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SPEAKERS

Olivia N, Theo

Olivia N 00:03

Today is January 9 2023. I'm Olivia Newsome interviewing FiO virtually over zoom. Do I have permission to record this interview? Yep. Do you know you can stop recording at any time?

Theo 00:16

Yes.

Olivia N 00:18

Can you say your name, age and pronouns?

Theo 00:21

I'm Theo, I'm 18, and I use they/them.

Olivia N 00:25

How would you describe yourself?

Theo 00:29

I think I'm like a lot of things. I don't know, I grew up in a lot of places. And I kind of a mix of everything that I lived and everything, my culture and who I am right now and what I learned what I like to do, I guess, and I'm a lesbian. So through that was also that.

Olivia N 00:52

Can you tell me where you're from? Where you grew up? And kind of what your childhood was like?

Theo 00:58

Yeah, I'm from Brazil. I'm from his aefi, which is like a town near the beach. It's a really big town. I think it's like the fifth biggest in Brazil. Like, it's not big comparing to New York, but it's like, maybe 3 million. And yeah, it's, it was a good childhood, I guess. I mean, not really, but I wasn't. I felt quite like trapped in the place that I grew up in. And in my family, I have a very weird family, because they're not

necessarily conservative. But they are because they're resilient. So it was quite weird, but I do all of them. And they made a lot of things that I am today. And that's cool. I'm sorry, I don't think I'm answering this like incredibly well. No, don't

Olivia N 02:04

apologize, you're doing a good job. We talk more about what it was like growing up, when you said they're not conservative, but they are resilient if you could talk about that. And what it was like growing up with a little bit more conservative family as a lesbian.

Theo 02:19

That's yeah. I mean, my, my, I grew up with a single mom, my dad doesn't really exist. But my dad is not like he does exist. He just doesn't talk to me. But he, like he is not a conservative men at all. Like, he's a very open mind everything. He was a dancer for like, his entire, like, life up until his 20s, I guess when he married my mom. But, and my mom was actually the most like fried out of her three sisters. She has two other sisters beside her. But I don't know, I guess, my main, like, they all are very white looking. So that also gives some kind of the race in Latin America, I think it's kind of complicated, because it's viewed very differently than people view it on the US. So even if you're not completely white, if you look like you are white, you know. And just like, my dad's half black, and I look, as I look and I do identify with like, because identifying as something else doesn't make sense to me. And that also gives you a lot of like, I'm trying to find a word in English because I can only think of it in Portuguese.

Olivia N 03:52

You can just say it in Portuguese.

Theo 03:56

But it's as if you have like this status above other people in Brazil, because you have kind of Oh, god, my mind is not thinking in English. I'm really sorry. It's they never were like, outright, like, prejudiced against other people. But they did have a lot of internalized stuff that they repeated to us. And especially like my grandparents and my aunts. My mom was usually the coolest, but I live with my entire family kind of but they didn't realize that they were doing something that they had this against other people. So every time that I would confront them as I do now, they will always be like, Oh, but what are you saying I have this and this. I have always helped this and this, but they don't really realize that they're being biased against other people. So I guess that's more it. And now like, politically what's happening in Brazil is kind of really shit. I don't know if you saw what happened last night. But

Olivia N 05:12

they the uprising.

Theo 05:16

Yeah, not really an uprising. It's like a fascist. What happens to the Capitol? They did the same.

Olivia N 05:22

Yeah. Like the fascist overthrow thing.

Theo 05:25

And yeah. My, like, my grandparents vote on that person. And that was a big like, for me, when they because they're mad about it. They're very insane. And, you know, they don't really see that as a big deal. So I don't know if that's a complicated thing, navigating family, because we're always told, and I think that's a very Latin thing to the family is the most important and we can't like push back from them, like, separate ourselves. But yeah, I think that's it mostly.

Olivia N 06:03

Did you like attending high school?

Theo 06:07

I did. I did love attending high school. I attended high school in Portugal. I moved here when I was I think 13/14. And I went to a theater, high school. So everyone was doing like everyone wanted to do the same thing was, like, with a bunch of hippies and like alternative people. And I don't know, we all we've fought a lot, because there was a lot of feelings involved all the time, people were very open with their feelings and very, like, they knew how to access them. But that was like a place where I truly felt comfortable and start started, like exploring a lot of things about myself that I know, I wouldn't have the space to do. So in a regular high school. And I do carry these people with me like, they're amazing.

Olivia N 07:02

Why did you guys end up moving from Brazil to Portugal.

Theo 07:07

My mom was like, in a really tough financial situation in Brazil. And we were having like difficulties to, like find her another job where she could pay for me. So my, we have Portuguese citizenship. So we could, like come here without needing a visa and everything. And it wouldn't be such a complicated process. And she didn't like being there anymore. Like she felt very like, ordered by her friends and her community and people because she was kind of different, I guess, in a system of mind. Because my grandparents used to be rich. So she didn't hang out with rich people. And then she wasn't rich anymore. Things. Yeah. So I guess that was it, too. She was doing her Master's like thesis too. And she did it on a place here. So that was also an excuse to come more, I think. But it was mostly because she didn't want to be there anymore.

Olivia N 08:23

So you mentioned it briefly about how your mom grew up wealthy grew up with money and like your grandparents used to have money and you guys don't anymore, and you were struggling with money in Brazil? Can you talk more about how class and money influenced you growing up?

Theo 08:42

Yeah. I think they started kind of like, breaking a lot. Like since I was three, so I don't remember having money. But I know it's something that happened. But what kind of essentially happened was that my grandparents, like, the place my grandfather owned, was, like, taken by some new laws and stuff that he couldn't, like, abide to, and he didn't have like his business anymore. So he, you know, was kind of

jobless at that time. And then his brother also, like cleared out my grandma's account. Like he took all the money and like the money that they had as a heritage for from their mom was gone. So he was like, Oh, sure. Was that's kind of bad. And also I think they were just very used to having money so they didn't really care about it and didn't spend it like carefully and with my mum would happen was just that, like she was like tricks, not tricks, robbed. I can understand. Like how to Translated to English, but I don't really know how to do that. But like she had a company, not a company, a small business. And they, she was robbed by several associates, who took everything. And she was very like in depth because of that. And, yeah, we kind of didn't have money after that. But I still went to a private school because they had a scholarship. So I was very around people who had money, but at the same time, like I didn't, and I was also, like I mentioned, I think I mentioned that I grew up doing a lot of artsy stuff. And I was very, like, I danced since I was pretty young, I sang I did lots of these things. And like, my, my school where I did, this was like a social project. So I was, like, in this place where I had all the art stuff. I like it was 90% people who were like, in very difficult situations financially, like people who lived in the favelas, and the work protected neighborhoods and everything that was going on, like, with police and everything. So I was around very rich kid, where it felt very like, but aside, and I've kind of didn't understand how to keep up with them, and I couldn't. But on the other side, I had like, very quite poor friends, but like, legitimately, people who were in very tough situations. And in that context, I was the kid who had more money. So I don't know, I think I am very, very, like, lucky that I've, I've had what I had, because I never like I always had food on the table. You know, like, even if we didn't have much, we always had like some rice and beans. And I was fed. And that's always good. But yeah, it was like a tough 10 years, but then we were okay. We came here and we were fine. So yeah.

Olivia N 12:17

Can you talk a little bit about how gender norms influenced you growing up?

Theo 12:26

I think it's the same with, you know, Brazilian families, because my grandma, at least she's a Sikh, she's evangelical. And I was kind of like her favorite kid. I don't know why. But she would always dress me a lot. And she wanted me to be this perfect little girl. And she calls me her Princess up until this day. And her doll, which I think it's a funny term. But it's kind of like, I have this cousin, who's perfect. Like, I love her. She's amazing. But she's like, the cream of the crop, you know, in the family, because everything's going on, right for her. She's gorgeous. She, she's like, academically successful, she has everything. She's a really cool person. And I always wanted to be like her, I guess. And she was very feminine, too. So I tried for a big while to be very feminine. And I'm good at it. Like, I do theater, I can perform quite well. But it's just in Brazil, they really do expect you and it's especially I think girls are sexualized very young. So I started going out and parties and I started making out with people at like, 1112. And we, you know, we had to look a certain way for that to happen. And I guess I performed a little bit in that context, because I did like to feel like that fit my ego. I guess. It was good, especially when I was going through other stuff that wasn't that good.

Olivia N 14:19

Can you talk a bit about who or what influenced you the most growing up?

Theo 14:26

Yeah, I think who influenced me the most? I honestly do think that it was my mom, because like it's been me and her forever. And she she kind of did everything for me. And she's a fucking amazing mom. Like I'm really lucky. But also, I think, like since I left Brazil, I realized how much like Brazil shaped the way I think of things So I guess just growing up in that place, and just like my that's not really what I mean, but like my, my boxes, my categories they did shaped me into who I am. So I guess because that is a different experience there.

Olivia N 15:25

Now we're gonna move on to like a slightly different section. But can you talk about when you started to realize that your sexuality might be different from what was around you?

Theo 15:39

Yeah, I don't think I fully understood it. Until like, not even fully understood it, but I sort of until it was like 12. But I think since I was a little kid, I used to pick the boys who I was supposed to like. So my my friends will be like, yeah, like this boy. Fuck yeah, he's amazing. I like this boy, too. He's great. And then I go, like, start to get obsessed with these men that my friends also like, because I've felt belonging, I guess, of some sort. And then when I was, I guess, 1011, I met this one girl from like, she was from my class. And I don't know why, but I was like, insanely obsessed with her. Like, I thought she was amazing. I wanted to be her friends so much. Like, when I went to her house, I had to like the same things that she liked. I researched about it. I, I researched the whole life of One Direction. I knew everything about it, just so that I could talk about with her. And yeah, I guess that's what when I realized like, oh, maybe something's kind of off here, since I have never felt this way about them. Ever. So yeah. And then I actually had friends who, like, turned out to be queer. And I realized that that was an option. And it just went from there.

Olivia N 17:10

When did you realize that you had queer friends? How old? Were you?

Theo 17:16

I think I was 1211. Yeah, for the first time.

Olivia N 17:23

And then when you were around 12 For like, like, 11 or 12. You were like, oh, maybe being queer as a possibility. Did you identify as anything or just as queer?

Theo 17:31

No, I didn't. I like I only came to terms with it when it came to Portugal because I like fully fell in love with someone. And I think was like, okay, yeah, I don't think I can run away from this anymore. It's not just like, Yeah, I'm gonna kiss you, because you're cute. And we're friends. You know? So I guess it kind of changed from that. But I do. Like when I, I remember saying this to a friend. And it's such a it's so trippy. Because I she will be like, Oh, no, because some boy had just broken up with her. And she was feeling like very shitty. And she was, like, belittling herself, like, in terms of her appearance was like they exist for well, if I were men, I would totally date you. Well, you're like, the most perfect person. And then I'm like, why? What are you saying? But that's a conversation that I've had 1000s of times with

several different people when I was younger. So yeah. And then I had these two friends who started dating, and they were so that was actually kind of eye opening for me to

Olivia N 18:47

what were your earliest interactions with like queer spaces, either online or in person? Maybe at your theater school or your art school?

Theo 18:54

I think that in Brazil already, I was in a very clear group of friends. I didn't know what at the time and I don't think they did either. But we all turned out gay in a way in some some flavor of it. And but online I think was a big thing for me. Like when I started figuring that out. I got on Twitter. And yeah, just lots of lesbians in there. And I started talking to people and identified as bi for a while first, and then I came to, to identify as a lesbian. But yeah, I think that was the first time.

Olivia N 19:52

How did you find lesbian Twitter? Like, what kind of things were you seeing? And what year was this?

Theo 20:00

Maybe 2017 2017 I think it was through shows. I don't know what I was into in 2017. But it was probably like a TV show of some sort, like Pretty Little Liars or something. Yeah. And like, everyone was raving about it, and most of them were gay. That's quite odd. This is so cool. And then I started like talking about being gay and having these other people people relate to me. And that was very nice.

Olivia N 20:32

So you mentioned kind of briefly how, maybe at the time in Brazil, you didn't know, but like, all of your friends ended up being queer in some way. How did you guys how did you find each other? Either in Brazil or in Portugal? But like, how do you think you find queer friends? Like, where are you finding them? So like, at a sports, like a sports group, or like a club or?

Theo 20:54

Yeah. In Brazil, I think we just kind of gravitated, even though it was a big school, we it was all like, kind of artsy, or people. We were all like, those annoying kids that bring a like a guitar to school, and are jamming on the trees, you know, so that was kind of the overall experience for me there. But like friends who I knew work, we're just art school. I'm, I've done theater, for high school and for college, and we just find each other. And honestly, in my school, like, majority of the people work, we're, I think, like a good 60 70%. So it's kind of hard not to find the people in the spaces that I'm included in.

Olivia N 21:42

What was it like being in majority queer spaces growing up?

Theo 21:49

It is very weird, because I think you kind of live in a bubble. And then just like, I come home to my family, and then I'd be like, what, what, what are these people saying, like, what's going on? That doesn't make any sense to me. And I realize that everyone's right. That it's felt kind of isolating, but like

for myself, like I am purposely, purposefully isolating myself from these people, and I don't really realize what's going on in there. But then I'm actually confronted with the real world. And I'm like, Oh, my God. That's, that's crazy. They do think that they? Yeah,

Olivia N 22:31

I know exactly. Like, I always forget that, like men exist in ways in which they can interact with me. Yeah. It's so funny, because, right. I'm a lesbian. I'm a dyke diamond, any male friends. I have a dad, but he's a dad and not a man. But then I'll be like, read my I work in a field that's dominated by mostly non men. I'm a librarian when archivists either there aren't that many men around. And so I always forget. And then like, one of them talks to me, and I'm like, oh, like, they see a man thing. And I'm like, wow, y'all really think that way?

Theo 23:10

Yeah, it's insane. Really? Oh, wow.

Olivia N 23:12

It is very jarring.

Theo 23:14

Because even my men, friends, and I don't really have a lot of them. They're theater men friends. So they they are different. And I don't have any men in my family. Except for my grandpa. So also, my uncle, not a big and it's that they're not men. They're just my grandpa and my uncle.

Olivia N 23:42

When did you remember your first exposure to lesbianism?

Theo 23:47

When I thought it was. Yeah, I think it was my my two friends. They started like, they didn't like officially date. But we all knew they were dating. Like, they didn't call it like each other a girlfriend but they would be making out in public places. You know? So I think it was 1112

Olivia N 24:14

How did that make you feel?

Theo 24:17

Oh, it was great. We all have them. Like we were cheering for them. And it was actually very funny because they wouldn't be like they wouldn't be like not touching because they weren't touching but they wouldn't be like, in a way that's romantic it was more sexual. So every time that we'd be doing something, and it was just like a little kiss something very quick. I'd be like, Oh my God, look at my friends. They're so cute to this. They're so cool. That seems like such a good thing to have. And I think it was more like that. But I really didn't think about it at the time because I didn't want to date Anyone I guess?

Olivia N 25:04

No, I get that. You were young, and like other stuff was going on? When did you start identifying as a lesbian? And how did you get there? How did you change from being bisexual to identifying as a lesbian?

Theo 25:20

Yeah, I started identifying as lesbian when I was 15. I started identifying as bisexual when I was 13. I think I started pretty young. But I guess I just realized that I had my little pipeline. Like, I came out as bisexual first, because I legitimately fell in love with this girl that was like, Okay, I don't think this is like a straight person's behavior, like cannot be straight. So my logical conclusion, because I've had crushes on boys, I hadn't really I just picked them. But I, like went to bisexual and it felt less scary, I guess, to me, because I have such a family doesn't mean and I didn't think like, okay, at least I can still end up with a man. And that'll be fine. Everyone's gonna be chill with it. But it didn't happen like that. So then, a couple of years later, I had this thing with a trans guy who at the time, just identified as a dyke. And he was like, a very gay person. And he opened my kind of my views into some stuff. And I was like, okay, maybe I don't like men that much. Because we started talking a lot about queerness. But it was something that I hadn't as much before, because I wasn't in my theater high school yet. And he kind of I went into identifying as queer back then, because it was like, I don't want to rule out the possibility of being with men. But I don't really feel bisexual either. Because there's such a, like, big prevalence of one over the other. And, yeah, then I went to Brazil, and Brazil, what happens is that you just go to a lot of parties, went to Brazil on vacation, and I made up with loads of people. And I was like, Okay, this is cool. I'm having sex with these people. And they're cool. And they're mostly women, and I enjoy more. And then I went back to Portugal after like those two months in there. And it was, I got into the theater high school, I started having lots of lesbian friends. And then I realized that I felt no attraction to men. And with talking to all these theater people and also lesbians, I just went like, look, I think I'm one too. And I, yeah, went in there.

Olivia N 28:13

of clothing, jewelry, makeup, tattoos, piercings, or other body mods, assisted with affirming your identities or your lesbianism?

Theo 28:20

Yeah, definitely. I, I, like, I don't really know how to do this, but I currently, like been feeling very, like close to portunus. Like, I really liked the term. And it's something that's been feeling very, like cozy to me. But I don't know if other people would see me as Butch. So I am not sure if I should actually identify with it. But it's something that has been like very, you know, cutting close, I guess lately. And I don't know since I stopped dressing femme I've been feeling much more comfortable. And like looking like a lesbian. It's very affirming to me. I love going like on the street and having all people look at me sideways. You know, because I'm like, I'm doing it right today. And almost no men hit on me ever. So that's also also a win. That's always a win. And I don't know, it's I've been currently liking the way I will because I look more like a lesbian. And I've been feeling more affirmed in like, everything that goes on with me and so like gender and richness and I don't know, I guess I I can't explain it. But yeah, that's mostly it.

Olivia N 29:57

What about art? Like you mentioned being a fee are gay. Has any of that helped you with your lesbianism? Your queerness? Or your gender identity?

Theo 30:06

Yeah, definitely. I think firstly, like the people, everyone is very, like, I am in a very leftist, gay, like, open field. And majority of the people are very open to everything. So just being around those people have has helped me a lot. And I know that I had like the possibility to experiment with my gender and then reach to a conclusion because I wasn't that space. Because if I wasn't, it wouldn't work for me, like, I wouldn't ever feel comfortable to do that. But especially in Portuguese, because it's way harder, since we don't have neutral languages. And I've just, you know, like, not officially that least. But I also played a lot of men and a lot of dikes. They do usually cast me for those. And that's all good. Like, I really love playing men. And I, yeah, I think so. And also, lesbianism is very prevalent in at least one of my directors, one of the guys that I worked with place he loved to make some gay people kiss. And every play and there's no reason for it. Honestly, there was it didn't make any sense. And but he would think it was very aesthetically pretty then like agree. So I guess all that was helped me a lot.

Olivia N 31:48

So can you talk a little bit about your first encounters with lesbian sex? You mentioned how you were having sex with mostly women. When you were younger? What were your first encounters with lesbian sex directly as a new having queer sex or lesbian sex? And then indirectly, like, maybe porn or thoughts about lesbian sex? What attitudes? Did you have it before and around it?

Theo 32:16

Yeah. To be honest, I don't know if that's a bad thing. But I think I was having sex before I knew what sex was. So like, I remember being like six or something. And I was playing with my friends. And they were like, Let's go to blade doctor. There will be a whole lot of vagina touching. I don't know what's going on. But yeah, that happened. But I didn't understand that. And I didn't conceptualize that as sex. So I guess when I first like, was aware of it was what I, like, first fell in love with that person here in in Portugal, and I was 13. And she was already having some lesbian sex that she was aware of, and she will talk about it with me, never a great start. Not good. But still. We talk about it a lot. And she knew I hadn't, like at least not to a point where I was aware of it. And then I imagined having sex with her, which led to me looking at porn. Not good. And then, yeah. I just started having sex. When I went back to Brazil, and then came here.

Olivia N 33:37

Were you nervous?

Theo 33:41

I don't think I was because for my like, incredibly majority of times where I have had sex with a person who I didn't know I was drunk. So I guess I didn't have like that much inhibition in me at the time. But yeah.

Olivia N 34:03

And did you look when you were hearing about lesbian sex from this person that you had a crush on? Like, what were they saying about it?

Theo 34:16

Oh, okay. This is a hard one. But at the time she her best friend, she was kind of in love with her best friend who was straight was to let her do things to her. So she would just tell me of being like but this feels so good. And I'm like into this thing and it like how can she not feel anything else? How can she say that like she's straight and what's going on there? I think it was more like in that context. But then we had Saxon we it was alright. So things do go to those places.

Olivia N 35:02

So But sorry,

Theo 35:04

no, no, that's okay. I was just saying that I finished.

Olivia N 35:07

Okay. So your conversations were with a person that you had a crush on at 13 Mostly and because like they were into straight girl, consensually. Yeah, were there and then you watch lesbian porn, and then you were like, bad. So what was bad about it?

Theo 35:28

I know, it felt very painful. So very weird. Because, like, I don't look like that the the people that I like, had things with not sex yet, but didn't look like that the one that I knew, and that I was attracted to look like that. So it just didn't make a lot of sense to me. Like, It all sounded very loud. And they it was kind of very aggressive in a way that didn't seem pleasant. So I just didn't really love it. And I guess I decided it was not really for me.

Olivia N 36:13

No, I guess that so. You started having like lesbian sex very young. Yeah. Which I think is an anomaly. I don't think a lot of dikes we're having like lesbian sex. As, as young as you were. Maybe that's just like a like a my context. You're all the lesbians that I know. So you mentioned how you were having sex before you knew what sex was? What was sex ed? Like? Like, what were they talking to you about sex?

Theo 36:46

Well, you don't have it. In Brazil. There is no sex ed. I had a conversation with my mom when I was eight, because I went to ask her what a blow job was because like I had one passed by me. That was like, Yeah, give me a blowjob. And I was like, why was that? And then I went to ask for my mom. And she explained everything to me. But of course, she explained it in a way that happens to stray people. And that was it. I never had any sex ed.

Olivia N 37:21

So you never had any sex ed. But then you were ended up having like lesbian sex, and you were just like, hell yeah. That's so cool. Okay. And were there like conversations about lesbian sex? Like when you were younger that other people were saying, maybe like lesbians, like how lesbian sex is supposed to be like lesbians couldn't have sex. You were on Twitter, which you mentioned briefly, when Twitter conversations like,

Theo 37:53

I think I only got on Twitter, after I knew of lesbians. So I already knew what was going on. And I had already done like, some exploration. Like I, I've seen porn, I'd have like, some sort of knowledge of what happened and what it was. But I don't know, I think it was my friends, honestly, like the two that I mentioned before. Like, one of them is, like, really close to me. And the other one is my cousin. So. But she would talk to me about it a lot and be like, Oh, this happened. And this happened. Because it was so exciting for her. And yeah, so I guess that was the first talks that we've had, and then theater school and found a bunch of drugs, and we talked a lot about it.

Olivia N 38:56

Whoa. So most of your sex ed was just like conversations with partners that you were having sex with. And then with, like, your cousin, and maybe online or something.

Theo 39:09

Yeah. Mostly not people necessarily that I was having sex with. But like my friends who were who are ducks. I think mostly, I'd be like, I don't know if I like this. And they would tell me about their experiences with this. And just like, we'd sort things out.

Olivia N 39:32

So you mentioned a little bit earlier how lesbian or Dyk felt scary a little bit and so you didn't want to identify with it. Can you talk a little bit more through that and what that was like?

Theo 39:47

Yeah, I guess. Lesbian feels like a very heavy word. And especially because like in my like in Portuguese Still in Spanish, we, like I had weighed more. I didn't feel good calling myself like a lesbian in those languages, because it felt very, like dirty in a way. I guess it was easier for me to start in English. And it was like, Okay, let me go, let me and okay, that makes some sense. But it was a big, big process till I got there, I think because of like the cultural weight that's held on to it. So it's not really used in a court weigh in there. It's not just like a descriptor of a person. Like most of the times where I've heard the actual word lesbian instead of gay, it was derogatory. So it didn't really, it felt very scary. And also because it ruled out the possibility of men completely. And that was also scary in a like, familial context.

Olivia N 41:05

So you mentioned your family, and we're talking a little bit about lesbian. Did you? Did you have to? Did you ever come out to your family? Is that something that you think of? Do you believe in coming out? Have you come out multiple times? Does the phrase coming into your identity resonate with you more?

Theo 41:26

Yeah, I came out to my mom. But not like, I came out as a lesbian to her. Because I was being like, caressed by a guy. So I had to tell her because she was like, oh, no, he's just being like, he's your friend. Like, he probably just likes you and wants this and this and this. And that's like, no, he knows that's never gonna happen. And she was like, no, but why couldn't have a mom, I'm a lesbian. Okay, come on. And that happened when I came out to her. But then I had another cousin in the assembly, kind of like, do go around the family just telling that he was gay. And I never felt the need to do that with my family. But I think my mom just started, I was like, if you want to talk about it, it's okay. You can talk about it with whoever you want. But like, maybe not, this and this, but like, the rest of it is fine. You can like refer to the people that I'm with. You don't have to worry about all of that. So I guess it just went around. But I never really sat down with anyone and was like, oh, yeah, I'm a lesbian. Except for my mom.

Olivia N 42:43

And your mom was pretty cool with that. Maybe?

Theo 42:48

Not really. But she was already better. Because I had been out as bi for like, two three years before that. So she she knew I liked women. But I guess she was just kind of like, disappointed. But like, the hard part for me was the beginning just when she knew that I liked women, not when she knew that I didn't like men. But she grew into it, eventually. And now she's like, a super cool person. And she defends me for anyone who says anything. And especially like, she defends me a lot to my grandparents who are like twink people. Yeah. And, like, really cool. I guess it's just a matter of adapting, especially when you're Latina, and you don't really you grow up hearing those things. And we're so influenced by religion and Catholicism and the Jellicle churches. So that's also hard.

Olivia N 43:54

So, how did your views on marriage change before and after unified as a lesbian?

Theo 44:00

Yeah, they did. They did change a lot. I never imagined myself getting married. I guess before I wasn't something that I ever like, I really wanted like, I thought of it and just didn't really feel like something that I would want to do whatever. But from since I'm very young, too, so it's not something that it's like on the table for me right now. But I guess that after I started, actually, like, having relationships, not just like casual things with women, and being like fully being in love with people who did love me back was very, like, I started changing the way that I viewed things. And music is a big thing to me too. So I do have a marriage playlist that A ripe age of 18 that I will probably never use, but I think it's such a good playlist. And it's, like, my biggest reason for wanting to get married. But it's still something, you know. So now it's something that I'm totally open to and I guess I just love to have someone and be like, Yeah, my wife. I think that's very powerful.

Olivia N 45:27

How's your lesbianism been influenced by theory or academics in some way? If so, how?

Theo 45:34

Yeah, I did when I was starting to question, if I was a lesbian, really, and not bisexual, or not queer at the time, because I wasn't identifying as bisexual anymore. I read a lot about compulsory heterosexuality. And, you know, started on Twitter, lesbian manifesto, and then I read the whole thing. Not a great thing. It's quite confusing for some people. It doesn't work all the time. But some of that resonated with me. And then I went into research like Adrienne Rich, and then I read her whole thing on compulsory heterosexuality. And I was like, Okay, that makes a lot of sense to me. This, like, that was kind of my starting point where I started to confirm what felt real to me and what didn't. And yeah.

Olivia N 46:31

Have you been reading anything about bullishness at all? Because you mentioned how you've been feeling more aligned with that recently?

Theo 46:37

Yeah, I haven't been reading anything about bullishness not really like I'm reading Fun Home. And nice watch out for from Alison back that like I just finished on home. And I just got the book. And that's like, incredibly amazing. Just having all these many books wanted. But I think that I mostly was worth muchness. And it started to make sense with me through media. Like through film and TV shows and all that.

Olivia N 47:15

What movies and TV shows were you seeing butches that you aligned with? I know that a lot of other masks people in bunches have talked about there's not that many mask letters or that many? No. They just like skinny white firms on.

Theo 47:31

They don't really exist that much. But something that was very recently, and that's when I started, like really resonating with the world word because I kind of found this community of people who all did. And that was like, that's so cool. Like, then we started talking about what it meant to each other. But like a league of their own. The reboot was like an August, I think and I watched it like right when it came out. And like the insane amount of watches and that that was so cool. Like, honestly, drip.

Olivia N 48:08

Like everyone was texting. Everyone was like, Oh, I watch edits. I don't remember I haven't finished the show. But you know, the blonde one? Yeah. I'm just like, yeah. And then the picture. Yeah. And then the fat Butch.

Theo 48:26

I love them all. But he's like, God, no, five butchers on my screen. And I was like, oh, what's up? I have never seen that before. That is totally inside. God, okay, now I'm, I'm thinking about it now. But something that happened was that there are these two, two budgets who have like a very cool relationship in the show. And I do really identify with one of them the pitcher, and that she feels a lot me for a lot of my experiences. And I read a lot into things. So that character resonated with me, way too much. And then she has her whole little relationship with the blonde braid, which also ha. And I was

like, oh my god, Butch is having kind of a thing. Like, it's not canon, but it feels like something. And then I found out all these people on Twitter, obviously, who were like, I need this bushes to Butch together. Yes. And we just started talking about our experiences and how we felt about it. And like I started coming to witness and especially like, watch love with that. And that was so cool. Like that started to make a lot of sense to me, especially people who had identified as it for way longer than I had and started like, telling me their experiences and I felt validated in a way too.

Olivia N 50:00

like watch for books love. Is that what you mean? Yeah. It's something that you want to experience.

Theo 50:06

Yeah, I do. It makes a lot of sense to me. But it's something that I think I have always experienced. I just don't have them call myself Butch before. But majority of the people that I'm attracted to are mask. So, or not even mask but majority are, but I do like people that look gay. Yeah. So I guess that's it. How

Olivia N 50:38

does being Latinx inform in your interactions with lesbian community in your lesbian community and the broad lesbian community?

Theo 50:46

Yeah. I think I do have a lot of different experiences. Because my, like, my journey with lesbianism is quite unusual for like two of the people that I'm friends with now. So it did start pretty young, because, you know, kids in Brazil to be sexualized, very young. And that's not true for majority of the people in Ireland. That is absolutely not true. And also, like, the way that I perceive things I guess intertwines a lot more with, like, class and race. Like, it doesn't it's something that's not as how can I say this? It's snug as like, the Irish people, the queer Irish people that are my friends don't really think of it that much. But it is something that I have always seen. And, like been in it. So that it's not really like it doesn't make sense for me not to see everything is like a joint thing. So it's a lot of white queer spaces and Ireland to specially. And they do have different experiences. It's like very different experiences than I have an especially I think, to I, even though my I'm not particularly religious. I'm just like, I'm very spiritual, but I'm not religious in any way. Having religion is such a strong thing. Generally, not even in my family just for except for my grandma, who did always try to pass that on to me, also affects me in a way, I guess. Yeah, well be the pitcher. So

Olivia N 52:59

you're feeling like, are you feeling a little bit isolated or disconnected from like, the queer Irish community or the lesbian Irish community because of your experiences?

Theo 53:13

I think it is a bit isolating, but it's not like, I don't feel bad about it. It's just like, it's more like I'm opening other like, I'm broadening horizons for other people, then I, then they're like closing themselves off to me. It's just something that they never really thought to think about before. But I also do have a lot of international friends who are lesbians and Nicor. Like, from everywhere else and are not white. And they, like talk about it a lot with me. Typically, okay,

Olivia N 53:55

oh, yeah, sorry. My landlord is just, like moving things inside. And I'm like whatever. Anyways, where are you meeting these international lesbians? Are these international lesbians as in they are not from Ireland, but are in Ireland now? Yeah. Okay. And where are you meeting them?

Theo 54:19

I like I think it's a big phenomenon where the internationals really do gravitate towards each other, like at university. So in my university, I found a bunch of people. And I'm closer mostly to international people. And then I have a couple of friends who came with me from high school in Portugal to Ireland, and they are in other colleges. And then I like sort of being friends with their friends and they also have a lots of international people. And I don't know, I guess there's more than that. Because I do know a lot of people that aren't from I'm university, but I cannot figure out how I know that. I think it's just from being a

Olivia N 55:07

real, like they just find you.

Theo 55:09

Yeah. So

Olivia N 55:13

how does your generated? Wow, how does your gender identity inform your interactions with the lesbian community? Can you talk a little bit about what it's like being a non binary lesbian thing about gender non conforming? Lesbians and lesbianism?

Theo 55:27

Yeah. I, I'm very lucky with it, because like, I'm in a space where it's possible. Now. And it's, like, broadly, in general, not by everyone, but it's kind of like, accepted by people. And they're, like, all very respectful and things. So people will never done they meet, and they will always get not always, but they will get my pronouns, right. And if they don't, they will, like correct themselves right away, and just like apologize and move on. And I've talked about it with a lot of people. Like if people ask me about it, I will talk and what it means to me and my experience with it. But what I think it's harder for me, I am currently in kind of, it's the people that I'm attracted to, because I am mostly attracted to witches and people that are mask of center and all that is that they're usually not comfortable with me, because I am also very masculine looking.

Olivia N 56:38

Kind of so you're saying that the where you are in Ireland, right? Yeah, like the like the bushes and like the mask people that you're attracted to. are not attracted to other masks in butchers in Ireland as much is that like fear? Yeah. Okay. So it's like a lot of the butchers and masks people are more interested in firms. Yeah, Ireland.

Theo 57:01

And I think in Portugal, too, and in but not it's not that big a deal here because, like, theater, okay. But in general, they, they are much more inclined ated to other firms. And yeah. Okay.

Olivia N 57:23

So, what are your understandings of like, Butch and femme? And masking? Those kinds of conversations? Like, do you feel like attached to any of those words as a young lesbian? And where did you first learn about those words?

Theo 57:38

I think I first first learned about it on Twitter, probably, like, that's pretty much it. I was, I do feel very, like close to witness right now. And it resonates with me a lot. I think, mask falls flat. Sometimes, because there isn't such a history of it. It's more like an aesthetic thing. I think. And like Femme and Butch seem like historical identities in a way wear masks doesn't. But I yeah, I don't know how to explain it that well.

Olivia N 58:28

No, that was good. That was perfect. I'm not looking for any explanation. I'm just always so curious about where young lesbians are finding out about like mask and femme. And I don't know, are you like, have you seen like, the most recent internet discourses? I don't know if it's most recent, I probably have about like, Butch and femme. And then like the fems for fems, like fighting the femme for butches. And then like the weird people, the weird femmes doing like the vintage bums? Yeah, yeah.

Olivia N 59:06

Yeah, do you feel like Butch and femme are like masking them? Are identities that young lesbians are aligning with? Currently?

Theo 59:15

I think. Yes. But it's not. It's usually the people who do align with those identities are political people. So it's usually people with lots of political awareness. And, like, history, people, you know, so it's not just like any lesbian.

Olivia N 59:43

Like, yeah, no, that makes a lot of sense. Like, let's say that you're you're like a group of lesbians in Ireland. And you look out into the crowd and you're talking to people would anyone identify as like Butch mask or femme?

Theo 59:57

I think few people, not a lot. Like I think all the people that I know that identify as something like that are not Irish.

Olivia N 1:00:08

Okay. So can you talk a little bit more about what it's like making a meeting lesbians? In Ireland? Yeah, yeah, Ireland now.

Theo 1:00:24

It's not that hard for me, as I've said before, because like, I studied my, my campus is a conservatory. So it's like, music and theatre in there. A lot of gay people, we, like naturally gravitate, gravitate towards each other, I think we find each other pretty well, then we talk about it. Like, I need a person. And like, five minutes later, we will be having a full on conversation about our first love with a girl. You know. So it's, we like, we talk about our identities a lot. And we discuss that and our experiences because it is something fun and it's it's it's cool to have that camaraderie, I guess, of people who have like experiences that are similar to yours in a way even though they're they might be very different than others. But I guess that's more like it. And all of my my other friends who came with me too, are also doing a theater degree in the other university. So kind of everyone's gay.

Olivia N 1:01:35

Where are you guys hanging out as like, lesbians or dikes in Ireland? Where do you guys meet up?

Theo 1:01:45

Oh, okay. There's a bar that we go a lot. But it's not a gay bar. There is one gay bar in my my city. I do not like it. Personally, like, I think it's a lot of gay men. And, like, the songs are not good, which doesn't make any sense for me. Because it is like a bar that should have good music. And everything's overpriced. And I don't feel good in there. But it's honestly anywhere like we are in a lot of parks, and at each other's houses all the time. It's a safe space. So I guess houses are always a great one.

Olivia N 1:02:32

I really get the meeting and community and each other's houses as safe spaces. Can you talk a little bit about your experience with lesbian community spaces online a bit more? And have you noticed any struggle on building in person physical lesbian spaces?

Theo 1:02:53

Yeah. I, like got on Twitter, pretty young. And that's what how I found out of majority of my identity, things like sexuality and gender ways. Like I figured out I was a lesbian because of Twitter. And then I started having a lot of, like, mutual, who, who were hostile lesbians, and I started being actual friends with these people and like calling them and be like, talk about our lives. And like, everything that happened. And I think that's when starting to identify as a lesbian became more comfortable to me, is because I was like, I knew of so many other people who had even similar experiences to mine. And we're already feeling like, we're a step ahead of me, I guess is what I mean. And that was also really cool. And then when I started questioning gender and my, like being non binary, and trans and what that meant to me, and like if I was that, because I've never felt really connected to womanhood. And that's because I used to have some non binary people on Twitter, and because I was friends with some of them, and I started talking about their experiences with them, and they sort of resonating with me. And I guess that was kind of the way things happen to me. It's a very online generation two. So it's, it might not necessarily be the best thing, but it happened. It not happened. It helped me personally, like it was a journey that was cool. Even though it's not that great of a space anymore, and it doesn't feel that good because of the amount of discourse that is currently happening. But yeah to do like to meet actual queer people in real life and do like lesbian spaces. I think there's a bigger difficult for that, I think. Because there's no money like these spaces will not be funded. I guess. So like, we would give money, you bet. But they don't really care about that. So I guess my lesbian spaces and the people are the

people that I'm friends with. And whatever space that we're in it is lesbian space because we are lesbians. And it's kind of that

Olivia N 1:05:43

it makes a lot of sense. I'm always about making your space more gay with you and your with you and your dog friends. Yeah, real? No, I like that was. That was high school. For me, I think I'm lucky to be in New York City, because there are lesbian spaces. But like, other ways that I make the space more lesbian is with my lesbian of color friends, because a lot of the spaces are predominantly white lesbian space. Yeah. But what? What is my next question? What does identifying as a lesbian mean to you? Big question.

Theo 1:06:21

Yeah, that's a big question. I don't know. It's me. You know what I mean? Like, it's, it is such a big part of who I am, and how I see the world how I present in the world. And it's, it's just a weird thing for me to not, like, talk about it, not not really not talk about it, but to not have it as something that is important to me. So every time that you are, oh, no, it shouldn't make your sexuality your whole personality. And like, it's not my whole personality. But still, it's, it's a big deal. For me. It's something that I struggle with that now it's so important that I have it.

Olivia N 1:07:15

Wait, you know what, you something else?

Theo 1:07:19

No, I just, it's a hard question. And I'm trying to think, but it is a very big question.

Olivia N 1:07:25

No, think about it. And then what if I asked you a slightly different question, and then you can come back to that one? Yeah, I know. It's a big question. So this is a fun question. What lesbian spaces or communities do you wish existed? In your eyes, little world?

Theo 1:07:44

Any would be great. Like, any would be amazing. But like, just cool places for people to meet. You know, like, give me some queer libraries, give me some some stuff like that. Not necessarily, like alcohol spaces, or like clubbing and party spaces. Just like coffee shops and bookstores and things like that. will be very cool. But also s'mores. Everything just give me anything at all, I'd be happy.

Olivia N 1:08:20

So what does it mean to like, build and cultivate and grow your lesbian communities so you and your like, friends, you and your lesbian friends, the online spaces that you not only are in that you seem to participate in and you talk in, and you talk with other dogs and other budgets? So can you talk about what those spaces mean to you what your lesbian friends mean to you?

Theo 1:08:46

I think, honestly, that it's very important to me, like especially, like where I live right now. They're kind of my family. It's chosen family. I know. Okay, sorry. But in like, I'm not at home in there. I don't know anyone except for those other two people that came with me. And then I have this whole family of dogs that have experiences similar to mine, and are so validating to me personally, and all my Butch friends were amazing. And the all my film friends were also amazing, and everyone was so like, understanding of everything. And it, it just feels like a like it's warm, you know, it's that it makes you feel belonging, I guess. And it's good to have someone to vent about stuff and not have them be like, Oh, but that doesn't make any sense. Why is that important? Because they know why it's important. So we're gonna

Olivia N 1:10:01

go back to that question is What? What is identify as a lesbian mean to you?

Theo 1:10:09

Yeah. Okay. So what does it mean to me? I don't know, like, I am a lesbian I, it's one of the most prevalent things about it like me, like a person looks at me and they can tell that I am something, or at least I'm not a typical human straight girl walking around. I neither of them. So just like it influences everything. I think for me it influences how i like how I'm viewed by other people, it influences the way that I see other people. The way that I present in specially in work and stuff like that, is like, it takes me a lot of like, I'm not gonna say opportunities, because they're not necessarily like people see me in a very set way. Because of how I present in the world, and especially being a more masculine presenting person and being bush. I'm very categorize and it's harder to get some stuff. But it's not something that I'm willing to give up either because I just be sad. It just wouldn't work for me. So I guess it's Yeah, it is who I am. And it folds into everything.

Olivia N 1:11:50

What does lesbian Joy mean to you? When are you happiest as a dyke? What are you happiest as a lesbian?

Theo 1:11:59

I honestly do love just like being at a person's house. And just like having music on the background. Everyone just like drinking from a bottle of wine. And, you know, talking about it. I think that's very lucky to say but I love talking about stuff. And just the ways that it differs to all of us. And having this support is it's it's a big thing for me. And I'm really glad that we get to have that.

Olivia N 1:12:36

Is there anything else you want to talk about?

Theo 1:12:40

I don't know. I think I went through a lot.

Olivia N 1:12:44

Yes. So I'm gonna stop the recording but don't leave. Okay. Yeah. Well, by recording