

On Selfhood: Young Lesbians Within the Margins
Oral History Project

The Reminiscences of

Dee

2022

PREFACE

The following oral history is the result of a recorded interview with Dee conducted by Olivia Newsome on November 25, 2022. This interview is part of the On Selfhood: Young Lesbians Within the Margins oral history project.

Readers are asked to bear in mind that they are reading a transcript of the spoken word, rather than written prose. The following transcript has been reviewed, edited, and approved by the narrator.

Olivia Newsome 00:01

Okay, today is November 25, 2022. I'm Olivia Newsome. I'm interviewing Dee here in New York City. Do I have permission to record this interview?

Dee 00:14

Yes.

Olivia Newsome 00:15

Do you know you can stop this recording at any time?

Dee 00:17

Yes.

Olivia Newsome 00:19

Can you state your name, age and pronouns?

Dee 00:22

My name is Dee. I'm 21 years old, and my pronouns are they/them.

Olivia Newsome 00:29

How would you describe yourself?

Dee 00:36

In what way?

Olivia Newsome 00:38

However way you like. Some people are talking about their hobbies. Some people are talking about their identities that they're going to be discussing in the interview. It really depends on how you want to answer it.

Dee 00:52

Um, I would say I'm very artsy. I'm very, like, I'm like, I'm black. I'm queer. Pretty scatterbrained. Like, like ADHD (Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder) and undiagnosed autism, like I got, I'm all over the place just mentally, I also got a buttload of depression and other junk. Like, like, I would probably describe myself as like a lava lamp, like just fluid, constantly changing into it.

Olivia Newsome 01:35

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

Dee 01:41

Well, I still live in Colonia, New Jersey. And it is, um it's not a bad place to live like, but it is very white, very vivid, very middle class. And not too like not not incredibly diverse. I would say in terms of like finding other like weird bipoc folks. I mean, when I was in high school there were like a few other like we're bipoc folks but but like, when I was in the GSA and I was in high school the majority of the group people they were white and there were very few very very few trans femme people are like queer people who are a who are a Mab. But that's just something I feel is, like, very common in a lot of queer spaces. Like, like a mad people are like growing up as a cis boy like a mad people are. are discouraged more from coming out as queer. Because, like, in the media, like when people like think of gay like, what what would be more hot? Like, like, Oh, two girls cuddling? Oh, yeah, that's hot. But like two guys cuddling, you know, gross. Like, I feel like that's how a lot of people see it. Like, people fetishize lesbians a lot more than gay men. And, and like masculinity, like, can't be seen as fragile or anything like that. And it's like, you're a mad and you do come out as queer like, that. Seen as fragile? You know?

Olivia Newsome 03:41

Yeah. Did being black or did your blackness impact coming out?

Dee 03:47

Oh, yeah, definitely lesbianism being transfemme. Oh, yeah, definitely. Um, like, I remember when I was in seventh grade, I was bullied like, hell by this group of black kids and like, they would just call me a faggot. And like, constantly, like, point out like, like, like, I like I like I remember I said, like, oh, yeah, I like hot dogs. And they were all like, yeah, that's pretty gay. But like looking back on it now. That's fucking stupid. Because like, Okay, I'm the gay one. But you're the one pointing out all this gay if y'all are straight, how are you gonna? Make it make sense? Like there's a little something fruity going on here. Like, being like being black and being queer is just very, I think it's very hard because, like back before colonization, and what not. Like there being more than two genders and different sexual qualities like that was very common in a lot of African tribes and a lot of non non western non white communities or tribes. And then you know that that all went away because white Christians deciding to colonize che and.

And also, like, especially in the, um, in the mid 20th century, like, like even back to like slavery times when they would when they would make like black men, like I'm like, I'm wearing like, a lot of like, feminine clothing and shit in order to demasculate the black man. So, like a lot of black men being homophobic. I guess that's like the response to like, you know, the demasculation of the black man. Which is why I think like a lot of black men are homophobic, but also because of like, Christianity and all that shit. Like, like my dad, like. Like he told me like, like, I'm still here to support you. But like, obviously, I don't agree with like, your choices and your identity because I'm a Christian, and yada yada yada God and all that, which I think is total bullshit. Because because the Christian Abrahamic God, it's not even our God. Like we like, like black. Like depending on where we came from, like in Africa, like we have totally different gods. So like, like, these are just the gods that were pushed upon us by colonizers. So like, I just think it's complete bullshit.

Olivia Newsome 06:54

Yeah. Um, can you talk a little bit more about what it was like, being in middle school in high school? Did you like it?

Dee 07:08

Public School, probably the, especially later in high school, worst years of my life. Like they, they weren't really fun. Like, I felt kind of trapped almost. Like I, like I still didn't really know who I was. And my mental health issues were a whole lot worse. And I didn't really have a lot of the vocabulary that I have now, in order to describe like, what, like, what the fuck is going on with me, you know?

Olivia Newsome 07:52

what vocabulary changes?

Dee 07:57

Like, now, like, I have a lot more language to better describe like neurodivergent stuff with me. And like, ever since I left high school, like I've become a whole lot more left wing. Or, as opposed to like, start of high school like freshman year. I remember. I was I was a right winger. I like I endorsed the Donald Trump. Yeah, like it was that bad. It was that bad. Because I was against SJW's (Social Justice Warriors) like, like trying to stifle people's speech. And this is like a talking point that, that like, even as a very left wing person, I still wholeheartedly agree with, like, white uppity college students like trying to talk about like issues, like, um, of marginalized groups and trying to speak for marginalized groups when they aren't a part of those marginalized groups. And he's never faced a day of oppression or face like very minimal oppression, compared to like, the groups that they're trying to speak for ya. So that's kind of what made me very right wing at the time. And eventually as I started, like, exploring my identity more, like I started to realize, Oh, me being a right winger totally disagrees with who I am as a person, like, like how am I going to be black and queer and all this other shit and like, still support these right wing politicians who don't give a fuck about us? And even like, as someone who's very left, like I still, like left wing politicians don't give a fuck either. Like, like, it's just my belief that like politicians as a whole, they are not there to care for the people. They're there for their own interests and other shit.

Olivia Newsome 10:06

You mentioned talking about neurodivergency and mental health. But how did that affect you growing up? And did your mental state um, Do you think it worsened when you were figuring out your identities? Like being trans? And?

Dee 10:22

Oh yeah definitely.

Olivia Newsome 10:23

and queer?

Dee 10:24

Like I think not like not because like, like, not me, like, um exploring my sexuality and gender like, I don't think that made my mental health worse. I just think being a teenager overall, like, objectively your mental health gets worse because you're filled up with hormones, and they're all going crazy. And like, I was, like, it was at that point when I was in high school, like, I was just starting to try to address some of the mental health issues that had went unaddressed throughout my entire life up until that point. And even now, like I, like there's still plenty of unaddressed things that I'm still like, trying to make sense of Yeah, cuz. Yeah, like just being like, neurodivergent.

Dee 11:26

Because I feel like, so many people have a very black and white idea of what being autistic or what, having ADHD or just being neurodivergent in any way, like, they have a very, like, most people just have a very black and white idea of what it looks like. And I think that I was just, quote, unquote, normal enough to not be diagnosed as neurodivergent. So I never really got as much help as I definitely needed. And just going through the public school system, like, I'm an artsy kid, I always was an artsy kid. I mean, there was a time, like, there was a time like, between middle school, and like, sophomore year of high school, where I kind of stopped a bit withdrawing and whatnot, but then I eventually got really back into it. And I think I definitely would have benefited from going to some sort of low tech high school, or some Arts High School, where I could have been more artsy, and I could have like, done a lot more shit that I definitely would have been more into. I mean, I did journalism, all throughout high school. And that, and that was fun. Like, I like writing. But and I do, and I just liked the photography aspect behind it. And like, as a graphic design major, like I take, like it take photography classes and photography, it still is very interesting to me. And it's, like, one of my favorite ways to make art. But I think I definitely prefer painting and digital art over photography, or any other form of art.

Olivia Newsome 13:38

How did class and race affect you growing up?

Dee 13:45

Oh, that's a good question. Yeah, I grew up, you know, like I said in Colonia, New Jersey, and I, like, very middle, like, compared to other black kids, that I knew. Like, I'm very privileged, like to have a family that's pretty well off. Or like, even compared to like, other members of my family, like my, like, my, like, my branch of the family like my, like my immediate family. Like we're probably the best like well off like um, financial. Lee wise. That was barely English but like, we're the best off financially um, but yeah, like compared to other black kids or even compared to like other white kids I knew like, like, we were way more well off and I feel that gave mine and I feel like that gave my dad like, this kind of like sense of like, Oh, I'm a black man. And I'm in America. And in spite of racism and all that other shit, I made it so my children can make it to so he kind of pushed that idea on all of my siblings and me growing up. And I mean, he still made it very aware that racism still exists, but like, he kind of like pushed the idea that like, Oh, you have to work really hard and you have to like, but also work very smart.

Dee 15:31

And I wasn't really too aware of like classism until, until Honestly, after I graduated high school, because like, I mean, obviously, I knew that, like, there were kids who weren't as well off as I am. But it didn't really hit me. Like my privilege until I started, like, until I left high school. And until like, I started meeting people from all over, and just hearing their stories of like, how they wouldn't have something to eat, or, like, certain things that I thought like everyone had that like, that, like some people didn't really like having a dishwasher. Like it like it really is a privilege. Like, like, I like, I remember, when I was a year, fleas, like I saw the dishwasher, and I was like, this is the first dishwasher I've ever seen in a fucking apartment. Like, in all the years, I've like been going to New York and like visiting people's apartments, like I've never seen anyone else with a fucking dishwasher. Like, and it's just crazy to me. Like, just how privileged I grew up and didn't even realize that, like, whether it be having a dishwasher or like, because, like not having to wait for hot water, you know, in order to take a shower. Like that. Like that's a privilege and, like having a fridge that isn't like just some college dorm fridge. Like that's a privilege. And not worrying about clothes or like, whether I'm going to, like be robbed or mugged in my neighborhood. Like not having to worry about shit like that. Like, really stuck in my head that damn, I really am a lot more privileged than a lot of other people.

Olivia Newsome 17:33

Yeah. Who are what influenced you the most? like growing up? They can be anything like anime, cartoons, and fanfiction?

Dee 17:47

Yeah, definitely a lot of cartoons and anime like my sister really into anime like me, like just me and all my siblings. We really love cartoons, and anime. And I think that's really a big part of like, especially like lately, like, I think it really is a big part of black culture, like liking anime. Like I do not know. Actually, not a one of my co workers, you know, like anime, but, but like most bubbly, most niggas that I know, they like anime. And that was a big influence on me. And like the type of stories that I like, and the type of stories and artwork that I want to make or create. Yeah, that was a big, like that a big part. Like, I kind of wanted to backtrack to the last question because I realized that like, I didn't talk about race, but like, it regards to, like race connecting to like classism. Like I like a lot of my white friends at the time. Like when I was going through school, like they would say shit, like, Oh, you're the whitest black cube we know which is stupid racist because like, Oh, am I supposed to not have the same economic standing as you? Am I supposed to talk like a Yo, what's good nigga? Like, am I supposed to talk like, I'm from the hood? Like, like, where are you getting this from? Like? Like, is it because I talk just like you? you know?

Dee 19:21

In like, it's and like recently just like becoming young. I didn't have a lot of black friends growing up and now even now, I hardly have a lot of friends who are people of color, like just growing up in a neighborhood that is so white and being like, labeled as the white black kid, like, even with other black kids who did go to my school, like they like they kind of confused me, because like they would all act like they're from the hood and shit, even though they live like it was school here, like in this very uppity town, but I guess I also kind of get it at the same time because I don't know their situation. I don't know if like they actually, like in some of them like did live like, because they're because like even like with my area like Woodbridge and the surrounding areas like there are still like poor parts of the township. And those areas are a lot more populated by other minority. So I feel like that's definitely where some of them got it from. So like, yeah, like, I didn't fit in with them either. Like I like I was like, I wasn't good at sports, and I can't rap for shit. And I remember, like, when I was in seventh grade, like starting from them, like I try, like, I would make like a lot of like blacks jokes and shit like that, like, oh, yeah, I sure do love fried chicken and all that other stuff. And yeah, no, it was quite cringy because I guess like, but I guess, like I

wanted to, like, enable more of those, like, embody more of those stereotypes, so that I felt like I was actually black. Yeah. And I could fit in with other black kids.

Olivia Newsome 21:25

No, yeah, that makes a lot of sense. When did you realize that your sexuality was different than maybe what was around you?

Dee 21:37

I feel like I definitely always knew that I was kind of different, but I just kind of put words to it. Like I did like other boys when I was still a young boy. And it wasn't really until eighth grade, or like, freshman year of high school that I really realized that Oh, don't like just girls. And that kind of it all just evolved from there. Because like the first like, really, really big crush I had, like a queer crush was like this trans guy that I knew. Like, I knew them ever since we were in elementary school. And they were and they didn't identify as a boy at the time. Like they were like they still identified as being a cis girl. And I and like, I kind of had a crush on them back then. But then, like once, but then like, when I met them when they like started, like identifying as a boy. I still liked them. So yeah, that kind of made me think maybe I'm pansexual maybe I'm bisexual. I don't know what I am. And experimenting with gender. Like, it started when I was in seventh grade. And dear God, my acne was so fucking bad. Like, I started experimenting with makeup. Like just to, like cover up my insecurities and all that other shit like not because I mean, yeah, I was about to say not because I wanted to look pretty but yeah, like, I guess like covering up my insecurities like yeah, I guess you could say that was to make myself feel pretty. And it was so embarrassing. I remember.

Dee 23:46

Like, sometimes I would wear white shirts, and I would cake on like a bunch of like, concealer, or some other shit. And my friends would be like, Hey, why do you have shit on the car, I get shit on your collar of your shirt. Or like I remember like, I was like, late, like lay down on my desk and like, you know, just a restaurant class and I would take my head up, and there would just be brown just like brown on the desk. And I am like, my heart would always sink like shit. We did it again. And my parents like that. And my parents were just like, No, please stop. Please stop doing this. And then I remember like in high school. I was really insecure about my eyebrows. And I and I used fucking eyeliner in order to fill in my eyebrows and like one of my friends is all like, funny. You don't use that for that. It looks like you have Sharpie on your eyebrows. It was bad. It was horrible.

Olivia Newsome 24:58

Do you ever what your first exposure to lesbianism was?

Dee 25:01

Um, I think it was. Internet porn. It was definitely Internet porn. Like, just being a teenager. I just growing up and being a teenage boy, like definitely Internet porn. And weirdly enough, even back then. I think what attracted me to that was because part of me wanted to be that. Yeah. And I, cuz like how not safe for work can I be on this?

Olivia Newsome 25:42

Anything you want.

Dee 25:44

Oh, fuck yeah. Okay, so, like, I remember like, I would just be, you know, masturbating as a like, teenage boy. And like, what really made me nut was like, when I would like, touch my taint. You know, like the part that's under your balls or like, you know, like, the area is between your genitalia?

Olivia Newsome 26:07

Yeah! The in-between.

Dee 26:07

And your anus.

Olivia Newsome 26:08

Yeah!

Dee 26:09

And like I was stroke that as if it was a vagina. And like, for some reason that really clicked in my head, like, Yes, this is right. [Olivia Newsome giggles] This feels this feels. It'll I just like ascended to Nirvana. Like, oh my god, we're here. This is it. This is the ultimate climax. And, like, I remember, I would still watch lesbian porn and like, just feel so jealous, like, oh, like, why can't I have that? And I think in high school, like I did identify as gender fluid. Or like nonbinary, but I, I went by any pronouns. And I think what made me do that was because like, I think I was scared to like fully identify as a girl. Because I saw that this other trans girl went to school with me and they got bullied so bad. And I went by any pronouns, but people still defaulted to he. Which is why I just use they/them at this point. But I don't, I don't enforce it with like, cishet people, because it would take like, most of us that people would just blow their mind trying to explain to them that hey, you can use they/them, not plural, you can use it singularly. Like I tried to explain it to one of my co workers had an old job that I had, it literally melted her fucking brain trying to explain to her that yeah, I go by they them and they're just really what, you're more than one person. I mean, as far as I know, no.

Olivia Newsome 27:55

When did you first identify as a lesbian? And how did you get there? Like, what was the process of identifying as a lesbian?

Dee 28:03

Um, I would say started more recently, like, I started identifying with lesbianism because at this point, I identify as non binary, gender fluid. Like if I had to describe, like, what I would want perfectly like for my body, like, I don't want to be perceived as a cis man. Like, but like, I don't want to be perceived entirely as a ciswoman. Like, I want people to look at me and be so damn confused. But like the last thing that I want, like, I'll take anything but a cis man, like, I don't want to be called a cis man. And like, like, like, if I could be a shapeshifter, if I could have like, some small tits, and like, also have like a dick and a vagina, like hell, yeah. Like, I would want that. Like, I would want to, like, like, I would want to keep my dick. But like, instead of balls, I would want a vagina.

Olivia Newsome 29:12

Like that bottom?

Dee 29:13

Yes. Like that would be my perfect set of circumstances. And I think it took me so long to identify with being a lesbian because just like growing up, and seeing how most people identify with lesbians as just being women loving women. And it wasn't until recently that like people started telling me that oh, it like it doesn't just have to be this like you like lesbian. The way that I would define it now in the way that I've heard plenty of other people identify it is like non cis men loving non cis men. And I used to think that that was crazy. Like, like I thought, Oh, he/him lesbian In that, that's kind of stupid, but but like, there's a lot of intersectionality between which lesbians and trans men. So like, let's be it just doesn't have to be woman loving woman. And what about nonbinary lesbians? You know, and I think what really, like, deterred me was like going on, like lesbian dating apps and like trying to find someone, but like, hearth but like, I would hardly get any matches or, like, if I did get matches, it wouldn't go anywhere. Because of reasons or, like, just they weren't that interested. But like, I think it had to do with the fact that there's a lot of like, turfs in the lesbian community, like, Oh, you have a dick. Well, you can't be lesbian, like I only like pussy.

Olivia Newsome 31:02

Have any clothing, jewelry, makeup, tattoos, piercings, or any other forms of body modification, assisted with affirming your identities, or lesbianism or even your gender expression.

Dee 31:18

Again, my septum pierced. Really, like so gender and like getting your, like, just having a bunch of funky earrings. Like I have so many weird earrings, like I've a pair of earrings that are just dentures like I just funky weird shit like that, like really makes me feel affirmed as like a queer person. And like, just as like a lesbian, and shaving off my eyebrows, like you can't even see them with my glasses. And I always hated my eyebrows anyway. And, like, going eyebrowless, like, I felt such gender euphoria from that. And dress like the way I dress I used to, like I remember I went through a phase where I bought a crap ton of clothes from shein, which I regret now because Shein is a horrible company. But I bought, like so many clothes from Shein. And like a lot of them are more feminine, and androgynous. And that really helps me feel gender affirmed. Like the best way I would describe my gender presentation would be like more, like more so like butch lesbian or just androgynous black person. And like, I don't like super. I don't like super feminine stuff. Like I wouldn't definitely not wear a dress to my wedding. But I I also don't like super

masculine stuff. I like more stuff that's, like androgynous or unisex like it could be anything. I if it's a bird for a while, but enough let it out. There we go. And yeah. wearing bras, I like even, like if I were to go on estrogen and like I got like some titty I wouldn't wear a bra. Um skirts, I really like like I really love skirts. And like I really like baggy, like stuff that I feel like snuggled and engulfed in like, I love oversized clothes.

Dee 33:52

And I say think I I don't wear skirts as much as I am with the left to though. Like I don't wear skirts and dresses as much as I would love to because like I still, like I still live with my folks. And part of me just like dreads that like moment of awkwardness where like I passed by my family and they see what I'm wearing. And it's very clear. And they I mean, it's happened before like they would see me in something that's very clear, and they wouldn't say anything. But I know deep down there thinking, Man, that's so gay. And I just don't like I just dread that awkwardness I guess. Because as much as I would like to think I don't give a shit what other people say like I still like very much care about what my parents say. For some reason.

Olivia Newsome 34:49

They're your parents.

Dee 34:50

Yeah. I mean, they don't hate me. Like when I came out to them like like they were totally fine with it and they don't give a shit what I do at this point because I'm I was like an adult, but I still live with them. And I have to come home eventually. And like when I am home, like I feel like there's always like an air of awkwardness because I'm not what they expected me to be. Like, like, I'm not the child that they thought that they would have hoped for. Yeah. Like more like, that's definitely a lot more so of my dad, I think that my mom I mean, my mom like she was she still thinks very she's not homophobic or transphobic. But she still thinks in a very, like Normie like, oh, there's only two genders kind of way where like, I, I feel like if I were to try to explain to her, like non binary stuff, and I have tried before, like, the like, just minute break. So I don't try.

Olivia Newsome 36:04

Has any forms of art, like photography, paintings that you mentioned doing before? If you like even watching TV, any like movies and stuff helped you with your lesbianism at all? Or you like watching because they're gay, even in general.

Dee 36:22

um a lot of modern cartoons have a lot of lesbian representation. And I love when they do it, right. Or, like, not even just lesbian representation, just like queer representation. Like when it's done, right, I love it. But there are definitely like, quite a few, like, different forms. Like, whether it be cartoon or not, like, shows or movies that get it wrong. Like I remember. I really like I do you know what blue is? The Warmest Color is yes, I like I like I found that movie through Pornhub because I watched the of I saw the sex scenes. And I was like, damn, dishes bussing this shit hot. And then, like, I watched the actual movie. And oh, dear God, the movie is not great. Like, it is not great. Lesbian representation. But the graphic novel is phenomenal. It's pretty. Thank you like it is so like it is leaps and bounds better. Because just because like when they do have the sex scenes in the movie. They go on for way too long. And even like I like I've seen interviews with like, the people on the actors and actresses. And they're just like, yeah, no, like, we felt uncomfortable filming this. And this directors clearly just a pervy man who likes to visualize lesbians. And that has been a lot of like, not just lesbian, but queer media throughout the years, just fetishizing like, gay sex and making it just all about the sex but like, we're still normal people, we still we do everyday things like, like art, like our sex lives aren't just us.

Olivia Newsome 38:35

Exactly. So can you talk a little bit more about if, like identifying as a lesbian or deich ever felt scary to you? Or have you ever struggled with like, your gender identities? Or your sexual identities in any way? I could talk a little bit more about that. You touched on it briefly.

Dee 38:58

Yeah, I'm identifying as a lesbian. It's hard. Because like, again with like, turfs and transphobic people in the queer community. Like that's what makes it really hard. And yeah, that especially made it like hard on like lesbian dating apps like like being like a trans person. And like, not being like, exactly. You know, what transphobic people wanted, but I don't need their fucking validation now. Like -

Olivia Newsome 39:45

when was your first encounter with lesbian sex or, or queer sex? In general?

Dee 39:52

Just porn.

Olivia Newsome 39:53

Porn?

Dee 39:54

Yeah, pretty much.

Olivia Newsome 39:55

What about, like fucking now?

Dee 39:57

Like now?

Olivia Newsome 39:58

Yeah!

Dee 39:58

Like, um, like I have, like, mostly all of my friends are just queer at this point, because I don't feel safe around. Cis men especially, but like cis women too. Like, I feel like, like

even when I do explain my gender identity and everything, I feel like cis women just see me as the token GBF gay best friend that they can have. So yeah, like I, like I just have like, a lot more queer friends than I do straight cis at friends. And I feel like in the queer community, like just talking about sex. It's not as, like, it's not as frowned upon. So like, I've seen, like, I've talked to plenty of people about their own sexual experiences, and like, what they do, and what not, and it's really given me a whole new perspective on what sex can be and what and like, what gender can be.

Olivia Newsome 41:17

Right. So, how does class and race inform your interactions with the lesbian community?

Dee 41:28

Um -

Olivia Newsome 41:29

it's a big question.

Dee 41:30

Yeah, that's, yeah, that's -

Olivia Newsome 41:32

you can put it up into class.

Dee 41:34

Um -

Olivia Newsome 41:35

And then just race.

Dee 41:36

Like my interactions with class and race. Like within the lesbian community?

Olivia Newsome 41:41

Yeah.

Dee 41:41

Um, I guess like, when I was still a teenage queer, like, I really liked a lot of like lesbian queer influencers on the internet.

Olivia Newsome 42:02

What influencers?

Dee 42:03

Like I watched so much Miles Chronicles, Ash Hardell. Like, I used to watch Mack does it. And the results, so what's her name? This one trans woman she does like video essays. And she does

Olivia Newsome 42:28

Contrapoints?

Dee 42:29

Yes, Contrapoints! fucking love her. But I don't really like, as many quickly I don't really interact much with like, queer, lesbian influencers, like I used to, because I'm more interested in like, people who are more like me, who aren't like insanely rich or insanely popular, because I feel like I can relate to like, obviously, I can relate to them a lot more. And they just feel more like real people to me, or like influencers. They just seem like, like, obviously, they're just what we see on their social media platforms. And I don't think I can engage with that. Because I want to engage with something that's real. I want to engage with something that I can be a part of, you know, yeah.

Olivia Newsome 43:29

What communities have you felt like you could be more a part of and less like a voyeur on the outside? Um, are there any online spaces that you really prefer to be in?

Dee 43:38

Recently, I found this group chat of black queer, of like black, or bipoc, lesbians and queer people, and they get brunch and do other shit like that. Um, I've connected with like a few people from that, like the group chat has tons and tons of people, so I can't interact with everyone. But like going over, but like finding groups like that, or like online space spaces like that are specifically made for queer people like Lex or Taimi. Like those are easily like two of probably the best platforms for like finding other queer people I feel. Lex, I feel is even more important, because it was made by like, less is more so for lesbians. But they allow like, any sort of queer people on there, but I've mainly just seen lesbians. Like that's the overwhelming majority. And I love it. Like the people who made it.

They got their idea for the app. Because like back in the day like lesbians would post stuff in the columns in the columns of newspaper is like, Hey, I'm on the I'm in search of hot sex in, in the Crown Heights area. And they will put a description and yada, yada, yada. And that's what the app less pretty much is. Like, they just recently added a feature where you can show your face. But for the most part, like I was used, like I was used, I started using the app when it first got made. And it's always just been about life. It's always been about finding genuine connections, rather than like, oh, this person's hot. I mean, obviously, there's still going to be people like that on there. Like we're just looking to hook up and all that jazz, but I see people on there who advertise their other businesses who effort ties, like if they're looking for a roommate, like, people use lax for all sorts of shit. And that's what I love about it. Like, that's why I think it is easily like the best app for lesbians, or all sorts of queer people.

Olivia Newsome 46:14

What do you think? I'm also on Lex.

Dee 46:17

Oh, nice.

Olivia Newsome 46:17

What do you think about being on Lex? And maybe the inclusion of gender nonconforming, and trans lesbians?

Dee 46:27

I think is great. Yeah, that's a very inclusive, because I feel like a lot of lesbian spaces are very TERFy

Olivia Newsome 46:37

TERFy, in what way?

Dee 46:38

Like TERFy in the sense that like, oh, they say that they allow, like, queer, like, gender queer people are trans people. But like, the overwhelming majority of people on there still, like just cis women. Like cis white women. Yeah. Like, but with Lex like, and seeing the team that's behind it. And seeing that there are a lot more people like me who look like me, or identify the way that I like, that's what I feel it makes it a much better space than any other, like community, you know?

Olivia Newsome 47:24

What's it like making and meeting lesbians in your city now?

Dee 47:28

Um, I think it's I think it's really great to meet a lot more people who are trans and identify, like, with the lesbian label because it makes me feel valid. Yeah, that like, I'm not just the only person who is trans and, like, still uses the label. And like, has the same school of thought that it's just not just like, it's not just women loving women. Or like, just thinking the like, or just thinking like binary terms or like felt like oh, you have a penis then? You're not really lesbian?

Olivia Newsome 48:29

Are you mostly finding other lesbians online? And spaces? Like Lex?

Dee 48:35

Yeah, mostly online.

Olivia Newsome 48:38

What other spaces other than Lex?

Olivia Newsome 48:40

Um queer, gay pride parades. Definitely a big one. And then there's like, different restaurants or coffee shops or bars that are very queer friendly. I don't go to bars because I'm not like much of a drinker. But I do love coffee and just living in New York in general. Like you're gonna find tons and tons of queer folks and just being like friends with like other lesbians like I'm going to like obviously, you're going to find like, um, other lesbians that way. So yeah.

Olivia Newsome 49:38

If you're in lesbian spaces now, like, Are you noticing any specific subcultures? I'm like cutting edge correlates or something.

Dee 49:51

I definitely yeah, like I think I do notice like a lot of different like, subcategories. slike like lesbians who are trans lesbians who are artsy lesbians who, who like might be very into fashion. Like, there's a whole lot of different cliques and like, like people are in the different niches, or the lesbians organizing around those niches when they're forming their communities. I feel like it kind of just starts with like, Oh, are you a lesbian? And then like, you find like people who, like align with your interests and hobbies and other stuff.

Olivia Newsome 50:39

So it starts with lesbian, and then the interest later.

Dee 50:43

Yeah, because, like, I feel like you, you need to start with like lesbian. Because if someone else identifies, like the same label that you have, like, you're gonna feel like 1000 times safer around them. But it takes more than just identifying with the same label to, like, really form like a connection.

Olivia Newsome 51:10

What was your first visit to a lesbian related place? Or event? Like? Wasn't what you expect it to find? Did it fit your expectations? Or was it completely different,

Dee 51:20

Um, I went to this lesbian art museum with my partner like months and months ago, and was very fascinating, like seeing all the different kinds of art. Because it's not like, what you expect of like the MOMA, or the MET, where it's just, like, very specific types of high art. Like, it's all sorts of different kinds of art. Like, even, like, if it's like, even if it might just look like a bunch of like, scribbles for, like, shit that isn't neat. Like, it's still, like, it still is very artsy. Like, it's still is very much art because, like, who decides what art is like, no one, like, are is just expressing yourself. And I feel like, especially with lesbian art spaces, like I see that a lot. Like just like being able to truly express, like, what you identify as, or like, who you are as a person without being held to, like, some stupid, like Eurocentric white standard of what art is.

Olivia Newsome 52:47

Do you think that the internet age has impacted your ability to meet more lesbians in person?

Dee 52:52

Oh, yeah, definitely. Like, I feel like I've done, I have been able to meet a lot more people in the lesbian community through the use of the internet, like whether, like I met my partner through lax. And through them, I've found a lot more people in the lesbian community. So without the internet, like, I wouldn't have met them. But like, without the internet, I also wouldn't. Like I also wouldn't be able to find like, let's say if I'm wanting to, like find any lesbian events around me that are being organized. Like, I mean, yeah, this is a newspaper, but like the internet, it's much faster, and it's way easier to access.

Olivia Newsome 53:42

How does? What does it mean to identify as a lesbian to you? And that's kind of an esoteric question.

Dee 53:50

To me, it's identify, like, to me being a lesbian just means like, you're not a cis man, and you love people who aren't cis men, like, the best way I would describe my, like, my, like, the way I feel sexually, or romantically, is like just loving other people who are trans, loving other people who don't fit the gender binary. Because I feel especially more safe around those kinds of people. Whereas, like, if I'm around someone who says like, I feel like they just want to get it and they want to get who I am and what I identify with, and they would, and, and they would be more likely to invalidate my identity and question it a whole lot more. What does lesbian community mean to you? To me, it means like, just other lesbians coming together and building each other up rather than tearing each other down. I mean, there's a lot of that. Still, like, I don't think the queer community as a whole can just be called one community because there's so much infighting and so much division. But yeah, what makes it worth it? Is just finding like the few, like the few people who do really get you. You know?

Olivia Newsome 55:37

I do know. [Olivia Newsome and Dee giggle] What lesbian spaces or communities do you wish existed? Ideate as much as you want, fantasize!

Dee 55:49

I wish that there was like, a lot more queer century coffee shops or bakeries. Or like people who don't really know for people who don't really like alcohol, or like drug use. So that like, even, like younger, queer folk can visit them. Because I felt very alone as a queer person when I was in high school, and growing up and discovering my sexuality, but if there was a space like that, where, like, regardless of your age, like you, like you can always go to then yeah, I feel like that would be very great. In order to find out that people like you.

Olivia Newsome 56:45

What does lesbians really mean to you?

Dee 56:48

Um, to me, let's be enjoy means feeling validated in my, in my lesbian identity, and being proud of who I am, and not feeling like I need to constantly explain myself to other people as to like how I identify, you know, and feeling comfortable in my skin. As like, who identify as

Olivia Newsome 57:33

Thank you very much. Oh, wow, that's all the questions.

Olivia Newsome 57:36

Yes, you answered them all.

Olivia Newsome 57:40

Bye!

Dee 57:41

Bye.