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Wed, May 10, 2023 7:04PM • 1:57:17

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

lesbian, feel, guess, bisexual, queer, non binary, men, date, shanghai, thinking, work, person, talk, friends, sex, woman, gay, year, high school, realized

SPEAKERS

Olivia N

Olivia N 00:00

Record. Today is January 2 2023. I'm Olivia Newsome interviewing Bailey virtually over zoom. Do I have permission to record this interview?

00:12

Yes, you do.

Olivia N 00:14

Do you know you can stop recording at any time? Yes. Can you state your name, age and pronouns? My full name? Nope. Just however you just your first name.

00:25

Sure. My name is Bailey. I am 23 years old and I use they them pronouns.

Olivia N 00:31

Can you tell me where you're from? Where you grew up, and what your childhood was like?

00:36

Sure. Um, I am originally from Phoenix, Arizona. I lived there until I was 14. And then I, my family moved to Shanghai, China, which is where I went to high school until I obviously graduated. And then I went to Stanford. I had a really good childhood, I had a very, I come from a very, like loving family. And yeah, they're just very accepting. For the most part, I think. But they've been pretty accepting of things that I've told them, the ways that I've come out, even if it's like taking a while, I guess. And that yeah, I have a younger brother. And he is now 18. And I am very close to him. He is like my best friend, even though he and I could not be more different.

Olivia N 01:27

Why did you move to Shanghai?

01:30

Yeah. Um, so my, so the plan actually was always to move to Costa Rica after like, when I was 14, after my dad, like, retired, he was a PE teacher. And so yeah, we just moved to Costa Rica. So I was already like, emotionally prepared to like, leave Arizona. And then his like friend's wife opened a school in Shanghai. And it just sort of like worked out that like, it was yeah, he basically one day just like asked me if I wanted to move to China, and I thought he was joking, because what kind of questions that but I was a yeah, whatever. And then yeah, it just sort of happened that way. Yeah, he like became a PE teacher at my school in Shanghai. That's where I went to school. And yeah.

Olivia N 02:17

He talked a little bit about your brother and yells relationship. You mentioned how you're really close.

02:22

Yeah. Um, I think it also was just like a product of us like having gone through this experience, just like living internationally. And sort of like only having each other also because like, were mixed race I think it's just like a lot of like, liminal spaces that we like, kind of exist in and like, it's like, only an identity or like experience that like the two of us have. And just like yeah, we lived in really small apartments in Shanghai. So I think just like being enclosed spaces is like, what brought my entire family closer together. Um, but yeah, he is like, he's a so he's five years younger than me. So I think I also feel like I raised him in a lot of ways. I definitely feel like being like an elder sibling is like, a strong part of my identity. But he is more of like a frat, bro type person. Like, I was really into cryptocurrency for a while, like, because like, life goal is to like, become rich, which is like, none of which is like my life at all. Um, but yeah, I think nonetheless, like, I think he's still is like a very caring person. I think we just like, yeah, really just, like rely on each other a lot. Just like growing up. And the way that we did. Yeah, we don't talk that much, unfortunately. But like when we are together, like in person, like we get along pretty well. Now, I think that wasn't always the case. But now we get along really well. I think that's really cool. And

Olivia N 04:00

speaking of moving to Shanghai, can you talk about what it was like attending high school there? Especially like the whole experience and what it was like being mixed race in Shanghai?

04:13

Yeah. Yeah, I think it definitely made me more comfortable with being uncomfortable. Just because, in general, and in Shanghai, at least, there weren't a lot of like non East Asian people. And so we would get stared at a lot. Like, just like, wherever we went, people would stare at us. I remember one time when we were in Beijing, we were walking through like a park. And like me and my brother were like almost a competition to see how many people would take would ask to take pictures with us just because we were foreigners. It was really a bonkers experience. My high school itself was like I was the only like, nine In the Chinese national students who attended it was like supposed to be like half International School half like, just like a regular Chinese High School, which was really unique because just like have some, like legal issues like that Chinese students weren't allowed to go to like international schools. So supposed to like sort of like bringing that together? It was like an IB program. Yeah, but so I'll, I always felt like really isolated. They're very just like, left out. People would talk in Mandarin all the time. And I didn't speak Mandarin going there. I didn't speak any. And then I like

learned a little bit but never like really knew what was going on. So yeah, I just had like a really tough social life. I never really got like that close to a lot of people. I mean, like, my ability, like, like, my friendships were all predicated on the, like, the English speaking abilities of my classmates, um, which I don't think is the ideal way to make friends. But it like all turned out okay. In the end, I think something that I think a lot when it comes to my high school, it's the fact that it seemed like very gay for a school that was like, in a country I don't know, if or when China like, made like gay marriage or even just homosexuality like legal. But it's not a it's not a super queer country, or, like, queer loving area. And yeah, it seemed like there are a lot of lesbians specifically, like, girls were just dating all the time. And I didn't really I didn't understand then. And I don't understand now, how that came to be. I don't know if it was like real, like, how many of these like relationships were like real versus just like, Oh, haha, like, this is my girlfriends, you know. But I was, like, what was going on. And then in high school, my senior year, which was like the best year of my experience in China, there was another student who like she was born in China, but she was adopted by like, some white people in Wisconsin. But she coming back. She wanted to do like a year in China. So she like came back that year, we became really, really close. And it also like, like, it helped, of course, that she just like, was American. And so just like, helped, like, have a friend who like came from the same, like somewhat culture that I did. But we also just like got along really well just like as people. And she came up to me as bisexual that year, and I was like, Oh my God, and then I was like, yeah, maybe I'm also like, bisexual or whatever. I don't know. Like, you know, we'll see. Like, maybe and she's like, okay. But yeah, I think that felt really important for that time in my life. Yeah. Yeah.

Olivia N 07:53

Is this the queer friend that helped affirm your identity in high school?

07:57

Probably, yeah. As I told my turn, yes. She was the only one there was like a friend that affirmed my identity and a friend that like, I almost came out to, and she like, pushed me back in the closet so hard. Yeah, I, I can't really I remember us like walking around the track. And like me talking to her just about, um, I think we might have been talking about like to other girls. And she was talking about like, Oh, my God, like, can you believe this happened? Or, like, can you believe that they're like, together or whatever. And I was like, Yeah, I can't believe it. And you know, like, maybe sometimes, like, I, like also feel that way. It's just like, why it's like, No way. She's like, it. She just like, had like, such a strong reaction. I was like, Well, I don't know. Maybe Maybe not in and

Olivia N 08:46

we were like, it was to know. Yeah, I

08:48

was like, Oh, I guess not, you know, but um, yeah, I think that was like, I think my friend coming out to me and then that friend having that reaction to me potentially coming out to her, like really shaped my, like, understanding of queerness in high school, or my greatness, at least.

Olivia N 09:05

And what was that understanding of queerness in high school? Yeah. Really, anything else? I get it.

09:16

I was such a white feminist is so weird to think back on. But just like, there was Yeah, I think it was good. Like, I like had like, some level of like social consciousness, even though I was like, in a relatively conservative country. You know, I don't know. Like, I remember my sophomore year I think we were doing like this like group project on and the like topic was abortion and like, we had to like present both sides and I was the only one that was like, abortion is good, right, like, pro choice and I thought that was such like a common I was expecting that to just be like their response. But anyways, um, But yeah, I think I had a pretty good understanding of queerness. Like, I wasn't on Tumblr, but I was on Pinterest and Pinterest at that time. For me, it was just a bunch of screenshots in some way. And I feel like I learned a lot of just like about social issues, just like from Pinterest. Yeah, and I don't think that I, so I didn't identify, I guess like, as queer all at that time. I certainly didn't identify as a lesbian and like, didn't think much about lesbianism at all. Yeah, certainly not the like, as someone who like, did a lot of queer studies stuff in college, certainly, like not level that or like now. But like, I would say, like a good amount. Yeah. It wasn't necessarily something that like, was talked about in my family. Like, we didn't talk about it. But it also wasn't like a taboo topic, I guess.

Olivia N 10:56

Yeah. Can you talk a little bit about how class affected you growing up?

11:03

Yeah, sure. Um, yeah, so I grew up middle class, probably in every single way. Which I didn't know until I like met people who are low income, because my dad raised us to think we were poor. I don't really know why he still thinks that is very much not true. But yeah, and I think, I think also, like, I always went to school with kids who were just like, objectively wealthy. And like, we're very high income. So I always felt like I had less than them. But I think for the most part, money was not, it was like, something that I was always thinking about, but it was never something that was like, a problem for us. Yeah, and like, any way that would like, affect my life, I Oh, yeah. So I guess financially, I've been like, very lucky. I don't think that class has really affected me. Yeah, that much growing up at all.

Olivia N 12:04

Can you talk about gender norms? Yeah.

12:09

Um, yes. So I identify as non binary. And that is relatively new as of like, last year. I think that being an older sibling, oh, the sibling. And also just like being like, raised as like, the oldest sister. There was just like, a lot put on me. And I think like that, like I sort of like mentioned with like, just like having to, like sort of raise my brother. Yeah, I was just definitely. I wasn't that I was actually raised to be super feminine. But I think like, those interests were definitely encouraged. Like, I really liked to read. And I think that like that was, you know, like, encouraged, like, you know, staying home like being indoors, being like very maternal towards my brother. Like, I think all that was encouraged and still is encouraged. And I think I was pretty feminine. I mean, you know, my mom, like, dressed me in pink before I could like dress myself a lot. Although I am returning to pink. I love pink a lot now. Bye, but oh, yeah, I think it's like if there's like a pay for Amazon's going on. But um, I just think I'm just I think there

was like stuff with like, body image that I like, grappled with a lot. My mom didn't have a good relationship with her body. And my dad also didn't, which I didn't realize until much later. Like, I think a lot of my body image issues came from him. And I also think, like, my grandma keeps coming to mind, although I'm not really sure why because I didn't spend that much time with her growing up, but I think, yeah, I think it was just also just like a lot. I think for the most part, the gender norm that like comes most strongly to mind is like having to take care of my brother. Yeah, just like every single way. And it's not that I'm, like, resentful of that. But I think it is something that I'm like trying to like, unlearn or just like work on just being like a sibling instead of being like another parent. Yeah. See what else? Um,

Olivia N 14:26

I have a question. So you talked about like being a being a parent to your brother. So and that kind of being like, a feminine, like gendered labor role, right? Yeah. And was it just you your dad, and your brother in Shanghai?

14:53

No, my mom was also there. Um, but I think the way that I like rationalize it or but Long time is like I was like a really easy kid. And my brother was not. And I think that probably has something to do with gender, but also just like, I don't know, just like asking different people. And so I feel like my dad being like a PE teacher, I think has like, worked through like a lot of like kids with like disciplinary issues. Like, was always very firm with us and my mom, like, she loves my brother walk all over him. And so I think then it like when my dad wasn't around, it fell on me to be more like a disciplinarian. Or at least just like saving up for my mom. You know?

Olivia N 15:42

Do you have a good relationship with your mom?

15:45

Yeah, I do. I love her very much. I think that like when we're apart, it feels hard to like, have something to say to her. Like me and my dad are really close. Like, I think we're like basically the same person. And when we're together, my mom, and I, like get along really well. But I think our relationship is something that we both have to like, be more intentional about. She definitely is like, a lot cooler than my dad's, like, politically at least. And I'm also like, native, I'm Northern Cheyenne. And that's on my mom's side. So I think that's something that we've like, been bonding over a lot recently, is just like, because she wasn't, so I wasn't really raised with any Northern Cheyenne culture or Lebanese culture, which is on my dad's side. But just because like geographically like, like my maternal grandmother, my maternal grandparents are still around, like, I don't know, I've just been like thinking a lot more about my indigeneity in the past few years. And I think like, in turn that's been getting my mom wanting to it. So I've just been like talking a lot more about that. And just, yeah, it's been like really cool to see how like, she has been so receptive to things that I bring up to her just around like any social issue. She'll like, do her like research or whatever. She was like, the she was like, cool about it when I came out as bisexual, in 2018. And then she was the one who asked me, like, outright if I was a lesbian, like, couple years ago. Yeah, and it just like she was like, very, I feel like she almost it felt almost, like scripted the way that she knew exactly what to say. Which I think is kind of cute. But yeah, she's, she's, like, very, like warm and welcoming. And just like super nice. Yeah.

Olivia N 17:44

We've already touched on a little bit, but can you talk more about race growing up? Yeah. being mixed race and you can even talk about life pre Shanghai. Yeah, and what it was like, being mixed race and maybe feeling a strange from both of your parents cultures, or Yeah, like, Are your parents immigrants?

18:10

No, they're not. And I think that's just like something that feels interesting because all my friends who are POC while you're not gonna see it, but most of them especially like, before, like maybe last year, they were all children of immigrants. So they all had that experience. But my dad's family is like, their generation Lebanese American, and my mom is like, native, so obviously not. Um, but yeah, I think growing up next, I think I just like always felt like brown. I feel like Brown was like, my ethnicity because I like didn't really have a connection to like, any specific culture. Like, I think like the first time that I visited my family's reservation in Montana, I might have been like, it was I was like, 14, I want to say it was like, just before we moved to Shanghai and I like, got like my paperwork sorted out so that I could like officially be enrolled or whatever. Like that's my first memory at least of being there. I think I was there when I was like an infant. But, um, yeah, and just be like, like, not my parents don't are like monolingual like they only speak English. So I like wasn't raised to speak like Cheyenne or Arabic. And there was like, never really a push to learn like another language. I mean, maybe Spanish because we were supposed to like move to Costa Rica. But yeah, and I went to a school in Scottsdale, Arizona. That was I look looked up. Look this up later, but like my high school in Arizona was 83% White. And I just felt it. Like, so deep in my bones like all the time, like, I don't think I noticed it. Like I don't think I like noticed it while I was you know. tween like, Wow, all these people are white, but I always felt really difference. They were all really white and really wealthy. And I was like, neither of those things and I just felt like really, just like I didn't fit in. And I don't think I like really knew that or noticed it like, you know, like fully until I like moved to Shanghai where I was like, Oh, nobody cares might but also, nobody here looks like me either. And so it was like isolation and like just big being like an outside and like a different sense. Yeah. And then like, it wasn't, I've never been close with my extended family. And it's not that I have like bad relationships with them. It's just like, my mom's family was in Montana. My dad's family. I don't know. We like saw them on like major holidays. And that was like it. So like, my immediate family was all I had and because we were so like, my parents were so whitewashed, and we were so whitewashed and my brother. It didn't feel Yeah, I didn't like notice really. That I like that I wasn't washed at all until I got to college, I think. And my dad like remains really proud of the fact that we're like whitewashed. You like it like has told me like, he's like, yeah, like, you know, Brody's like completely fine. Like being like, completely separate from like, his, like culture or whatever. And it's just like, wild to me. But, um, yeah, but I think being in college was the first time that I even like, knew, like, the language and mixed race, or, like, considered it as like an identity. And when I did it, I felt like I like finally felt like understood for like, the first time it was like an I was being interviewed for like, some students like, class project about, like, multiracial identity. And I was like, Oh, my God. Like, this is like, you're asking questions, and you're like, saying things that like deeply resonate with me. And I like was a TA for another class that was like about identity. And one of the like, race units included, like a multiracial group, which is we were just like a bunch of multiracial kids talking about being multiracial. But the thing about being mixed, and I guess more so the thing about being Northern Cheyenne, and Lebanese is that like nobody else is. So even when talking to other mixed race people, it's never the

same experience. Yeah, and I think that feels hard. I think that's been feeling harder, I guess. I think at first, like, once the like, novelty of like, recognizing that being mixed was like a shared experience. It like led to like a different kind of isolation, where it's like, okay, yeah, we all know, that, like, whatever like cliches about like, mixed race kids, like that's true. But like, one of us, like, so many mix people go into this, like, people who are half white and half not white, really just I like have very little, you know, time and energy, and patience for them. It just like is completely different. And they just take up so much space and like, make serious conversations. And I think they should just stop. But yeah, and I think just like when I was like having these conversations, a lot of times it was with people who are halfway and I just like, it's just like not the same. It's like, oh, like half of me is a colonizer and half of me is colonized. Like, I do not really. Um, yeah. So that was hopefully that answered the question. No, you

Olivia N 23:37

definitely did. There isn't really a spot for this, like in the oral history. But just because you mentioned it is something that you're thinking about when you talk about it later on, too. So I'm gonna give you that option to talk about it at the end. But if you want to talk more about like conversations about your indigeneity and coming into your indigeneity, especially from his with your mom, I would love to give you a space to talk about that. Yeah, I

24:00

would love to talk about that later. Do

Olivia N 24:01

it. We can do it towards the end. Like one of the last questions. Yeah,

24:05

I think I wouldn't be surprised if it came up more.

Olivia N 24:10

Cool. Yeah. So who or what influenced you the most growing up?

24:16

Oh, my gosh.

Olivia N 24:21

It doesn't have to be people it can be like social media.

24:24

Yeah. Okay. The neck is definitely

Olivia N 24:28

like lesbian YouTube. Yeah, Pinterest.

24:31

Venture Pinterest really was it for me in high school also because I like was like, Okay, so in China, Facebook and Instagram were banned. So I couldn't use them without a VPN so when I went on vacation to like other countries, I was like, able to like, you know, check in on the rest of the world. But for the most part, I just like wasn't on social media at all. I don't even think it really accounts on social media. I wasn't like following or interacting with people that I know. But it like definitely fully shaped my like consciousness. I can't remember if YouTube was also no, I can't remember it was banned or not. I can't remember really going on YouTube but um oh no, I did a little. Remember watching Connor Francis coming up. Oh wow, I was such a good ally

Olivia N 25:27

I'm honored Santos choice Avans all the dikes from Buzzfeed. I just really love supporting gay

25:36

people. Yeah. Like they're so great. Need a

Olivia N 25:41

rainbow fried cake with icing. And then my dad asked me if I was gay. And I was like, no. If making this rainbow cake to support gay people, I love it. appreciate them.

25:57

So good. So anyways,

Olivia N 25:58

yes. I've never in my life heard someone talk about Pinterest shaping them in the same way. You're doing it? Like, explain to me what that means to

26:10

you. Yeah, I think it's just was the only way that I was like getting information from the outside world. And I think Pinterest algorithm, and I stand by this was so strong and so good. In a way that just like Instagram could never, I think it's gone downhill. Like, I'm not on Pinterest currently. I've been thinking about getting back into it, but for a while, I feel like it just knew me so well. And it like had everything, you know, we had like forever 21 ads, which, you know, as like a 15 year old was very important to me. But then it also had, like, you know, just like, yeah, information about like feminism, um, and about like race, I can't remember clearly, but I can remember that it was like super important to me. And I was on it all the time. Um, but I think also, there were like a couple high school teachers actually thinking about now. One of them Oh, he was I guess my English teacher when I was a sophomore my first year in Shanghai, and then was committing to be like, an English teacher was also like a librarian. After that, at my school, and I used to be really interested in linguistics. He was really in linguistics, so we like sort of like bonded over that. But he also was like a feminist. And that was like, the first time that I have like, heard someone identifies CONUS. I also strongly believe he was closeted, there's no way like, I think it's just like an open secret. He was married to another teacher at the school who was a woman. But there was no way that marriage was, was a love marriage. Anyways, that's off topic. But yeah, and I think he just like really also was like a person that I met in real life who was talking about like, social issues, which felt really important to me. And then I also had the so she was so cool. She was like this,

like middle aged Indian woman who was my English teacher and my junior and senior year, and she was so cool. Like, she we only read like feminist literature. Um, if any of the boys gave her like lip, she just like shut them down immediately. She was so badass. I love her so much. Um, yeah. And I think that they really influenced me, I guess, like, like, as a person, like, my social consciousness and also like, I'm just like a nerd. And I love being in school, and reading and so I think like having two English teachers like that was like, really important to me.

Olivia N 28:48

Did you realize that your sexuality might be different from what was around you? Like, do you have like, a moment where you're like,

28:56

Oh, I'm How do I know? Um, that's actually interesting. I think I used to, like, be like, oh, you know, I realized that like, when I was like, in first or second grade, like me and my best friend like, I was like, in love with her. Because, you know, she was like, the only other brown girl she was like, she was biracial. So she was like, half black, half white. So we basically our skin tones basically the same. And, um, yeah, and so just like in this like, sea of like, white people. And so I like yeah, just like it was like kissing on her and stuff, just like in the after school program. And yeah, but I but then I don't know when I realized that that was clear. I think part of me always knew like I remember like being like, sort of like shy about the fact that I was like kissing her arm in front of these like older white boys. So I think I knew it was like, not necessarily okay, because she was like my Sister, so it's okay to kiss your sister. Um, but, um, I don't remember when I really thought about it, I guess. I think being around a lot of queer people in high school like helped me, like, sort of normalize it more. Yeah. Remember? Can you talk I was about to ramble.

Olivia N 30:26

Oh no, continue to ramble.

30:29

Okay, I, I feel like there are people I didn't have like crushes on girls are not like conscious crushes on girls in high school. There was this girl who I've recently reconnected with, who I definitely had a crush on. But I didn't realize that until I think much. Like maybe senior year. I can't remember what it was about senior year that made me want to come out as bi. And I like immediately came out as bi when I got to college, but honestly, yeah, I guess I can't remember which is very surprising to me now that I'm like actually thinking about it. Yeah.

Olivia N 31:11

Can you talk a little bit about how you found like, clear friends in high school?

31:18

Um, yeah, I guess. A good question. of my closest friends in high school. Okay. I'm, like really thinking back. Like, I would say, like, half of us were queer. But I think only I guess two of us were like, out at the time, half of us, I think being like four, maybe five out of like, eight or nine. The others were like, very straight. But um, yeah, I think it I think again, like just because like my friends were made on the

basis of like, who could speak English? I think it just sort of happened. I think I just ended up being in a very clear High School. Um, yeah, I like literally, I don't we never talked about it. Even like once my friend came out to me. We like didn't really talk about it much after that. The other person who like was out was I think he he was gay. And he had like a couple boyfriends through high school. But also wasn't really talked about it was just so I don't know how or why but at least from what I like, understood, because again, there was like, a whole school culture happening that I just literally cannot understand because it's happening in Mandarin. But from what I could like tell everyone was like super chill with all these people being gay. Like he nobody like said anything to him about it is like, oh, yeah, like Edison's boyfriend. This Edison's boyfriend that. And I think he might Yeah, I think he identified as bi but like, nobody, really, I guess like labels didn't really count for anything, because I'm pretty sure all those girls would say they were straight or say they were like, queer, but like in like giggly kind of way. Um, yeah.

Olivia N 33:19

Around what year did you know you were a lesbian? Instead of bisexual? How did you arrive there?

33:25

Yeah.

33:26

Um, oh. Okay, going back to um, briefly, when I like was sort of realizing I wasn't straight. Because related people really have to tell me things about myself. There was this white. So there was like this exchange student from like, our sister school in New York. And he was a psych white guy. I think he identifies bisexual too. He was like, I'm Loki bisexual person. Oh, um, and he was like, I think your bio, and I was like, what? Oh, I totally forgot. Okay, I'm going back to this. I'm remembering why now. I'm using you're bisexual. And you just don't know. Yeah. And I was like, really stressed out because my entire life. People had been making this joke to me about being like Lebanese, and like Lebanese and lesbian. It's like a common, it's a common joke. And so I would get that, like, a lot growing up. I was like, Oh, you're a lesbian. And I was like oh, so I think I was like, always aware of that just because it's being like, put on me like a joking kind of way. And then to have this like, kid, tell me that I was bisexual. I don't really know why. But, um, yeah. And then. So then that was high school. And then I was in a relationship with a woman, my junior year of college and it's my first relationship ever anything even remotely a relationship like romantic at all? Um, it's very cute. It was very it was like as you Holly's you can get when you're like living in a college dorm. Um, and yeah. And then she told me she was like, I think you're a lesbian. That was like, why as crazy and then broke up like right when the pandemic hit. Just because I really don't want to get into it. But I was back home in Costa Rica. She was home in Long Beach. Yeah. So

Olivia N 35:40

you moved to Shanghai just for high school, and then you then you guys decided to actually go

35:44

to Costa Rica.

35:46

Yeah. So my family moved to Costa Rica during my freshman year of college.

Olivia N 35:50

Okay, so Scottsdale Arizona, right.

35:54

I can give you yours if that's helpful.

Olivia N 35:55

Na, Shang

35:58

saying hi. And then.

Olivia N 36:01

Then like, we went to college in Stanford, California and never lived there. And then your parents are like, done with Shanghai. Right. Costa Rica vibes. Yes. So you come home to college to Costa Rica, where you never lived? Right. Got it all up here. Yeah. I was like, Wait a second. You were like back home in Costa Rica. I was like,

36:29

I get it. I get it.

36:31

Yeah. Um, yeah. So I finally moved there. I had never been there for more than a couple of weeks at a time. Until the pandemic, and then I was there for a year. So then, I guess, in a sense, it felt like I had lived there. And I was we can get into that, as well. But anyways, um, yeah. So then, when the pandemic hit, I was in Costa Rica, she was in Long Beach. And we had just broken up. And I was, you know, thinking, reflecting. And I was like, Maybe I am lesbian. And it just sort of like, it just sort of happened, I think, because I was so isolated, like, I wasn't seeing anybody who anywhere because I was in my house all the time. And it just felt easy to like, just sort of like, think about it. And just like, sort of, like, be like, well, and I knew that I didn't want to marry a man. And so I was like, why am I going to, like continue to, like, mess around with men if I don't like have any intention of actually doing anything with them. And so I was like, I may as well just like, call myself a lesbian. And then, you know, it's just like, a practical measure, just call me towards me. And so I like for a while was like, I'm like, technically bisexual, or I was like, I'm bisexual in theory, but a lesbian in practice. And that happened for a while. Um, and then it was fine. That was around the time that I also realized that I was non binary, because I like wasn't centering men in my like, idea of gender anymore. And so when I realized that, like, my entire world didn't around, revolve around like men, and like, the male gaze and everything. I was like, What is womanhood? And I started, like, just like, sort of, like, took it apart and was like, not really vibing with being a woman, or calling myself a woman, anyone. I didn't identify as non binary at that point, but I was still distancing myself from aiding the idea of being a woman. And I switched, like any pronouns, I think, later, in 2020. Yeah, and then I think that like lesbian, just like as I continued to call myself a lesbian, it just, like, started to like, fit better and better. And then when I was like, back in the

real world, or whatever, like when I was like, back on campus, especially, and like, just like college campuses are very horny. And so I was like, when I was confronted by people of all genders, again, for the first time, in a couple years, I like realized that I like, it just felt very, I was like, Yeah, I'm a lesbian. So it's like all there is to it. Yeah.

Olivia N 39:11

I get that a lot. I get that a lot. Not the non binary revelation, but the not centering men thing. Yeah, I never had any male friends. And I was like, I don't really believe in men as a concept. Except for my dad. But my dad isn't a man. He's a dad. Right? That's true. I would just be like, Oh, I would never marry a man and like, is that a bisexual thought? Yes or no? Not particularly. And then I would be like, then I would see men I'd be like, yes, but then like that. But I was like, that's what bisexual thinks. No, bisexuals actually, like men. They like want to be friends with them. Like for reals. I thought we were just kidding. Then they were like, why would you want to date a man but then not be friends with one another? was like, for obvious reasons. What could a man tell me that someone who wasn't a man couldn't tell me better? Yeah, that's well actually value their boyfriends thoughts.

40:11

You're telling me new information?

Olivia N 40:13

I literally never did. I'd be like, you have silly little thoughts that like men. Yeah, that's it. I'm gonna go to my friends for real thoughts who are not men.

40:22

That's so real. Growing up. I thought that like I was supposed to be friends with men like I thought girls who are friends of boys were like, cooler, and never really happened for me. But then when I got to college, I was like, I do want to be friends with men. I want to be cool. Oh, it like happened. And then I did an oral history interview of this, like, really old like Stanford alum. And she was super cool. I talked to her for like hours. And I like realized in that moment that I like, didn't want to be friends with men anymore, because I actually didn't really care about those people. And so just stop being friends with a lot of men in my life because I didn't really you know, want to be friends with them.

Olivia N 40:58

I truly don't think they have anything to say that's that interesting. I just like there's so many people who are men that could say anything, they could say better. Yeah, it wasn't until I realized that like people who date men really value men. It's like thoughts.

41:11

More than just don't believe you

Olivia N 41:13

know, but I thought they were awkward. That I was like, You're gonna ask your boyfriend about this. Literally. Why would a man be there man boyfriend? Not their boyfriend in like a queer non binary way.

Like a gender non conforming? Like, I've had a boyfriend. But as a dyke, right? No. I have to explain. I mean, man boyfriend for the

41:40

Yeah, honestly. Y'all actually for real care.

Olivia N 41:44

That's so wild. Wild thoughts. So wild vibes you?

41:49

Anyway, say yeah. But I think and I think what got me on the bisexual, like, I think men are nice to look at some of the time not only is a beautiful man. But then, you know, you take that thought further. And what bisexuals want to do is actually interact with him. And I'm good. No interest. I don't want to hear public anymore.

Olivia N 42:15

Like I only see pictures of men, really drawings of men, or men and shows like I don't like look at a man on the streets. And then I'm like, What a hot man, that doesn't happen in my brain anymore. I'm also not looking at men. So I wouldn't know if they were hot or not. I just anyways,

42:33

yeah, that's just like, do what

Olivia N 42:37

just such non entities in my life like I work in like, that's dominated by non men. I volunteered a lesson in archive I worked at like, I'm going to be a librarian. Not that many there. Yeah. All my friends are people who are not men. Yeah, I live by myself. If I live with people, there would be no men there. Yeah. All my friends are dikes and don't have men.

43:01

Yeah.

Olivia N 43:03

That's so powerful. It was just it was so wild. I was like, wow, this is like really serious. Like, serious. And it's kind of like a good, like little segue into the clothing question, because I do like clothing and gendered expression. When I started identifying as a lesbian. Everything changed for me. I was like, how many petticoats? Can I put on right now? I'll see you later. But, but yes, and so how like, I think it's like a brain switch. So how have like clothing, tattoos, piercings or other body mods are gender expression, serving your identity. So being non binary or being a lesbian?

43:43

Yeah, great question. I was actually just talking to my friend about this the other day, because they're also a non binary lesbian. And we were looking at pictures.

43:51

I

43:54

don't know. Well, there Yeah. I don't know. I mean, if you're still looking for Yeah. I want people to

Olivia N 44:05

know each other in the projects.

44:07

Oh, what? Yeah, I applied. Well, that's so cool. That's off topic. Okay. I'm like, I

44:15

wish I would have literally I'm like,

44:19

like, imagine.

Olivia N 44:21

Imagine the thought I just show you the picture. There's I have a couple that did it and I have a picture of them together because they went to my apartment to see

44:33

oh, wait. They look so I can't really see. But they look to you. They look gay. They are gay.

Olivia N 44:44

They're both lesbians of color. Ah. Sorry, that's really off topic back to your friends who didn't apply because they hate me so much. And so I can email them or you can forward them the form of this someday ignore the due dates.

44:59

Well because I'm also okay, if you're still looking for people, I'm doing this like art thing, which like, I think three or four of us are non binary lesbians of color and

45:09

you just never brought it up.

45:15

I will, but I can send I will Yeah, I'll send you that friend. And I'll put it in the group chat,

Olivia N 45:20

put in the group chat anyways, and tell them to ignore the deadline to say November 26. Because every second, but it's fine.

45:28

Sounds good. So your friend, you guys are talking about gendered expression clothing? Yeah. Because we were looking at photos of them when they were in like high school or whatever. And I was like, You look so heterosexual, like, you look like a straight woman in these photos. And they're like, what they're like, I but I feel like I look more fun now than I did then. And I was thinking about, like, how being femme as well as like a lesbian is different from being feminists like a sis hat woman. And yeah, anyways, um, I think that I was just reflecting on that part, because it's not necessarily I think I have been trying to dress more non binary, whatever that means. And like, every day, I go to work, and I'm not out as non binary at work. I'm like, how could you not tell? Um, anyways, yeah, and I just think that like, yeah, I guess just reflecting on the ways that like, when you're a lesbian, you just dress like a lesbian is like, even if it like, looks like them. It's just like, is lesbian? Um, but I think that being said, I recently cut my hair. It's going out now, but um, I cut it short. It was inspired by Kailani and her honey era. I limbus literally the photo that I showed there dressing modestly. Yeah, I know. That's so important. So important for the lesbians. Um, and her hair in that like, little like album covers so cute. Anyways. Yeah, and I think that was like really gender affirming, because that was also that was the shortest meeting I've ever been. And I think that was also like, I stopped getting cat called. And that was really interesting. It was a new experience. Um, well, I say that being like, I am used to getting looked at in cat codes, just for being a woman looking like a woman. And yeah, just like the fact that like, stopped getting cat called and stopped getting any attention from men just because my hair was shorter. was really interesting. And I guess also, I dress gay. Right? Um, so that'll do it, too. But yeah, I think it was just really, it was really, I guess gender affirming. It was just like, very noticeable. And it felt like at first it felt weird. And I was like, Am I no longer attractive? And then if I'm really good, because then I was just like, doing my own thing and like having good time. Um, yeah, so I think the haircut was really big. And then other things like, I mean, I have a nose piercing. I am. One day we'll get more into your piercings than I am now. I love a good flannel. So that 303 Like

Olivia N 48:16

masking for from the clutches of flannels, I walked into a lesbian bar recently. flannels about I was like Jesus Christ. It's Halloween. It's to be dressed in costume. And all y'all are wearing flannel.

48:32

They're just so good. And they're so cute and comfortable. You don't make plans for anti flannel.

48:38

I don't wear a flannels. I am not a flannel. Lesbian. Okay, that's fine. That lesbian?

48:45

Yeah, we need those. We need you guys.

48:47

Yeah.

48:50

Are you attracted to plan a lesbian?

Olivia N 48:52

Oh no,

48:55

I have been looking I just don't own one. I will never love young but not

49:02

good. Um, but yeah, love a good find out what else? Oh, I think I was really susceptible to the like the like old school vans. I'm like an old school bands gay. Love those? I would. Yeah, just can't stop buying them. Um, oh, something that I've been reflecting on. And like, so I stopped wearing a bra when I was or like, a few years ago, four years ago is like, just like whenever I'm just gonna stop wearing a bra. I don't want to wear one and so I'm not going to and then I can't really remember what it was exactly. I got a binder when I like last year, I guess technically, years, something like that. Um, and I say but it stresses me out. They stress me out because I'm like, How is this supposed to? Like it feels too tight that I know that that's So

Olivia N 50:01

I had, like, my friends who were binders are like I'm being choked. I'm being told, This can't be legal. This feels like I'm gray.

50:10

And it's like you can't work out in them, you shouldn't sleep in them, you're like, just wear them for a certain amount of time. I'm like, This is too many rules. I'm going to die if I wear this piece of fabric. And so I like don't wear the binder either. And I realized that like, I also like didn't feel comfortable going back to wearing bras because I was like, if I wear a bra that makes me a woman, or it feels like a very feminized piece of undergarments. I don't know. And so I was like, if I saw I, like, didn't want to wear a binder. I didn't want to wear a bra. And so I was just like, you know, to these out in the world. Yeah, and I guess that's still sort of like how I am. It's just like, a like, I feel like I'm in between this like decision that feels like, eventually will like have to be made. I would like some support. I like my boobs. I really do. I love them a lot. But I feel like I need to start giving them a little more love. I need to support them a little more. And I feel like that, but that just feels really closely tied to gender for me. Um, you know, as boobs do? Yeah.

Olivia N 51:12

Have you ever struggled with your identities? Or did like, identifying as a dyke or lesbian ever feels scary to you? If so, why?

51:21

Hmm, um, I don't identify as a dyke. Oh, yeah. Or as a lesbian? Yeah, I do. And otherwise, I want to be here. But it's never really felt scary. Again, my non binary lesbian friend and I have like, sort of talked about this because they also used to identify as bisexual and are currently going through like a bisexual crisis, even though they know that they're lesbian. That's a whole thing. I guess you could talk to them about it. Yeah. But yeah, I think I have questioned I think, in this moment in time, being a lesbian calling

myself a lesbian doesn't feel as scary as I think it used to or does for other people. It feels like a very, I think it wasn't until after I turned identifying as a lesbian that I became aware of, like, lesbo phobia as, like, its own thing. And I think it like partially came from just like, some like fi phobia, like I just like, didn't want to be I was aware of my phobia. Actually very aware. I cared. I was very passionate about it, as someone who's now like, kind of by phobia. Um, it's kind of funny to think about, but yeah, so I was like, I don't want to be bisexual. Like I. Yeah, I was worried that by calling myself a lesbian, it was because of internalized homophobia. Yeah, and so I think that was more something that I was like, aware of and thinking about, but I didn't ever really feel scared of calling myself a lesbian. Some I like haven't really like, corrected. Like, I haven't come out some people as a lesbian since coming out as bi. Because we're all going to, I'm going to end up the same place. You know, like, if I was bisexual, they knew the odds that I would like be dating people. Like, you know, non men. And so what needing was been versus by they already got over the bisexual hump, I didn't really want to come through, like lesbian thing was one. Yeah, that's all I can think of.

Olivia N 53:36

And when you identify it as non binary, it just felt right.

53:41

Yeah, um,

53:43

no. Okay.

53:46

Or identifying as non binary. Okay, I was dating over the summer, a DM was with him.

53:55

And he called me non binary. But he said it was a t for t relationship, and

Olivia N 54:04

everyone's just identifying you before you identify you.

54:07

And I feel so much safer when someone else like sees it in me, it like feels like it's more real. And at that point, I was like, I wasn't calling myself a woman I was calling I was had, I didn't know what to call myself. I just was like, I'm not a woman that was like, just like, the language that I use. It felt like scary to like call myself non binary, because that would be another thing. That would be like another box that I would have to like, fit into. And I was like, this is like, I had so many assumptions about non binary people. And I was like, I don't want to like have to like do that whole thing, you know? So it was just like, free wheeling it just being my own day, my own gender. Um, and then yeah, he was like, Yeah, I think once just like I guess like, wow, he and everyday English didn't not last long at all. Thank God. Oh yeah, but I think it like really shaped my understanding of like being like a nonsense lesbian. Yeah. And that felt good. And that felt important to the point where I like, yeah. I don't know if I would err today like a sis lesbian at this point in time. Yeah.

Olivia N 55:29

Can you talk a little bit about your first encounters with lesbian sex both indirectly and directly? What attitudes you had around it before and after the encounters and I'm supposed to remind you to talk about Audrey Lord? Because yes,

55:45

right. Yes. Yeah. So, um, so I will start with Audrey Lorde thing just because it feels really important. And also, I guess something that's very relevant, but that I'm still like, actively thinking about, so I haven't really brought it up here is the fact that I'm questioning if I am asexual and or a romantic. Um, so I think that shapes everything. Is it clear like sex and romance? But I think like a big, really important part of my like, queer journey, and like, realizing that I guess it was like, actually queer. I had been identifying as bisexual, but in the like, I'm not like I'm bisexual. But it's like, no, my whole identity. I've been doing that for a while. But then I read Zambia and the spelling of my name by Audrey Lorde when I was a sophomore in college, and that book really was so I was reading it at a point in time where I was really thinking about, like, I guess, like, what it meant to be sapphic. And she just, it's so I still think about it. I think every time that I'm like, interested in somebody, the way that she talks about lesbian sex is not it's just like, very sense. It's like sensual. And it's like very like since Oreo, and like a very sensory experience. Like I like I just remember that she was like a scene in the book where she like, like, penetrates a woman using like a plantain, green plantain. Just the way that she describes it. It's like, not necessarily like super. It's not like porn, I guess. Or like, even like, erotica. It's just like, it's like, its own thing. And I think it felt really important to me as someone who like has like a pretty fn sex itself, like the act, just to be kind of like, whatever. I'm like, oh, this person does this, and this person does that. Whatever. But I think thankfully, the Audrey Lorde describes it is like, the main way that I like find it like, like our browsing, I guess. Or like worthwhile. Um, yeah, she just says it so well. Like, I feel like when I identify as lesbian or think about what it means to be sad, like, I'm just like thinking about that book. Yeah, it's just so incredible. I'm thinking about it all the time.

Olivia N 58:15

You come visit me and us at the archives in Brooklyn. We have original. We have drafts of zombies. Because I

58:22

visited the archives. We'll come back and look at them again. Yeah, I was like, I was like, freaking out because I like had the book in my backpack. And I was like, looking at the earlier drafts and I was like, this is a crazy moment for me.

Olivia N 58:40

We also have an original recording of her talking about.

58:47

Yeah, I can send it to you. I'm pretty sure it's digitized.

58:51

Okay, yeah, definitely send it my way. I would love to I love it. Someone

Olivia N 58:54

asked me this question. I have no clue where I learned this information. I'm sure someone told me and then I just like absorbed it like osmosis vibes. Yeah. And then because? I don't know. I don't know. It's like, where did that come from? Maybe someone was researching Audrey Lorde at the archives, and then I was just staffing.

59:12

Yeah, they should send it to me if you can find it. I will definitely. Anyway, which way okay. Um, but yeah, I'm more about lesbian sex. I was having sex with my girlfriend. I guess. Yeah. So that was happening when I was 19. Yeah, so a few years ago when I so my relationship with that person who called me a lesbian that's like, been my only real real, like, official labelled relationship that I've ever had. So you Yeah, so it just feels and she was like until the like he him was he was the only person I've ever had sex with. Yeah, so I think like my relationship with likes, like largely, I think a lot about her. Yeah. And then also, and that was fine, whatever. I think felts confusing to say the least. Just because of my relationship to sex, and I was like, this is supposed to be something that I really want. And I like thought she was hot and was like, attracted to her, but I don't know. Just like, yeah, it was like, it definitely made a lot of things real that I like hadn't had to grapple with because it hadn't, like had sex with anybody hooked up with anybody before it. Sounds interesting. Feel free to ask follow up questions about if you have any. But I have

Olivia N 1:00:46

a little bit of questions. Did you say you were thinking that you were maybe a row ace? Yes. Okay. Okay.

1:00:53

Yeah, that's,

Olivia N 1:00:54

I have that written down. Arrow is making sure. Yeah, Miss hear you. Um, how's that process been? Have you been like into me with any other a race or on a spectrum like lesbians?

1:01:08

I have recently talked to one, asexual lesbian. But she, I feel like I may have like, ambushed her with like the question because we're just like, hanging out or whatever. So she was like, in a committed relationship. And like, it's also like dating other people. But anyways, she's like a friend of a friend. And I was like, talking there. We were like getting lunch. And then I was like, so I heard you're asexual. And I was like, I was wondering, I was like, I think I might be asexual, like, can you like, talk to me about your experience, or whatever. And I think she was taken aback. But um, she talked to me a little bit, but then she recommended this book that I actually just finished called ACE by Angela Chen. And that has been really helpful. I think, just like normalizing things. For me. I think I've always felt really insecure about my, like, lack of experience in romance and sex. So like, always feel like it's something that I have to like, justify or explain, or, yeah, and I just, but there are also things that I haven't really, like wanted, and

if I wasn't in like, such, like a sex and romance obsessed world, I probably wouldn't care that much about and I think, in my day to day, I'm not like, necessarily like missing things. I'm alright, um, but like, in like a, like a fake way where it's like, I don't actually want it but it's nice and things. But at the same time, I like don't want to add like more labels. Like I feel like mixed race, indigenous non binary lesbian is like a lot. It's like add arrow keys, or even one or the other. It just feels like a lot. And I don't even know if it's true. And it's like, yes, all identity is like fluid. And so anyways, it's something I'm like actively thinking about embarking on so all my thoughts on it are very rudimentary, I guess. But yeah, that's right. Now that I

Olivia N 1:03:05

have one thing or two things, one thing is, so there's another lesbian in this project. Her name is Nia. And she talks very openly in her little history about being asexual and what the like and talking about asexuality and lesbianism and she loves to do education about asexual lesbianism, and she talks about an oral history. And she talks about it like in life, she like, did organizing and stuff. And she's an asexual lesbian. So that's one person you could potentially reach out to, or he's oral history, you could listen to like the spot in like the transcript where she's going to talk about that. Yeah,

1:03:49

that sounds great.

Olivia N 1:03:50

It doesn't talk about sex. For reasons that makes sense. But she does talk about asexuality a lot. Got you. Yeah, you mentioned sex obsessed world. Would you be a little bit more specific if you can and talk about maybe what it's like to deal with hookup culture as a young person in general, and also queer hookup culture and culture, which is different. Talk about queer sex culture as someone who might be I don't know if your sex negative or not. You didn't say? I don't mean that's cool. Okay, so like sex neutral?

1:04:32

Yeah. I don't know. I don't know. I don't know. I just I'm not like giving you

1:04:39

any I don't know either. So I'm giving you a term you don't want to you don't want to be the one to leave with this. No,

1:04:43

I just

Olivia N 1:04:45

I just know have these conversations. I'm around. Yeah. Um, so can you talk a little bit more about that? So queer sex culture, lesbian sex culture, hookup culture specifically, and how that affects because that's changing the questions a little bit, which is great, and how that affects how you interact with lesbian community, especially lesbian community that is, so there's lots of really important

identifiers that are related to sex tops on. Like Butch and femme can be sexual identity. Yeah, that's true. Yeah.

1:05:20

I'm moving through that as well. Yeah, definitely. So like I said, college is a very horny place. And I think, almost immediately. I don't know, it just feels very obvious. It feels like I should be like hooking up with people all the time. I felt that way, like, the whole time. And I think it helped that I had like my best friends in college, who I'm also kind of in love with what I tell everyone except she's the only one that doesn't know what to say. Least, she is grappling with it. She is bisexual, at least, but like she's Muslim. She's Sudanese. And so she, I think as like things she's working period. And I think that's partially like, I wouldn't date someone who isn't like, really confident in their kindness. So I'm just like, sort of waiting. I've been waiting for a long time. But, um, but anyway, so she also wasn't dating or like, hooking up with people. And I think it helps like, have that like grounding force, as well. And then, honestly, I feel like I was like, kind of, I was like, good about, I was just like, I was a nerd. What can I say? The people that I was surrounding myself with, I think, like made me feel comfortable. And like, in the fact that I like wasn't doing things with people sexually. I've never had a problem with having crushes. And I think that has been interesting in terms of like, realizing that my crushes were never people that I wanted to date, like, realizing that I wanted that people wanted to date the fuel they had crushes on and actually, like, talk to them was really mind blowing to me. And I think that was like, partially how I realized I was like a lesbian was like, I had no problem having crushes on men. I was like, Oh my God, he's so cute. And then that was it. That was as far as I wanted to go. And then, but then I realized after I came out as a lesbian, I was like, Okay, I'm a lesbian. I don't feel that way about men. And I didn't, I was like, actually, I feel that way about, like, everybody, like, I don't really want to date any of these people that I have crushes on. So anyways, that was happening. Um, but I think the big thing, okay, so like queer hookup culture is just the like, I think when I think queer as like a general thing, I think about the amount of space that like gay men take up. And gay men apparently are just fucking like, good for them. You know, that's what they want. But, um, you know, like, the existence of Grindr? Like I don't know of like a lesbian version of Grindr. I think they like might be one but certainly is not like you use Flex

Olivia N 1:08:03

is not as much grinder as well. Yeah,

1:08:07

I will. Yeah, I don't think but they're similar. But yeah, and and so I have been, like, aware of that. And I think like, was beans pride themselves almost on be like, oh, you know, we're not like, we're not like those, like, you know, those men who just like, just fuck Buck Buck. It's like, you know, we like build. But also, it's not true. At the same time, like lesbians also, like, just hook up. And I think the thing with lesbians and like lesbian sex culture is that lesbians are supposed to be really good at sex. Like, I don't think that's like the case for any other group. Like even gay men. I don't think but they're known for having good sex. It seems like it happens really fast, very often. That's my understanding, but it seems like lesbians have sex for like hours. And that's crazy to me, because I get bored almost immediately. And I Yeah, and I think that feels really also really scary because it's like, it feels like I'm on the outside again, like, I don't really want to date anybody which makes it easy to not want to have sex like to have sex with anybody or want to have sex with anybody. But then I do feel pressured to when I'm like, you

know, flirting with people or dating around um, and it's just yeah, it's just something that I'm like aware of and I think it makes it scary to like want it's like month to month it almost like it seems like if I do have sex with someone there's like this like expectation that I'll be really good at it and then I'll like want some like want specific things, or like know exactly what I want. I don't know sex is just really scary to me for a lot of reasons. I really liked that

Olivia N 1:09:55

you were talking it out. I've always been telling people on the project and just in general, like this is a space So you don't have to have an answer. Yeah, like, Thank you. You're figuring it out. It is what it is. Maybe you'll never come to a conclusion if that's what you want. Yeah, well,

1:10:11

yeah, one day maybe, I don't know. I was recently talking to this person who I kind of have a crush on. And I was telling them that I might be Eric ace, and they were like, Oh, you just haven't met the right person yet. And it's weird because they're lesbian isn't that's just like, what people always tell lesbians like, Oh, you have the right man. And I was like, how do you? And then it was like, like that, though? Didn't you just say that about any identity? Like, oh, it's just like, it's just, you know, until you do something changes? I guess. It's weird. They

Olivia N 1:10:42

do a lot to people who are either pillow princesses or stone.

1:10:50

Awesome. Just saying I didn't know.

Olivia N 1:10:51

Like, they're like, Oh, you just like haven't had enough experience. Or you haven't met the right person that you

1:11:00

would allow to touch you. That's interesting. It's like

Olivia N 1:11:03

weird consent stuff. And I think it's weird that the person that you were talking to said that?

1:11:10

Yeah, like. And I feel like they're trying to like, make me feel better. But it wasn't something that I felt bad about. So it was weird. But my ex girlfriend called me a little princess. And I guess I was

Olivia N 1:11:27

you're like, Okay, fine.

1:11:29

Is a yes. And yeah, but I think that's something that I that has also really stuck with me. Yeah, like that label. And then that being like a negative thing. But also, I think, like, she was the only person that I had ever hooked up with, and I had no idea what was going on at all. So it's not like I was prepared to like, you know, be able to like touch her please her in any real way. At least that's how I feel. But in Zan, me she the first person that Audrey Lord cswip She talks a fuck out of her. So

Olivia N 1:12:06

what do I know? Maybe it's just what you wanted in the moment. Yeah,

1:12:11

maybe? Goes to No. No, certainly not me

Olivia N 1:12:15

to No, no.

1:12:18

But I also want to talk about the L word. Oh, shit.

Olivia N 1:12:22

Yeah. Let's talk about the L word.

1:12:26

Because I think that like really impacted my interest in human sex in the US. Oh. Yeah. And it just really. So I watched it all. So I learned about it for the first time watching the bisexual, which is like a six episode Hulu show. And I watched that one, I was like, 17 is actually a great show. But that was when I was I didn't think as So the premise of this show is that she it's like this lesbian who realized that she's bisexual. So the first episode, they're talking about The L Word. And I suppose the show I just growing up in China was like very sheltered from like, a lot of like American pop culture stuff. But anyways, so then I learned about it. And I watched it a couple years later, and I am still so obsessively. I'm watching like the like renewal or like the spin off now. It's so good, but I think it also, I think a lot of what I know about being lesbian comes from that show. And I think that's probably a common experience. Maybe not so much now, but I think it just is such like an important part of lesbian culture, I think, especially from the mid 2000s. And it just Yeah, I'm just like, so obsessed with it, like, and I think it's just like, Who do I identify? I don't really identify with any of them strongly. But I think like, especially like, Shane, and her obsession with sex as like, I guess like a mask top. I don't really know how she would identify, but just like the fact that she's almost she's not predatory, but she just like goes after a lot of women. I feel like that feels like something that is desirable. Like, like women who aren't women watching because she like goes after what she wants. And she has sex like with a lot of women. And yeah, I think just like in general. I really appreciated that show for them number of lesbian sex scenes, I think. Yeah, but it was definitely very important and integral and shaping my understanding of lesbianism.

Olivia N 1:14:48

Let's talk a little bit about how your lesbianism has been influenced by fear your academics you mentioned Zanmi and Audra, Lord. Mm. So is there anything else? Yeah.

1:15:03

So being gay at school in college was my entire personality. Everyone knew that I was gay. And I did a lot of just wasn't a lot of like feminist and gender studies classes. So I guess it was honestly, it was extremely important. So Stanford has this thing called sophomore College, where there's like the three weeks before school starts in the summer, students can take a, an intensive course, and whatever. And it's like, it's like 15 students, you only like, take that class and hang out with students who are also in your class basically. And so the summer before my sophomore year, I was in the gay one, the gay SoCo, which is called LGBT history and culture in the Bay Area. And it was essentially just learning a lot about queer history and culture, specifically in San Francisco, which was, it was convenient that we just like we were right next to a very gay city. And that was the first time that I had like, was really learning about it. And I'm just like a history nerd. So it was like, felt like it was like really merging a lot of my interests. That was the first time I visited, like, your archives is very important to me. I'm like, really just shaped my interests in like our archives. Yeah, like material culture, material history. And then the next year, well, I guess, two years after that, because then it was the pandemic. So there was no sophomore college at all. But then I was a no. Then I was the year after that was 2019. I was the the chief, the courses student for that class. And then pandemic year, and then I was the course assistant again, for that class. It was just very important. And I think is also when I was a student in that course, was the first time that I was just around other gay people, like everyone was explicitly, like, everyone was gay. It was fantastic. So we were just like being gay. I was learning so much about queer culture, like contemporary queer culture from the other students. And I was only about like, queer history through the course. And it was just all around like a very gay time for me. And it was like some point that I like, went back and was the course assistant for the next two years. It just like really shaped me and then my senior year, and also my junior year, I spent two years on I guess, I wrote my honors thesis in American Studies on lesbians of color in the 1950s and 1960s. That's when I visited the lesbian Herstory archives. Yeah, and I was just really, it was really an excuse to just look into like queer ancestry, specifically, like lesbians of color. Because I had done all of this research, and had taken so many courses about like, queer people and lesbians, but they were all just like white people, or white men a lot of the times and I was like, I need to find like, I need to find my people. And so I spent so much time just like reading about lesbians lesbians of color. And it was yeah, it was super important. I the thesis ended up being like epistolary and it was like a, I don't know if you're familiar with Cydia, Hartman's work at all, Dr. Hartman

Olivia N 1:18:15

would lie

1:18:20

so that her mother always right so like she does critical population. And so I essentially took that and I took all of my research and like put it made it into like, an epistolary conversation between like these two lesbians that I constructed. Um, and yeah, so essentially, I was like speaking for these like to fake lesbians, but also speaking on behalf of like lesbians of color in the 1950s and 1960s. So yeah, it was very I just know a lot about what it was to be like a lesbian in that time.

Olivia N 1:18:57

Let's that's a great thing. I actually love critical tabulation. I love CT Hartman. I I love her. I did something like that as well. Not really. But that's like my history Capstone because he did American Studies. Yeah, history major. I did. I like recreated the life of a free young black woman in in Massachusetts. Early 1800s.

1:19:27

Wow.

Olivia N 1:19:29

Micro history bytes. But yeah, city Hartman I love critical tabulation. It's what I bring to my archival work, and my archival processing work especially with like silenced and marginalized histories.

1:19:39

Yeah, I feel like it's like not a new concept. I think like what's the deal Hartman does? Like the way she names it. Yeah. And like talks about it and does it is so good.

Olivia N 1:19:52

Have forever been fabricating their own histories, right in really interesting ways.

1:19:58

Um, Okay,

Olivia N 1:20:01

so let's talk a little bit about race. Right? How does race inform your interactions with lesbian community? As a mixed race person?

1:20:12

I don't say white people, I'm not going to track it to white word. And it's really, it makes life better. I think it helps. And like, I feel like all my friends are attracted to white women. And I just can't be part of those conversations, but I literally just don't understand, like, what's happening? I was like, she just looks like a white woman. And that's like, that's attractive. What?

Olivia N 1:20:40

I don't find white femmes attractive.

1:20:43

But you find why? It depends. Honestly, okay.

Olivia N 1:20:48

Life gets so much harder. If you like as a like a lesbian of color. Like, if you choose not to date White. I'm just saying, but the pool just makes them all. Yeah. smaller and smaller. And it's just your friends. Because all my friends are mostly lazy with color. And I'm like, Oh, am I having sex with you? But you're not telling your friends? No. No, I know, that's not common. But my brain doesn't work that way. Like once I make a friend, your friend. Nothing else. Friend picks his day, I wouldn't never date my

friends. That's weird. I respect other people, especially you because you are in love with your friends. I respect other people who do things like that my brain, I can't cross the wires like that. It simply doesn't compute.

1:21:36

I couldn't just like hook up with a friend or like I wouldn't. I couldn't do something that I think would be damaging. That's another reason. So me and this friend have actually talked about vaping extensively, and I think it just feels scary to like potentially ruin a friendship, but I think it's just like the quad every friends to lovers, which is why oh, it's hard and it's scary. So I wouldn't I feel like there are some people who just like, date and fuck everybody in the friend group. And that's not me, but that seems really stressful.

Olivia N 1:22:10

Real for saying you don't find white people attractive. I don't find white femmes attractive.

1:22:16

I I don't mind white becomes attractive ever. And I rarely find whiteness attracted. But it does.

Olivia N 1:22:27

Some of that tank top like cargo pants, like Doc Martens in the in the high arm cross. I'm sorry. I'm so sorry. Like a couple sticking pokes. Um, so I live in Brooklyn. What do you expect from me? expect me to do. I'm sorry. It's like one of my big sins,

1:22:48

but you would you would date them.

Olivia N 1:22:53

I don't really have many white friends. And so my friends actually don't have any. I have one. And that's a new development. She's cool. So no, for now, but No, literally, but it's just like I have so many things that I need a person to be not like I'm projecting on them. But it's like, I'm autistic. Can't be ableist I'm Black can't be racist. Yeah. And you don't necessarily find not all skin folk are kinfolk, right? Not all colored people. I have to stop saying I'm gonna get in trouble. Not all POC not all POC aren't necessarily cool with everything. It just and then I feel like it just gets smaller and smaller. And then it's like high pitches. And then you're friends with them because they're cool in the first place. And then I'm just like,

1:23:48

well, what's there to do?

1:23:51

So funny? You live in one of the guest cities? Yeah, I

Olivia N 1:23:55

feel like they either they do exist. They do exist. They're just all dating each other. They're each other. Like my friends of color that are lesbians already in relationships with that's harder lesbians of color but they love their to do.

1:24:13

Yeah, that's real. That's hard to do.

Olivia N 1:24:17

And it was I just think it's so funny. Like, you're so real. So, race if you're attracted once with me, you do not find community with white lesbians at all.

1:24:26

Real I mean, except for those like, there's like, I'm not on Tinder anymore. But when I was whenever I swiped right on a white person, I was like, I hope they know how lucky they are.

1:24:37

Like community service vibes. Yeah, like

Olivia N 1:24:43

Oh, that's okay. That's how I approach dating all the time. But if I'm dating or seeing a white person, you have to be obsessed with me. obsessing me I have to be absolutely perfect in your eyes. Yeah, you have to have my ass

1:25:01

I love surfing.

Olivia N 1:25:02

I'm like the prettiest human you've ever seen. You've like never seen something so beautiful and perfect. And you don't want you're gonna do to yourself and you love black women. And I'm sorry.

1:25:14

But then is it weird if they're a white person? They love black woman.

Olivia N 1:25:18

I tend to think about it. What's there to do? What do you want me to do? What do we do? Bailey? What do you what do you do?

1:25:25

That's the thing. Like, I feel like white people are like, I'm not racist, you know? And then but then they are

Olivia N 1:25:30

or, or they date you or want to have sex with you for like social capital points. Because they they're seen as better for dating like, a person of color. That's interesting. That's the vibe I have to escape

from. Cuz I'm yeah, I'm also strange. And so I have like, odd vibes. That yeah, not derogatory, like, odd, positive, right. Or neutral way.

1:25:54

Have you seen heartbreak? Hi.

Olivia N 1:25:56

Yes. I love I love when nobody vibes. Yeah. And so I'm like, so I have to be very careful that someone isn't just like look at this weird Blackie. No, like, it's for like social cap. It's a real thing. And so I'm always on the lookout. It's fine.

1:26:20

You'll find love. I believe in you.

Olivia N 1:26:26

Yeah. Why are you not in community with white lesbians? I think it's I think it's a great thing.

1:26:33

You say why? Yeah, why? I just kind of historical record. Okay. Yeah.

Olivia N 1:26:40

You're a lesbian of color. Damn. Say it again. Say it again. So what I'm not speaking.

1:26:46

Don't fall in love with your colonizer. So real issues is couldn't I just, it just couldn't happen for me, even if I was yeah, I just wouldn't date them. And I mean, that's doesn't necessarily mean a lot, because I don't date anybody.

1:27:03

But in the abstract, if you did,

1:27:05

but yeah, exactly. Like there's no chance like it is simply wouldn't. But I think like also being mixed, it's like, no matter what relationship I enter, it's going to be an interracial partnership. And I feel like I'm just aware of that, and it feels weird. But it also feels like kind of freeing in a sense, where it's like, I don't have to like, subscribe to like, in like cultural expectations. Like, my family isn't expecting me to marry like a native person, or like a love nice person, or whatever. I just like hanging out. And I think like also, like queer people of color. I'm just like, racially ambiguous. I think I just feel like I'm very palatable as a person. Like, I'm not white. So I think that makes it safer for like, other people of color to like, consider me as an option in this dating world. But then, yeah, so but I'm also like, not anything else, necessarily. So it's just like, it just is what it is. I'm very aware of it. I'm, I love brown people. That's it. And that's all from me.

Olivia N 1:28:16

I respect that. I respect that. And you're so real. And everything that you said is so right. You know, some of those core tenets I should probably take to heart more, but I'm not ready for that yet in my life. But I respect you and I believe, and I agree with you. I agree with you on paper. Do I agree with your practice?

1:28:36

One day, maybe

Olivia N 1:28:37

one day? I'm trying I'm trying real hard, though. I really am. I really am. Anyways, can you talk a little bit about your gender identity, and how that informs your interactions? lesbian community? And this is where I want you to talk a little bit more about t for t. Yes, and I don't mean t for t just in a dating sense. Because we've been discussing you being a race. You can talk about t for t dating but you mentioned like you don't like you wouldn't date sis lesbians and so you can talk about t for t and maybe any issues that you've seen with like sis lesbians, or like lesbian transphobic conversations or spaces? That's like three things. I know. Yeah. Yeah. Just speak on that.

1:29:18

Sure. Um, so I am gonna talk about that relationship that I was in just because it was so formative for me in every single way in terms of being queer and being queer in regards to other people. And I think I went into it with like, very heterosexual dating expectations, like, okay, like, I'm the more we're both like, I'm the founder. And so I am going to like, be like this and I'm going to expect these things. And she is the math so she's going to do these things and expect these things. Yeah, and I think she like played rugby and had more experience at least and was tall. So I think I just like put a lot of assumptions on her. Um, yeah. And so I didn't really see any problem with that at the time. Um, I just like was following scripts that I had been given through like society and media and stuff. And then when that relationship ended, that's when I honestly the relationship ending was the formative part. I was like, Oh, wow, like, that was really fucked up with me to like, think those things and like, have those expectations, instead of just going into this like as like a partnership or like, I just want to be around her. And that's it, you know? So I think coming from that, I think that's why I like wouldn't really date like a sis lesbian because I think I'm scared of like, falling into like a similar thing. Um, or like, that person having, like, those expectations for me, which is very, I don't know, I don't I think people think of me as a fan. But I think in the past I have been, I was a felon. I think since coming out as non binary, that feels incorrect for the most part. Um, anyways, I think in mannerisms and everything, I think, but anyways, um, yeah, and then I think just, I think I just like love non binary people and trans people a lot. And I it just feels like a shared experience that I don't think that I would be able to get from like, daily like, this is lesbian. Yeah, I just feel like I'm I feel like there's like so much representation. Okay. There's not representation of lesbians, period. What does exist happens between sis lesbians, and items like femme lesbians. I feel like, I'm thinking about the L word really. And so it feels, it just feels like there's like a lot of expectations around that. Like there's like a right way to do things. And I think what I love about being non binary is the fact that we have to build, I guess, like expectations and scripts for ourselves, because there is nothing. And yeah, it just, I like, like the flexibility that comes from being non binary in relation with other non binary people. Yeah, that's also about that. I feel like you there were more questions, but when I forgot them?

Olivia N 1:32:35

No, no, you, you, you talked about it a lot. I was one thing I wanted to ask you about is not is to talk a little bit more about maybe, if you've noticed any transphobia from the lesbian community, or any lack of inclusion and gender nonconformity in like, mainstream lesbian spaces.

1:32:54

Yeah. So, um, so in this art thing called queer ancestors projects, and we make a line of cut prints about our queer ancestors. And it just so happened that every single person in that program is a non binary person of color. And like, some of us are lesbians, and it's wonderful. Truly the most accepting space that I've ever been in, like the most that I've just like, felt like I could be myself, I guess. And I haven't been in lesbian spaces, or Yeah, I guess outside of that, since I've come out as non binary. And that haven't really been like, on the lookout. Oh, well. When I was at Stanford, I worked at the woman's Community Center. And a lot of the people who were on staff there were non binary or trans. And the people and we all know when we're you're on staff, you know that and you're, you know, brain is developed enough to like know, what the WCC does and who we are. But we always had interns who were like, a lot of times like freshmen, and they're just like, I just love being around other women. And it's so uncomfortable every single time someone says something like that, because like, not all of us are women in this space. And it feels obvious to me to not use like gendered language like that. And I don't think that they are being particularly like malicious. I think they're just being ignorant. And I think even for myself like in this interview, I've like said woman a lot as like shorthand for like non men. I feel like I at least like in my brand, I like spiritual self and a very specific point in time. Maybe, but like, I don't know, I think like when I'm talking about being a lesbian, I oftentimes say like this, like, oh, it's like women loving women. And I feel like that feels very limiting and not really my relationship with extremism. But I feel like it's easier. You know, it's like easy shorthand. Anyways, but I don't think that's the shorthand that these people were going for. Yeah, and so I don't think I've been around transphobic people, or in transphobic spaces ever. I don't know. I feel like I've, I don't really like to like not know things about certain people and not have certain conversations. Yeah. So who's to say?

Olivia N 1:35:34

Thank you for because I don't know, I just I'm always curious to learn about non conforming lesbians and young Gernon conforming lesbians in their experience? Have you felt like some people think that gender non conforming lesbians and non binary lesbians are like pushing the boundaries of lesbianism? Or like the expensive or like lesbianism is expanding in some way? Like, have you felt that kind of pushback from people or maybe not people you're in community with?

1:36:03

I don't think I've noticed that. But again, I'm like, I have only like five friends. And like, most of us are non binary. And so it feels. Yeah, I think I'm very intentional about like, who I talk to, I just don't like talking to people. But I like talking to you via never fear.

1:36:31

It's okay. I don't feel any type of way. type of way about it. I completely get it.

1:36:38

Completely get it.

1:36:39

That's why I was asking.

1:36:40

Yeah, no, it's all good. I have like a trans coworker now. So briefly, I guess I think when we did the pre interview, I was unemployed. But um, no, I wasn't, I was new. But I have a chance coworker, like a binary trans coworker, and I'm not out as non binary there except to him and to my work. Besties it was 23 like me? Yeah. And I think I don't really want I'm scared. And he was like, Oh, it's fine. Like, they're gonna be accepting whatever, you should just tell them that you use they them pronouns, like, and I think about every single day, but I'm scared and so I don't do it.

Olivia N 1:37:22

I mean, honestly, it's not worth your peace, mental state of mind, or safety or job security. To do any of those things simply not worth it. And if people don't matter, you don't like they're just, it's just work. Right? There's

1:37:40

honestly.

Olivia N 1:37:42

So what's it like? So you mentioned earlier about how you're not really seeking out lesbians? Lesbian spaces specifically? Yes, that's true. So can you talk about what it was like to visit a lesbian related place for the first time? And what you started to find? And did it fit your expectations was a completely different?

1:38:10

Yeah, I'm the only one who's been in space that I can really think of that I've ever been in, was Joe leans, which is a lesbian bar in San Francisco. And I went there for the first time. There was a drag brunch that I was under age for, but I still went when I was 19, I guess? Um, yeah, everyone else was 21 that I was with, and I had no form of identification whatsoever, because I can't drive and just didn't have one. And so he's like, whatever. Just thoughts one. Yeah. And that was really wonderful. I was there with a bunch of bisexual woman. Um, I guess I was myself a bisexual woman at that time. Um, but I just remember and I remember the first time so I've been there quite a few times since then. And I think, but I think being there for the drag brunch was really important, because I think everyone there was traffic, I want to say, I mean, it's it's epic space. But I don't know, I like love that space. And it's like a white lesbian space, for sure. And feels kind of like I think that bar has a history of being transphobic to its workers. But there's nowhere else to go. So it's like, I mean, there's this other bar in San Francisco called El Rio and they have this like, lesbian night once a month called Mingo. But, and that bar I think is supposed to be like more POC friendly, but because it's only once a month, like it feels almost mythical, like I've meant to go so many times. And then everyone is like the line is like a mile out the door. Like you'll never get in and it's like two crowded. So anyway, so drumlins is where I go. But

yeah, I remember the first time that I went there, it felt like very surreal, like, especially when I was there for the first time to like actually dance. I was like, oh my god, like, there's so many like, it felt so good because straight bars, it's just like men like watching women dance a lot of the times and then dancing on them without consent. But I feel like agile leans. There may have been some of that, but it feels a lot more gentle. Like the like dancing on somebody else. And it's like, if you want me to stop, like, I'll stop type of thing or like, you just walk away and it's fine. But yeah, also just going into a room and it's just full of like beautiful people like so unmatched isn't feeling so good. Yeah, so I really like going there, even though it's a bunch of white people. It's still a bunch of lesbians. And I feel like that feels really important to me.

Olivia N 1:40:58

Let's talk a little bit about what identifying as a lesbian means to you.

1:41:04

Ooh, okay. Wait, can I go to you real fast? Yes.

1:41:13

Okay, so, um, well, as you mean, to me, I think it feels, I think, honestly, it's like what we talked about near the beginning, which was like, it's just like, not centering men in my life anymore. And I think like, what, I think what really makes it unique is like, I think it's not like I would have said that I was like centering men in my life before, either, you know, but it's like, I feel like when you are attracted to men in any capacity, it just happens. Like, I

1:41:49

think it's just like, part of like living in like such a patriarchal society where

1:41:53

it's like, it's just men, I think you have to, like, actively work to make sure men are not the center of your worlds. And like, Yeah, what else? Um, and I think that like, makes it easier to open up lesbianism to other people and identities, rather than just saying it's like woman having sex with other woman or being romantically involved with other women. It like makes her like trans and non binary people, Ace and arrow people. Yeah. And I think yeah, I think it's just, I think it's just is that I feel like for me, definitions work best when they are like, very short, and just very broad. Yeah, so I would say it's just like centering, just centering non men, I guess, in your life. And I think maybe within the definition it does. centerman unfortunately, but I think there just like isn't language to work on that, I guess, like centering gender marginalized people? Um, yeah. But I think it's like it requires to go into a little more. I feel like there's like so much like compassion. And being a lesbian. At least I feel like to be a good lesbian. It requires like, a lot of compassion, and a lot of like, understanding of just like other people. I don't know, I have been having conversations with people recently about attractiveness. And I feel like men tend not to date people they think are unattractive. And it's not that I think lesbians date people I think are unattractive. But I simply think that like physical appearance is not the most important thing. In dating. For a lot of people. At least for lesbians. I feel like I'm one thing Yeah, and I don't know, that feels like unique and notable to me, especially like growing up like I felt like the be all end all was like to

be physically attractive. And that being like, very, like, Eurocentric and like that which is racism anyways, yes.

Olivia N 1:44:03

Can you talk a little bit about what lesbian community means to you?

1:44:09

Sure. So the non binary lesbian who I keep bringing up is friends with a lot of lesbians and through them I think there's like have met a lot of lesbians with asexual has been talking about another one of their friends is also in queer ancestors project. And yeah, I guess lesbian community to me. I guess. I think about it. I don't think that I specifically call any of my communities like I don't think I consider them to be like lesbian communities. But I think I do have community and I think they all are sapphic. Um, maybe not necessarily like lesbians, and hopefully that is that alright. If I do So,

Olivia N 1:45:00

there's nothing there's nothing. You can say anything wrong here. Okay, so I'm taking I'm taking notes.

1:45:09

Um, but yeah, I think it really just is, I guess like people who like love and care about each other through trials and tribulations I guess, like my closest friends, I've been friends with for like five years. Or I've seen them like through some shit more recently. And it just feels important to me to like, be able to, like, go through and accept, like fluidity and like, things just like ebb and flow. And I guess like, for me community is just like finding people who like, will still care about you will still like attempt to understand you or will understand you after you or they go through something. Um, yeah, or even like as time passes, or whatever. Um, yeah, I think it's about like making time. And I guess it's like, utilizing the love languages to their full potential whenever possible. Yeah.

Olivia N 1:46:15

If you see me looking over, I'm taking notes on my phone and then notes written down. Sometimes I type faster than I write. You're good. I have like, my little pink setup, and then it's okay. It makes sense to me into looking over I'm listening. I'm just yeah, um, what less namespaces? Do you wish existed?

1:46:42

Um, again, well, actually, I guess it's knowledge. It's that I'm in the L word. They always go to that one cafe. And I feel just like, a day like a good daytime lesbian space, I think I really appreciate because there's like bars more. Honestly, there aren't even I guess lesbian bars really anymore. But um, I feel like queer spaces tend to like be nice spaces like my time alcohol, you know, party spaces. And I think I would love spaces that like are not that. Specifically like, I would just like love a good lesbian coffee shop. A good lesbian bookstore. Yeah, what else? So fun to think about these things. I feel like there should be specifically a lesbian boardgame cafe. Cuz I think that sounds really fun. Um yeah, I feel like any space, that's a lesbian space, it's just better than if it wasn't a list, Kinsey's. I mean, I could just like keep listing types of spaces. I was like, lesbian gym. But obviously, like, he doesn't say anything. And I think it was meant to make it better.

Olivia N 1:47:56

What does lesbian Joy mean to you?

1:48:00

Oh, these questions. Okay, let's be enjoyed to me. means okay. I'm going to talk about something very specific. Maybe I'll even read it. So a lot of what I like to do, as I guess someone who has studied a lot of queer history, which is like, essentially just a lot of time studying, like homophobia, and like how homophobia has evolved over time, I think it's really important to imagine queer futures. And so that feels very important to me and I write so I like, when my main art form is words. I'm gonna pull something up. Um, yeah, so I just like to, like, right through I think a lot of times when people like, have questions about like, oh, like, what would like the world look like after like, abolition or after? Like not? Um, also kind of an inner gets like after like, orders are abolished? Like, how would that even work you know, and so I really just like like, think through these things

1:49:28

um, alright, so I read this thing. And I won't read the whole thing because it's kind of long, but essentially, I will just read parts of it. And so this Yeah, this is what crow Joy means to me. I like to be enjoyable. It's to me. So in an ideal world, I write this while waiting for a cake to finish baking. I let the sun warm my cheeks through the windows taller than my father and remark how great other plants must be for the light. The egg timer on the counter sings Rihanna, I take out the cake and set it on the counter to cool. We are planning a picnic on our front yard and you have already baked the bread with the sandwiches. The cake is my contribution and you're already grabbing the bluetooth speaker. I tie my hair up with the scrap piece of linen from your latest upcycling job and pretend not to see you swipe your finger through the frosting bowl, I tell you about the fantasy novel I'm reading, and you put it in the basket so that we don't forget it. We laugh together as I tell you, the protagonist has not yet realized she is gay. I decided last minute to do some lemons and add water and agave syrup. You don't see me and I'm delighted that this will be a mini surprise among the festivities. We are in no rush. You are reading captive genders and asked to read a section out loud. I finished washing my hands and welcome your voice always. We discussed the ways in which we could change the world have already changed the world. And then I continue and like a friend comes over. And like happens just like a friend like comes over like spontaneously and happens to like have brought like a snack with them just like to share. I'm a big fan of like gifting like homemade food. And so it's just like inviting this friend along to this picnic and just like existing in the world like it's like after capitalism. So it's just like sort of just like being in the moment. savoring things that you've made. together. I think that feels like we're doing to me

Olivia N 1:51:29

that something from your, like one of your own pieces. Yeah. Oh, okay.

1:51:35

That is really beautiful.

Olivia N 1:51:38

Um, this is the place where you can talk more about your indigeneity or we can just end it. There's nothing else when talk about you can't leave to zoom though. And doesn't stop does it? Stop recording?

1:51:49

Oh, good. Yeah. So me returning to my indigeneity has been so beautiful. And yeah, it happened. It's happened more recently, within the past few years. So I think because I felt really isolated from Mike, my ancestry, my biological ancestry. I and I Montanus close thing, as opposed to like Lebanon being far away, and like, I don't know, any of my relatives beyond my like, I guess like my dad's immediate family. Um, whereas like, I visit my grandmother, while I was in school, I visited my grandmother, like, everything's giving break. You know, and I like got to, like, know, that side of my family better, just like as people. But yeah, I think it just feels important to me to like, also be like, more intuitive. My with being Northern Cheyenne, specifically, because I feel like in every way, it's like, there's been an attempt to make sure that I forget it, you know, that I like just, like, forget that culture, and so that I can't pass it down to my own children. Like, that's what happened to like my mom through her grandma, you know, it's just like, I didn't want that to keep happening. Um, and so I've just been trying to like, slowly get back in touch with it. I just like think that it, I don't want it to feel scary anymore. I think it felt like this like faraway place where I like, didn't really like I knew the names of like my my grandmother sisters, but I didn't, like know anything about them. And it's not to say that I actually know that much about them now, but I think it feels like something that I actually care about. Whereas before I like had no real interest in learning those things and doing those things. Yeah, and so it's just like, I just really liked being up there. It just, it seems cute. And I think I like have like a romanticized notion of what it means. So my mom grew up on the reservation until she was, I think, in high school, and then her family moved like one city over. And, yeah. So I think I really romanticized notions of the res, which is where a lot of my mom's family still lives. And I've been there a couple times. And I know from hearing stories, that it's a really hard place to be but also part of me is like, this feels like a place that is home, even though I've like never lived there. And so one day, I would like to move there. I would like to really do an oral history project there with my mom's family. Yeah, I think that would be the dream. Yeah, but yeah, it just feels like I guess like my mom never talked too much about it. But I think my mom really likes when I asked about it and being able to talk about it and knowing that I'd interested. My mom's dad knows a lot about our like family tree like has a whole binder about it. Which is cool. I like got some Look through it a little bit when I was there last summer. But yeah, yeah, I guess

Olivia N 1:55:12

is there anything else you want to talk about? As we go anything else that you feel like we may have missed?

1:55:20

Um, yes. And I guess it kind of talks around it, but I wanted to talk specifically about situation ships, I guess. Um, because I think another, and I think it's just, I, I never know what's going on. And it's, I think, like it Come, you know, like, with sis hat culture, it's like, oh, can can boys and girls be friends with each other? And, you know, obviously, yes, but I feel like, there's that, like, Norm makes it difficult in lesbian circles, because it's not assumed one way or another. I feel like I feel like both are assumed. I feel like it's assumed that it's a date. And I think it's assumed that it's not a date. Okay, actually, that's, that's I

really want to talk about is the number of dates that I've gotten that I'm not sure if they were dealing with it. And it's hard, because somebody needs to make the first move, like physically, like, I feel like a date is the date if there's a kiss, and not maybe not always, but if it there's a kiss, it's definitely a date versus otherwise, it could go either way. But I would just really like some clarity. So that I can stop being really confused about things. For a while. I was like, it's a date, I'll decide that the day after happens. And that didn't really get me very far either. Because then I didn't know. Still. Yeah. And I just I'm just begging all lesbians to just be like, this is a date or this is not a date. And so we can all just get on with our lives.

Olivia N 1:57:00

I want to talk about before we end.

1:57:03

I'm good. I feel good.

Olivia N 1:57:07

Okay, I believe you. Thank you so much. I don't know what's going on.