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SPEAKERS

Olivia

Olivia 00:01

Today is July 9 2023. I'm Olivia Newsom interviewing Ariel here in New York City and Brooklyn on my couch in my apartment. Read permission to record this interview. Yes. Do you know you can stop recording at any time? Yes. Can you say your name age and pronounce?

00:18

My name is Ariel. I'm 21. And my pronouns are they he?

Olivia 00:22

How would you describe yourself?

00:23

Oh, I'm definitely I would say maybe whimsical? I'm real silly with it. I love to talk. Yeah, I'm friendly. No, no.

Olivia 00:42

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

00:46

So I'm from Houston, Texas. I grew up in Houston with my grandparents, and they had like, moved from Mississippi to Houston. When Hurricane Katrina happened, so I spent also a fair amount of time in Mississippi, which is not very fun. There's not anything to do. But I had a very, like, Southern growing up, because my like it was raised by old people from the Deep South. But overall, it was like, pretty laid back. I think. There wasn't a lot of like, change going on past. Like my early childhood.

Olivia 01:39

Can you talk about what it was like growing up with your grandparents as kind of your parents?

01:45

Yeah. Um, I mean, it definitely. I definitely had a lot of issues with it as a kid. Because I didn't like feeling different. I didn't like feeling alienated. And so like, anytime there was like a Parents Night, or like, I didn't want my parents like show, but I didn't want my grandparents to like, show up at school. Like, I didn't want people to see them. I was very, like, unhappy about that. So that was a big, like, it was a big deal for me. And I was very, like, I think ashamed of my grandparents. And I think they knew that which is kind of sad. But you know, it is what it is especially like when you're a kid

02:32

Yeah, I mean, I think that's

Olivia 02:37

Can you talk about what it was like attending Middle School?

02:40

Um, so I remember. Meet, so I remember being fine during middle school. As it so happens, I think I probably was bullied and just didn't know.

Olivia 02:55

Yeah, I was just so oblivious. You were like, actually, this was fun for me. And then you are adult you're like,

03:02

yeah. Um, I went to a very small middle school. So I went to the same school from like, first grade to eighth grade. And I had a class of like, 45 like eighth grade head to class like 45 kids. So it was spent most of those years with the same kids. And they had they had seen me be ridiculous for eight years. So it was definitely worse in like elementary school night, early, middle school, and then by the time we got to like, eighth grade or so. I started to realize I was like, oh, people think I'm weird. Let me like tone it down for the ones and friends. And then I guess High School and I like continuing to you know, tone it down and then by like junior senior year, I went from like, weird autistic animated to manic pixie dream girl. Just the the it's the successful sterilization I guess.

Olivia 04:04

So what was your friend group? Like? Who were your friends? And how did you interact? And what did you guys do? Oh,

04:09

I always wanted like to be friends with the with the cool kids. And I wanted to get like invited to parties and shit. But really, I was friends with like the theater kids and the anime kids. But like I would, I would anytime I had an opportunity to like hang out with the cooler kids, I would ditch them. Just so bad. But like, we're like, those are the people I'm friends with now. Like those are the people I've remained friends with. Yeah, so everybody in my friend group from high school is I think was queer then and most I think everybody except for one person is trans No, but I was I was there almost first, maybe second or third. That's a really Trailblazer you for being for being trans.

Olivia 04:58

Um, can you talk a little bit about out maybe how class affected you growing up?

05:06

Yeah, so in Texas, especially in Houston, there's like a lot of socio economic diversity, especially in like, the high school I went to, because it was in a very wealthy neighborhood, but the neighborhoods surrounding it were like, very working class neighborhoods. So, I grew up around a lot of different classes, I guess. And I always felt that I was middle class, I think it's probably more like, lower middle class. But in the neighborhoods I grew up in, we were like, I think we were generally the most well off in the neighborhoods, because everybody else was like, really, really, really, really, really fucking broke. And so we were the people like, we were taking care of other people in the neighborhood. Like, we've, a lot of times, like we were like, like, taking people to medical appointments, like trying to, like, you know, do mutual aid stuff.

06:07

So that was, that was a big thing for me growing up. But I don't think I started to realize that like,

06:17

that, like, where I was, like, socioeconomically I think until probably college because you move up to New York, and you go to NYU, and you're like, Oh, I see how it is now.

Olivia 06:33

We'll talk more about that realization,

06:35

a little bit. Okay,

Olivia 06:37

but can you talk about your relationship with your grandparents were you close, um,

06:45

we're on and off, we have some personality conflicts. My grandma especially like, she's had a very like traumatic life. And as a result, she's very paranoid and has a lot of like untreated mental illness, I think probably, I've always highly suspected that she has borderline personality disorder. And she won't get treated and also like, makes everyone kind of like enable her to not always act in the kindest ways and in the most like respectful ways. And so she's pushed a lot of like her family and children away. Except for my grandpa who will enable her because he just kind of wants to keep the peace but I am not a keep the peace person. So it was definitely like I was I would, I was always fighting. Like, not badly but like, just anytime I felt disrespected, I would go off. So it was very like it could be combative. A lot of the time. My grandpa is kind of like he's pretty like passive I think as a person. Not very, like aggressive. I was. He is passive aggressive though. But he was definitely I think he made me lesbian because he was a contractor. So we spent a lot of a lot of time at Home Depot. And his favorite artists that Tracy Chapman

Olivia 08:21

maybe he's a secret lesbian.

08:23

I listened to so much Tracy check. It he'll like he'll he'll, every time we would get in the car. He would press like the button on the iPhone. Be like Siri, play Give me one reason by Tracy like I can hear it in my head. Every single it's like clockwork. He has to play Give me one reason why Tracy Chapman. I think he'll die. Otherwise, I think that's the only thing

Olivia 08:47

keeping him alive. Tracy Chapman, that's just that one song.

08:50

He likes other Tracy Chapman songs. But that's his favorite. He does have a favorite.

Olivia 08:57

So can you talk a little bit about how gender norms affected your coming of age. And

09:05

he talked about what you mean by being third gender. And this is a time where you could even expand on

Olivia 09:12

kind of toning like that mention of like, toning down cutting off certain parts of your identity.

09:19

Yeah. I mean, so with my parents, I think they were sort of like they kind of tried to like, you know, like, teach me how to like, be a lady. It's like, yeah, don't sit with like, don't sit with your legs like wide open if you're wearing a skirt or something. Like stuff like that, but I don't think they tried very hard because I think they knew it was a lost cause from the start. And that I was always going to do whatever I wanted to do. So I think in that regard, like I had a lot of freedom to really just do whatever I wanted to, like I cut my hair really short. Several times like I think I started doing that in like, fourth or fifth grade my grandma cut it for me. She said that she's a hairdresser, but I don't think she actually ever was. It wasn't a good haircut either. God bless her. Um, but yeah, I think like I was my mom always wanted me to be very feminine. I stopped living with my mom when I was like, five or six, I think I was on the sixth. And she wanted like, she wanted a very feminine daughter. And so as a kid, I was always dressed up very feminine ly. And I don't think I really minded that, like, I don't think I cared that much. I think that I what I cared about was like, I didn't want to be like, restrained from what I wanted to do. So I liked like, I liked the cute things as well. But like, I think when I was say, like, from like, eight to like, high school, I was pretty like tomboyish. I kept my hair short. I like, people thought I was a boy, like the kids that I was a boy in, like, fifth and sixth grade. My hair was short. But then I also had the biggest boobs because I went through puberty first. They were confused. And they would be like, we don't think your boobs are real, we think you're stuffing your bra. And so it just, you know, it got weird, got gay. I don't know. But I think I definitely was never at any point, like treated like, like, I always did feel different than like, the

girls, especially in how I was like, treated. Um, because it felt like I was not like, a viable option for being one of the girls, if that makes sense. In the terms of it's like, okay, well, here are the list of like, the girls in the class. And then and then there's Ariel, who, you know, we try to ignore. Because like, especially in like how the boys were like interacting with the girls. They did not ever, ever, ever treat me like that. And the girls were not very, like welcoming of me into their own like circles. So I mostly hung out with the gay kids.

12:27

Yeah, I don't know, I feel like I was never really like treated like a girl. It was just kind of like, I was called a girl. And I was she heard because that was like, you know, we don't know what else to do. But I don't think I was ever like, truly seen as one.

Olivia 12:44

Why do you think that? I'm

12:48

Justin, like, I would always notice the way that like, the girls around me were getting treated. And the ways that like, I felt like I was deprived of that. Almost like, I wasn't having the same experiences as them. I wasn't being interacted with the same ways at them. I was like I don't know, it was like, I wasn't being treated like a boy either, though. So it was like, really just something like, I don't know, in between. And it was kind of awkward. And everybody like, I think kind of tried to ignore me. And I'm so loud. It's it's really hard.

Olivia 13:31

So can you talk about disability and how that affected you growing up.

13:38

So I knew I so I got diagnosed with autism and ADHD when I was like, six or seven. And I knew. And I knew that like that was very, I knew immediately that it was very stigmatized. And I knew that that also was a lot of the reason that people didn't like me. And so I was very, like, upset about having those diagnoses, especially being autistic. I was like, even from like, being like seven or eight, like I was very upset by it. And so I would get reevaluated every few years. And I was like trying to beat the allegations. I was like, No, this time, this time, I don't have it. I'm sure I'm better. I'm just because I knew that that was why people didn't like me. And I knew that that's why I was like, treated differently. And that's why like, people treated me like I was like almost wrong. Because I really was not a fan. And I think that also contributed to like why I was kind of like third gendered. Because I didn't know how to I didn't know how to act in a way that would get me treated like a girl

Olivia 14:56

did you feel like like the anime kids and theater kids treated you differently. Were they more accepting,

15:03

um, they were like, I don't ever feel like, like, I was treated like, specific, like, gendered wise. I think it was just like, you're a gay kid. I'm a gay kid. We both, you know, like, we're both kind of like not fitting

into these. So I think it just didn't apply, I guess, in a way that like, were outside of like hanging around queer kids, the whole, like, I think heteronormativity was so strong that it was very much like, like, being a boy and being a girl were very important. And then, like, within that circle, it just wasn't. So can you talk about

Olivia 15:52

how sighs affected you growing up?

15:55

Yeah. So I don't know, when I started realizing that I was a bigger size. I think it must have been like, I think I must have been Middle School. I don't think I knew. I don't think I realized when I was in elementary school, I also think I was still relatively, like, similar to the kids around me. Um, but I think that it made me very insecure. And so I tried to like mitigate that by like, hiding it a lot of the time. But I also knew that like, that was another reason of why like, I don't think people thought that I was attractive was because of my size. Um, and so I also like, attributed that to like, reasons that people didn't want to be friends with me.

Olivia 17:00

So this kind of this question kind of ties into the next question. I was curious about how Tumblr, social media and internet culture affected you growing up?

17:08

Oh, yeah. So I was given basically unrestricted Internet access at the age of like, 10, or 11. They thought it was restricted. It was not restricted. I was doing all kinds of crazy things. So I was on Tumblr, like, maybe that lovin to live like that? Yeah, I was really young. But it was like, I feel like, I didn't really have that many bad experiences. Because I think I was just on like, relatively innocuous sides of Tumblr, where it just didn't like, it was like 20, or 2012. It was just, you know, the silly memes and whatnot. That was a lot of my experience. But it was, I think, basically, one of my first times being like, explicitly exposed to queer culture. And so it became very, very important for me to have access to that and to be around that. But obviously, like my parents, like, didn't know about it. And like, because I definitely wasn't allowed to have that have like social media like that. And obviously, like, it wasn't meant for, like children. But it was important to because I didn't have anywhere else. And like my parents, I don't think that like, I think that everybody knew that I was gay. That's what my mom told me is that when I was like, seven or eight, some of my aunts pulled me aside or pulled her aside, they're like, you know, Ariel is gonna grow up and be gay. So, I didn't know that everybody knew. I had no clue. But I guess everybody already knew that I was gonna grow up and be gay. But I think that, like they weren't. They definitely weren't like, I don't think they were trying to change that. But I don't think that they were in any rush to, like, expose me to queer culture. It was just kind of like, I think the goal is just to act like that wasn't there, and then deal with it later, I guess. But when I had access to like, an, like, a queer culture that was like, explicitly there, and like, visible that, I think, really made a lot of things make sense. And like made me like, I think have a lot more understanding of my identity and understanding of like, where I wanted to be in the world and who I wanted to be around. So it was very important to me, to the point where like, my parents found my or like, took my phone I was like 12 or 13 In and they found my tumbler and I got a lot in a lot of trouble for it. And I wanted to get out of trouble

and I wanted my phone back swing shrink cap of toilet, capital toilet cleaner. And like, and like actually, I was like, had was like, I'm gonna kill myself. So that I got so that I wasn't in trouble anymore. Because I was like I'm escalating on purpose. Yes

20:37

I got my phone back. Yeah. Yeah. Crazy. Well, I just like I needed to shift the importance. I need to shift what you're focusing on and kill

Olivia 20:48

yourself with toilet bowl cleaner. Yeah,

20:50

but I had like this much.

Olivia 20:55

thought possible? No, no, not that much. But they were just like shit.

20:59

I like had like the smallest, like less than a teaspoon. I put it in my mouth. It was obviously really gross. And I spat it out and like screamed.

Olivia 21:10

Yeah. What were you doing on Tumblr? What were the discussions that you were having? What? fandoms what queer?

21:17

Were you? Um, I was in fandoms for a lot of things that I didn't actually watch or know what they were. So I was reading a lot of Wikipedia pages. Because I wasn't. I wasn't about to watch all of Dr. Who

Olivia 21:32

you were in like super Hoolock stuff some stuff because that was just where

21:35

a lot of like queer people were. So I was just like, whatever I thought was funny. Or like, whatever, just piqued my interest I would follow. Yeah, I don't remember I knew I was still at that point into pretty into like Harry Potter. I think most people were at that point still. Yeah, just like I think like, various anime fandoms I think they all kind of like melded together in like the popular ones.

Olivia 22:06

What this like Italia phase?

22:10

No, that was earlier. Okay, that was before. It

Olivia 22:13

was like was this Italia? Or was telling you was before it was going on in 2012?

22:20

I don't remember. Was that I know they had um,

Olivia 22:24

was that Black Butler. Maybe? Like Sebastian.

22:28

I know. I did. We I did read Wiki pages with that. Yeah, I didn't want to watch it.

Olivia 22:33

Did you watch any of the fandom?

22:37

Which one? Um, you're

Olivia 22:40

just like, we're the gay people. Yeah. All like, because there was like, people gonna be mad at me. Remember? grelle? Yes. Yeah, I

22:50

was like the like transfer? Yes. I Butler. Yeah, I liked them a lot. So I was like, on I don't know who this is. I'm not I'm not. I'm not reading all that though. Just show me thy let me see the naked oil though. Yes, but like, no, because I had a hentai addiction like nine years old.

Olivia 23:16

That makes sense. What? Okay, no, I meant like, not for you. I meant like, but I think it does. Awesome. Yeah. Like the like the spaces that you were in and how early you were in? Oh, yeah. The fact that you were a casual fandom. enjoyer Yeah, you were seeing horrible freaky shit.

23:33

I don't feel like it was that horrible? And for you it was just normal hentai?

Olivia 23:42

Like hentai It wasn't your anime. Like,

23:45

literally whoever just pretty girls. I wanted to see pretty girls no reason. Yeah. Well, I do think there's a lot of like, artistic value to hence especially like, do you know like the hentai like games like the interactive games? I think there's a lot of like, Yes, I do know what you're doing. I think there's a lot of like analysis to be had there about like, how it's supposed to end like it's supposed to show like a heterosexual interaction. But like, any aspect of the man is like, erased. Yeah, he's not super there. It

doesn't exist, because it's supposed to be you. Right? Yeah. So it's just like, you and this very beautiful woman and her bouncy, bouncy breasts.

Olivia 24:25

Like, this does something for me.

24:27

Yeah. And you can rotate her.

Olivia 24:31

Like, I want to see the bottom. Yeah. Zoom in,

24:33

zoom out.

Olivia 24:37

I wanted to get internet access. Would you say that it was beneficial for you?

24:40

I think so. Okay, because I think that like, I needed somewhere to not like I needed to not be lonely somewhere.

Olivia 24:50

So when did you get off of Tumblr? Um, did you never leave?

24:55

I think I got kind of bored of it around like In 2017 2016, whenever they like started doing like the porn ban, not because of the porn, but because it was just taking random shit down and I got irritated by that. And I think I like went to Twitter for a while. And then like was on Twitter for a few years. And I find Twitter really irritating. So now I'm back on Tumblr because Sasha really likes Tumblr. So she's got me tumbling again.

25:25

You log in, you're really blocked.

25:27

I'm reblogging you don't write anything? No, I just have it on my phone. I don't like have the blogs anymore. But back when I had up like, back when I was was Tom wearing like, I was like coding themes and shit. And I was like, moving stuff or I had like the little sidebar with the music and I had like the my custom pixel, whatever custom cursor. It was I was putting a lot of effort into there. had like a border and it was like lace. That's pretty Yeah. Okay, so

Olivia 25:56

you were on Tumblr very early, but you're not brain broken from Tumblr?

26:00

I wouldn't say so. I feel like I'm bringing together Yeah.

Olivia 26:02

Okay. So can you talk about growing up Southern Baptist?

26:07

Yeah. So my grandma always wanted us to go to church. I was never really that interested in it. But a lot of the times, like, we would go to church and go to Sunday school. And I didn't like the kids there. I found that really irritating. Because I went to I went to a mega church when I was started from like, middle school and up. Yeah. Um, and so as much of like, I don't know, like millennial youth pastors, people, but and they were like, trying to, like, connect with me and I did not find cool at all. I remember I went to church one day, I was in middle school and I had like a I think it's like a like a pierced the veil shirt on you faster about that, to me is like I love pierced the veil. Like, no, you're like, nevermind, yeah, I don't like it anymore. Yeah, it's ruined. And then when I was in high school, I started realizing so you would go. So the way that it would work is that you would go in and they would have like, some breakfast stuff. They'd have like some doughnuts, and then you'd hang out for a while. And then they would go into like, the I don't know, the Bible study part, I guess. And once I was a teenager, I realized, because there was one other queer person. And they taught me they were like, I realized my parents would drop me off. I could go in there and go get a doughnut and then just leave and go away. Just to like a different, like, it wasn't like a strip mall, part of like a strip mall. So I could just go somewhere else, or like, hanging out in like some, like, abandoned part of the church. And that's what I did with the one other trans person there who did not like me and would not speak to me. And like completely ignored me. But she would just with them. Yeah. And then we matched on Tinder several years later, I was like, but you didn't like me, then. They're like, maybe a year older than me maximum. So it wasn't that big of a deal. But it's confusing. By that time, by the time they were out as a trans man, I was out as a lesbian. I think I slept on them just to see if they saved me. And then they did. Yeah. And I was like, You had your chance. And then you blew it. Yeah. Cuz I was I had a huge crush on him. Yeah, that's, that's why I was there. It's also because like, some whoever was there, I'd have a crush on whoever was in front of me. I was like, I love you. Let's get married.

Olivia 28:39

So can you would you would you say you live in a religious household with religion? Like an everyday aspect of your life? Yeah,

28:46

I think so. But like, not not in as much of a way as like, it could have been, because the thing is that my grandma and my mom. Like, they were both sex workers. They both been sex workers. I came from like, even my, my grandma's mom had been a sex worker. They had like, had drug addictions and stuff like that. And so like, I think that they were a lot less judgmental than a lot of like, the other southern Southern Baptist people, because they sort of had to be, yeah, so it wasn't like, like, I didn't grow up around. Like, I have no memory of like growing up around like a lot of like homophobia or like transphobia. And like, I'll hear about, like, unlearning, transphobia. And of like, things that like other

people were taught and I'm like, Wow, I've never heard that. Which is surprising to me, because I felt like I would have heard that. I don't know. They're just surprisingly tolerant. But I think also just not like, like tolerant but not like embracing I think

Olivia 30:03

so. When did you start realizing that your sexuality was different from maybe what was around you? Um,

30:11

I don't think I I don't think I ever like thought about it. I think I was just like, Yeah, I like, girls are so cute. Well, I don't know, as a kid, I wasn't around any. I remember like, the people that like a lot of the girls that are around were very clearly, like, straight. So I just don't think I had any interest in them. I know that. Definitely. When I was on Tumblr, I was like, exposed to a lot of like, I already knew what the, like, I already knew about like, the different labels and stuff like that. But I think that it felt like those were things I could embrace. And I think by like middle school, there were a lot of kids that like, were queer, like, out of square. But I think that I don't know if I ever really thought about it being different. I don't think that I realized that. Like, it was different. Really. I didn't know that anybody really cared. So like, when I was even when I was like, 10 I just like, I didn't realize that I was trans. I just like was like, Yeah, I want I think it'd be cool to have to be a boy. That, but I didn't know that. I knew what trans people were. I didn't know that that was trans. So yeah, everybody wants to be void. This is my twink Sona. I'm not transgender.

Olivia 31:39

Actually, people don't think that way. Yeah. So can you talk about when you started to when you what a rough what year, you start identifying as a lesbian and then also trans.

31:57

So trans, I realized that I was non binary, when I was like 11, or 12. I think it was like 11. But then I also realized at the same time, that nobody cared, and that I didn't like being patronized. I actually hated being patronized more than anything in the world. So I just stopped telling people, because I knew that nobody cared. And at most people are gonna make fun of me. Yeah, yeah. And especially like going into high school. I was like, Okay, I know, I'm autistic. I know, I'm transgender. But like, I gotta, I gotta choose one. I can only do one of these, if I want any friends. I do both. Any friends, like Tim and I pick one? Yeah, I can't get rid of the autism. So like the transgenders just gonna have to settle down for now. But when I went to college, I was like, I was out as trans. I was I was non binary for a long time, because they didn't know that, like, I could identify as trans without being like, without, like, I think like medically transitioning, or stuff like that. But now, I definitely identify more as a trans person, like, even more than like, the label of non binary, because I feel like there are a lot of people who are non binary, but don't necessarily like. Like, align themselves with the trans community. And it's very important to me, I feel like to be aligned with the trans community.

33:33

So and then also being a lesbian. I had identified as by, like, I think starting from like, when I was like, fourth or fifth grade onwards. Um,

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but I didn't know that. So apparently, everyone around me thought already that I was a lesbian. Because I had like, crushes on lots of boys that were very, like trivial. And I think I was kind of just bored and was like, a really horny teenager. And I was, like, whoever's in front of me, like, you know what, I'll take it. But I was so like, I was I felt so humiliated to declare any attraction to a man. But like, I would have rather like, I would have rather had been shot than like, like, yeah, I liked that boy. Because it felt humiliating, like, embarrassing to say that. So even though I did like, have crushes on a lot of boys, and honestly, probably more than I did on girls, because I think for boys, it was kind of like, I was just horny and I was like, you're an object to me. And then with girls, it's like, I love you. I want to get married to you. Let's let's grow old together. So it was actually much more rare for me to like, have the same crushes and attraction to a lot of girls because it was much deeper. But I wouldn't tell people that I was attracted to boys even though I was like, yes, and bisexual. So everyone just thought I was a lesbian already. And I think most people, they had no idea that I wasn't already. But I think a big turning point was I was in. I was in senior year of high school, we should have been, I think it was the last semester too. So it was in 2019. I was in statistics sitting next to this boy who I had a very big crush on. And we were talking about, like future partners he'd been he's like, he'd been in a relationship at the time, and it's still dating this girl, honestly, which is kind of crazy. That's a long time. And I think I had like, had been talking about like, my future partner, but I said, like, oh, like, the future person I marry like, she's gonna do this or that or like, I was like, man, you know, my future wife. And then he turns to me, is I had huge question. I've always I felt like, I felt like I couldn't say that I was going to marry like a dude, because then that'd be too obvious. And he would be like, no, they think that's gonna be me. So I was like, being covert with it. And then he drains me. He's like, I noticed you. You don't ever. Like you say you're bisexual. But you don't ever talk about anybody other than women?

Olivia 36:20

are a bisexual thing to do?

36:21

No. But to hear that from a boy had a huge crush is really like, Yeah, but I didn't think much of it. I think honestly, I was relieved to hear it because I didn't want I didn't want him to know. I didn't want him to be on to me. Wow. Successful

Olivia 36:36

calm. Yeah. too successful. Yeah, he thinks that you're a lesbian and that you would never ever be interested? Well,

36:45

because I didn't I don't think anything was gonna happen anyway, because I knew that he was in a very long so it

Olivia 36:50

was easy. It was easy. You will you have crushes on men that were unattainable.

36:55

Even if they were attainable. I just didn't want to attain them. Except, like, I wanted them to want me. Yeah, because I wanted to be attention, because I love it. But I didn't actually want to, like, do anything. I didn't want anything to do with them. I just want I wanted them to want me more than I wanted to want them. And then when I was I started my first semester of college I was in creative writing class. And I was in a poetry class who was taught by a grad student who is is a lesbian and honestly is one of my biggest mentors. And like, we're very close. We became very close after the class. And we continue to like be friends. But this girl was in this class, honestly person. I don't know. I haven't spoken to them in a long time. And they were very cute. Their curly hair. I have a thing for curly hair. I don't know if you can tell. Yeah. And I was very like, I had a very, very, very big crush on them. And I wrote a lot of sappy poetry. While listening to Hosier I was like, yeah, we can live in a cottage together together with birds.

Olivia 38:27

Birds or you bird lesbian.

38:29

You like I like birds that are outside. I don't know. Birds. Good. Birds are fine. I grew up with birds in my house. I don't like them. They're irritating. So loud. Yeah,

Olivia 38:39

I have a parent. I

38:40

had a parent at home like a big ass like green parrot. He's so fucking loud. And he's like, extremely aggressive. Because he was like traumatized as a young parent or something before he even had him. So he was like, he was problematic from when we got it. Yeah, I don't like him either. I wish we did not have him. But alas. I eventually know he's gonna live to be like at what

Olivia 39:08

was a die like 20 years ago. He's got a human life. Yeah.

39:12

Ad. Real Yeah, apparently. Yeah, that kind of does. I was like, Don't be die like 2030 years. Some of them do that. This one doesn't. This one's like ad. Yeah, he's only like, 11. No.

Olivia 39:26

Rising to your parents. No,

39:28

I've already said no. So the thing is, like, we didn't even buy this parent. My grandpa was a contractor. Right? And he was doing work for this woman who was a parrot breeder. And he was going to do her whole kitchen. But he saw that she had parents and he wanted a parent. He was like, I'll do your entire kitchen for free if you

Olivia 39:47

remodel your whole kitchen for one parent. Yeah.

39:50

He didn't ask anybody he just did.

39:58

So much money well Just yeah. An apparent gain. There also like he's like at No. Like, I don't I don't know what's gonna happen to us for somebody else is gonna have to take him because I don't want him. A lot of my relatives want him, but they're also pretty old and I feel like they're not equipped to care for the spirit because he felt he's like a lot of work. I feel like the best thing is like if someone you know, we like rehome him to someone who knows how to handle like traumatized aggressive burns. And it's like, that's their thing. I feel like that's, that's lifestyle for him.

Olivia 40:36

Definitely like a white woman activity what women love handling traumatized animals.

40:40

He like he like could bite my finger off so easily if he wanted to. Yeah, I don't I don't fuck with the teabag. He's big. And he hates me like,

40:51

like any reply.

40:56

I don't think he knows how to

Olivia 41:00

wait, wait, wait. So you just asked around.

41:04

No, we keep it we like mostly stays on the cage. But like he's fallen off several times. And he doesn't know. He doesn't I don't think he knows how to fly.

Olivia 41:17

And no one's I don't think so. Okay. You know what, what's the birds name? Leon? Leon? Yeah. You know what birds will have 80 years good. Human. Name's Leon.

41:37

After I just liked it. I just thought it was cute. Like, what's that show? Let's start with

Olivia 41:44

the gay vampire lady whose biggest spot? Lady Dumitrescu.

41:48

Oh, that had document like eight years after? Oh, geez. Yeah, forget he's

Olivia 41:52

a billion years old. He's 11. Yeah. Too old for any animal. Yeah, ad is crazy.

41:59

We have another parakeet that I got forgetting. We had her before it. But like, there's a slip from like five to 15. But like, so I've been kind of like, every time I come home, like, Are you Are you done yet? In the parakeets alive. So I got her. I got her and I was like eight. And I'm 21 now. So that's, that's like 1213 years. She's still alive. Because she's also very mean. Her name is Eloise. I don't name

Olivia 42:34

Yeah, that makes sense. Yeah. And Leon.

42:39

Yeah. Okay. I love a people name. The next question is going to be crazy. Okay, go from parents to this. Yeah.

42:48

So like, what was it like?

Olivia 43:06

I was like, ooh. While we're giggling about Leon and Eloise. Like, what was like you see? Oh, it's like a light question. Yeah, I just skipped it. Oops. I was just like, it's because I wanted to know, when you identified as a lesbian, what year was that? That

43:29

was? That was like December. Okay. Um, I think I started getting I started, like, getting into my eating disorder. I think as soon as I started college, okay. Because I was surrounded by very skinny, like, modelesque people. And I had no money. And I was like, Well, I have to one up people in some way. I have no unknown. What can I do? What can I do to fit in any? Yeah, I was like, What can I do to fit in and and get accepted here? Because I'm autistic. I'm transgender. I'm fat, and I have no money. So which of these can we

Olivia 44:10

change? You're like, something has to change. Yeah.

44:13

You were like, getting any disorder. Yeah. And I think it was also like, it took, so it was like, harder to, like, I wasn't coming home and like having dinner on the table. Right. It was like I had to like, go out and get food. And I wasn't very good at that, because I never had to do that before. And I also was like, walking like four miles a day because I was suddenly in a walkable city. And I'd never been in a walkable city before. No, I was really just like, I was marching.

Olivia 44:46

You weren't eating enough calories, and then you were spending a lot of energy it was

44:51

Yeah. So I think like it took a good Meanwhile, I think for me to experience like negative effects from it. Because I think at first it was like, I felt fine, and I felt good. And I felt like it was going to be beneficial to me, like socially. Um yeah, and then a lot of it. I think it a lot of the time, like, because I just moved to New York, I had never, I didn't have any family within like 400 miles of me. I had never like, lived without my family before, I'd never really like been good. I didn't think I could even drive at home, I was taking everywhere with my parents, so I didn't have any like freedom. And then even when I got there, like my ADHD medicine had stopped working, because I had built up a tolerance to it. And I didn't know that that was happening. So I stopped being able to read. So it was like, my life was kind of like spiraling out of control. And I was looking for something that I could control. And I think like, that's what a lot of it was, is that I needed to feel like I had control over myself in some way. Because it didn't feel like anything else was controllable. Because there was just so many like moving parts I was so young to I'd like just turned 18 So I wasn't I wasn't restrictive before then.

46:41

But yeah, I think it started to get it was it was bad, then. And then when I moved back home from like for COVID I got food poisoning and when I had food poisoning, and I was also like delirious because I'd stay up like two days in a row, like trying to do finals. I like started having nightmares and my nightmares were about like, me being too skinny and my bones breaking. And so I just like, I just got like so freaked out by that, but I just like stopped and it wasn't really that difficult. Um, and then I think but a year later, I think it may be fall of 2021 I started doing it again. And at that time, it became really really really obsessive. Like, it was just it was like all I would think about I was constantly like calculating shit like, like I was I had gone as far as like I was in like eating disorder communities now I wasn't before. And I also like I was like pro Ana like Twitter. Yeah, like at Twitter at Twitter. And I was I was but the way I justified it was that I only followed trans people and at Twitter, which made it better

Olivia 48:08

when there's good yeah. Police cars rainbow you were like, well, only to trans people. Yeah,

48:15

no, I don't feel this this people Yeah. Know, it's ridiculous. I'm sorry. It's crazy. Surely shouldn't be laughing. Okay. Sorry. No, it's fine. No, I'm good.

Olivia 48:38

Are you sure? Yeah. Okay. So funny. Yeah.

48:45

It was still very clear for me. Yeah. You

Olivia 48:47

were like, well, I'm quitting eating disorder.

48:50

I'm quitting interacts. Yeah.

48:53

I'm sorry. Sorry. I didn't need to laugh.

Olivia 48:56

No, but the thing is that it's laughable cuz that's like, funny. Like someone who want me to be very somber when you're telling them

49:04

no, I don't think so. I don't think it's worth it was somber about not in quietly because a lot of it's so silly. It's like it's like, I was just doing calorie math all day. I was putting my fucking vitamin gummies into my fitness pal. My Oh, yeah. Yeah, you were in it. I was in it. I was in a bad too. And I think that it became such an obsession that like I wasn't able to like really connect with people anymore. And I think that a lot of that like it really like I think destroyed a lot of my relationship at the time because I just like couldn't see anything past myself. I couldn't see anything other than, like, this need to control and to restrict. So I was controlling and restricting, like every part of myself. And I think that like, in that, like, at the same time, we had just started to, like, we got our fake IDs. So we were starting like to be able to engage a lot more in the lot more like queer spaces, which are a lot of bars, and, like, be in a lot more queer spaces, which I think should have, like, should have, like, been beneficial, but I think that I was just, I think it was at first and then I just reached a point to where, like, I couldn't gather anything from it. And I like couldn't even I couldn't connect with with people at all. Because I was so obsessed, about like, on like losing weight. And I think the thing that got me out of that was when I lost that relationship, I in a very, you know, dramatic and unnecessarily traumatic way. I had, like, I was just trying to do anything to like, fix myself and like, like, fix whatever had gone wrong. And I like knowing that I like I knew that, that, that me being so obsessed with that had like, it was hurting other people. And I think it was about like hurting other people and hurting like, the people around me and my community around me, that drew me out of it more than, like, wanting to do better for myself, because the unfortunate thing is that, like, I got treated better, I was treated a lot better. And people were treating me like I got treated like a girl. And I got treated like I was pretty. And I never had that before. And that's very, very hard to let go of when you have never had it before. But that like, as much as I wanted that and as much as I enjoyed having that. It like, knowing that I had traded like, my connections to the people around me for that like like it like ruined me and made me so upset. And that, like that desire to like not that desire to like to not isolate myself from my community. And to not like hurt the people around me, I think is what drew me out of it more than anything. And then from doing that, like I was able to like, you know, I think let go a lot of the beliefs that I had gained about like, you know, needing this, like, social capital.

Olivia 53:14

So, this is going to be kind of a switch. Can you talk about if you've ever struggled with your identities, like did identifying as like a lesbian, or like identifying as trans or identifying as a dyke ever feels scary to you or like something that you had to think through a lot or no?

53:39

Think that like with being a lesbian? It kind of felt as like as soon as I felt like, because I was non binary, right? Yeah. And so I think one of the first people who, like I saw, like visibly being a non binary lesbian. Who is this person that I followed on Tiktok who now like, actually quite good friends with really fun as it happens, it's actually really, really fun. Yeah, it was, it's just like, this butch lesbian who only like, where she only wears Brown, and like, has everything and different shades of earthtones that I love. I think it's so fun. They like I just watched a lot of their videos. And I was very, like, interested in them and interested in the things he had to say. And once I realized I was like, Oh, I can do that. Then it just felt very easy. And it felt very, like enjoyable and very fun. And I think at first, like, when I wasn't sure about it, I started just like, saying it to myself, like and not saying it to anybody else to like, see if it made sense to me and be like, Oh yeah, I'm a lesbian. And that like, you know, kind of like, had little spark had a little issue and it's like, whoa, actually, at that time, I had been like I'd started like recording myself and my sleep because I talk in my sleep a lot. And I found work. There's a recording of me like dead asleep at like, three in the morning. Around that time I came out as lesbian and it's just me very quietly going. I am in this recording. I would love to hear it. I do have it. Yeah, I will send it to you. Thank you. It's like it's so funny. It's

Olivia 55:26

where you were just practicing right? In your sleep.

55:29

I was I was fully asleep.

Olivia 55:34

Yeah, like that. Sleep recording. Yeah, like did at the time when you make sound? Just you farting a lot? No, it's you talking?

55:41

Yeah, I talk a lot in my sleep. I'm mostly unintelligible except for like,

Olivia 55:46

yeah.

55:50

That I knew that. That was this. Yeah.

Olivia 55:54

So can you talk a little bit about coming out? Do you believe in coming out? Have you come out multiple times before and does the phrase coming into your identity versus coming out resonate with you more?

56:14

I think coming into your identity is definitely a bigger residence because then it's more about you than about like, like, revealing yourself to other people, which is kind of like, not the point, I think. Or maybe it is maybe there are two different things honestly, coming into your identity and coming out. Because you can come out lots of times and you can still be in your identity. Like I don't come out to a lot of people. I generally don't come out as trans or like non binary to sis people that I don't know very well. So like coworkers, like people in classes, like, cuz it's just to me more hassle than it's worth, because I don't like, at this point, I normally don't especially access at people. I just feel like they're either gonna not do it or just kind of, like patronize me or like, just make it into too big of a deal. I think a lot of it is that, like, I would rather them not know and unknowingly misgendered me all the time, then no, and then continue to do it. Because then it's like, I don't have to do anything. And I make core I am lazy.

Olivia 57:32

It's so much energy to constantly correct people as

57:34

well. It's too much. Um, I think with my like, I think I didn't really have to think I don't often have to come out to people. I think it's pretty casual. To me at this point. I didn't really like I didn't really give it much thought with my parents or with my group, or with my mom or my grandparents. Because I was, I was already like, pretty, like I would just say shit just to make them mad anyway. So I kind of didn't care, like how they would react to it. I didn't think like anything was gonna happen anyway. But already, like, I wasn't looking for approval. So I think I don't think I don't think I like was like, Hey, I'm a lesbian, by the way. I think it was when I was like, deeply in love with that girl and my creative writing class. They like call me like ask for updates on like, how I was doing up in New York. And I was like, I'm deeply in love with this girl and my creative writing class. We're gonna get married. Like, okay, yeah, it was like,

Olivia 58:50

and the grass is green and the sky is blue. Yeah,

58:52

I think it just wasn't that big of a deal to them. And then I think I came out as trans and like October of 2020 and I think it went in one ear and out the other and then I kept correcting them for a long time and at sometimes they would do it but they would like the way that they would say that me because I didn't even give them heat. They couldn't handle the heat him the way that they they made them be like the they sounded like it had some malice behind it. It was like it was too strong of a day. Maybe not malice, but it was like,

Olivia 59:33

like they were being imposed upon. Yeah,

59:37

it was like very much like we're doing this to appease you, and we think it's stupid if they did it at all, and then I think like, eventually I just stopped correcting them because I stopped caring. Um, I just

didn't wanna put that much effort into it and now they mostly they know they almost exclusively she hear me now. It's like this Got. And they'll be like, Oh, my God, I don't care. But, um, I'll correct them sometimes. And they act like they've never heard of this before. Which is, you know, silly, Goofy. But I also came out to my mom, I think 2021 on like, Trans Day of visibility. And me and my mom are, are really close now. At the time she like, really, she really kind of like showed her asset because she was like, Well, I don't get it, and you have a period. So you'll be you're always going to be a woman, just really stupid. I didn't speak to her for like, eight months. But she's, um, she says that and then also is like, she's she's always been a very big ally to all of my, all of my trans femme partners. Know, she, like, just not

Olivia 1:00:59

you. Yeah, just not me. Can't be trans but other people.

1:01:02

Yeah. Okay, I think because it just doesn't make sense to her because I'm not like, mask. Okay. But like, I think there's a lot that she doesn't like, understand on, like, navigating a translate and trans experience and like, the dangers of that, and of like, you know, recent legislation and stuff like that. And like, what, why explanatory. Like, she gets it. And she's like, you know, a good ally, and whatnot. And she can, like, do this critical thinking and analysis on her own. But I think I think I'm a little bit too much. I get that she's like, at the end of the day. Like, I think it's more important for her to be an ally to people who are like, whose, like, lives are being threatened and are in danger. Like, that's more important than like me getting the damned. So like, I mean, we're not like 100% there, but like, where it counts, I guess.

Olivia 1:02:02

So, I'm speaking louder, because I'm farther away from this right now. So that's why I'm not yelling at you on purpose. So I'm going to ask you, just some, like four or five like, these are not as heavy questions. Okay. Yes. I'm going to ask you about clothing, jewelry, makeup, tattoos and piercings and other body mods, or other forms of gender expression assists with affirming your identities or your lesbianism? Right? Like which ones like, what do you do?

1:02:33

What do you like? Oh, that was the question. Yes. It was a question.

Olivia 1:02:37

My tone was off. Okay. No, I

1:02:38

just thought that you were like, This is what I'm going to ask you. Right now. Okay. Um, I like to dress pretty firm. I would say very firm. But not but I like to get very zany with it very zesty if you will. I always dress very very, very bright. Very like bold patterns, colors, textures. Because that's what's fun to me. I for most of like my a lot of like being a teenager and like being like in middle school I had like brightly dyed hair. Like I did like hot pink for a good while I did like a teal. I did like purple. Lots of that shit. And then I got tired of redoing so I stopped but then now i i diamond bangs now, which is a lot easier

because it's just this part. And I don't have to do the rest of it because the rest of it's too much work. It's a lot and I don't like doing it because I'm lazy. But then I still get to like have that sense of expression, which I think is really fun. Yeah, I think for piercings I have like, I got my nose, my nose piercing my nostril piercing when I was 15. And at the time, I thought that I was I was late to the party. I was the last person getting it. I was like everybody has a nose piercing except for me. Which is now that I think back I'm like, That's not true at all. I was like when I was one of the first people like nobody gets it. Very few people get nose piercings that early. But I really fought for it. And I thought that I was I was so behind

Olivia 1:04:19

us on Tumblr.

1:04:23

Yeah. Because now like I feel like it's kind of crazy for someone to get a piercing and thought at 15 Not that I think it's a bad thing, but it's definitely uncommon. I got my septum when I was 18 because my parents wouldn't let me get a septum. So as soon as I moved to New York, I got a septum. I feel like that had something to do with my queer identity. I feel like the septum really did something for me there. It was. I feel like that was like that's a very queer if you're saying And then I only have my like your lobes pierced because every time I get my cartilage pierced it just gets infected because I don't wash my hair enough. And then recently Oh, Sasha and I got our belly buttons pierced together on the same day. And we have the same Pearson So like we both have this this pink one. And we got it pierced on the same day they started HRT Oh, wow. Yeah. That wasn't like planned to happen well, so that yeah, just so happened and the belly buttons piercings were very spontaneous. I just kind of call through and morning because I was bored. And I was like, let's let's get piercings I wanted to class. Because she had wanted one for a really long time. And so we did that. And when they heal, heal a little bit more we can make them kiss. Like, rub them together. Yeah, they're kissing. Oh, okay. I do wish you would have gotten them like in the winter or something because I can't go swimming. Yeah, no, you can't go swimming. It sucks. But I also have not been to a beach. So I feel like a pool would be fine, though. No, not as good. But like better. No, no.

Olivia 1:06:13

Go into any body of water. But like, okay, taking one bath.

1:06:17

But where's the where's the harm reduction perspective?

Olivia 1:06:25

Like, belly buttons are so finicky. Yeah. I don't want to get that infected. Yeah.

1:06:32

Pools. I think chlorine pools are better than ocean. For sure. For sure. Surely, I

Olivia 1:06:39

guess maybe. But like better than what you're like, you still have a high risk of like, flush that shit deeply. Yeah, like lots of water afterwards.

1:06:50

Yeah. Yeah. I'm sure it'd be fine. People do worse. Yeah, I wouldn't I want to go swimming in a pool in a pool. Yeah. Like

Olivia 1:07:00

they'd be like, tie back to like, sit forever. And they're just like, washed out with the hose. Like in between pool sittings. Like, don't let the pool water sit. Flush it. I feel like you'd be fine. I feel like it would be. Water is disgusting. And it's cold right now.

1:07:15

Yeah. Oh, that's the thing. I grew up near the Gulf of Mexico. The waters way warmer. Yeah. The first time I was in the water here in the Atlantic. It was like, around my birthday. So like heat of July. Oh, it was cold. It would have been. I thought it would have been warm. Yeah, it was the coldest water there. Yeah, it sucks. It

Olivia 1:07:36

does suck. It won't be warm until like late August. Hmm.

1:07:41

I feel like isn't July HOTTEST?

Olivia 1:07:43

Yeah, but the water isn't hot yet. Like the water is still ice cold.

1:07:48

Yeah, no, it's not fun. Like I

Olivia 1:07:50

grew up in Virginia Beach. Like by the beaches. The water is cold. And it's not warm until I mean, it's it's a really, really hot day. Getting into cold water isn't horrible. Yeah, but it's never that hot here. Yeah. You're like high 90s. Hot here. And

1:08:08

maximum. Yeah, because you're from Houston. Oh, yeah. It gets like 110 Yeah. And it's never that hot here. No, not ever. Do.

Olivia 1:08:15

We have like one really hot day and there was like heat advisories. I get emails for comment.

1:08:20

Well, how's it every day? Like lately been like the hottest day ever? I'm not even gonna lie. I don't

Olivia 1:08:27

look like

1:08:28

that. No, I get that. Yeah, because

Olivia 1:08:30

of all the Supreme Court rulings, ya know? The Trans bands and then, like the I just was like, I can't Yeah, and so honestly, I couldn't tell you. I remember like when the air was bad I found that out on Tik Tok. What was going on? I didn't watch like a single or read an article. I was like, Oh, yeah.

1:08:50

No, I had to go to work that day. So I was out and about. I was like, a yellow.

Olivia 1:08:57

No, I was on Tiktok and then all my like, like disability justice. Like Mutual's Yeah, my disabled, Mutual's were talking about how to, like, make homemade air purifiers. Oh, yeah. Like how to wear your masks and what to do. And I was like, okay, don't know what's going on. I just like, saw the I was like, they were like, it's smoking there. And I just said, Okay.

1:09:18

I didn't know it was smoke until like, the second day it happened. So the first day, I came home, and I was like, I feel so sick. Yeah, yeah, I felt awful.

Olivia 1:09:30

I I was masking because I noticed, like, I saw it on my timeline because of the people that I follow. And so I was like, okay, but I didn't know I didn't ask any questions. I didn't know where the smoke was coming from. I didn't care. I was like, where the smoke is coming from has nothing to do with me. Yeah. And then I found out it was from Canada, and then

1:09:49

it was like, it's also for it was also from New Jersey. There fires in New Jersey. See, I didn't even know that. I know, because my coworkers are from New Jersey. Okay, yeah, that's the only Isn't it? No, see, I

Olivia 1:10:00

don't care. I'm just I'm just like, I mean, I care in the sense that fires that. Yeah, I don't care because it's like me knowing where the fire is doesn't change the fact that the sky was red. Yeah. So the

1:10:14

first day, the second day, I didn't know and then I wore a mask all day was like a cat. 95 The first day I didn't know what it was. Yeah, you

Olivia 1:10:23

just were like, Okay, it's yellow. Odd. But yeah, I couldn't even turn on the AC because the AC just brings in Yeah, outside. Yeah. So I like I think I knew about the smoke the night before or something or

that I was coming. And so I had like, frozen myself. Like with like, I turned on the AC is very cold. Yeah. And I didn't open any doors. And so it was already pre cold inside. Oh, so when you had to turn them off? Yeah, it was fine. It was fine. Because I was mine. I was like, I will wake up with like smoker's lung with AC on. We got off topic. That's okay. So the last thing you said was y'all got matching belly button piercings, and we're gonna make them kiss. Yeah. Do you feel like you're like hyper femme? Like, Miss Frizzle. Lang and I dress in similar? Yeah. Yeah. Opposite? No, actually the same? Yeah. I pretty similar. Yeah, pretty similar. Like, do you feel like that's like tied with your lesbianism in any way? Oh,

1:11:27

I think so. Definitely. Because I feel like, it's, I love femininity, and I love being feminine. And once you take that outside of, like, out of the perspective of like, sis heteronormativity, then it just becomes so fun and so freeing. And it's so like, enjoyable, right? It's not like, like, because when I was in high school, I would like I was, you know, performing, I guess femininity in the like, sis hat way, where I was like, let me get my Lululemon. And I was like, you know, doing the Urban Decay, smokey eyes shit like that. And I didn't like it. I hated it. I thought it was so like, irritating. And I stopped wearing makeup for a long time. And then I started getting into really bright stuff and like, I wasn't doing it to like, look pretty or, like, look presentable. I was doing it because it was cute. And I thought it was fun. And then I think that like I think that also helps like my self confidence a lot. Because then it was like, once I stopped caring about like being perceived as attractive by men and once that stopped being the goal, then like, there were other things to focus on. Like just wearing the strangest things like the craziest strangest things I can find. Because they look cool and also I want that like the Accept or like the the approval that I would want from men. I want from lesbians. And the lesbians love it. They love a Miss Frizzle

Olivia 1:13:16

Miss Frizzle Yeah,

1:13:17

they eat that up. They do. So I think it's very fun. I think it definitely ties into my lesbianism.

Olivia 1:13:24

So have any like forms of art? And I mean, art very loosely. lowercase and uppercase art. Okay, like photography, paintings, movies, TV shows, like helped you with your lesbianism in any way.

1:13:38

Huh? Me Thank ya

1:13:52

was my watch it? What have I been watching? I think there is almost the opposite and which like my lesbianism has influenced a lot of how I consume art and media to where like. Now every every character that I like in a TV shows a lesbian. And if they are a man, and they're he and lesbian, and they're all lesbians, everything I watch every character I liked, they're lesbians. And I think that like I just view everything through a lesbian lens because it's more fun that way. And then I think it's everything's just more enjoyable.

Olivia 1:14:39

So can you talk about how the art like how art making as a process has influenced your lesbianism or gender?

1:14:47

Yeah, so I write a lot of poetry. So I think like, I was definitely I had to, you know, be gay to begin with. Um, but I think like getting to I just like express thoughts that were, you know, if I said them out loud, we'd be like, too dramatic or like too much or like, you know, just like, I guess didn't fit in with the conversation of the everyday world. And getting to explore that and getting to be dramatic and getting to, like, look at what different are like, getting to, like Delve into like, the fantasies of living another life. I think that made it very think that made it easier to like, connect, what I wanted and what I wanted to express to what I was and what I was actually expressing.

Olivia 1:15:51

So, can you talk about your first encounters with lesbian sex both directly and indirectly? And what attitudes or thoughts that you have around it before and after the encounters?

1:16:02

Hmm. And I don't remember most of it on Tumblr.

Olivia 1:16:15

Was it boring?

1:16:15

Probably, I honestly don't remember. I watched I looked at a lot of porn. So I cannot tell you. But I know that I wasn't interested in a lot of it, because a lot of it like, definitely was made for like a male gaze. And it just wasn't that like appealing. Or you know what, I think probably one of the important ones was I watched a lot of oranges, new Black isn't your teenager. So that probably was a big like, Introduction to like, lesbianism and lesbian sex and stuff like that. I definitely liked that. I was a big fan of that. I'm a big fan of Natasha Leone.

Olivia 1:17:03

Are not lesbian Queen are straight queen, which is crazy.

1:17:09

It was crazy. It's wild.

Olivia 1:17:13

Like what about now? Like, have your ideas like has like, how's your relationship to like lesbian sex?

1:17:19

Um, I enjoy it. Oh.

Olivia 1:17:24

Fun. Yeah.

1:17:25

Um, I think that like, once I've started, like, exploring lesbianism and like exploring, like, erotica, and sexual content that are like, made by queer people, for queer people, and like, made like, to be enjoyed by lesbians, then it got much more easier to, to see like to look at. And I think also, like, my relationship with sex changed as a whole, right? Because before I was a lesbian, like, I was very horny teenager, but I kind of I was, was mostly focusing on like, you know, having sex with men, because that was easy. And I didn't respect them. But with women, I was like, Well, you know what, whatever she wants. We don't ever have to have sex if she doesn't want to. And I think that, like, the sexual part was not because I hadn't even gotten like, I hadn't gotten that far. I had never gotten that far with any woman. So like, that wasn't really something that I was thinking about a lot more than I was thinking about, like, the aspects of like, establishing like, a romantic relationship and like, like, a life with people. Because I hadn't done that. And I think that like that, to me felt at the time necessary. before I was ever gonna think about anything else that felt like the first thing. Making sure my phone isn't dying. Yeah, Psalm 33. Thank you. But yeah, I think a lot of it changed my like, let's like really just solidified myself as a lesbian. And I think that like, because I think, at first, I think that it was very intimidating to me lesbian sex. Because, I mean, I was like, 18. So like, kind of most sex was intimidating, but it was unfamiliar to me. And so I watched a lot of porn because I was like, well, guess what I gotta do. I don't know what to do. And I think that being able to see lesbians sexualized in a way that is not for men, and not tended to be appealing to men is very nice. Oh, I used to watch like, a lot of like, I wouldn't watch anything but like homemade porn. I love a good homemade porn where it was like actual couples like lesbian couples, because it just felt so real. And it felt like, attainable. And it felt like, this is what my life could look like. And that was a lot of fun. I feel like that was very eye opening to me. And very much like solidified like what I wanted.

Olivia 1:20:31

So now we're moving into the section that talks about how you see yourself, and all the aspects of your identity, that in fluences, your interactions with other lesbians, and yourself. So how does class inform your interactions with other lesbians in the broader lesbian community?

1:20:55

I think that like the lesbian experience, I think, can look so different depending on like, what you have access to, and where you have access to, because like, you know, there are a lot of lesbians that have always like, been in accepting families or like been in, like living situations or places where it was accepted, or like, where if they lost their living situation, like, they're fine. You know, and I think that that, or even, like, I think another big thing is like people who this is where I think sometimes I get, like, I think have maybe tough trouble, like getting along with people on a class base level, is people who grew up well off or like, wealthy, and then they come out, and then unfortunately, like, you know, their parents are not being accepting and then now they are experiencing, like, being low class for the first time. And I think that like, it's kind of like, sometimes I feel like sometimes like, that can be sort of difficult for someone who's never known anything else, you know, even though my parents are accepting, like, I actually don't like, I don't actually get any support from my parents either, just because they can't. Um, so I think it can be kind of isolating some times when that is a lot of like, especially, you

know, like, in NYU, and like places around here and with trans, a lot of like, transplants, when that's the like, experience of class, and queerness. And it's like, just so I know, different, I guess. And so like, I think new to them, they don't know how to navigate it. And it's all I've ever navigated. I think it can be kind of difficult.

Olivia 1:23:01

So how does disability inform your interactions with other lesbians?

1:23:06

Hmm, I feel like I feel like a lot of the lesbians that I'm around, are very, like neurodivergent and very autistic. And I feel like, I wonder if there's a connection because I feel like, you know, with autism, and like, with autism, there is a, either implicit or explicit, like rejection of social norms, which I think ties in a lot to lesbianism, and I think makes it so much. But I think that's why there's so many, like, so many trans people are autistic is because, like, they can deviate from the social norms. And so I think that there's much higher like, prevalence of neuro divergence within lesbians and within, like, the queer community, I think especially lesbians, honestly, because it's a lot more to break away from, as well as like trans people. And I think it's, it's, I think I really enjoy like getting to be around other people like that and getting to be around other autistic people and people with ADHD and other neurodivergent people.

Olivia 1:24:29

So how does your gender identity inform your interactions, the lesbian community and can you talk a little bit about what it's like being a trans lesbian?

1:24:36

Hmm. So I really hang around like mostly trans people. Um, but a lot of those trans people that I hang out with are lesbians, like, I would say, a majority of them honestly. And I think that within this like The community that I'm in, like, I sort of have this belief that like, being a lesbian, like, is inherently transgender. Especially like with the identity of like lesbian as agender. It feels like they really go hand in hand. Because I feel like you're inherently like deviating away from from like, sis hetero normativity. And like being a cisgender woman and I feel like at the point that you're a lesbian, like I feel like there's a deviation from what is society societally defined as a woman? And I feel like it's, it's very transgender, it's very non binary as well.

Olivia 1:25:54

So the next section is about make about like, being a lesbian in New York City. So what's it like making a meeting making lesbian friends meeting? Like maybe you're making lesbians? Maybe you're turning people out? Oh, I am. Yeah. Like making lesbians and meeting other lesbians who,

1:26:14

I love making lesbians because I love meeting people who I'll ask them, like, if they're lesbians because they look like lesbian something. Well, you know, like, I'm, I'm bisexual, because I, you know, I, I think, I think certain male celebrities are cute. I'm like, I love just being like, I think you should be lesbian. I'm like, I'm like proselytizing. To everybody I can. I'm like, I think, if I call you a lesbian, and you like it, I think that you should be able to see. Um, and, you know, I try not to be too annoying with that, but I am

a little bit annoying with it. But I think that it's very, it feels very, like rewarding to get to, like, share that experience with the people around me of lesbianism and like to because like, it took me so long to come out as a lesbian, because I like, there were so many things to work through. And I think if someone was just like, you can just, you should just be a lesbian, just be a lesbian. Like, I think that I probably would have gone a lot faster. And I think I would have been having a lot of a lot more fun a lot earlier. And so, I really enjoy like, lesbian people, because all my friends get to be lesbians.

Olivia 1:27:49

So like, where are you meeting your friends, your lesbian community? How are you meeting people?

1:27:55

I meet a lot of people like at the lesbian bars like gingers and Henrietta's? I don't really go to cubby hole goes to small. But I also meet a lot of people like trans events like out in Bushwick, like places like, I don't know, nowadays, Purgatory. This is like that. Yeah, you know what I'm talking about? Yeah. There's just there, there are many lesbians to be found. And they're in no short supply. And I feel like I can tell immediately, like, when somebody is definitely a lesbian.

Olivia 1:28:35

So, have you felt any isolation or like disconnection from like, a broader queer community in any ways? He's facing better, like lesbian and not trans?

1:28:48

Yeah, I think that I definitely avoid spaces that are like, lesbian, but not like, explicitly trans, inclusive, and, like, and containing trans people. Just because, like there. There are a lot of lesbians that are like, not inclusive of trans people. And it's like, I don't really want to be in those spaces at all. Especially like, you know, being a trans person dating a trans woman. Like, this is not like, that's not the experience I want to have. So I'm always trying to, like, hang around, like, places that are like, if they're lesbian places that like they're also like, very trans and I see a lot of trans people. They're like gingers, it has to be trans people. It does. It's very trans. Yeah,

Olivia 1:29:39

that is true.

1:29:40

So I love being there. And it's like, I've always felt comfortable. There was

1:29:44

a gingers last night.

1:29:47

It's not very far. It's uh, do you walk?

Olivia 1:29:49

I do walk. It's like 15 minutes for me. That's not bad at all. Yeah, sometimes slower. Faster. But yes. So um, What was your first visit to a lesbian related place? Like, what did you expect to find? Did it fit your expectations? Or was it completely different?

1:30:10

I know the first it wasn't, it would have been hens or cubby hole. Um, I think I went into it to cubby hole for a few minutes first, and there was just Yeah, it's too small. And there's so many people in there. Yeah, there's never seats. So I think that I like going in there and taking pictures of the ceiling. Because it's real cute. Yeah. And I like I appreciate the people who are who are cubby hole supporters and cubby hole fans, and that's their vibe. I love hens every day. And I think like, one of the first times I went I was still 20 I had a fake ID and I was very scared of them, like realizing that I had a fake ID. Um, so but we got in, right. And it just it was it felt very, like magical almost, to suddenly be in a space with so many lesbians and so many trans people in a way that I'd never had been before. And it felt like I don't know, it just it felt like almost like mythological. Like where everything was so like, important and everything was so big. Especially because I was 20. And like, that was probably like, one of the like, the first few bars I'd ever been in at all. Yeah, it felt like every experience or every person I spoke to every song they played was like more important than anything in the world.

Olivia 1:32:05

So what do you and your lesbian friends do when you guys go out? Almost, we look for questions. Oh my god. out of 36 Oh,

1:32:20

we've done so many. Um, a lot of the times we do go to gingers because we live in Brooklyn now. And that's, that's quite close. Yeah, but it's also like, it's a lot more chill. I think a lot of my friends. A lot of my friends are a lot more chill than me. I think that's a prerequisite for my friends is that I have to be the most energetic person. Because if I'm tired again, it was somebody else's energy levels being too high. So like, I sometimes have the energy to like, do that stuff. But like, most of my friends are very laid back and they they prefer like going to gingers and like having a a dark beer. I don't like take beers. It's gross. But like, I'll buy them anyway. Yeah, I Yeah. But I do like I like the the ginger citrus, cider. Ginger. So yeah,

Olivia 1:33:13

I just get the draft cider. I don't know if the ginger citrus one but it's the one on draft.

1:33:18

That's an A cup. I don't know. I get the candle when they spill the cups.

Olivia 1:33:23

Because they filled them all the way up to the top.

1:33:24

Yeah, they're so they're so full.

Olivia 1:33:26

I don't even know it. So draught cider. I just asked whoever I'm with to get it. Yeah, we're at the bar. me out. Oh, yeah.

1:33:34

It was kind of stressful. I think it's fun though. Because then you just look at yourself in the mirror.

Olivia 1:33:41

myself. I like scan gingers very quickly. Yeah. And if I like stop too long, I'm gonna see someone and I'm just like,

1:33:49

someone that you know. Yeah.

1:33:51

I don't want to look too long. Yeah,

1:33:54

I get that. A lot of times like, I think I don't know if I've ever ran into anybody that I know agenda. Well. There's one girl I run into. It's because she's there like every night. I like and I met her there. Okay, so like she's always there. Okay.

Olivia 1:34:08

What does she look like?

1:34:09

She's gender name is Ginger. Ginger. Ginger. Ginger is

Olivia 1:34:13

ginger. Yeah. Ginger. Ginger is but again I'm stronger.

1:34:18

That I'm never looking Yeah. You lock in your eyes are closed.

Olivia 1:34:24

I genuinely I'm like here's my ID and then I'm just like the Oh man. I don't I don't look around I'm not like panning the walls.

1:34:33

Oh goodness. I'm watching the quilt a well known Oh, I

Olivia 1:34:35

love watching movies. That's what I did last night. Yeah. I love watching them play there was almost like a wasn't like a fight but there was like a mean there's like a mean like this mean Butch. Oh, and I was like kind of hot but like wasn't mean to me so not as hot

1:34:51

were they mean to

Olivia 1:34:51

like the other like the people playing pool because they were like, what's taking so long? Like, when is this game gonna wrap up and I was like That's exciting. Yeah. They fight. Yeah, there was no fist fight. That's what I wanted.

1:35:07

I love a fight with like a fist fight. But also when was Chun Oh

Olivia 1:35:11

yeah, then I want them to kiss afterwards. Yes, that's exactly what they did it. They actually didn't do any of that. It was just really awkward. Yeah, the person was just like do it'll be done when it'll be done. And then there's like a list and it takes longer on weekends, because there's more people. Don't they only have the two people that are on a weekend. Yeah, but like it takes even longer because it was like, it was a Saturday night.

1:35:33

Yeah, it was a Saturday. Yeah, like Friday night.

Olivia 1:35:38

It's like it took forever. Like it was just like a lot of people were playing or wanting to play another game

1:35:41

Fourth on the list. I love watching them play though. Like when they're sexy

Olivia 1:35:45

and playing. Yeah, they become sexier when they play.

1:35:48

I agree. I still love the outdoor backyard. It's

Olivia 1:35:53

really like sitting. Yeah, that's why I like it. Yeah, it was like, I don't like to stand anywhere and pierce my feet. Yeah, I don't like most other places.

1:36:01

I like hens. But it's specifically because like, if I'm going there, like I didn't like my speak. Yeah, I'm ready to dance. And to like be like, like, like, chest to chest surrounded entirely by like, eight women. And non binary people. Yeah.

Olivia 1:36:17

Like,

1:36:19

it's like we move as what like It's like skin to skin like they're sweats on my skin.

Olivia 1:36:26

Like hot. Then you go out into the street and you're like Jesus Christ. Yeah. Yeah. And I'm just like, moist.

1:36:37

Yeah. And every time I go, I get I get so drunk that like I start puking. And then even I stopped Uber's like, won't let me in. Yeah, it's like the last time I was there. It took me like three Ubers to get home because like they would I would show up and I would not be throwing up. They had a little bag, just in case. Yeah. And it would cancel and just drive off.

Olivia 1:36:59

Like, I swear I'm done. Yeah,

1:37:01

cuz sometimes they can be free drinks.

1:37:03

Oh, yeah.

Olivia 1:37:05

wasted. Yeah,

1:37:07

yeah, they they're heavy. Yeah, they know. I don't have that. \$14 No. So expensive. Expensive. Yeah.

Olivia 1:37:16

So you have to get pretty drunk.

1:37:18

So the thing is, I can only have three drunk free drinks in any night before I start throwing up. Yeah, get pretty try. Not really No.

Olivia 1:37:26

Three have any type of drink with any alcohol limit? Pretty

1:37:30

much except for like, I think a beer but like with beers and ciders, it's like, I can only have two. And that's not for because of alcohol. It's just like, my tummy starts hurting.

Olivia 1:37:39

Yeah. So you do like one cider and then like to mix drinks, and then you'd be throwing up? Like, yes, like one side or one midstream. But the

1:37:47

thing is that if somebody else is having a shot, like I'm not going to let them have a shot alone, so

Olivia 1:37:51

you take shots, two or three limit, take three drinks and then an amount of shots.

1:37:58

Uh huh. Well, so I'll do the shots. Also, like, if I have more than three, so six drinks? No, well, no, I mean, like, three drinks. So three, like, it doesn't matter if they're shots or mixed drinks.

Olivia 1:38:10

Okay, I get it. Now. I thought you were saying that, like you would do three drinks. And then you're like, I'll take a shot, whatever. And I'm like, well, that's why you throw up every time No, just taking

1:38:18

anything anything after. So it doesn't matter if there's shots or mixed drinks. Anything after three. I will start puking. But but you drink more than three anyways, because if somebody's doing a shot, I'm like, Yeah, I want a shot too. Okay,

Olivia 1:38:31

vomiting. You don't care about balm. I just do it so often that I don't even care. I was like, Are you just like not a person who gives a fuck cuz I know people who are like, sometimes I throw up I make myself throw up after I drink. I don't feel better. I like

1:38:44

only sort of feel better. It doesn't feel good. Don't

Olivia 1:38:46

believe them. I regret it every time. You're like, Damn, I can't wait to do this next weekend. Like I always see like the vomit in the corner. Like, on when I'm walking somewhere like because it was vomit from Friday night or Saturday afternoon and I'm sorry, you like threw up taco chunks. Oh, anyways,

1:39:10

no bueno.

Olivia 1:39:12

So what does this big question? What does identifying as a lesbian mean to you?

1:39:21

That was a big question. I don't know. I think it's like, a way it's like a way of living almost. It's almost like a religion. I feel like, like, my religion is lesbian. I wish if lesbians. I follow the path of lesbian in the way that like it, I feel like it influences like every aspect of my life. Like there's nothing that doesn't feel like like I feel like almost everything I do is through the like, through a lesbian lens. Right and it's like it really like, truly like shifted the way that I viewed life and the way that I thought, in general, like, the way that I have thought about myself with about others, I feel like everything changed in a way that is very lovely, and very enjoyable. And I think that like, I don't know, I think it's very freeing, I think a lot of being a lesbian is about the freedom that you gain through through doing so. And I think a lot of it has to do with that freedom. Because I am always seeking that and like, always wanting to like, feel like in like, like, in sync with myself and like, not like, restrained by things. And I think that being a lesbian, like, helps me do that a lot.

Olivia 1:40:58

So what does lesbian community mean to you?

1:41:03

I think that like, it all feels very, like familial, honestly, it's like you, you see lesbian, as, like, even if you've never seen each other in your life. It's like, you know, that, like, you walk up and like, you know, like, it's almost like, you know, like, you know, them in a sense, and, or like, it feels like you could know them very easily. And it feels very easy to like, connect and to know each other because these like borders of what has to like how we have to interact with each other aren't there at the same way.

Olivia 1:41:39

So what lesbian spaces are communities do you wish existed?

1:41:44

Hmm. I don't know. I mean, I feel like definitely a lot of more like, sober lesbian spaces. I feel like a lot of them are just bars. And that feels like, you know, not very inclusive. A lot of the time. Yeah, no, no, I would love like, I would love every establishment to be a lesbian establishment, obviously. But like, yeah, no, no. A whole a whole city lesbians is my is my goal. That's my space.

Olivia 1:42:21

What does lesbian join mean to you? And what are you happiest as a lesbian?

1:42:28

I think I'm always happiest as a lesbian, like, just without when I'm with my girlfriend. And especially like, I love being around other lesbians. But truly, as a lesbian, I love being at home. And so just like laying in bed with my girlfriend. And like, I have both both sides of my bed have a lesbian flag on each side. So we look up, we salute the flag. We don't really know what you mean, by watching the flag, we'd look at the flag and I'm like, looking at my girlfriend and like, it's just it's just nice. It feels like so. It just

feels wonderful. I think we talk about it a lot. So should I especially like in moments like that. I think it is honestly like being at home. Because I think I'm also just more comfortable at home and I'm kind of a homebody that like I feel the most joy like being a lesbian next to my partner.

Olivia 1:43:27

Is there anything else you want to talk about? To talk more about my parents. Do you want to know? Like, it's your time. Well, thanks. That's it. Thank you. Okay.