense zines perform the difference they are trying to make. By challenging, re-imagining and replacing exclusionary and oppressive discursive practices, zines perform new representations of subjectivity.”

These publications position themselves at the margins of mainstream print media and in doing so create the landscape of what those margins can look like.

There are no designated individual topics as outlined by the table of contents. The traditional categorization of topic articles in a compilation piece distinguishes the parts that make up the whole. Yet, *Extended Foreplay* does not offer this kind of categorization for its audience. Rather it asks the reader to peruse and find out for oneself. *Extended Foreplay* identifies co-present themes (radical queer feminist perspective) that cannot be split up or evenly distributed. It wants to be simultaneously radical, feminist, and queer, while also remaining critical of those categories. And what is stuff? Stuff carries with it an unclear categorization. Where does stuff place itself? Less neat that the miscellaneous, stuff is invoked as that which does not fit. Supposedly mundane, people do not usually produce explicit explanations of their ‘stuff’. But in this sense, stuff becomes an interesting way to draw the proceeding articles into conversation with each other without having to self-articulate specific consistency. In a similar vein, sass
and awesomeness carry a particular incendiary egoism but they remain abstract, never offering more explanation on those introductory pages. The thematic consistency of Extended Foreplay does not hinge on LGBT identity politics. Instead, voices weave in and out, remaining in motion whilst trying to grapple with multivalent understandings of power operating in pragmatic and imagined situations. The purpose statement (“Fuck Yo Shit Up. Maybe?”) posits and element of doubt or uncertainty. In many ways, this purpose statement highlights the stark differences between Extended Foreplay and Pandora’s Rag. At the very least, Extended Foreplay is angrier. But it is also not comfortable with itself nor with its self-articulated leftism. The zine infuses queer politics into the structure of its writing. It makes aggressive claims, but in the very same breath retreats to admit an uncertainty. The “maybe” is included with care. As the anger flares, it is immediately brought back into critical inquiry.

“The theorization was highly, like I would say, Foucauldian. I don’t think anything was written in academic jargon. For me too, that was important. I don’t think necessarily that all writing is activism. The process of collaborative project with other people who might have similar views but not the same is important to gauge. Its like a political practice. Its like brushing your teeth. You do it because it does certain work.”

Interviews shed light on the purpose statement and the theoretical influence for the zine. All of the participating contributors have had considerable background with Gender Women’s Studies curriculum (most at the University of Illinois) and all have a working understanding of the importance of an intersectional type approach. Two interviewees also explicitly expressed the influence of cultural studies work on their interpretation of the zine’s political relevance and content. I would argue that the “maybe” comes with direct influence of particular strands of feminist and queer theory. Furthermore, the zine was purposefully not high-falutin because its contributors were trying to hold their theoretical background accountable to practical activism. The zine became an exercise in bridging the gap between practice and theory. As an exercise in practical application, the zine making process allowed contributors to process information in a more critical way in order to rearticulate it for zine content. One interviewee likened zine making to studying:

Studying doesn’t always have to look like reading a book. But atleast some sense of
commitment to continually engage with something. And I think that’s what it was. None one us were diluted to think that we were going to change the course of human history... It was like working out. It helped me think through somethings to actually write it down. The space of extended foreplay definitely extended. I think it was the impetus for us being involved in other projects.  

This passage highlights the importance of the zine as a process for the contributors. As well as an actual text, *Extended Foreplay* became a mental exercise for those involved. As a commitment to continually engage, *Extended Foreplay* also became a commitment to rethinking what political activism looks like. The process of writing down and documenting influenced the further documentation of ideas and thoughts even after the zine production had hiatused. In this way, the zine is both part of a longer trajectory of organizing and a micro-project unto itself.

The contributors had all previously been involved in social justice organizing that ranged from involvement with STOP(Students Transforming Oppression and Privilege), FIST(Feminists Instituting Social Transformations), CACC(Coalition Against Coca Cola), and other locally based efforts to hold the University institution accountable for ongoing violences. This paired with the desire to put theory to practice highlights the zine’s focus on critiquing academia within its content but also with reorienting a collaborative method in the face of a largely bureaucratic university system. The contextual evidence for this appears with the fake dictionary definition of the word “whackademic” as well as an fake obituary for Chancellor Herman (who died in a vat of Coca-Cola).14 Whackademic refers to someone who has “has traded one’s soul for a paycheck and tenure”.15 Overlooking the problematic positioning of the soul, we might take this dictionary blurb as a direct critique on the university and the role it plays in curtailing interests that do not suit that of its corporate style. This brief zine article was directly in The Herman obituary comes in direct response to the previous anti-Coke struggles on campus and Herman’s failure to take CACC demands seriously.
“you can do what ever the fuck you want with it. you wanna copy it again and pass it out to a class? sure. all it is is a photo copy. we're not getting paid, or paying anyone. they are thoughts we have had and like and want other people to think about, we don't own them, or really author them.”

As the quote above points out, authorship of Extended Foreplay is not owned by anyone. In fact, the text is concerned with complicating ownership of knowledge and the positioning of an author in relationship to the knowledge produced. As Foucault notes, “it would seem that the author’s name, unlike other proper names, does not pass from the interior of a discourse to the real and exterior individual who produced it; instead, the name seems always to be present, marking off the edges of the text, revealing or at least characterizing, its mode of being.” The author becomes more than an ancillary citation to an individual creator. Authorship reinscribes a false stability in the ownership of thought and reflects a dependence of the sanctity of the liberal thinking subject. When we put authorship into dialogue with neoliberalism’s focus personal responsibility, the ambiguous authorship in Extended Foreplay becomes conscious political commentary on neoliberal subjectivity conferred by productivity. In the specific context of the academy as an institution charged with the task of tagging knowledge with institutional and authorial affiliation, Extended Foreplay also reads as a critique of the very academy that has enabled its existence.

If authorship is supposed to designate from where a text is born, the lack of author distinction disrupts a search for origins. How can we trace Extended Foreplay and its importance without searching for historical origins? How can we place it in a specific socio-historical context while also acknowledging the context of our desire to write its history? Ongoing and never truly complete, the meaning changes as we read it in different spaces and temporalities. My reading of Extended Foreplay is invested in rooting it as discursive but also material in order to think about what the production can do as an organizing strategy. Its structure and content proclaim queer political interest and method. I position queer more forcefully as an active investment than a sexual identification. Reading the zine as a queer text, we can reorient our imagination of what being queer means. We can further articulate queerness
and its political relevance when we put queerness into conversation with issues we might not think to be related. Our critiques of US imperialism, local policing, pop cultural icons, neoliberal economic policy, academia and the production of knowledge can all be made more dynamically when we situated them in conversation with queerness and the politics of ‘othering’.

Almost all of the zine contributors would lean toward queer sexuality. Barry notes, “Thinking about my sexuality definitely came about at a very specific time...I remember sitting down... I don’t want to co-opt. I don’t want to be somebody that says oh queer is the vanguard. I don’t think I perform straightness in a heterosexual way. And I don’t want to be associated with the histories of heterosexuality as an identity.” Barry already positions his sexuality as politically charged and entrenched within a long history of heterosexual privilege. He highlights how it more productive to think about how to use queerness to think about cultural production as political activism. This allows queer identification to remain responsive and changing. Specifically in its ambiguous authorship, lack of self-proclaimed theme, and unsure purpose, Extended Foreplay offers itself as a queer text. The zine implicitly interrogates our assumptions of origin, Knowledge, and Truth (here I invoke capitalization to refer to the liberal version of both which assumes a transparent acceptance of something as uncontested apolitical fact). In addition, the zine’s purpose statement remains critical of the probable left leaning audience that will find Extended Foreplay interesting enough to read. Instead of a call to blanket revolt, the artifact calls for a critical inquiry of those statements we want to make so loudly and aggressively.

“quite literally, i read it as conversation that is casting a wider net than our living rooms. most of its content reminds me of the way the people who work on it all talk to each other. it’s a mixture of frivolity and seriousness (i really don’t think this is a word). and this works to convey what i really think is at the heart of EF-- politics should be in everything. that our queer/feminist/radical politics can and should be applied to the way you look at even the most innane shit, like ellen or misses piggy. and doing that is fucking fun, you know?”

Extended Foreplay’s content forces us to consider how so many different styles and interests can exist within one publication. Collectively, Extended Foreplay issues display a stylistic range that includes fake
dictionary entries, poetry, a playlist, both fake and real public service announcements, an obituary notice, collages, love letters, instructional guides, ruminations on local policing activity, fictional short stories, and short narrative memoirs. Categorizing it as an LGBT student publication would fail to account for its commitment to interrogating the identity politics which have bolstered LGBT as a coherent identification. Although I argue there is no straightforward unified theme, Extended Foreplay pushes us to draw connections between the individual pieces in order to imagine a politics of solidarity based on similar struggle as opposed to traditionally identified feminist or queer issues.

As the quote above mentions, politics should be everywhere. The zine attempts to highlight how US imperialism and globalizing capitalism works in intimate spheres. In the first issue, an article entitled “Corporate Diversity is Cowabunga Dogshit” interrogates the drive toward multiculturalism in the corporate enterprise. Diversity can be mobilized to create niche markets and to designate proper examples of what difference looks like in order to be tolerated. As Wendy Brown writes, “the rhetoric of ‘teaching tolerance’ relegates enmity or intolerance to the construed narrow-mindedness of those who are more childlike, less formally educated, and, above all less individuated than enlightened moderns.”

Purchasing power stands in for equal rights as tolerance discourse veils necessary conversations about imperial legacy and the neoliberal indexing of democratic rights and privileges. The second issue of Extended Foreplay includes a piece that advocates stealing from corporate booksellers such as Borders. The article undermines Kantian universal maxim ethics in order to posit a possible resistance to the corporate merchandising of knowledge. The third Extended Foreplay includes an article on the economic crisis and stimulus checks. The two page piece entitled “$600 Stimulus Check Seriously...Fuck That” considers how neoliberal economic logic that shifts state responsibility to private corporations and individuals. It also considers how policing in low income communities of color increases in these troubled economic times as a means of regulating borders and boundaries. Through disciplining and punishing ‘surplus’ populations that are marked as deviant and unproductive, we can focus on individual
pathology and individualized solutions to systemic economic oppression. In this logic, a $600 check can placate people in order to stymie collective organizing. In addition, the third issue contains a short narrative blurb that thinks about local communal eating habits that might disrupt a public/private divide whilst reorienting the political value we place upon our meals and our food practices. The piece states:

I will not give my money to restaurants, when I can give money to my friends. Simple subversions of the ‘capitalist machine’. A meal and some conversation beats a meeting and note-taking...Let’s start feeding each other. Sharing our knowledge. Becoming each other’s own experts. Creating alternatives. Let’s smash this public/private divide and fill our bellies - fill our brains with REVOLUTIONARY LOVE.²⁴

This brief excerpt highlights a possible alternative to buying food at restaurants. It sees politics in dinner meals and imagines activism done in the very process of eating dinner. Though not entirely prescriptive, the article offers a possible example of rethinking our position within a violent and racist economic system. These articles are specifically focused on illustrating the connections between economic violence and the racism and classism that it perpetuates.

Extended Foreplay is also explicitly concerned with policing, both locally and more abstractly. An untitled article about the problem of police officers in Champaign schools pairs nicely with a second issue piece on Brian Chesley, a black Champaign teenager who was accused of trespassing and suffered physical abuse by police in Douglass park. In the second issue, “Breaking Borders” considers how policing of particular spaces with borders and boundaries functions part and parcel with US imperialist discourse and action. “The Revolution Will Not Come With Freedom Fries” questions the idea of the nation also employs an anti-imperial critique of solidarity.²⁵ This article was written in direct response to the choosing of Alva for keynote speaker at the 2008 MCBLTGACC conference. Each of these articles imagines the state as a violent actor. Instead of advocating an anarchist mentality, most of the writing stresses the importance of rooting oneself within multiple struggles for social justice without having to
employ a transcendent teleological end goal.

The zine centers tropes of race, class, gender, and sexuality in its analytical framework. All of the articles tackle organizing strategy and do so on a number of different planes. Theoretically and practically, it posits a critique of the radical, the feminist, the queer as subjectivities. In many ways, the contributors attempt to attach these privileged positions to their mirky contextual pasts. “Why Not a Women’s Center” illustrates how a student led ‘feminist’ project is also implicitly invested in owning a space, which cannot be disconnected from the capitalism that has positioned this student activism as unproblematically progressive. Miranda Joseph notes that we must remain critical of the “complex complicity with and resistance to capitalize offered by community”26. The women’s center article implicitly baits the question of the relationship between community and capitalism because it takes discomfort with a seemingly well-spirited student movement.

Similarly, the zine takes vitriol with the liberal LGBT movement on campus, but also nationally. The contributors reflect on what Michael Warner has identified as a shift in the LGBT rights based movement. He writes, “Its face is now dominated by a small group of national organizations, an equally small group of media celebrities, connected to a network of big money politics that revolves around publicity consultants and campaign professionals and litigators”.27 In tow with his observation, editorials call out The L Word, Queer Eye for the Straight Guy, and the HRC as specific examples of the influence and reiteration of this changing LGBT movement. We can read the short fictional story entitled, “I’ve Stopped Zipping Up My Fly” as a response to the politics of assimilation and respectability that the LGBT rights based movement proliferates in its search for legitimacy.28 In the story tension arises from public indecency on a city bus. The people on the bus are appalled that the narrator shows his penis in public. Here, we might read the story as a symbolic reference to a queerness that refers to the abhorrent other in juxtaposition to a dignified well-to-do American citizen. Jasbir Puar writes of the “emergence of a disciplinary queer (liberal, homonormative, diasporic)subject into the bountiful market and interstices of
state benevolence, that is into the statistical fold that produces appropriate digits and facts toward the population’s optimization of life and ascendency to whiteness: fully fledged regulatory queer subjects and the regularization of deviancy”.

Multiple zine articles draw from her definition of “homonationalism” as well as Lisa Duggan’s idea of “homonormativity” in order to situate a critique of the LGBT rights based movement. No where do any of the articles advocate solidarity with LGBT student organizations such as PRIDE or Ladies Lovin’ Ladies. If anything, the zine calls for a reexamination of our organizing tendencies in order to imagine more effective coalition building on the basis of similar struggle as opposed to sexual identity or national affiliation.

Much of the appeal in Extended Foreplay comes from its use of humor and its turn to pop culture. In invoking the pop cultural as political, the zine can traverse between theoretical and practical producing interesting readings on the most mundane subjects. In this sense, the zine utilizes symbols and images that resonate with audiences who might not have an extensive background in queer or feminist theory. In the first issue, Extended Foreplay printed a fake obituary for Ellen Degeneres. One article also presents a fake pamphlet page from CALF (Citizens Against Lisa Frank). The pamphlet accuses Lisa Frank (a well known sticker maker) of terrorism based on her overt use of gay, drug, and anti-Christian iconography (unicorns, mushrooms, and kittens with angel wings). The sarcastic voice highlights the Christian Right’s worst fears. It would appear absurd to regard Lisa Frank as a terrorist to the American Spirit, but very similar arguments have been used in the past in order to galvanize national anxiety surrounding un-American ‘Others’.

In its third issue, Extended Foreplay contemplates how we might take Miss Piggy to be a queer icon. By writing about Miss Piggy, Lisa Frank, and Ellen DeGeneres, Extended Foreplay locates politics anywhere and everywhere. In some ways, we can infuse our own politics into the popular in order to draw inspiration from sources that might otherwise depress us given the current state of affairs. In the case of Extended Foreplay, reappropriating American pop cultural icons changes their meaning and
creates counter discourses to their hegemonic dispersal. Time and again, Extended Foreplay (in its content) invokes a queer method to think about how ongoing histories of state violence interact with non-normative bodies and ideas. It privileges a radical, queer, feminist perspective even though it attempts to acknowledge the limits of that perspective. In this sense, the zine becomes a collection that is constantly trying to work itself out – constantly trying to offer its point of view without trying to prescribe solution, but ultimately always struggling with the limits of its own activism.

Extended Foreplay is not without fault. Even in its attempt to remain accessible, its content appeals to a narrow audience. Although it circulated at the 2008 Chicago Dyke March, Extended Foreplay was the product of various privileged positions (young college students). In addition to this, it was only really around for six or seven months. Yet, its contributors also went on to work on other projects together including movie making, food collectives, and a youth summer camp for local children.\(^\text{32}\) It is hard to quantify the impact and importance of Extended Foreplay, but for those involved the zine project became more than just a task or a deadline. The political significance of the zine was more than just content produced. Rather, Extended Foreplay offered a way to establish an already mobilized network of individuals dedicated to engaging in similar queer political projects.

“but that weekend was actually a big turning point in my life, i think, and the zine was part of that. i remember it being the impetus of us going to that zine store last summer.i remember reading the 2nd issue, the one with the funny butt cover?, outside at a concert. it had the poem, the night i cried on your couch, and i thought about the way that the zine was a collection the my memories at the time that they’re written, too. what i was working on, and what my friends were working on, and how those projects defined my life, in a way.”\(^\text{33}\)

For the people involved, Extended Foreplay became more than a singular project. As the quote illustrates, the zine was an archive of memory for those involved and it reflected the emerging radicalism for those involved. All of the three interviewees stressed the importance of thinking about the zine as a collective project, citing collaboration as a fundamental component to their fond memories. As a collaborative project, there was no president or any officers for that matter. The zine-makers did not even pursue student organization status. Individual articles were written then presented to each
other sometimes only hours before compilation time. The collectivity of writing and producing was also a collective memory, a collective feeling. So much academic work disregards the lived emotions of the subjects of study, but how can we account for the importance of Extended Foreplay without thinking about the role it played within the intimate lives of people who became friends through the process? As Ann Cvetkovich writes, “Lesbian and gay history demands a radical archive of emotion in order to document intimacy, sexuality, love and activism, all areas of experience that are difficult to chronicle through the materials of a tradition archive”. How fun is social transformation if it does not chart the joys and friendships made by those involved in local activist projects? Extended Foreplay might offer a small (though not unproblematic) example of how people might reorient themselves toward a queer political organizing strategy. Not to say that everything must look like a zine, but how might we imagine our friendships themselves to be queered by overt politicization? How can invoke Extended Foreplay to tell a story whilst also telling a story of Extended Foreplay? My focus on this zine is a small component of a larger project that might account for and archive stories that would otherwise slip through the cracks of archival work. And perhaps academic work that might critique queer activism can be used practically to offer alternatives for social transformation but also alternatives for further academic work. The projects we participate in change not only our life trajectories but also the way we interpret those trajectories. In reading Extended Foreplay as both a queer cultural production and a instance of queer memory making process, it forces us to expand the analytical frameworks we use to think about the zine, thereby producing a reading that might more readily document its significance as activism.
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