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SPEAKERS

Olivia N

Olivia N 00:03

Today is January 12 2023. I'm Olivia Newsome interviewing Sophie virtually over zoom. So I have permission to record this interview. Yes. Do you know you can stop recording at any time? Yes. Can you say your name, age and pronouns?

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My name is Sophie Lopez, Alonso. I am 22 years old and my pronouns are

Olivia N 00:24

they them? How would you describe yourself? I would describe myself as I think I'm a very helpful person. I,

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I love to believe in people. I love to believe in things very strongly, maybe sometimes to a fault.

00:45

Yeah,

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I think that's how I describe myself, someone

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who's very helpful. Can you tell me where you're from? Where you grew up and what your childhood was like. And growing up Catholic? Yes. So

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I grew up in sunny LA and New Mexico where I am right now. It's a little touristy town. Very pretty. And it's also in probably the most Catholic region in all of Mexico. So, you know, I grew up Catholic, my family's all Catholic. Pretty standard for, you know, Mexican families.

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And,

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yeah, you know, I always grew up in the church going to church on Sundays, I did my first communion.

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And

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it was interesting, I think, as a lesbians who grew up like that.

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Especially because, you

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know, in my family, I think I am very lucky, because I have other gay family members who had come out before I was even born. So within like a part of my family, my mother's side. I always grew up kind of learning, you know? loving who you love us, okay. But then it My dad says Emily, I didn't like my greater like, contacts in school and church and everything. I was getting the exact opposite message. So that was really, really interesting. I remember there was like this one instance that it's like, really, like present in my brain. Kind of one of my go to stories. When I was I think, when I started like going to puberty, I think I was 11 or 12. I looked up on Google, Britney Spears and Shakira, boobs Google Images as your camera moves. And I felt so guilty. I felt like incredibly guilty. I couldn't sleep. I was like, literally peeing myself at night, because I felt so so guilty. So I told my mom, mom, I watched porn for me. Yeah, Googling TRICARE losers was for me, that was porn. And what she did is, you know, she saw how guilty I was, she was really confused. She didn't really want to know what I Googled, or what I saw, or anything like that. So she took me to the priest. And I talked to the priest and the priest, you know, gave me this long speech about how sex is the sacred thing between husband and wife that happens to have children so we can understand the love God has for their creations. And you know, as you're sitting there, and I was listening to the entire thing, I had done my like, first communion, like, maybe like three months before that. And the day of my First Communion is the day that I realized I was gay. Because before that, I had like, all these doubts, I had all these thoughts. I kept like asking, like, you know, my like, catechism teacher and like, the teacher kept saying, the moment you take the wine and the little wafer, all those doubts are gonna disappear. They obviously didn't. I went home that day, and I was like, a shed, I think I'm gay. Looked up Shakira, Britney Spears boobs. Wow, I'm definitely gay. This is really, really exciting. And then I'm just sitting there and I'm thinking, okay, but I think I'm never gonna have a husband. What does that mean?

04:21

And, and, yeah, I just,

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I kept getting all these like, really mixed messages. I ended up like, coming out as an atheist. I was like, 12 to my parents, which I think they thought was a phase. And then, you know, eventually when I came out as gay, they were like, Okay, this all makes more sense now. But yeah, I think yeah, my childhood and especially like my childhood in regards to like, relating to my queerness was really vastly defined by Catholicism.

Olivia N 04:56

So Catholic guilt is a really interesting very strong influence in people's life especially like, young, queer people's lives. In you, did you go to Catholic school? No. Okay. How did gender norms influence you growing up? Oof,

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I in Mexico, very, very sexist countries still, unfortunately. From a very young age, I was really aware of gender roles. I think as I've grown up and now that I'm like, very, very out to my family, and I have, like, started to have more conversations about my childhood and stuff, being like, yeah, I guess I don't know how I missed those flags. They were all over the place. I had dolls. I had all these toys, but I didn't really care for them. I just, I had them there had them lying around. I would my best friends growing up. They were boys. Because you know, I'm not like the other girls. No. And I would love to go to like my boys, like my male friends houses and like play with a little cars like they're hot wheels. But it was so exciting. I thought it was so much more fun. I would play superheroes. I remember very clearly when I was like, in kindergarten, I was like, maybe five years old. I used to play Power Rangers, with the other boys and the girls. We would play Women's Club. And I didn't watch men's club. I watched Power Rangers and I would play Power Rangers. I was actually a Red Power Ranger, which I had to fight really, really hard to get. And the teachers called my parents and we're like, Hey, we're concerned.

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And,

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you know, my, my mom said, Oh, I think that, you know, playing Power Rangers and watching Power Rangers might not be the best thing for you. So I got like the channel like Jetix, where Power Rangers used to air I got blocked from ITV. And I was forced to start playing wings club. I had to like, literally remember my dad like driving me to like the DVD store and buying like the box set of wings. Soccer, like watch the TV show. Because I didn't know any of the characters didn't know anything going on. And I remember that like so clearly, I was so angry because I didn't think I was becoming a violin person. And, you know, when stuff like this, you still play that you would like, go into battles and like, fight and kill each other. Like it wasn't it was really not that different. And then when my brother was in kindergarten, he was super super into the WWE. And he would, you know, bite with his like little classmates and stuff. And I remember like sitting there and thinking, Why are my parents not banning WWE? From my little brother? Why are they actually taking him to WWE shows when they're in Mexico? Where are they encouraging this? Why are they not telling him it's dangerous that he might become a violin person, the way they did that to me. And it's because of generals 100%. And I think that's like one little example, when I was little, but like, just the routes. I remember then when I was in elementary school, and in middle school, I really struggled with femininity, and with expressing

femininity, because it felt something so foreign to me. So I would always wear pants. I didn't only think a single dress for so many years hated the color pink, which, you know, ironic. No, I'm like, Oh, um, and, you know, I also like other girls in my class, like, they would like no wear earrings and like lip balm and have like, fun little hairstyles, and I didn't. And I had like, teachers, like call me out as like, you know, some people just don't care about, like, how they look, or about how they present themselves, because I wasn't presenting myself like, super feminine. And that was something that was a fault. And let's like unforgivable for so many people in my community. And I was singled out for it so much. And, you know, now I've come to transmit community in a way that makes sense to me. But back then it was like, so I resented it so much. I think a lot of it also has to do with like, the political situation in the country. You know, we're a country that has like a femicide crisis and love and women are murdered every single day just for being women. So you know growing up as someone who you know, is assigned female at birth who like grew up as was raised as a woman and that female experience it was very scary. And then you know, knowing you have to bear that and not relating it not relating to it at all. And feeling so disconnected from it. I I was sent it in a lot. I resented and I resent it, how easy and how fun. Masculinity look like to me. I remember in weddings and you know, I think this is like maybe not so much a Mexican thing more like a you know, kind of southern where the like there's a lot of Korean infield Flint's, in the south of the country that's where my dad's from. And in all the weddings at some point the men break apart and they go smoke cigars. And all the women gossip or dance or whatever they do. And I remember being so so jealous, whenever I saw like, my dad and all my cousins, and my uncle's goes smoke cigars, and I was like, stuck there with all my aunts. And then my brother was like, six, and he would also tagalong knew he wouldn't smoke cigars, but he would, you know, just go and like hang out with the men smoking cigars. And it was something about it. Like I was still envious of it. I I wanted that so badly in a way that I never wanted. And I never felt attracted to any of like, the feminine traditions that was being forced to

Olivia N 10:57

conform to. And it was hard. And

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you know, now I feel very grateful that I've been able to come to terms and discover what gender really means to me in a way that makes me happy.

Olivia N 11:22

You mentioned I love about how other people's perception like your community's perception of you and the gender roles you were not doing heavily, heavily heavily impacted your life. Did it affect making like friends in any way? How you were expressing your femininity? Oh, yeah, yeah, I had

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very little friends in high school, not in high school and middle school and an elementary school I was bullied for years, where I would just like go like the second I like went into my mom's car would start crying. You know, it was like a it was a lot of things. It wasn't only that, you know, I wasn't presenting feminine it was that, you know, I went to like a private school where everyone was just white, even though they're Mexican. They were like, oh, no, my grandpa Spanish. I didn't have my grandma's like a 100%. Might and woman. So you know, if it was that I wasn't part of the country club. So you know, we

were the poor family because we weren't in the country club. Everyone in the country club sucked, like we we want to be a part of that. So it was also that it was all that I'm bad. It was like so many things. That made me an outsider, and made it very hard to make friends. And, you know, I had I think, you know, it's also this was like a tiny school, there were 24 kids in my class. And those 24 kids in my class pretty much stayed the same for like the eight years I went to that school. So it was like, there was no diversity there was like, No, like looking for someone else. So I think I had like two or three friends that were pretty much the same friends I have from like, first grade to eighth grade. And then when I started high school, I moved to like, another city to my dad's city. My parents were divorced. So but you know, the eight years I was at that school, I always like, it was very clear. You know, I did not belong. And it was, you know, very hard to make friends. And it's funny now because like most of the friends I had specially like seventh and eighth grade. Now we're queer, and have come out. So it's funny how, you know, we were like, all of us were friends. And now all of us are out. And we don't really talk to each other. Because, you know, middle school drama was interesting.

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But

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I don't stay in touch with anyone else really.

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So, I would I want to keep going on this thread. But I also want to ask you what it was like or how it affected you how to divorce parents, especially in a Catholic context. Yeah,

14:22

um, well, how it affected me Hanworth parents, I think my parents got divorced when I was six or seven. My little brother had been born like six months before my parents separated. Um, you know, it was hard. I think that was what was the hardest is that after the divorce, my mom moved. And we moved with my mom to like, you know, here's some yell which is why like, I feel like this is where I grew up like I spent kindergarten and get it that Oh, which is 30 minutes away, and that's where my dad lives. And that's a city. This is like a tiny little town. Thing that what was hardest was uprooting my entire life. I'm thinking a Catholic context really. I don't think it matter that much. Funnily enough, I think

15:12

in I feel like

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not like if I had gone to Catholic school would have definitely mattered. Like there are Catholic schools here that if you don't, if your parents are divorced, you cannot be in that school. But I did not go to Catholic school, it was something really important for my parents that we got the best like, education and they didn't think that the best education would come from a Catholic school. So it didn't matter that much. There were other kids in my class that had divorced parents. It was just kind of like an oh, your parents are divorced. That's kind of sad. But yeah, I mean, it definitely affected me. I've listened therapy pretty much. Since I was six. Until now I like continued to be in therapy kind of in and out. It was a very

confusing situation for like a kid, especially because my brother had just been born. My mom was very stressed out. And I wasn't like, I mean to the day like, my father has not fully admitted or like told us like straight up what happened and that he left. My mom's the one who had to do all of that. When I realized that, and he left, because he started a relationship with another woman who he's still with. And when I realized that this happened, I actually realized because my site, my psychologist, like yelled at my face that I was being foolish, by not realizing that this friend that my father had introduced me to was his girlfriend, which is very, that was like a huge malpractice. Like, you don't yell at a child for that. But when I ended up, like confronting him, he, he wouldn't tell me the truth. Like he refused. He didn't say like, single word. He's kind of like sat there. And it was like, really awkward and really dramatic and gave me like, huge trust issues. So you know, same time, like this is when like, I had just moved, and I had just uprooted my life. And I had just come into like this terribly vicious school where everyone was awful. And I was being bullied. So it definitely wasn't fine.

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But but you know, I

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guess time heals everything. I've kind of come to terms with a lot of it as much as I can. And you know, at the end of the day, I'm grateful because I've never seen my parents fight. I never saw that.

Olivia N 17:42

And they co parent well. So, you mentioned the bullying, and then you briefly mentioned kind of aspects of being bullied for being fat. So can you talk maybe about how size and fatness affected you growing up? Yeah,

18:04

definitely. So I actually I think I started gaining weight when my parents got divorced. You know, I think I there was like a lot of hormonal stuff going on as well that I, you know, that I used to, like struggle with I have PCOS. And, you know, like, kind of paired up with the stress and all that. I mean, I honestly have loved so much of my life when I was like in elementary school, it's like really hard for me to recall some details, but I'm pretty sure I had like an eating disorder. And I gained a lot of weight really fast. And because of PCOS because of everything, you know, kind of stayed.

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And, you know,

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being like, in this kind of, as I said vicious wibes. Rich circle, there's like one way to be and fat definitely isn't. And you know, and if you're five, if you're fat, you have to be white and rich. And they'll kind of deal with you. But if you're not, you're like the most disgusting thing that has ever happened. Like I was constantly bullied. I was constantly you know, like the butt of the joke. The person that everyone would stare at health class, the last person to get picked in gym. The person that everyone would like, whisper and laugh I when there were pool

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parties. Always me.

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So you know, it was definitely hard. It is hard. And you never learn, or at least I never learned in my school. I never had even like teachers would teach you you know, whatever body you have, it is yours. And it is worth the same as anyone else. Like that is never the narrative that is pushed The narrative is, you know, diet culture, and a lot of these really harmful, really traumatic things when you're a child, that, you know, you constantly have to like, starve yourself and fix yourself and fix yourself or you're not worth much. And that's what everyone believes. That's what I believed growing up. That's what, you know, my parents, I think, believed for me for a long time, maybe even now, think I'm like, I don't live here anymore. And I'm 22. So like, like, don't have a say in much of that anymore.

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But, you know, it's,

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it's definitely tough, because like, I think weight and size is something that is so stigmatized. And we refuse to talk about it, period. But it is, I think that the kind of othering that I experienced because of my size, it's different than the other thing I experienced based on my sexuality or any of these other things. Because, you know, when you ask people why they hate you for being gay, like, at least in my experience, it's because God said that, when you ask someone why they hate you for being fat, it's just because they believe you're less, it's like a feeling that they have towards you is because you make them like looking at you makes them uncomfortable in a way that they can't explain. They can't like, rationalize, they can't even like, verbalize why they hate you. They just do. And everyone does. And everyone agrees. And it comes with like this, like, long string of assumptions about you, that you're lazy, and you're lonely, and you're sad. And you're overcompensating all the time. And you care so desperately about what they think. Even if you don't. And that follows you everywhere.

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And I think when you're a

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child like that's, like deeply traumatic to have that on, you

Olivia N 22:13

know, definitely

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this is kind of an aside, but not really, I wondered if you struggled getting a PCOS diagnosis? Not really.

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My I think the health system in Mexico is much better, less health system. And I started going to OBGYN and when I was think about 15. It's like, oh, you know, this is like something everyone has to do. And you know, I got bloodwork, my hormones were all over the place. PCOS.

Olivia N 22:49

Yeah. So it was simple to get. Yeah. Okay. I was just curious, because I knew I know, like a lot of other like, like people who have PCOS, especially like, people of color who have PCOS, sometimes struggled to get a diagnosis.

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So I was just curious. You danced around it. But can you talk about how race and class affected you growing up? Yeah.

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So as I said, I was, you know, in a school where most of people were very white or white passing. And I think race in Mexico is very interesting, because we are definitely a deeply racist country. They just refuse to say it because we all try to operate on there live this, like live Misty sat here. And we're all mixed. So there's like no racism, because we're all the same. We're not all the same. And it's like very clear. My dad and my dad's side of the family, they're they're indigenous. They're Brown, Brown. They have indigenous features. Actually, my mom sometimes tells a story as a joke. I don't think it's that funny. But if you look at Maya statues, and like Mayan people in general, like you'll see they have a very pronounced nose. And when my mom was pregnant with me, she said that she would pray every night, that I didn't have that nose. And she would pray and pray and pray and I didn't have that nose. Because she said that in women, that kind of thing is unforgivable. And I was born with a different house. I don't have my dad's Now sometimes I wish I did, just to kind of just to like, I didn't have to hear that story over and over again. But kind of that's I think, I think that really encapsulates kind of the way that people think we're like, that's a that's a funny story.

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Wow, ya know, funny story is the funny story in the room right now.

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No, yeah. And then when you're like, confront stuff like this, because I think racism for of Mexican families, for Latino families in general. It's so present inside our homes, in ways that we're often scared to confront or call out. And you know, when you call that thing out, they're like, Oh, I'm not being racist. I am literally indigenous, because I'm from this region of the country. And those were the indigenous people there. When you ask them, Can you trace it? They can't. They really can say, when you say, Oh, why are you like, you know, speaking down on like, an indigenous feature? It's just not pretty. It's like, objectively not pretty, it's objectively not pretty according to European standards of beauty. Sure. But like, why are you going by them, it's just, you know, kind of goes round and round, it's kind of hard to make people understand sometimes. But for me, I think for a long time, I was ashamed when I was younger, when I believed in this when I was so like that I was so deeply ingrained into the way I grew up. I was ashamed of my dad, I was ashamed to like, you know, take my dad to school, especially because we were divorced, I lived with my mom, they and my mom's more white passing. They my a

lot of my classmates didn't know my dad. And I didn't want my dad to show up. Because that will tell them so much about me much more than maybe what they already knew and what they believed. And I didn't want to deal with that. My dad grew up in the South, in Quintana row, which is like the capital of which we're not a capital is like the state where like, and Kunis and stuff he is my mind, he grew up really poor, he kind of like, he was like, in a household where, like, everything, they had to be worth beans most of the time. And he worked very hard to get into a position where he could support his entire family to, you know, have a better life. And I am so proud of him for that. But that also comes with you know, once he gained success once he was able to integrate into kind of the city society and into business and in with like all of these people who are not like him, and did not come from the same background as him. I see him neglect where he comes from all the time. He never talks about it, unless he's asked. And even then, it's not something he really acknowledges. He is really condescending to people in a way that makes me upset. Because I can imagine people were condescending to him and to my grandma that way when he was growing up, and he didn't like it. My stepmother, she's white, her entire family, they're white. And when he's with them, like I can see how like, how much he changes and how much he enjoys changing to be like them.

Olivia N 28:02

And it's so upsetting to me to see that I know what you're talking about. Do you feel like maybe part of the whole, like, climb, or like pulling yourself out of poverty, pulling yourself out of all of that in like maybe like proximity to whiteness via marriage? And kind of like forgetting your roots. Well,

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my dad never married my stepmother. They've just been together for years. Okay, but they're basically like, I don't know, like,

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is there together?

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They're together. I don't really even know how to describe that relationship. I don't ask. It's okay. None of your business. Yeah, I get it. Like, yeah, I think definitely the fact that he's with her, especially that he stayed with her through all these years, is that she's white and that he gives, she gives him that proximity to whiteness, through her family, and through their conversations through their lifestyle. Now that he can afford that lifestyle, yeah, he wants, you know, to be like them as much as he can, even though I'm sure he noticed that he'll never be like them 100%

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Is that like a common Association? Like, is there a desire to like, be associated with whiteness, or like

Olivia N 29:27

a denial of

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like, indigenous features of like mine and features are of like mine culture and mine history? Is there like a desire to, like aspire for whiteness, or to be white?

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In general, or in general? And yeah, definitely. I mean, that's all admits DISA haze, right. It's mixing and mixing and mixing until like, you're so close to white that you might as well be like, That's the entire like, you know, mestiza has meant to be race, blackness and axle guts, material race indigenous nests in Mexico, and its main to make us one thing that is close to whites. And, you know, and it's, it's celebrated. That's the worst thing because people don't I don't think people really understand what it means or what it was supposed to be from the beginning. So it's celebrated. It's something indigenous, I think in Mexico, it's so funny. And it's really sad. Because, you know, our aesthetic, the Mexican aesthetic, and the Mexican Mexican culture, its indigenous culture, or syncretized indigenous culture with Catholic elements. And people celebrate that. And people claim that when it's to their advantage, when it's cool, when it's fun, but then indigenous people or people who, you know, are like Misty, so people who are not white passing, they're tossed aside, and they're treated less than, and they're exploited in yo, is a common, like, insult thrown around.

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Like,

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it's basically a slur, I would say. And it's so common to like, you know, call someone in India, if you don't like them, and if they're brown, and if they look indigenous, and you think you're better than them.

Olivia N 31:21

So, I mean, definitely,

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I think it's I think that pursuit of whiteness, and that kind of appropriation and exploitation of indigenous culture, unfortunately, is at the heart of what being Mexican

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is. Can you talk a little bit about? Who were what influenced you the most growing up? Yeah. I think I think my mom influenced

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me a lot growing up. And I think I said a lot of like, things that my mom didn't do well. Listen to dirty so far. But my mom did a lot of lot of things, right. My mom's a very strong woman. And my mom has been the greatest friend she has been able to be to us. And I'm deeply thankful for that especially, you know, being basically a single parent.

Olivia N 32:29

She has always,

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I think something i I've realized a lot, specially my artistic practice is that I learned how to be an artist from my mom. And my mom does not do it. She, if you ask her to like even like play Pictionary, she will try to avoid that as much as possible.

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But

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I think a big part of making art is a lot like the parenting I received, which is, you know, just nurturing something, someone and then accepting when it's time to let it go, and let it grow into something bigger, that does not quite belong to you. And that's how my mom raised me when I was

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when I was 14. Yeah, when I was 14,

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I kind of left home. I went to study abroad for a year. And then I moved with my dad, which was basically living alone, because he's never there. He's always working. And he's always having like, business trips and stuff. And, you know, my mom was kind of gutted, that I was leaving, but what she told me is that she gave me wings so I could fly, and it wouldn't be fair to cut them off.

Olivia N 33:53

And I think that she is someone who has deeply inspired me to be strong, and to push through. But also to be kind and to be understanding and to

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not close myself off and to give people chances and to understand people even when they don't deserve understanding.

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I would love to talk more about how your mom influenced your art. Maybe a little bit later on. But do you remember what your first exposure to lesbianism was? Like first ever? Or one of your first experiences? I think the Madonna Lady Gaga Christina Aguilera kids Sorry. Yeah. That's so that's so Do you know

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I reached Mexico? Like, you know, Mexico, I think Mexico. And in general, I think specially queer kids in Mexico were deeply connected to American pop culture. Yeah, because Mexican pop culture, it's getting a little bit better, but there was no queerness at all. And, you know, growing up in the 2000s, in the US, you had a little bit like, Madonna, Lady Gaga and Christina Aguilera kissing at the VMAs. So I think for me, that was my first exposure to like, Oh, my God, girls can kiss girls.

Olivia N 35:39

And I was so into it. I

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was like, wow, what's going on here? Why is this so exciting? Why do I not feel so interested? When like, I see like a guy kissing a girl in the movie. And at first I thought it was like,

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like, weird curiosity,

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you know, like, kind of went here. But like, I mean, I don't know if you feel like this. Like when you feel about like witchcraft and like, black masses and stuff. And you're like, Oh, this is kind of interesting. I want to hear more scared. I felt the exact same way when I saw Christina Aguilera, Britney Spears and Madonna because of the VMAs. And, yeah, thing that kind of opened the floodgates.

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I was still I left. Because I completely forgot that happened. I remember there was like, and it's very general. upsetness people have hated that shit.

Olivia N 36:34

And I don't, I didn't. I don't even know. I don't I don't think I found out about it. I mean, I think I found out about it. When I went to school and other people were talking about it. I also went to a white private school. And everyone was like, this was disgusting. It was horrible. They're like corrupting kids. Because it's like on TV.

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No one in my school was talking about it. That's so yeah, interesting to me. No one was talking about it. I just, I don't even know how I saw it and what it might have been like in the like, news or something.

37:07

Um, I kind of

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knew who Britney Spears was. I knew who Madonna was. I don't think I knew Christina Aguilera was at the time. But I just I was like, in my big ass desktop computer, like looking over my shoulder. I like look, looked that video. And I think I might have watched it like, at least 20 times like the first time I watched it 20 times on a loop just over and over and over and over again.

Olivia N 37:37

No, that's so real. So Real. So

37:41

funny. Okay, so you mentioned how you came back from First Communion. And you were like, No, I'm like, definitely a lesbian.

Olivia N 37:53

How old? Were you then? And also, you mentioned kind of like struggling with your sexuality. So could you like, talk through more what the struggle was? Yes. So I was in love when

38:11

I was 11. And, you know, by then I kind of had, you know, had like celebrity crushes on female celebrities and stuff. But I think I also and I think this was like compact, but I also like overperformed like crushes on those celebrities. Like, I was like, obsessed. Even though they made me really feel nothing. I just I think I felt like that was what I was supposed to do. So that was like a little bit confusing to me. Like, because at some point, like, especially when you're a kid and like, before puberty starts and before you feel like genuine attraction towards people. It's kind of confusing to like, mix up like to like, understand if I really like women, or if I just think they're pretty and if I, you know. And like what the difference is with the way that I felt about men and male celebrities specifically. But yeah, my first communion. So before my first communion, I had a lot of questions about capitalism and about myself and about the way capitalism view me. I was deeply conflicted about the fact that they said that Jesus died for me. Jesus died like 2000 years before I was born. That made no sense to me. He did not know me personally. I did not understand why I had to, like carry that burden. Like for myself, like that was not my fault. Some people killed him. That was not me. I was not there. I was not born.

Olivia N 39:43

So

39:45

when I like, kept asking questions, you know, I kept being told, you know, it's a double that's something you know, it's the devil. That's something you do have questions and when you have the wind and the up and the wafer, that's all going to go away. So I thought all These other doubt all these other feelings I have about women, they're also going to go away when I have the wine and the wafer, and it's all going to be fine. And I'm going to be Catholic. And I'm going to like actually believe everything that has been taught to me. Well, I had the one in the wafer, and I felt the exact same way. I and I was like, Well, this is really interesting. And I went to my party. And I, like kept thinking, and I kept thinking, and I kept thinking, like, and I kept looking at, like, all the women on my party and their dresses. I kept thinking about how they looked at the man and I looked at the boys, and I was like, that's not interesting, that's worn. They're all wearing suits, whatever. So I went home. And that night, I kind of sat there and I thought, wow, I think I'm actually gay. And I don't think that was the devil, tempting me. I think this is actually who I am. And in some regards, I was like, Well, you know, being gay is okay. I know this because my uncle is gay. I know this because my cousin is gay. And my family loves them. And they come to Christmas. So being gay has to be okay. But then they're men. It's different. I didn't know I lesbian. I don't think I met a lesbian until

Olivia N 41:23

I until I was in high school.

41:30

So, you know, I was like, Well, what does that mean? For me? Like, what does being a lesbian mean? And then at the same time, I was like, Well, you know, I think my mom's could be okay with this. And my maternal grandmother, grandparents, and my uncles and aunts and everything, we're gonna be okay with that. But I don't think my paternal family is going to be okay with this adult.

Olivia N 41:50

So it was

41:55

kind of really confusing. And at the same time, I kept thinking, like, you know, and I don't think I ever internalized what the church was telling me. I don't think that I ever thought God hated me. I think that what I resented it was that the community would hate me. And I remember, in school, hearing, you know, little comments, like from conversations. Gay was an insult. It was like, pretty common, like, oh, something's bad, it's gay. And then I remember hearing, you know, kind of classmates say, oh, you know, I would feel so weird if there was if there was a lesbian or like, someone was gay in our class. I don't know how to do it. I think that's so weird. I feel so uncomfortable all the time. I think I would even switch schools.

42:45

That's Oh, much. Yeah. So

42:47

it was like little comments like that, that, like I grew up around. So it's like, you know, even if I didn't necessarily think it was wrong, or if I knew that my mom and my, like, you know, if I had examples of people I loved, and people I saw living a gay life. Also, like, you know, my, my uncle lived in Mexico City. So that's a different story. And my cousin lived in Toronto. So they also, you know, they were not where I was, they had once been there, and they left. So for me, I thought, you know, oh, if I want to be gay, I have to leave as well, which I did end up leaving and, but I mean, but I think the big thing for me was knowing that if I was gay, and if I was accepting, if I was like, coming out to myself, that was like really accepting that and I was choosing to, like, let other people now I was setting myself up for even more othering

43:46

and for

43:51

just like a harder life while I was at home. And that was a hard decision to make. I think that what made me kind of feel okay, and kind of start to slowly accept myself especially like in a Catholic context was that that same year, Lady Gaga was born as my album came out. And that all kind of changed my life especially because there's so many songs in there that you know, are about accepting yourself and are about loving yourself and are about like family and found family and friendships and queer friendships and celebrating not, but also celebrating kind of, you know, born this way. I think a big part of it is kind of celebrating that. That's the way God God made you. And today, I don't know how I feel about God or how I feel like I was on I think I struggle with that a lot. But

44:47

it was kind of really it made me feel really hopeful about the future. And and I think

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even though I kind of I think I knew that Do my First Communion when nothing got fixed after had the wine and the wafer. I didn't really accept it until later last spring as well when came out and that was last I checked on my car and my mom would not understand a single word. And I felt like I also felt so sacrilegious. Doing that I would like blasted in the way to my friends for like first communions.

Olivia N 45:27

Funny, that is so funny. Other people talk about, like, I

45:32

think I had an oral history where someone's grandma was there. And then they were like, it doesn't really matter. They don't even speak English. And I was like, bikes?

45:39

No, yeah, that was the exact thing my mom like, did not understand a single word. So I could listen to Lady Gaga born this way, I could listen to two dogs, I could listen to all these songs. No one knew what was going on. Just me.

Olivia N 45:53

No one knew. So can you talk about coming out? And if you believe in it, and how it relates to your Catholic experience coming out multiple times, and you kind of mentioned it, but like coming into your identity and coming out to yourself first. And if you could talk about that process? Yeah, so I think

46:19

I first came out as bisexual, to myself and to the people around me. But when I first came out as bisexual to myself, I thought I don't think I really need to come out because I could end up with a guy. So, you know, if I fall in love boo for the girl that's like a bridge, I'll cross when I have to cross it. But I don't think that's like a thing that's worth it for me right now to do. So I kind of like, hold it in. And then when I studied abroad, when I was 14, I was in France, which and I was in a Catholic school for the first time in my life. It was in a really Catholic town with really Catholic people. And you know, just this like literally, like all light all Catholic people, I I kind of hate French people. And I kind of hate France. All deeply racist as well. Or they all thought it was a war refugee, which made no sense to me. But, you know, I went with it, because it was the war. I don't know, they were just like, Oh, I know, you're coming here from the war. So if you don't know war, if you don't want to, like go to history class, because we're just starting World War One, and it's triggering to you to talk about the wars. You can like, you know, you can be excused and go to the library. So it's like war. I don't know. There was no work going on in Mexico. Drugs, I guess, but like, not like, yeah, there's no

47:55

your race. They were racist and xenophobic and wrong. They're always wrong. Especially the French.

48:01

I had like people being like, Oh, do you know there's how is it in Mexico? Because you will like move around and dunk in donkeys? And is there internet in Mexico? And,

48:14

um, you know, I

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like kids point to a map and be like, is this Mexico and it was like Africa. And they were dead serious.

48:25

You always think they're smarter?

48:28

No, there are, they never are. I know when I was 14, I was fluent in English and Spanish.

48:34

And I was like,

48:38

I became fluent in French and like the six months I was there. And

48:43

they didn't know shit. I ended up like, that's the year like you have to do like a big test for middle school. They play they belong. And I ended up getting one of the top scores for the French literature credit in the entire school. Anyways, I was in the school at War Refugee. Yeah, as a refugee, I did that. We didn't have internet who had never taken a math class before who wrote a donkey to school. But anyways, I was in the school, and I had a lot of time to myself to think. Because half of my classes were like, you're a war refugee, you can just go to study hall or the library and do whatever you want. So you know, that's my dad, you know, I didn't have to deal with them. So I took it. And in this time that I had to myself, I started thinking a lot about who I was in this place where no one knew me. For the first time like, in my life, as I said, I had like the same classmates my entire life up until then. And then suddenly it wasn't this like entirely new place where nobody knew who I was. I could be whoever I wanted. And that made me you know, just sort of think for the first time who do I want to be and who I am. And that same year I actually I read every struggle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe. That's like one of the four books I took with me to France. I don't even know why I took it. I didn't even like, want to read it, or know, it was queer or anything, but I remember just reading it, or the library in one set, and then sobbing, and sobbing and sobbing, like, I don't think I've ever cried about it before. Because they were like, you know, this to Latino boys. And.

50:39

And the main

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character specifically already, like struggles with his dad's struggles with his family struggled with his identity, in a way that felt very angry. And I felt like that for a lot of my life. And I've never seen anyone, like, kind of express it that way. And that's when I came out to myself. When I feel like the first time I had someone or something to relate to. That's, that was it for me. I was like, wow, I am gay. So I went back to Mexico, I switched schools, I went to my dad's town. And I started living with my dad, which was interesting. How did I come out? I don't, I don't, I don't remember how I can always tell my mom. I honestly don't. My mom says that it was when she gave me the sex talk. And she was, you know, talking to me about like, STDs and the importance of wearing condoms and stuff. And she says that I asked her about AIDS. Because I heard about AIDS. And she was like, oh, you know, that doesn't concern you. Because aids, you know, it's like a disease that, you know, mostly gay people get so you don't have to worry about that. And apparently, I told her Oh, but I'm gay people. And that's why I came out to my mom. And I was like, Okay,

51:59

you came out to your mom through eight.

52:02

That's what she says. I do not remember. I don't remember. But that's, that's what my mom remembers. So I that might have been how I came up to my mom. I think I came up to my little brother just by telling him hey, do you know I'm gay? And he was like, No. And I was like, Well, I'm gay. And he was like, okay, he was like, whatever. Leave me alone. Yeah, literally. That's how he was. Yeah. Yeah. Just don't have to make this a big deal. Okay, you're Why should I care? Get out of my let me play my PlayStation. Yeah. But with my dad, when I lived with my dad, I came out to him so many times. And he wouldn't accept it. And he wouldn't take it. And living with my dad was interesting, because it was the first time I lived with him. Since the divorce. It was the first time I really feel like I lived with him period. Because even when he was married to my mom, he was always working. And he was studying and he was never

52:58

home. Um,

53:03

so the first time I came out to him, I thought it like sexual. And he told me not to tell anyone. Because I was young. I was I think at that point, I was 15. So when I was young, he told me I didn't know what I wanted.

53:20

He told me

53:23

he knows that growing up right now, it's confusing with the Internet. And so many things may seem cool.

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And that my opinion might change. But I was too young to know what I wanted.

53:37

And so not to tell anyone. And that was the first time I came out to my dad. And it was just deeply disappointing. And at this point, when I moved towns, when I moved to my dad's city, and I started going to school there, I had a group of, for the first time, I had a group of friends who work here.

54:00

And

54:01

I met, I met a lot, I had a lesbian teacher had a gay teacher as well. And that was like, like, for the first time I felt kind of safe starting to start to tell people that I was queer. And to start talking about having crushes on girls or anything like that. And it was still very much a thing of like, if no one asks me, I'm not going to, you know, come out and say it. But if someone asks, I'll tell them the truth. And that's kind of how it was for most of my friends as well.

54:41

But, you know, when

54:42

I started, you know, to kind of feel the need to be out and to live a queer life. It was a deep struggle with my dad. One year about a year later, when I was 16 my stepsister got married

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and And

55:02

you know, my dad was like, oh, we need to get you a dress for the wedding. We need to get your dress for the wedding. It has to be, you know, an evening dress, blah, blah, blah. You told my dad, I want to wear a suit. Can I wear a suit to My stepsisters wedding? And he said, No. I said, I do not know. Like, can't I wear a suit? It's you know, formal wear, I am abiding by the dress code. I just, I want to wear a suit. And he said, Oh, no, you know, it's, it will take too long, we would have to, you know, get a suit custom made by blah, blah, blah. I said, my little brother's getting a suit custom made? Why can't I get a suit custom made at the same time? He does? I doubt it's much of a difference. And he said, No, you can't wear a suit, because the only other women wearing a suit is going to be their cousin who is a lesbian. So if you were sued as well, there are people are going to start thinking about us.

Olivia N 56:03

And I told them, Well, they wouldn't be thinking wrong. They would be thinking right. And you know, this guy, he just left. He just left the room.

56:16

And there were, you know, a couple other instances like that, I will he'll make a comment. And I'll be like, remember, I'm gay. I'm still gay. I was not confused a year ago. I'm not confused now. But, you know, a year later when I was 17, I moved to the States. And I started to go to school in Westchester, and now I'm at NYU. So you know, that was kind of, you know, once I started to go to school here and this well, not here, but like in the States.

56:48

I was out. I was like President of GSA. I was complaining to you were the president of GSA. Yeah. Did your GSA not prejudice? That's actually really cute. Did your GSA have a strong lesbian presence? No, not really. It

57:08

had a strong bisexual presence.

57:10

Yeah, but were you still identifying as bisexual at this point?

57:14

I was identifying. Not straight. I did. I didn't really know what to identify. I was. Were lesbian. For so long.

57:24

Yeah. Can you talk about that? Yeah.

57:26

I mean, you know, I think that I first identified as bisexual. And then when I started going to boarding school, I noticed I didn't care about men at all. None of these boys that everyone's in love with, I didn't care about them. I didn't find them attractive. I stopped caring about celebrities. I stopped caring about, like, like, and I started to realize, you know, the way I felt about Justin Bieber in one direction and stuff. It was so deeply performative. Like I remember at some point, I was thinking, Oh, when I used to read like, Harry's tells fanfics I never pictured myself through the point of view of the girl. I always saw through the point of view of the guy who was falling in love with the girl.

58:13

Wow.

58:16

Oh, and I was like, oh, like, like, and I fell in love for the first time. And it was with a girl. And I was like, well, all the times that I had crushes on boys. It was nothing like it was not even close to this. I don't know what I was doing. I don't know what I was thinking. But like that was That was nothing. And, you know, that was scared to use the word lesbian because it felt so definite. It felt like a period it felt like that's it. And I think that I was still like kind of clinging to the hope that maybe one day I would meet a guy that I loved and I would fall in love with a guy and I would marry him because it will be easier for my dad it would be easier for my family.

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It would be easier for my community.

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So I felt like I was kind of clinging to that really desperately to that like one little hope. So we'll just say I was queer when I was in GSI. But I started presenting more queer, whatever that means. Lots of rainbow things

59:35

and like

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it got to a point where I was so so out in you know in my school in my life with my friends, that when I came back home I don't think I could do it anymore. I don't think I could like pretend any different. So I got like really, really hard to ignore. My mom started to ask if I liked any girls instead, if I liked any guys. The rest of my family kind of started to like, catch on as well. But not my dad didn't talk about it at all still. And I think I started using the word lesbian

Olivia N 1:00:25

when I got my heart broken for the first time. Um, and I think, I don't know why I think just like, feeling heartbreak. And, you know, knowing that I have loved a woman

1:00:45

in a way that I thought I didn't even think I could love someone.

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Think that was like saying, oh, there wasn't a clear relationship. Like that didn't feel enough. It felt lacking. And

1:01:09

I don't know, it was just it felt right. It felt like lesbian was the right word. Like I love the word lesbian. I think lesbian is such a beautiful, such it's such an expansive word and community and way to identify, and I think it holds so much. And I felt like it was the only appropriate word that I had to describe the way it felt. So that's when I started to use the word lesbian. But before that, it was it was so scary. But you know, at that point, when like, I feel like I'd love to girl and I've known what it was to love a girl and it was so great. And it was so wonderful. And it was everything. There was no use and holding to the hope that I would one day a little bit boy, because I knew that that wouldn't happen. And even if it happened, it would never be like that

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can you talk about your like when it was and who was your first queer crush ever? Yes,

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my first queer crush ever was this girl who lived in my neighborhood. Her name was Annika

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she was Italian.

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And she was an expat. She was just there for a year for her parents work, I think. And she

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she was a year older than me. And she was the coolest person in the world. And how old were you? I was

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I think I was in fifth grade. So I think I was 12 I

Olivia N 1:02:44

think, okay, I was 12.

1:02:48

So it was a year after lady got us born this way. And I don't think I even like identify that that was a queer crush until later. But I was obsessed with her. I want her to like me so badly. Every day, at the same time, we would meet outside and I live kind of like in a like here in Mexico, it's really common to have like kind of little gated community complexes where there's like all the house there's all the houses and they're all in a square. And then in the center, there's like a pool or a garden or something like that.

Olivia N 1:03:25

And I lived in one of those. And every day we

1:03:37

would like meet outside at the same exact time and we would like hang out.

Olivia N 1:03:41

And she had a Tumblr. So I started to have a Tumblr.

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I was like, Oh yeah, I know assembler is. And I was like, we made pancakes together. We had like kind of a I think it was kind of a date to go see the first Hunger Games movie when it came out. And it's the first time I went to the movies with all my parents. And we just want her and I and my mom thought I was like my mom's it was like a really toxic friendship because she thought that I cared too much about her. She thought about me, which I did to her like I didn't care too much what she thought about me and I don't think she cared about me as much as she was like, oh yeah, this is like my annoying neighbor who I like hanging out with because I have no one else to hang out with. But one time I got grounded because my mom thought that I was prioritizing this girl over like my actual responsibilities

like homework and stuff. So she staged a protest outside of my house where like all the other neighborhood kids we would like hang out with they all like make like cardboard signs. And they protested outside of my house. So I would be let out. And she climbed up my fall. Kenny and snuck into my house.

1:05:01

And

1:05:06

like, when I think about it now I'm like, Well, yeah, that was gay a shit. But back then I was like, Yeah, this is like a normal friendship. This is how girls are friends, right? But yeah, she was my first crush. I still follow her on Instagram. I'm like

Olivia N 1:05:26

yeah, I still

1:05:28

think about her sometimes. I'm like, That was That was weird. We should

1:05:31

talk about it. No, like, that's so funny. Why in the balcony, like High School Musical vibes. No, yeah, it

Olivia N 1:05:42

was very lonely when you were young. Yeah. So um, can you talk about struggling

1:05:54

with your identity more? Maybe not the lesbian identity exclusively, but can you talk more about struggling with gender nonconformity?

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Yeah, I mean, as I said a little bit before, like, when I was in elementary school in middle school, I really resented femininity.

Olivia N 1:06:14

And I like

1:06:19

only wore jeans and I always had my hair up. And, you know, just jeans and T shirts kind of girl. And I got really I got a lot of shit for it

1:06:32

for my community.

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And, you know, then, you know, I moved to and

Olivia N 1:06:42

I think that for a while, like, after I moved, and I wanted to really

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be very clean and very presentable all the time. Like I had this constant need to make myself presentable because of the way I had been treated before. So I were like, it was like in high school and I was like business casual every day. Yeah. We were like heeled ankle boots and like Blazers do fucking history class. It was ridiculous. I think of it now. I would like exclusively shop at like Zara. Think of it now and I'm like, What was I doing? Why was I taking myself so seriously? Like, I wish I had like worn like hoodies and sweatpants. I probably would have been, I would have like sprained my ankle. Zero times. When in reality I think it's for Michael like six times in high school because I like war like fucking heeled ankle boots for no reason.

Olivia N 1:07:50

Um, but I think

1:07:56

like even that, like wearing Blazers wearing business casual for me feel very masculine.

1:08:04

And when I started going to Kansas, I would wear suits.

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Which is why I was like, why can I wear like, a suit to my like, stepsister sweating when I already wear suits, like argues what whatever. That was like really into it. I felt like being presentable. And I think that's also because that's the masculinity. I knew, because that's what my that's how my father is. He cares so much about being presentable. And he has like, all these suits, and he gots like manicures because he says that, when you're in business, the first thing people notice are your hands when you shake them. So he cares so much about like, looking like a businessman. And for me, that was what masculinity was. So when I started, like, when I felt like for the first time, I could reinvent myself, that's what I wanted. So I did it in the way that I clicked in that I felt comfortable with, which was like, you know, business casual, and it was still like a little bit feminine, but I definitely felt really, really masculine. And I really enjoyed it, but I don't think I wanted to acknowledge why I enjoyed it. And it wasn't until because like I had a friend I have a friend who was who was trans mask in high school, and I saw him and I like would like to hear him talk and so many of the things he said I felt like I related to especially like feeling disconnected from femininity and like resenting a lot of things growing up and in feeling kind of and like kind of gender envy from from like, different like things different rituals. I love to the toxic fuckboys in my high school because I got such Gender envy from them, like the way they could just like, they just walk through the world as such

1:10:05

assholes. Like,

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I mean, that's like, extremely toxic masculinity, but also that's like the kind of masculinity that exists in Mexico and the kind of masculinity that I grew up with. So that was like the ideal for me. And I was obsessed with them. I would like, I would have served them so closely. There were so many girls who thought I was, I was in love with like one of them. It's like, No, you don't get it. I don't want to date him. I want to be him. But I knew I wasn't trans in that way. I knew that I didn't want to transition. I knew that. I know that I'm not a man. So it was like really confusing to me. And I was like, Why am I feeling this way? Like? Is this just how like every gay person feels? And for a while, I thought yes. Because I didn't know any non binary people.

Olivia N 1:11:01

I don't even think I knew what non binary was.

1:11:05

Until it was important school and I wasn't GSI. And then I would a non binary person.

Olivia N 1:11:09

And I was like, Whoa, this is interesting. And I firstly didn't understand that actually, I I didn't get it my like,

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upbringing was so binary was still extremely this or that. I mean, even like, you know, Spanish language, like many other languages, they are deeply deeply binary languages, where like, even the chair, even the computer, even, like fucking pencil, they all have gender, and it's he or her. And there is nothing outside of that, like, there's no way to communicate outside of that. So when I first met non binary people, I was like, Well, I'm glad this is something that works for them. But this is not something that could ever work for me. Because it could never work for me in my life in Mexico could never work for me in my language.

Olivia N 1:11:57

So it felt like a very like, Anglophone thing. And, you know,

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then the pandemic hit. And in the pandemic, I think a lot of queer people in Mexico and a lot of queer roots in Mexico started to make themselves more visible. A lot of like, queer online community spaces started and, like, around the same time, there was like, there was a lot of discourse going on, especially because of zoom boxes, and people using the gender neutral Spanish pronouns in them. So AJ, kinda got brought to my attention. And I was like, Well, wait, whoa, wait, this thing that people in my high school were doing that I thought was like really cool, but could never work for me, it could actually work for me, there's a word for it in Spanish. And it was still mocked. Like people would mock, still mock the pronoun edgy and it's they still mock like gender neutral. Like a gender gender neutral Spanish and like the move towards more inclusive language and Spanish is like constantly mocked and belittled kind of, in the way that a lot of people do it for English, too. So it was like still very scary. I honestly, I have not

come out as non binary to my parents. My little brother knows, he doesn't give it a bit. But I feel like it's still something that it's very hard for me to verbalize to them and to have kind of have them understand. Because, you know, my mom watches drag race with me, for example. And my mom, like has heard kind of some of the drag queens talk about being non binary. And then she's like, I don't get it. Can you explain it again? And then I tried to explain it and she's like, okay, like he's referring to them with like, the wrong pronouns because she does, she's like, I just I don't understand how this like other pronoun works. I don't understand how I could use it. And I explained to her once over and over again and she just, she doesn't get it

Olivia N 1:14:07

and it's frustrating.

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And in some way, I understand that she doesn't get it because it's something that literally did not really exist until like five years

1:14:18

ago. But

1:14:26

I think I think that makes it hardest of all is that in the past like three years I've started to present really feminine and I started to play with femininity in a way that I feel is really separate from the femininity I was raised in and it's really separate from like sis hetero femininity

Olivia N 1:14:50

and

1:14:53

but you know, with me like having pink hair and wearing earrings and 1000 necklace, says and skirts, like,

Olivia N 1:15:03

my parents. Like,

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I don't think they would understand how I feel about my gender unless I presented more masculine.

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So

1:15:22

it's something that I still struggle with. And sometimes, you know, I'm here and I keep being called a woman. And I keep being referred to like, like, the, like the feminine Spanish pronoun. And, you know,

sometimes they like told me Oh, like, you are this type of woman are, you know, you know, with women, this and women that.

Olivia N 1:15:40

And I feel really dysphoric

1:15:45

sometimes, and I'll go with my brother, and I'll cry, and I'll be like, I don't know, like, I don't even know, like how I would have that conversation, which I know I will one day

Olivia N 1:16:01

I just I think that gender is so personal.

1:16:09

It's so personal to everyone. I don't think anyone experiences gender in the same way than that someone else. And it's something that I think I have a privilege by, you know, going to school in Manhattan. And being in friend groups where like, everyone is queer, most of them are in the trans spectrum, where like, that's something that is like, a given, like, everyone kind of understands that I don't have to explain that anymore. And when I came to terms with my non binary identity, when I like, came out as non binary, it was when I first entered these types of rooms and these types of circles, and I felt really held and I felt really seen and understood. So I never had to explain that

Olivia N 1:16:50

21. And now I have to, and it's something that

1:16:59

I kind of struggle with, because I think explaining gender and the way I feel about gender is like, so broad, and so big. And so like, hard to understand to even myself, that I don't even know how would go about like explaining it to other people. But at the same time, I know I can't keep like, you know, going back to being treated treated like as sis women every time I'm at home, because it hurts. And it makes me feel weird. And again, it makes my skin crawl. So I think that's like an ongoing battle.

1:17:45

Can you talk a little bit about maybe since you mentioned feeling at home in these transparent spaces that you got from college? Can you talk about maybe how your lesbianism or your gender has been influenced by theory or academics in some way?

1:18:14

Sorry, my camera glitched for a second, I

1:18:16

think okay.

1:18:19

Yeah, so through my academics, a big part of my major is queer studies. So I think I'm making my way through the entire NYU catalog of classes that have queer in his name.

1:18:33

And

1:18:36

it's been a really transformative experience, to be in rooms where everyone acts, especially academic rooms, where everyone is queer, and everyone respects each other pronouns, everyone kind of sees each other in a way that I think is very beautiful. And everyone kind of, you know, takes these conversations and these opinions and this lived experiences about queerness as something that is valuable, and it's worth recording, and it's worth talking about, and it's worth discussing. Because it matters not only for ourselves in our individual experiences, but because it matters in this world to have people talk about it and to have people exist in a very visible way in academic settings as well.

1:19:29

So, you know, and I think,

1:19:39

you know, being in queer classes has also really helped me with my gender and my experience as a lesbian because reading other lesbians and reading about gender, and, you know, feeling seen and feeling understood is something that I think is very, very special. And I feel really privileged to have those opportunities. Because I know that if I went to college in Mexico, I would have never found a class and career studies.

1:20:10

And

1:20:15

I had something to say, and then it left me.

1:20:18

And it happens all the time. Yeah. If you remember, at the end, you can come back to it. But do you have like a favorite piece of that you've

Olivia N 1:20:27

read something that really inspired you?

1:20:33

Well, this is not particularly about gender about being lesbian, but just okay. In all the families and their friends in between revolutions, Larry Mitchell, is a text I found so beautiful that I go back to over and over and over again, like, every time I feel sad, I just read a covered cover. And it makes me feel hopeful. I think that's what I value most. Oh, that was what I was gonna say. I think that what I value

most about queer academia and about queer studies is how hopeful it is, and and how it has allowed me to be a helpful person because I always, and that's the way I describe myself at the beginning. But that's not the way I would have described myself four years ago. It's not the way I grew up being. I don't think I ever allowed myself the privilege of hope. Until I was in the circles, and I was

Olivia N 1:21:29

in a queer city. And I feel really, really moved by hope.

1:21:41

And by the hope that I see in queer tax like, Larry Mitchell, like CO seminars like all these people keep talking about how Hope is the thing, the hope and the longing are the things that drive queerness and that drive us as a community, and are the things that we can absolutely not let go of. Because that's what that that that's what makes us us, that's what makes that's what makes it all worth it in some way.

1:22:07

And no,

1:22:10

I think right now, crew people are going through a lot. I was talking to my best friend about it. He's from Trinidad, and about how upsetting it is to see everything going on, especially in the United States. Because growing up for me, that was my escape. That was the safe space.

1:22:29

That was the utopia.

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And now I'm there now everything that is happening, it's so clear, it's no better than what's going on here in Mexico. And that's kind of deeply heartbreaking. For someone who like kind of held that as, as an oasis some somehow to see that it is not an oasis. It is also a battlefield

Olivia N 1:22:56

in many ways, but but I'm still really hopeful. And I'm still you know, I think maybe there's no

1:23:15

place where I'm ever going to feel safe in the way that I thought I could feel safe when I was younger. But I think queer academia and like these like queer spaces that I'm a part of,

1:23:28

have

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given me like small pockets of queer joy and of course safety and of queer

Olivia N 1:23:37

queer every everything that make it so. So it doesn't it's not that scary anymore. I guess.

1:23:52

I don't know why went on that tangent.

Olivia N 1:23:54

That was not the question. No, that's fine. I think you answered it. Well. Can you talk a little bit about

1:24:05

your first encounters with lesbian sex both directly and indirectly? So indirectly would be like porn? Not the not the kiss.

Olivia N 1:24:14

Get to the VMAs but like, Lauren is things you heard about lesbian sex, and then maybe your experiences with lesbian sex and how what were your attitudes around it before and after the encounters? So

1:24:34

yeah, it was porn. 100% Um,

1:24:39

well, first, it was the Google insecure and Britney Spears spoofs. But then, a couple years later, maybe

1:24:48

a year and a half later, two years later? Maybe more. I don't know what it was like 14 I think. I 1314 I found porn. And I started watching porn, like, like almost obsessively, and I don't think I've ever been addicted to porn. It wasn't even to get off. It was like I was studying it. It was like, still fascinating. And I actually watched more heterosexual porn than I watch lesbian porn, because that's very important made me really uncomfortable. But then when I was watching the street porn, I only like POV videos, because I didn't want to see them. And by being in the point of view of the man, I could handle that, like, yeah,

1:25:35

I was like, Yeah, can you imagine? Like, you know, something? I don't know. So, you know, that was like another like, big red flag like, Oh,

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why am I only like, Why do I only like POB porn and kind of lesbian porn sometimes. Why do I think men are so disgusting? Important? Yeah, I thought lesbian. I thought lesbian sex was so strange. Because you know, in this porn sites I was going and like, like most porn sites right now, like, the lesbian porn is for men, and is heterosexual men and for the male gaze, and it's not realistic. There are no strap ons. There is nothing of the sword is just two women who like rub their heads and then they scissor. And then they squirt, they always squirt. Which is strange. I've never seen someone squirt in real life.

1:26:34

I heard it's pee.

1:26:38

I heard someone say that. It's actually kidding. I don't know if that's true or not. Like, yeah, those are my first encounters with lesbian sex. It was just something that was like it made little sense. To me, it felt a little bit scary. You know, I've been taught in sex ed that sex is penetration. So, you know, I didn't understand really like, how it worked and how that was sex. And I never saw like realistic lesbian sex and porn because, you know, all sex and foreign I think in general is very unrealistic. And we all know that hopefully. And then I grew up and then I had lesbian sex and it was so terrifying. I did not know what I was doing. The first time I had lesbian sex. I didn't have a strap on. I didn't like think I was it was too scary. To have a strap on. It was kind of you know, winging in a lot of fingers. And it was just so awkward. It's just deeply, deeply awkward.

Olivia N 1:27:43

i i When I was done

1:27:50

there with me and the person I was with, we started laughing so hard. We were both cried. laughing and crying.

1:28:01

Sorry, I would be like I have to go. But at least we're both laughing.

1:28:06

Yeah, we were both laughing. It was also this girl's first time. So was it your first time? Yeah. That's actually really cute, though. Yeah, yeah. I've never been with a man. So that was okay.

1:28:22

And yeah, it was just so

1:28:27

weird. We were like, laughing We were crying. And.

1:28:33

And yeah,

1:28:34

and when we kinda like didn't want to talk about it for a long time. It was really awkward, but I researched and then I was like, Okay, I don't think I did that. Right. And I don't think I knew what I was doing. And I really didn't know what I was doing. I think a big part of it is that we both were in high schools with our first times we both really didn't know what we liked or what we didn't like. And I think a big part of any sex is that communication, and being able to verbalize what you want and what you like

and knowing what your partner wants and having number like that as well. But when it's your first time you have no idea. I remember my first time having sex with a strap on.

1:29:17

And whoa. I felt like I don't know like I feel like the most

1:29:26

powerful person in the world when I've grown up stuck on for the first time. Oh, you were like this is it for me? Yes. You were like this is it.

1:29:33

Thank you very much. Yeah, strap on warrior, though.

1:29:37

Like this like wearing the strap on is better than any sex I've had before.

Olivia N 1:29:42

Like I was really into it. And

1:29:48

I remember reading I got a strap on before I got a strap on I read stone which blues. I remember the part about them talking about strap ons and like learning about After that, and saying how like, you know, this is like such a sacred thing. And I think that it's really important that you know how to use with care. And I was like, really president for me, like, I think in some ways, I feel like I've kind of learned how to have sex, or reading stuff, which blows. You sometimes talk really violent, like violent. Wah, wah, it's really violent. And it's really sad. But they do have that, like, little nugget about how, like, you know, you know, like, strap ons and sex and all these things. There's something that can be really beautiful. It's always something that can hurt someone. So we always have to have a lot of care around it. Okay. And that really, really stuck with me. And it stuck with me like, to like many different parts of my life, but I've never heard someone talk about sex in that

1:30:53

way. Like,

1:30:57

I love sex and care, even before the sex happened.

Olivia N 1:31:02

And sex is something that especially as of lesbian sex is something that that is very nuanced. And yeah, what? What help? Oh, sorry. How old are you? How old? were you when you first put on a strap on? I was 1919. Yeah. Okay, that's I was just curious.

1:31:40

And when you said you were doing research about lesbian sex to get better after your first time in high school, where were you researching? Google? Just Google, like Google articles? Yeah. Like, how

1:31:52

do you have lesbian sex? How to finger someone? Oral sex, one on one, things like that. Like, it was so disappointing, because, you know, there's always like, these jokes, like, oh, men don't know where the clip is, men don't know how to have sex. Like, well, I also don't know how to have sex. Like real porn and learn

1:32:13

nothing. Have you? Ever, you know, they're

1:32:18

like, such cold articles. They're like, at the end of the day, I think like, it's something that, you know, you kind of have to, for me, at least, it was something that there was like, an awkward period.

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And then it got better. And

1:32:37

then I had a strap on, and then I was like, Okay, this is the way because then it's, in some ways, I feel like for me, I was always really aware of myself and lesbian sex as, like my role that I had to play within it. And like pleasuring my partner. And I still to this day, I really love pleasuring the partners. That's something that is really important to me. And that's, I think, for me, the most pleasurable part of sex is being able to give pleasure to someone else.

Olivia N 1:33:07

So it was, I think, really

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awkward and really hard for me, and I really didn't enjoy it at first because I didn't know how to do that. And I really wanted to do that because I really liked this person. And I was really into the um so you know, reading all these cool articles, like they gave me a couple of tips and tricks, but like, at the end of the day, like, you know, reading a paragraph about how like, you know, how to think or someone means really little when you're there.

1:33:48

So this is slightly not related. But can you talk about I don't know, How deep are you in the internet?

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Keep in mind the internet. I like the internet.

Olivia N 1:34:10

I don't think I'm that deep in the internet, honestly. Hey, yeah.

1:34:16

So I was curious on Oh, you're on Twitter. Okay. Okay. So you're not gonna Okay. Yeah. So you're not an avid Twitter user.

1:34:26

I'm not on the deep web or anything like, deep web, but you're on Twitter. Yeah, I'm on Twitter. I'm on YouTube. I'm like, I love streaming.

Olivia N 1:34:36

I watched a lot of Netflix. Yeah, as one does. Yeah, I think my main one is Twitter, all my friends and I won't Twitter. We all like Twitter. Okay, so this will all make sense. What about to ask, have you been Are you aware of the Butch femme fans for femme wars going on right now? Yeah. And also, like, bottoms to which top don't? Yeah, mixing up things with BDSM and kink? Yes, can you? What are your thoughts about that? About all of that? Those competitions are resurfacing now. Yeah, I also think I have like,

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a slightly different view on size because I'm an intimacy director. So I've studied sex a lot. And kind of other because like a big part of intimacy, direction and intimacy coordination is extra sex education, and sexology. So I've studied sex a lot, in a very, I don't want to say it's in a very clinical way, but it's like,

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very much under the like. Like,

1:36:01

I've learned about sex, through my, like, training for intimacy direction in a way that is very, very caring. And that is really prioritizes care, and consent, and then everything else is good. And it's okay. And everything is perfect. As long as you have given consent study, like, you know, I've done like kink and BDSM workshops for intimacy, direction and stuff like that. To learn how to, you know, be able to stage that to be able to help other people who want to make art that has to do with that, but so I feel like when I see discourse about sex, and about fun for fans, top bottom,

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I

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I feel really suffered from even like it because like, now, when I talk about sex, I feel like it's something that has kind of become something that it's outside of my personal experience. It's what I it's kind of my job in some ways.

1:37:03

But I think it's,

1:37:07

I think, especially in Twitter, like there's like this, like current, like, there's like this constant joke that they'll show like, a like girl wearing a tank top and they'll be like, this is like the most Butch girl that Twitter can handle.

1:37:21

And

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I think there's like this big comeback of this, like, Bush and stone top and all these like, kind of vocabulary and categories that were much more present before and kind of, I think, from my experience, or at least what I was around when I started to come out and when I was like in Tumblr and stuff like that they weren't they didn't use those words, much at all in 2012 to 2016 on Tumblr. I think that a big part of wanting to like bring this discourse back is that I think there's like a real

Olivia N 1:38:01

big need to identify and to have like a lot of identities and to create communities around them I think it's funny that so many people fight over it.

1:38:23

But I do think I think that the part where I think there's more valid concerns

Olivia N 1:38:27

it's in how both them and birch

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were presentation and standards and what is shown and what is argued it's all white, skinny conventionally attractive. When especially for like Butch like, and well, not all especially for Butch, but like, you know, like, I don't see people talking about studs at all of her. When there's like a big, big community, big historical rate, a lot of culture on that as well. A lot of churches were plus sized and now that's kind of mocked even with like, there's like this one picture of this, like one woman wearing a suit that like everyone uses as a joke almost. And I think that's what's more concerning not like, you know, oh, is it toxic that so many people are fend for them or whatever. The thing though, what's toxic is or not even toxic? I think what's concerning is what we consider as thumb and what we consider as Butch and why are we not seeing anything outside of that? And why are we constraining these huge identifiers and these like very decided there's like words that have like such a rich historical legacy and culture tied to them to a very constrained performance of white femininity and whites androgyny.

1:40:11

So, it didn't come up earlier. But you unfortunately for you mentioned Tumblr and the fact that you were on Tumblr, from 2012 to like, 2016 ish. What was that? Like? Which part of Tumblr were you on? And how has that impacted your queerness and your lesbianism?

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I did mention Tumblr, I said, I got Tumblr for the girl I

1:40:34

like Yeah, yeah. But like, what were you doing on Tumblr? It was like having Tumblr and being on Tumblr a different things.

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First, it was in one direction Tumblr, because she was really into one direction her favorite was Liam. So that's the first time what community I joined because that's the one she wasn't

Olivia N 1:40:56

then, you know, I was really basic. So as in the Super Hoolock little corner.

1:41:09

I never watched supernatural actually supernatural. I watched Doctor Who and I wish her

1:41:15

all the gauges were in the Super who loves

1:41:20

like scrolling through the John Locke tag and crying at the ship some people would come up with because it was so tragic. I was also in the little like marauders like fandom from Harry Potter, which I think was the most unhinged one because like, there was no cannon, right? Like, everything's made up. But still, like when I went in, like everyone, and I think I joined that like in 2014. So it was like a little bit after I like frustrate Tumblr. But what by the time I got there, like there was this like, canon that they had come up with that everyone respected, but like, like, it was kind of like unspoken. And people would fight about it. It was it was kind of crazy. But yeah, Tumblr, I

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think. Oh, and then I was

1:42:08

also like, I was exposed to like Alana Del Rey Marina and the Diamonds, the 1975 Saito Tumblr, towards the end of my Tumblr journey.

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That was like, 2015 Tumblr like, 2014 2015 I tell you like pale grunge aesthetic. Yeah. Like, like emaciation. Like,

1:42:25

yeah. D Okay. Yeah. And, yeah. stuff. Okay. Yeah.

1:42:31

Okay, so we're gonna talk about all of that. I was, I was so curious to see. I was like, What are you guys doing? What did you do? Actually? You can't get out of there. I'm gonna ask you about it. Think about it. There's no hiding that you were super Hoolock? No, no,

1:42:46

no, it's gonna be in an archive forever.

1:42:52

But that's the thing about it. It's like we're implicating each other. Because I also know what you're talking about. If that makes you feel any better? Yeah. You're not alone. I would say a lot of people have been talking about Tumblr. And so don't feel like you'll be the only one saying something because you won't be. No, I

1:43:12

mean, I think fandom in Tumblr especially was so huge, because it was like a huge peer community. Everyone was queer. And like, the main chips, like there were pure chips like it was Oh, yeah. And it was the one from Supernatural. I don't know, at least that I was opposed to because I never was

Olivia N 1:43:28

like Dean and Castine. And yeah, Castile. Okay. Yeah, I was like, why can I fucking think of the name? See, I wasn't even in these spaces. But I was aware that they existed at the time.

1:43:40

Yeah, the angel one and yeah. And one of the brothers. Yeah. Yeah. And, you know, like,

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I was there,

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I was there all the fucking time. Like, I would get back from school and I would like eat with my family. And then I would go on Tumblr. That'd be on Tumblr until like 1am scrolling scrolling, scrolling, scrolling scrolling I would laugh so hard. Like I thought I was going crazy

1:44:14

and I mostly reblogged

1:44:17

I didn't really come up with my own stuff. I've never written fanfiction which I think is crazy. Because fanfiction was like a huge part of my life even before Tumblr.

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Yeah, okay, what were Platt what platforms were you on?

1:44:35

Well, I was in a oh three.

1:44:38

You were originally you started off in a oh three. No, I started up on Facebook. Wait, wait, wait, wait, wait, wait, wait, wait, wait. What did you did you say Facebook? Okay. Anything This is more for like Spanish

1:44:58

speaking people.

1:45:00

Okay, I was like,

1:45:02

reading English fanfics on Facebook. I was not. So people wrote fanfiction on Facebook. Yeah. And they would make it like photo albums. Yeah, yeah that you scroll through. Okay. Yeah. So like the first chapter and then like second chapter and stuff like that. And like this is common

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for like Spanish speaking like countries to engage in fanfiction on Facebook. I don't know,

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that still happens. But when I was in like, I was like, 12 It was really common. Damn. Like, all the fanfics would be on Facebook and like my friends and I we would send each other like, the dirty Justin Bieber. fanfics

Olivia N 1:45:36

Yeah, on Facebook. Yeah. You know,

1:45:39

it'd be like, do you follow this Facebook page? Wow, see, you're opening my eyes. I thought I knew everything there was to know about fanfiction and platforms. I had never heard about fanfiction on Facebook before. I didn't know there was such

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unity. Because like these like pages, like they had different admins and the admins like they all have different fanfics. But then sometimes they

Olivia N 1:46:03

thought, okay, so they had to break apart

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and when admin would leave and then they would be like they're stealing my intellectual property, cancel them. Rather than like Facebook pages would get deleted. Report this page because they didn't

want to take my fanfic down even though we had a fight. And then you'd lose like six different fanfics it was really dramatic and really stressful to be communities. Yeah. I started on Facebook, and then I moved to Wattpad. Yeah. And then I moved to a three and then I moved to Tumblr, and then two or three.

1:46:39

Okay, yeah. Okay, that's okay. Because thank you for giving me the timeline. Cuz I was like, No, what's your progression? See,

Olivia N 1:46:45

I went Wattpad EO three as an adult, and then Tumblr as an adult. Like, I don't have a Tumblr

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when I run out of stuff. I'm not on to learn more, but I am on to three. Oh,

Olivia N 1:46:59

I want to answer I was on AOL three, literally yesterday. So the thing is, I was never on Tumblr, I made a Tumblr. I was Tumblr adjacent. I was on Wattpad. And I was aware of all the Tumblr discourse, because people discussed it in real life, and I had friends who are on Tumblr. And so that's why I know what you're saying. That's why I know what you're talking about. And I was on YouTube. The craziest

1:47:25

thing was, I had friends who were on Tumblr in real life as well, but we wouldn't knock each other like each other's usernames.

Olivia N 1:47:31

Oh, yeah, I didn't know usernames. It was just like the micro. Like the micro identities. Like I'm definitely romantic. Yeah, like definitely romantic, that kind of stuff. The micro labels I was aware of, and then the pro Ana stuff and then the pilgrimage stuff.

1:47:47

Yeah. No, I was really into Tumblr. I was in it. Like I took this quiz up like, oh, how broad it are you depending on how many Tumblr things you understand. Like most of them, right?

1:48:00

Yeah, same. I think I'll definitely have less than you because I wasn't on Tumblr, but I was like, where did I learn this? There? Wasn't there

1:48:07

were jokes because there was like, almost like a specific brand of Tumblr humor that I really enjoyed. That was like not related directly to like fandoms like all the people who would come up with like, fake stories like deeply fake stories. Oh,

Olivia N 1:48:20

people who lied. Yeah.

1:48:22

So one who lied about being like, Oh my God, that they were like sex trafficked? No, not though.

1:48:30

Those are like, Oh, I was working at Starbucks. And this lady was like, homophobic to me. And then the guy who felt like mine was like, Don't be homophobic lady and then he like kicked her. Oh, I know. That one's in your face. And then he gave me like \$200 like that type of stories.

Olivia N 1:48:45

I was thinking about you know, like the the people who would have like really big like, followings based off of a lie. Yeah, that's what I was thinking of. Like that one person who was found out to like, not be from Mexico like not, it was just like, an old white lady from the US Anyways. Anyways, anyways, anyways, so you like Tumblr, in these spaces? Because everyone was queer. Yeah, everyone was queer. And everyone was a little bit weird. Yeah, everyone was strange.

1:49:22

Everyone I loved Tuesday. I love like kind of the

Olivia N 1:49:29

like on a bash I'd like light on a battered

1:49:34

Expression of Interest and yeah, of love to words. You know, different things, TV shows, books, whatever you love. Like just I love when people love it very openly. And it was not cool. It's like not cool to love things at least in my opinion. In my like experience in elementary No, I agree. Oh, high school. It's not cool to love things. It's not cool to be really into it. Okay, what you're into, and everyone on Tumblr was obsessed and was weird, and was so into what they were into. And I really admired that. And I loved that. And it made me feel safe to be really into what I was into.

1:50:17

So,

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I love Tumblr, I think when when Twitter was was shut down, like, two months ago, whenever it was, and everyone was like, oh my god, we're gonna go back to Tumblr, I was so excited.

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But you know, Twitter didn't shut down. So, yeah. So would you say that Twitter and Tumblr have had a net positive impact on your life?

Olivia N 1:50:42

Think how wrong it is your brain?

1:50:45

I think so. But I also think that I've never taken them too seriously. Okay. As I said, I didn't really produce my own content. I just kind of reblogged other people's content. I had, like, a couple 100 followers, but wow, that's, that's pretty sizable. But I never like talked to like, I mean, I talked to some people, but I never had like, very deep online friendships. I would much rather like you know, connect with people in my life that highlight the same interest. And then we talked about, like, the text posts we both saw.

1:51:24

Yeah. Yeah,

1:51:28

yeah. And we would like text them to each other. I think I've always kind of really struggle to connect to people online, honestly, like, I don't know how to make online friends. I love meeting people in real life. I love talking to people in real life.

1:51:44

So

1:51:47

and, you know, with Twitter specially like, I feel like Tumblr was more anonymous Tumblr, you could be whatever you wanted, and whoever you wanted. And most of the time, you were not even a full person, because you were just like, whatever you were obsessed with. But on Twitter, where I think it's like, more yourself and more, you're over sharing and everything like that. Um, I've never taken social media in general too seriously. I

Olivia N 1:52:13

think it's a really fun space to do theater.

1:52:21

I am a character in my social media. And that's not completely me. And I don't expect it to be me and I don't expect everyone else to be themselves. And I think for me, that's more fun.

Olivia N 1:52:30

Can you talk a little bit about since we're discussing like expression, self expression, and like the theater of social media? Can we talk about the social theater? Let's talk about how clothing, jewelry, makeup, tattoos, piercings, body mods, or other forms of gendered expression, have assisted with affirming your gender or your lesbianism in any way. Yeah, I have pink

1:53:02

hair. Right now. As you can see, I have hair and think you're at. I had pink hair a lot of blue here for a while, but I've had pink hair mostly. I love pink hair. I love earrings. I love big jewelry. I'm not wearing anything right now. But I have so many necklaces, so many earrings, like ridiculous amount of earrings.

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I love makeup. I love love, love makeup. I have multiple tattoos. I think I love thinking of myself. And I think I

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think every day I wake up and I put in a costume. And then I go on and I live my life and my son a little lesbian way. And it makes me really happy to do so. In the privacy of my own home i think i i Don't perform that necessarily all the time. Because I think that what makes it fun is when this character interacts with other people

Olivia N 1:54:04

to me but it has been

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so important and making me feel part of a community and making me feel myself and making me feel excited to get out of my house and be queer.

1:54:23

In it has aided me to like

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you know, establish so many friendships like no just want to be like, Hey, I love your hair. I love your earrings. And doing that to other people as well like has helped me connect with other people. I think queer markers like that. And, you know, I don't think there's one way to be queer but there's definitely I think especially for Gen Z people like a queer aesthetic that a lot of people share or aspects of it are shared so that it makes it easy to identify each other. And I enjoy that I enjoy. I don't think I do it as hard when I'm here in Mexico. Oh, because I don't feel as comfortable or safe doing it. But when I'm in New York, I really enjoy going all out and overdressing and

Olivia N 1:55:12

feeling

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like, no matter where I am, I am

1:55:19

myself. Or like,

1:55:27

like, yeah, I am myself in a very, very queer camp the way I love camp.

Olivia N 1:55:34

I, I love wearing tacky things. I love when like old women give me the side I can decide I real, I get that. Can you talk a little bit about? You mentioned being an intimacy coordinator. This is kind of unrelated or maybe you have a connection to your queerness or your lesbianism as an intimacy coordinator. But what does that mean? How did you become an intimacy coordinator? What does that mean for you?

1:56:17

Does it impact or has it impacted? Or are you informed by your queerness? Or your lesbianism? Yeah,

1:56:25

so I'm an intimacy director, intimacy coordinator is more applied to film and TV, and more suited for his age. I become? Well, I've always been really interested on sex education. And, like consent education, more specifically, when I was in high school, my senior year of high school, my high school, the play we did was Spring Awakening, which I don't know if you know, Spring Awakening, but it's this play about GERMAN KID, it's a musical, we did the musical, but it's also played, but it's about like German kids. And they're all like discovering sex and discovering each other. And it's kind of sad. One of the characters ends up killing himself, one of them has an abortion and dies. It's like, way like, it's 19th century Germany. And the adults are very, the adults are unable to like, communicate with the children and the way that they need to be communicated with ask like, and they don't have the information, they need to be safe and to protect themselves. And they don't have the understanding. They need to feel supported and to feel human, in many ways. So we did this show. And the school's condition for us during the shell is that we had to do a sex ad campaign with it. So I did that. Like, that was my project. So I prepared like this, like big presentation on like, sex ed, but mostly like focusing on consent. And also on like, some of like, some like mental health stuff that was related to the play as well. And we went to every single homeroom, and my high school, the cast, and I like I trained them to go into every single homeroom. And we did this presentation for absolutely everyone. And I wasn't an International High School. A lot of the kids were from countries that were very conservative. And I had many of them approached me after and be like, I've never heard of any of this. And asking me questions and telling me this, like really personal stories that I wasn't required to like to wait, I just like referring them to the nurses who were really great.

1:58:45

But it meant a lot

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to me to be able to see that. I was genuinely helping. And I was genuinely given people the resources they needed to feel safe and to be able to make informed decisions. And then I think I think theater is, for me, it's a really beautiful thing. Because I think theater more than anything, is

Olivia N 1:59:10

it's a community art form.

1:59:13

You do it with other people. That's the entire thing. And also, I think it's really accessible in some ways, because even though the way that the theatre industry is built, it's not. It's made to like, be calm and accessible at its core. I think all you need to make theater is a body is based on a story. And I think we all have that all the time. But within theater, and within the theater standard today there's a lot of harm, especially to queer people, especially to people of color. That is not addressed. And I wanted to become an intimacy director because I don't see especially like, I mean, I think intimacy directors are becoming more popular, more calm. And right now, which is great. Because I think every theater, every production should have one and should have that resource. But within the people who I see I don't see anyone like me.

2:00:10

And

2:00:15

I know like, especially when you're like staging certain things when you're bringing certain stories to light, sometimes a wide a straight intimacy director, even if they mean well, even if they've trained, they don't know what you need, in the way that you need it. And for actors especially think it's really hard sometimes to ask for what they need, because it's so stigmatized. And they don't want to be seen as difficult. And that's what they've been told, like, just the system for like forever, that if you need something if you don't want to do something you're difficult to work with. So I when I started training, like a year and a half ago, I've been training with IDC with ICSC and with theater, intimacy, education.

Olivia N 2:01:01

And, and, yeah,

2:01:06

I've, it's been really interesting. I started with IDC, which is like, I think one of the big ways to train and there were a lot of queer people, but there were no queer people of color. And there were no people of color period, we were like 40 in my cohort, and there were only like six people of color total. And even though there were like, not a lot, a lot of queer people that I would say maybe like 1015 queer people, I would always get misgendered in my breakout rooms and stuff, even though my pronouns are literally there. And it was really frustrating. And I actually wrote to IDC because when I moved to level two, they are like, Hey, do you have like any requests for like, something you'd want from we like placing in like your breakout room? And I was like, Hey, I would love to be with people who are non binary and people of color. Because in my past experiences, I've been misgendered many times. And I've also felt like race was an afterthought in the discussions I've been having in the courtrooms. And I don't appreciate that. And that one's super noticed. Like no one did anything about it. I was like stuck again, in like a room with toussis white women. So I stopped training with IDC because I felt that I wasn't being heard. And yeah, like I've been training. I've been doing some training with ICSC, which is intimacy coordinators of color, which has been so wonderful. And really healing and and James, who's the head of that is, is just a wonderful person, one of the people who trained us is also queer. And I just think it's so important to especially I think sex is so magical, and it's so expansive and it's so hard to pin down.

Olivia N 2:02:48

And I think sex, queer sex,

2:02:54

sex in general, often in theatre and in film is either fetishized and when it is shown cares only when it is violent.

Olivia N 2:03:04

And I think we should care about it all the time.

2:03:12

And I think caring about it as a way of celebrating it. And for me, being able to stage queer sex is a way of celebrating my queer identity

Olivia N 2:03:26

and that we're gonna move on then. Can you talk a little bit about how arts and theatre have impacted your lesbianism?

2:03:51

So, theater and art and micronus

Olivia N 2:03:55

I. I feel like I feel like Oh, I feel like for me doing art is a career practice. Even when the art

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I'm making is not directly about my queerness I feel like there's just something that I find deeply, deeply spiritual about being able to create stuff. And I think queer people in the way we exist. We're creating so much every day just by living in whatever way whatever path we create for ourselves. And for me, it really parallels each other. I think specifically making art with queer people is such a blessing in my life,

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I

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I really haven't really lucky that I get to prioritize and I got to be able to build T means where queer art is happening. And I got to find amazing awesome queer artists and collaborators who I now have long standing relationships with. And I keep coming back to them, there's something really magical about the vocabulary that queer people use with each other. In general, and when you enter an art room and you enter with this ideas, and these words and these like similar interests, like I think just magic happens. I directed a play this past semester, about like, lesbians playing poker in hell. And it was ridiculous. And it was so campy and Joan Crawford is the one dealing to poker game. And I had so much fun, I've never had that much fun in my life. And I think, and it was just the most ridiculous thing. And we were just being our most ridiculous elbows. And what I told them is, you know, go big. And when you think you're being too big, go even bigger, and go big, when it's appropriate and go big when it's inappropriate to. And I think for me, like, that's also the way I like to think of, of my career has

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just go big. Go big,

2:06:22

and be big. And I feel really lucky about that. I have a zine called queer time. We are going into our sixth volume. And in queer time, I just include a lot of my friends and their stories and their art.

Olivia N 2:06:41

And

2:06:44

for pride addition, for example, I had over 30 artists who submitted and who I interviewed for it. And I like to think of career time also, as a little bit of an archive, small archive that I keep building. They are really two different things. The first one was about like the concept of queer time. And then second one was about gender. The third one was about lesbianism. The fourth one

Olivia N 2:07:10

was, the fourth one was about pride. I don't know, I'm missing one. I am missing one.

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The sixth one, the one that's coming, it's about faith. Don't know which one I'm missing right now. But I feel so lucky to also give platforms to artists that way, and to be able to have people work with me and share their art with me and share their experiences with me in my art practice. I feel like I've been able to create a little artists community within career time. And

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I love that

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I am so lucky, I am always so grateful to have people be willing to collaborate with me and to be willing to share with me and you know, I had one I had a party when we finished the pride issue. And I had a bunch of the people submitting come and it was so fun. And I think especially post pandemic, I think it's so, so so important to build in person, queer community. And I found that art is a very effective way to do so. I am a producer for multiple, kind of small theatre festivals and stuff. And I think finding queer place and queer directors and queer actors and being able to place them all together. It's also something that I find so special and I find really gratifying even if I'm not directly involved in those projects, because as a producer to be able to let them let them do their magic and see what happens. I really enjoyed and yeah, I mean, I think for me, my criticism, theater, lesbianism, my art, I think they all connect in how I build community around all these things. And these communities have intersected in the mode in a in the most beautiful way. And I'm so thankful for my artists, friends, my queer artists, friends, who are the most magical, talented people in the world.

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I'm so excited to get to see your art, and learn more about your queer art community in your queer lesbian in your lesbian art community as well. So we're gonna get to the questions about community. Now. We've been talking about community without mentioning the word community

Olivia N 2:09:47

that often, but can you talk about how

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being less than a informs your own lesbianism in your interactions with the lesbian community and do You think it informs your gender identity in any way? Yeah,

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I think that have already kind of mentioned a little bit of how like being Latina really has impacted my gender identity. I think it's most clear in what I have performed and what I envy when I was growing up, I think

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that today,

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being acting and being lesbian and being a non binary, I think it's I think it's a really interesting space. I think especially living in New York, and living and going to a predominantly white school. There's a lot of times where I feel separate, and I feel like I can't relate to a lot of the experiences of my peers, and I go into lesbian bars, and I don't see many people like me, and that makes me feel a little bit uncomfortable.

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Which sucks.

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Because here, back home, I don't really have the community, I know that, you know, queer people are coming out more and more and more and more, which is wonderful. I just don't know where they are. And there are no gay bars in my town. Actually, I would, I would love to open a gay bar one day, I would love to open a queer bar here in my, in my city, that's like my end goal one day, to be able to have that as like a side hustle.

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And, but

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I think in my gender expression, and in the way I've learned how to, or I've, I've come to adopt gender, being that DNA is very important. I love that I love Latina aesthetics, I love colors, I

Olivia N 2:11:54

love all these really bright

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culture and cultural imagery that I grew up around. I always think when I'm in New York, I feel like things are so great. Sometimes here in Mexico, especially in my town, like all the houses are yellow, and pink and orange and still bright, and there's a lot of light, and there's a lot of color. And there's a lot of joy in that. And I think that's what I want for myself. And that's something I wanted my gender. And that's something that, you know, I used to be, as I said, I was on Tumblr, I was in the little pill brush community. So I was one of those like, only were black people. Not anymore. And I think a big part of that and a big part of how I've learned to love color. And I've learned to love over accessorizing has to do with that's a way that I can connect and I can carry my litany that with me. Which I think is important. When I was in high school, I think I did try to kind of blend into white queer spaces more. Which I don't try to anymore. I think

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that

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finding queer communities of color has been something that has been really important to me finding other Latina lesbians, other Latina queer people, is so magical to be able to relate to someone in that way.

Olivia N 2:13:24

And yeah, I mean, I think it's just, it's,

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it's interesting, because there's definitely that other thing that happens in New York City, and especially in Manhattan. And in the Manhattan queer community in Manhattan, queer nightlife. It's very, very white. I think a lot of people criticize it for being very, very white. There's this kind of that I think the politics of desirability are interesting and how they happen that way, and how you always will, I always feel

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like, like,

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like, they're like, why lesbians are always gonna prefer other white lesbians. And if they don't, then, you know, and it's something that I like, I think that I'm more aware of now, but when I was, like, even like two years ago, I think I didn't realize it as clearly as I do now. Like, I felt like almost like I had to be thankful for white queer attention or attraction. But I think there's also really fun Latina like Latina led queer spaces in New York like horchata I think it's great. I think a lot of Latina and just not only Latina, but I think a lot of drag artists of color are wonderful and create wonderful artists and create wonderful spaces for their audiences.

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And yeah, So can you talk about how maybe your immigrant status, your former immigrant status, or the immigrant status of your loved ones affects you and your ability to develop or engage with lesbian communities? Yes,

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so I am an immigrant, I am on a visa.

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Which kind of I think, I don't think it

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affects me that much because I am on a student visa. But it does make something a little bit scarier like, going to protest, for example, which I think are it's so important. Community Action and direct action, I think is really important. I think protesting is really important. I wish I could do more of it. But

Olivia N 2:15:44

oftentimes, I'm scared.

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Because as an immigrant,

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if, you know,

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if I get detained, I could put my visa status in jeopardy. When I was under 21, I didn't get a fake ID, I couldn't get a fake ID because if you're an immigrant, and you get a public ID, you are committing a citizenship fraud, you're, and I guess you deported forever. So I couldn't go out and two bars until I was 21. Which, you know, luckily, like, I turned 21, this summer before my sophomore year, so it wasn't that big of a deal. Anyways, by that entire year before that, all my friends had fake IDs. And I didn't. And it was sometimes a little bit sad. But besides that, I don't think it really like as I said, I'm really lucky that I have a visa and I have a student visa, which allows many privileges, and there's not that limiting. And I'm the only person in my family who isn't New York, so. So I don't think I've have had to experience a lot of the hardships of immigration in the ways that other people in my community

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have. How does sighs inform your interactions with lesbian community? Oh,

2:17:23

oh, in major ways. Yeah. And I think you know, and I was thinking about

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it earlier, actually, in between questions, but I think the way that I present myself the way that I costume myself the way that, you know, I dress and I do my makeup and all of that. And

Olivia N 2:17:47

it's so important to me,

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because for so long, I felt so uncomfortable in my body. And I felt so uncomfortable being perceived. And I still do sometimes. But growing up, like, I think that's also why I didn't wear any makeup. And I didn't want to stand out in any way. And that ended up making me stand out when maybe I wanted quite the opposite.

Olivia N 2:18:12

But I think the more

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I grow, the more I am in New York, the more I allow myself to be myself and present in the way I want to present and perform gender and perform identity in the way that makes me happy, the more comfortable I feel with my size, and with my body and with the way I occupy space. I think when you are a fat person, immediately in any room you're in, you occupy much more space than anyone wants you to just by existing in that room

Olivia N 2:18:49

physically as well. And I think a lot of the times my instinct is to either be really big, or really be really small. So that's

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interesting, you know, I either walk into a room and I, you know, when I walk into a room, I know that I'm immediately going to be perceived differently than other people because of my size, especially if I'm in a room and everyone else is skinny or mid size. So I either have to live up to it and have a really big personality and be really funny and be really captivating in that way or I have to blend to the sidelines and just be really, really small.

Olivia N 2:19:42

I haven't really found a mid like a middle ground between the two.

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So I think it's a choice that happens every day. And it sucks that it's a choice that even has to happen because I think skinny people midsize people they don't think about thought that often. And they don't have to make these choices about what person and what kind of person they're going to be when they enter that room. And then that choice you make once you have to carry on with this group of people over and over and over and over again, even when you don't really feel like it. Around lesbians and around lesbian community, and especially, you know, in dating situations, I think it's scary to date as a fat person. It's scary, especially when you meet someone on apps, and you're like, Oh, my God, I don't

know if they actually like, understand that I'm fat. And if we're going to meet up and they're going to, you know, be disgusted by it, because you never know if they actually understand that or not. And it's an awkward question to ask sometimes.

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And then when you do get someone who likes you, and it was attracted to you,

Olivia N 2:20:57

I've been guilty of putting up with a lot of shit, just because it doesn't happen that often. And you

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feel like, well, I feel like I have to cling to it while it lasts. And while I have it, and it's again, something I am actively working on are doing because I don't deserve to put all this shit. But it is something that I and I've talked to other plus sized people, other people who like feel the same way. And again, I think it all goes back to kind of what I was talking about in the middle of the beginning about how it's so strange to be a fat person in any space. Because it's the feeling of rejection you got it's, it's a feeling. It's

Olivia N 2:21:46

it's a system, but the system is so it's so engrained to I don't even know how to

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describe how like the system of it would would exist. I think it's something that we just don't talk about. So we don't even know how to verbalize that much.

Olivia N 2:22:06

But, yeah, I mean, I think that I

2:22:10

am different people for different people, depending on how it performed my size that day. And then I have to be that person for them forever

Olivia N 2:22:15

Do you feel like how does the NYC like, desirability, lesbian scene impact you as like, a fat like, as a fat

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Latina, a lesbian, because I, I've had other people talking about what it's like dating and just being a multi marginalized, lesbian, and the New York City dating scene, especially in our age

Olivia N 2:22:57

group. I think there's a lot of performativity

2:23:04

there's a lot of people who say they accept and they accept everyone and everybody's beautiful, but they don't actually believe that. And I think that when you're dating, it becomes really clear. I think for me, I think I don't like apps. I don't love Lex or Tinder or Bumble or hinge.

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Just because you know.

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As I mentioned before, I kind of I've never been able to like kind of really get into making online friends or anything like that.

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I think it's my mom.

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I think it's because my mom, like when I was younger was like don't talk to people online. They're gonna kidnap you. And I really believed it.

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So,

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a lot of the dating experiences I've had in New York have been within my circles in school. And that always goes terribly bad. Yeah,

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I was like, you can't fuck friends you can't do I know that's like a queer tenant. I know. It's a queer tenant. But it's like one of the things where I'm like,

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No, yeah, it always goes terribly bad. I think you have hooked up with each other or have hooked up with each other's exes or have hooked up with each other's past friends. It's just this web that I find really overwhelming. So I try not to engage with that much rain. It's also a very, very wide web and yeah, in my experiences of dating white people have always

Olivia N 2:24:40

I think it's not what I want for myself. Yeah.

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I don't think I feel understood and supported in the way that I need to. So I don't want to do what people so that like lowers the pool by a lot. I also think and I think for me, I have a bit of a different experience sometimes because a lot of my really, really close friends, a lot of my best friends are gay, not lesbians. And with hookup culture, the gay hookup culture is like so different from lesbian hookup culture, I feel like but I also feel like a lot of lesbians I know are. They either are already in relationships,

or they don't care about being in relationships. And a lot of the gay men I know desperately want to be in relationships, they just don't know how to go about it.

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So, you know,

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find myself as people who desperately want to be in relationships, sometimes I feel like I should want to be in a relationship as well. When I don't.

Olivia N 2:25:48

I feel like so, you know,

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I haven't been dating for the past year. I just I don't think I have time for it. And I think after getting myself into one or two really messy situations, I would rather not try to untangle that web of lesbianism and NYU that exists.

Olivia N 2:26:12

Which is funny. I think someone made a charge of it. Like the L word chart? Yeah,

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I think so. I think you've got to show it.

Olivia N 2:26:21

You've got to find it. We got to find it.

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It's just it's ridiculous. I think it's also it's exactly like the L word. Like,

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just like, I need to know it though. I need to see it. You got to send it to me. I'll ask you. I

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lost my lesbian friends about it. Yeah. I mind

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don't know where they would have told me. Yeah, I yeah, I'll ask around. I think I know. Yeah. You know, okay. Well, tell

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me off of recording. Yeah. No, don't put them on blast. That's okay. That's okay. So, what's it like being a non binary lesbian? Do you feel like there's a consideration for gender nonconformity?

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What's in the lesbian scene can you can talk about what's in our age group, and then if you have an understanding of like,

Olivia N 2:27:15

the broader lesbian community,

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I think within our age group, and within my friend groups, there is definitely a consideration for it. Like

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I think people are very open to non binary lesbians in you know, the

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particular queer circles I run, I run and I frequent.

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However,

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in my experience of frequenting gay bars, gay men, especially Gen X, gay man, they first I don't think they have that much of an understanding of non binary people, period. Especially, you know, this

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is why Gen X guys who live in Hell's Kitchen, or go to Hell's Kitchen bars, especially when you like you're a lesbian, like, you're a woman. And even if you tell them you're not, they refuse to understand that and they're like, oh, then you're not a lesbian. And they don't really, I think, want to see lesbianism in a very expensive term.

Olivia N 2:28:30

Which has been interesting to experience a couple of times.

Olivia N 2:28:40

I mean, I think there's a lot to learn. Again, I think I am just, you know, really weirdly, and

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laden, not like my most of my lesbian friends, I think I am more in touch with the gay New York City nightlife scene than the lesbian New York City nightlife scene. So I see this a lot.

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But, yeah, it's just it's

2:29:18

you're invalidated for being non binary, and you're invalidated for being a lesbian. MB and being in that space, like, even if bars and even if clubs want to be really inclusive and want to become queer spaces. A lot of these clubs are very strongly gay spaces, and their clientele wants them to be gay spaces, and they only want one type of person to be there. And that is definitely not lesbians. They think lesbians suck, make a lot of lesbian jokes. And definitely not non binary people, especially if you're an you're non binary person that was assigned female at birth.

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But what's it like making the meeting was teens in New York City now? Where are you finding lesbians? Well, I know a lot of lesbians from classes from school.

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And, you know, I've connected with a lot of them through that through making art. I've met a lot of lesbians. So I think most of the lesbians I've met quite organically. And then, you know, once you meet one lesbian, they introduce you to another lesbian and you go to a party and there's five lesbians and then everyone's a lesbian and it's kind of wonderful. But otherwise, I do enjoy Lex to like, connect with people about mutual interests. I think that's fun. Now there's let's group chats. I think those are funny. Oh, there's

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drama. I wasn't a likes group chat, and it got deleted. Oh, because someone was like selling the data to like, like, was going to use it for their project, to like SCOTUS, that we're going to share the data and their findings, which is illegal. That's, that's really sighs. Yeah, I was like, wow. Anyways, there's no group chats on legs.

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There's no grudges and legs. And I've enjoyed using the group chats on legs. I think they're less threatening than connecting with people like, and I enjoy making friends through that. Even if it's just like to text for a little while. I've been doing it now that I'm at home. Because I have a lot of free time and I don't have much of a community here. I also like I mean, I don't live in the, like city center. I live in a little ranch. like donkeys and birds and sheep, and horses ranch. So maybe the French people were not that wrong about me. Wow. But they didn't even know that they were just being racist. Yeah. I also didn't live in a ranch back then.

2:32:04

There was definitely wrong.

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Yeah, so I really I don't know many people here. So I've been using the legs, group chats, and that has been fun. I know a lot of people who have met partners and friends through legs. Yeah. Which I think is fun. I think that's a great way to meet people. I am a big advocate for a lesbian grinder. Yeah. I don't know why it doesn't exist.

Olivia N 2:32:36

And you don't think Lex is lesbian grinders? No, I don't not enough. No, I think

2:32:42

after seeing how Grindr works, I think Grindr is really effective. And is really interesting. And I think legs. I like Lexie, because I think Lex allows for more. And I think Lex allows for better community building opportunities. When Grindr it's really it's it's a hookup app. It's literally up. I think it's fun, but like you're somewhere and you can open it and you can see all the gay people around you. On Lex, or in Grindr. Grindr. Okay. Yeah. Yeah. I think it'd be fun to have something like that for lesbians. A lesbian grinder? I don't know why someone has not done that already. Maybe because like creepy dudes would go down. Yeah,

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probably safety issues, but I don't see. Like in an ideal world, if we could have it. There should be lesbian grinders what

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you're saying. I mean, there can be wired for famous people. I don't see why we can

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Yeah, minor. But yeah,

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I mean, I think I've mostly met two lesbians through school through projects through mutual friends.

Olivia N 2:33:49

So where are you guys hanging out? So if you win, like your lesbian friends, we're gonna go somewhere. Where are y'all going? What

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are you doing?

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Where are you hanging out?

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Well, a lot of the times we just hang out in each other's apartments like little get togethers I think are really popular. If we're going out. It's usually Henrietta's. Or what's Wednesdays? I honestly think the best lesbian bar in New York City is gingers but I live right by gingers. I think gingers is the best lesbian bar in New York City. But I think a lot of lesbians I know don't go to genders. Because also like we all mostly live in Manhattan, so they're more Henrietta's people. Okay,

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what are your thoughts on what's Wednesdays and Henrietta's? Oh,

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I like what's Wednesday is better than Henrietta's. I think Henry okay.

Olivia N 2:34:47

I think Henrietta is can be really wait. What Wednesdays aren't?

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I think they are too sometimes. But I think they're a little bit more diverse. Am I going to with Wednesdays? Are you doing more than versus Henrietta's. I also think that I like that what's Wednesdays is like a little bit more like, you know, I think the space is bigger, and it's not all indoors, which is fun. I like that about gingers as well. I like that little terrace space they have I think it's really cute.

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But

2:35:21

I think that there is a lot to say about consent in lesbian bars and lesbian parties. Every time I've gone to a lesbian party or lesbian bar, I've been groped without my consent. And most of my friends have had similar to this Oh, my lesbian friends I would safely say have been groped LSP and bars without their consent, or they've been hit on very with with a lot of insistence despite not being interested. So I think that's Knox I think. We have to really talk about consent in lesbian nightlife spaces and criminalized spaces in general. But I do see it a lot in lesbian nightlife spaces. And that's not always fun that does like turn you off sometimes from going I think.

Olivia N 2:36:15

So I think I've noticed that I do like going to like,

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I went to a watch party at Henrietta's ones. And I think that kind of thing was more fun. It was more low key. It was more chill. I've gone to happy hour cubbyhole early. And I found that to be fun. I've been able to connect with people I wouldn't have connected otherwise and have like conversations especially with like, older lesbians. Which I really, really cherished having that opportunity, especially since I grew up with like no queer elders and no presence of like, anyone older than me who's queer. So that was my that's always nice. I really appreciate that, I think. And I think this is like a common thing that I talk with my queer friends, not only my lesbian friends, but I wish there would be more spaces to connect with queer people that don't involve alcohol and alcohol intake.

Olivia N 2:37:26

I am personally not sober. But I do like

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I do wish that there would be opportunities where you could go to queer community spaces, and there are some queer community spaces but you know, more popular queer community spaces where you could go and it would not be so reliant on alcohol sales

Olivia N 2:37:47

and on alcohol intake.

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Yeah, I think those are I do like them though. I do think we're nightlife is really special. And I think there's a lot to say about what Korean nightlife represents about the history of Kuru nightlife and about the importance of keeping it alive. I think it's so tragic that there's so little less than bars in the country. I also think it's so tragic that lesbian and gay bars are so separate and are so different, so different from each other. And there's little space where both can converge.

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And

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yeah, I honestly I go to gamers a lot more than or equal to lesbian bars, though. That's because of your friend, right? Yeah, my friends and drag. I love drag. I think drag is wonderful.

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Have you been to die drag yet?

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I haven't been the producer of drag drag is my best friend's girlfriend's sister.

Olivia N 2:38:54

Oh, I'm baby. Yeah,

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yeah. Cool. You should go to date drag. It was nice. I've been once. Yeah, it's always on a weekday which makes it hard for me. Yeah, it's because I live in the area I just like walk over.

2:39:10

I've been to other like, like the cake boys used to have a residency at the Q but then the QX and drama so we didn't go to the Q anymore. Yeah. Yeah. But I used to go support them whenever that happened. I have a couple of friends who have like this like nightlife collective called avec ma. That other kind of Yeah, yeah. Like I'm friends with Mark and Celine and stuff. So they are trying to open up more inclusive crew spaces, especially for lesbians think everyone in leadership but I've had more as a lesbian.

2:39:44

Oh, and

2:39:48

I've been to a couple of your happy hours and they've always been really wonderful experiences. And I've always made a lot of friends. And I am a regular at some Queen strike shows and they're wonderful. They're very nice. And I just I think drag is really, really magical

Olivia N 2:40:09

so what's it like?

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Building lesbian community? Like in person, physical lesbian community? Have you noticed any struggles for that, especially since we're in the middle of a pandemic? Yeah.

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I think it's hard to everyone is so busy all the time in New York, I think that's more of like maybe a New York student thing. Everyone is always so busy. So that's hard. I think in getting lesson community, physical, lesbian community, building physical as a community, I think it's really important. I think the rooms that you got when you put a bunch of lesbians together are so healing for me and being able to talk about lesbian experience in a way that I can talk with my gay friends, and I can talk with other queer friends. We talk a lot about what it means to be I think it always goes to like what it means to be a lesbian to us, whenever I'm with a lot of lesbians, and they have these very long, very valuable conversations that I really cherish and I think of a lot. We always also talk about the web of lesbians.

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A lot of gossip going around. Yeah, that's a struggle

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of building lesbian community that everyone kind of knows each other everyone kind of they all

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love each other. And they and they base their friend groups, especially the white lesbians over how much they find each other attractive.

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And how many people they have fuck together. And what's weird as shit.

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I'm like, be regular be regular human. Yeah, be normal, like, people. Talk to people that you don't want to fuck. Don't be men be different.

Olivia N 2:41:49

Sorry, that was so aggressive.

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But according to this wealth, because there's there's something in the ether going on right now. The NYU lesbians are shaking. There's

2:42:02

your array, like a lot of these lesbian friend groups are based on like, who wants to hook up with who and how much like, sexual capital they hold. Which is strange. I think that is a big part of lesbian social dynamics and lesbian in person social dynamics, in my experience, like, sometimes, like someone would walk into a room with the entire room shifts, because like someone fucked them, and it went bad. It's also really funny whenever you have beef with someone, and suddenly someone comes up to you, and they have like, 50 horror stories about them. Yeah, so I think, but I think this is not about lesbians in general. I think lesbians in general are really wonderful, magical people. No, you're not shitting on lesbians.

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It's just like, you're you're you're showing that lesbianism you're just you're just a lesbian who's talking about your life. Like, I don't think it's, like fucked or anything or. I mean,

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it's the truth.

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It's weird. Oh, um, so

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So that's, that's a struggle, I

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think, um, I think I think

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a big struggle I've had with some of my closest lesbian friends is that they you call and then they don't have anyone ever again. And then they just forget that they have friends. Yeah. And they'll be the loveliest people when you see them. But then you don't see them for six months.

2:43:32

Yeah. And then they have a terrible breakup. And they're like,

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hey, luckily for me, my u haul friends have stayed strong. Oh, hell yeah.

2:43:42

You have friends who are your who? Who are your u haul lesbians? Lindsay and Rachel. Lindsay and Regina bird and Rachel's are Dang, I don't know, these NYU lesbians. Anyway, Lindsay,

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Lindsay's wide. Rachel is Middle Eastern.

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I don't know Rachel.

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What Lindsay was my roommate freshman year. And we were really good friends. And then like a month into the semester, they met Rachel and they never came back. And they're just adorable. And I love them. With all my heart.

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I don't I don't know every lesbian of color, but I feel like I should know them at least by one degree of separation.

Olivia N 2:44:31

I don't know Rachel. Their sister is dating um, maybe

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maybe I don't know. Maybe I'll have to look at the face. I'm just not in the NYU lesbian treated in the same way you are. Because I don't really like going out. Valid.

2:44:56

It's like a reality show how you watch Tampa Bay's.

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Oh, I watch it from I watched it Maya watches Tampa Bay's but I watched the NYU lesbians from afar. I'm an I'm an observer.

2:45:08

I one of my close friend wants to do one and what you Tampa Bay's?

2:45:14

Oh, really? Yeah.

2:45:17

It's a lot of drama. It's, it's like tamper base, literally. And there's the beef and, and all of that going on. So, so it's, it's interesting. But yeah, I think I missed my u haul friends. I'm really happy that they're happy. I envy their happiness. I wish them the best. And I think that they're gonna get married honestly. Because they love each other so much. But I miss hanging out with them.

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Yeah. So you think in person, lesbian community is really important. And there have been some struggles

Olivia N 2:46:01

about it. But like, not too much to overcome.

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Yeah, yeah. I mean, I think at the beginning, and I think the larger like lesbian in person, community and lesbian community in general, like, I didn't know he was very white. And that was a little bit of a struggle, because of course, like, at first, I didn't mind it that much. We could we could connect over our shared lesbian identity. And we could talk about lesbianism and we could gossip or whatever. But the more time I spend at NYU, and the more time I spend away from home, the more

Olivia N 2:46:44

I feel,

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or vary from white people from white Americans specifically.

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So I think that

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I do, like right now, struggle more at being in rooms of white lesbians, and being the only lesbian of color. I noticed much more, and I do find myself not relating to a lot of their life and a lot of what they do, and

Olivia N 2:47:19

that is hard sometimes. So, what does identifying as a lesbian mean to you?

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Think identify as lesbian means to be. Like, how would I define lesbianism? Or what does it mean to exist as a lesbian for me?

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Like, you want me to elevate so you can talk about maybe what it means to exist as a lesbian to you. You don't have to define lesbianism if you don't want to. Yeah, I

2:48:04

think that's really hard. Yeah, I

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was like, don't define lesbianism unless you want to, but mostly about how you like what does lesbianism mean to you and your experience of lesbianism?

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I think my experience of lesbianism has allowed me to live and love and exist outside of a lot of the patriarchal roles and a lot of the patriarchal teachings I grew up with.

Olivia N 2:48:30

And that has been

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really, really important for me and has been really healing.

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I think

2:48:41

being a lesbian for me means I think I've said a bunch of times how like, I feel I see my lesbianism, I see lesbianism in general has been really expansive. And I think an existing they've in this really expensive really broad really valuable and never moving ever changing identity. I've learned a lot and I felt myself grow through the people who also inhabit the same space I do.

2:49:17

And I think being a lesbian for me also means like,

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I think it means rejecting a lot of the things that I've been taught growing up that do not serve Me and do not serve my friends do not serve my partner's not serve my community. Because they're not relevant to the way I view the world and they're not relevant to the way I've been able to. Have to to to for my life right now.

Olivia N 2:50:07

I think it has meant

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it does mean community for me in many ways. Like I do have a lot of really wonderful lesbian friends and lesbian friends of color who do just have constantly been there for me have constantly been the most wonderful and understanding people in the world.

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And

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I'm really, really thankful for them and I'm really thankful to see them exist and be happy and inhabit the space of lesbianism and the way that they feel

2:50:42

like

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like they are like they like they do which is different than mine

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yeah, I think that's what it means free. What are you happiest as a lesbian? What does lesbian joy is when I remember lesbian joy is when

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I got to make art and be

2:51:27

really happy about it. I think

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let's be enjoy is when I get dressed every morning, and I put on my makeup. And I feel really, really glad. I feel really happy

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and comfortable with myself. Thing lesbian joy is when I got a new pair of earrings

Olivia N 2:51:51

and someone notices them on the street. I think lesbian joy is getting coffee with someone you love. And I think let's be enjoy is sharing even when it's scary. And

2:52:18

I think less we enjoy is taking care of yourself so you can take care of the people

Olivia N 2:52:23

around you. Is there anything else you want to talk about before we stopped the recording? No. Okay, well, thank you very much. Thank you