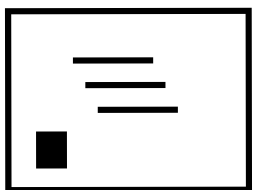# CONGENIAL TELEGRAM NUMBER 1

MAKE A ZINE!

You can make a zine like this one. Go to: github.com/jessdriscoll/congenial-telegram. The 8pg text zine template is designed to work with Open Office, a free open source word processor: openoffice.org. Once you download and install, go to FILE > NEW > Templates and Documents. Replace the text with your own, then go to FILE > EXPORT AS PDF, and share with the world! Don't forget to print it on paper. It looks great.

When I started my blog again, it had to be basic. It was the bigness, the complexity of WordPress that made me quit last time. My blog is written in Markdown and Jekyll, hosted on GitHub Pages, and I love blogging again. GitHub is a code publishing platform, but it's best feature is sharing. Making anything is hard, but if I can borrow some of what you've already done, making can be easier. When a user creates a new repository, GitHub suggests a random name. The suggestion it gave me was CONGENIAL TELEGRAM--literally too perfect. It had to be my new zine.

Recently, I bought my name dot com and changed as many of my online accounts as possible back to my name. My name is how you will find me online. My name is how you will see me.

But this zine needs a title. Until this week, I thought I'd call it ALL DAY BREAKFAST (it's my favourite meal). Then I spent most of Friday creating a template in Open Office. And as I tried to get it perfect to make this zine the easiest part of my routine, I thought, I should share this.

A few years ago, I started a project to make a zine a month. It lasted four. I'm an on-and-off blogger. Been at it since 2002, but never in one place, and not always for very long. If one were to add up all my archives, I have nearly 20 years of posts. But those 20 years don't seem impressive when they're scattered across Livejournal, Tumblr, Twitter, and multiple WordPress installations.

A couple of years ago, I started a project to make a zine a week. Monthly was too long; daily was too much. Weekly felt almost possible (and impossible at the same time).

The first few weeks were sporadic, but I found my enthusiasm. Once I picked a day, I found my rhythm. I called the project SUNDAY ZINE, and at the end of the year, I had 50 8-page quarter-size zines. And then I stopped.

A year ago, in a desperate attempt to prove I was still an artist, I made a broadside zine in Pages! on my phone! every day in August! (How did I forget August has 31 days??) It wasn't a project, only an impulse that I needed to do SOMETHING because it had been too long. None of them were very good, but they were words on a page. They were SOMETHING.

Since then, I've formed the idea that what I need is a single title, a regular publication, a system and a deadline within which to hold my work. But then again, I've spent most of my life insisting I can't do a thing until I have the right name for it. When I started blogging, it was at the URL homoeroticsubtext.blogspot.com. My first domain (bought with my parents's credit card) was dammitcarl.com. I came of age on the Internet in the days before anyone used their real names. When I joined Twitter in 2006, it was early enough to claim my name, but that wasn't what we did then.

Nearly everything I have made online is under another name. Even the fiction I've written and sold (like most authors who write erotica on the side). A pseudonym is easy to change, unlike the name I use IRL, the name on my birth certificate. If I make a thing under another name, there's an escape. But if that name is my own, I have to bear the shame of being seen, of being known.

Recently, I became a blogger again. I've always been a diarist, an archivist, but I save most of it for my paper notebooks, two boxes worth since high school.