

Terre Thaemlitz

Admit It's Killing You (And Leave): Sound/Reading for Gay Porn, Text excerpt from *Deproduction*, 2017
JP: Comatonse Recordings.

When Terre Thaemlitz says the word "heteronormativity" I hear: a paradigm of power relations organized around sexualized differences. I say sexualized differences and not sexual difference because the paradigm exceeds essentialized biology and functions via the sexualized distribution, assignment, and recognition of differences as such – of race, sex, age, ability, class, position, role, power differential. Heteronormativity in this sense refers to the paradigm of force to which we are *all* (regardless who we sleep with) subjected. But if heteronormativity is not bound to acts or identities and is far more insidious and ubiquitous, what can we do about it *here* in the context of this show? Can Thaemlitz's work remind us that even non-reproductive receptivities (in both art and sex) remain heteronormative?

Terre Thaemlitz's 2017 commercial release of *Deproduction* (on an SD card) includes five audio files, two video files (one in English, one in Japanese), and a pdf (containing one document in two parts, offered in four languages). Contrary to a comparably scaled modernist *Gesamtkunstwerk* or postmodern intertextual maze, *Deproduction* makes no claims to or about "wholeness." No part is primary, no combination of parts leads to synthesis, parts are neither fragments nor autonomous. Parts unromantically remain parts – bits of a thing that work contextually (a video installation at documenta 14, an "album" for music fans).

Menstrualities offers printed individual pages of one of the two parts of the pdf to be reassembled and taken home by viewers.

Does this presentation complicate communication of the text's contents? Yes.

Is the choice of this presentation the result of economic and ideological conditions? Yes.

Is it a violation of "the work" to de-contextually receive in this way? Yes.

But part of the point of a work that never made claims to wholeness to begin with is to acknowledge that expropriation is our horrific norm. The veneer of wholeness – in families, politics, *and* "critical" art works – has always come at the cost of violence.

If we want more than another self-affirming moment of art exhibition experience economy ("why yes, I, cool-queer-art-viewer, am against families too!"), we're left to seek out the SD card and put in the time. But obviously even this also won't do *that* much. It would just be a small part of "the grimly realist, anti-globalist, anti-humanist model of democratic engagement" Thaemlitz proposes. As Thaemlitz writes elsewhere, "the revolution," if anything at all, "will be hard to swallow." (BD)