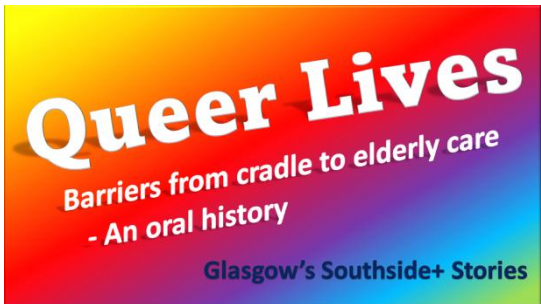


<p>Project: 'Queer Lives: Barriers from cradle to elderly care - An Oral History'</p> <p>Respondent: Arete Glitterpunk</p> <p>Year of Birth: 1989</p> <p>Age: xx</p> <p>Connection to project: Local Knowledge</p> <p>Date of Interview: 08.05.2024</p> <p>Interviewer: Rachel Kelly</p> <p>Recording Agreement: Yes</p> <p>Information & Consent: Yes</p> <p>Photographic Images: No (Number of:)</p> <p>Length of Interview: 1.30.07</p> <p>Location of Interview: Respondent's home Glasgow</p> <p>Recording Equipment: Zoom H4n (internal mics)</p>		<p>Glasgow's Southside+ Stories</p> 
Time (from: mins/secs)	Description	Transcribed Extract (from- to: mins/secs)
00.37	<i>Where were you born?</i>	
	Ashington in England.	00.39
00.40	<i>Where did you grow up?</i>	
	Wales at first and then Berlin and then back to Scotland, in Airdrie, and now I live in the Southside of Glasgow in Govanhill.	00.41-00.59
1.00	<i>Do you have any preferred pronouns that you would like people to use?</i>	
	I use he/him pronouns.	1.04-
1.05- 1.231.39	<i>We use the term 'Queer' for the project in an attempt to include as many people as possible, and realise that not many people identify themselves or an aspect of Queer, so how would you identify yourself?</i>	
	"I would probably define myself as Queer, yes, it's a nice shorthand for the seven other things I suppose."	1.24-1.37
1.38	<i>Would you mind telling me if you've 'come out' as Queer and when was this?</i>	
	"Oh yes, a long time ago. I think probably about 22, at least as bi-sexual and then and then at 24 as non-binary trans-gender."	1.39-2.00
2.01	<i>Have you faced any barriers to access to education in your life due to being Queer?</i>	
	"I would say like not knowingly. Especially because I wasn't out for a long time. It took me a long time to figure out my gender and my sexuality. So... Because of the way I was always perceived I don't think I experienced barriers knowingly."	2.12-3.18

	But I think the way that the way I saw other people around me be treated had an impact on how I portrayed myself. Because when I was in school there were very few people who were out as queer and those who were out were treated pretty badly and pretty ruthlessly and I think that subconsciously shoved me deeper into the closet. So I guess that's a yes and no answer."	
3.22-3.26	<i>So the barriers that you saw other people faced, do you think these barriers have changed over time?</i>	
	"I think that we would like to say that things have changed over time but I don't think that they really have. I think that as the years go on and we become more 'accepting' of queer people of all types and that also leads to more push-back as well and when we were younger I think that there were more people that were unaware of things as they currently are, especially because obviously until the '90s it was pretty much illegal to talk about. I mean it was illegal pretty much which was obviously the biggest and massive barrier but I think that in terms of people becoming more aware and educated about queer issues has definitely lifted a lot of barriers in some ways. But in the social context of people's subconscious biases that then become very conscious. I think that those barriers are very much still in place like we're 'out' more than ever before but we're also treated with disdain in very similar ways. So yes it's got better but I think that people mistake the vocal ability to be 'out' and to ask for and demand our rights, has translated into our rights being in practice whereas the reality is there is still a huge amount of prejudice that queer people of all kinds experience that lead to them being discriminated against extremely harshly and sometimes, especially in younger people, like losing their lives. So I'd say that in terms of the ability in finding community and standing together and there being more awareness of these issues, it's certainly got better but I don't think that's actually translated into those barriers being truly lifted for people."	3.28-6.04
6.09	<i>How do you see things change going forward?</i>	
	"I think that there really needs to be less hand-wringing over our demands for our rights to exist and not be a debating point. There's a lot of 'well people are entitled to their opinion' and I think there needs to be a lot more judgement of people who have opinions about whether or not trans-people or queer people should be allowed to exist. I think there needs to be a move socially for people to see that for what it is; which is a form of discrimination that is violating human rights. It's not an option, you can't change who you are but the fact is we're still having discussions about whether or not trans-people are real for example, or whether conversion therapy is something that can still work. There's still an understanding of queerness in forms of like a moral failing in some way, rather than a mutable part of human experience and I think that the biggest thing that we need to do socially is to, which is happening and is part of the long haul, is for people to stop seeing queer people as 'other' and as a choice that's being made and instead is an inherent part of life. But, I guess that's where so much prejudice comes from is the othering or the decision that it's a choice and I think that with so many things that does come down to at a young age people being introduced to this as a reality like prejudice is born in	6.10-9.48

	<p>ignorance and from when we are very young the way that we talk about queer people or they're perceived in media, through their churches or through their parents' social groups. If they see queer people as some outside element that's where their prejudice is born. But if you're brought up alongside queer and trans people as just another member of your community. That doesn't translate into the same prejudice. Or maybe that's over optimistic but I think that is exactly what we are trying to do. That's why it's such a battleground and has always been as to whether or not you can teach people about queer and trans issues in schools because people that hate us know if children get taught that we're just normal people then they won't hate us too and they don't want that too. So it's a clichéd answer but that's true. One that education solves so much when it comes to prejudice."</p>	
9.49	<i>Do you think government policy could help?</i>	
	<p>"I would find that a difficult question to answer for me because I have a deep distrust of our current political systems as a Communist. And I find that a huge amount of policy that is implemented by government in a liberal kind of way where it's to maybe appeal to a certain demographic that they want votes from tends to be without teeth. Or it's a law but then it never gets into practice and I always hope there would be policies in place that would then be put into practice but I have very little trust for that. And kind of always believed more in like community activism and the kind of boots on the ground, the changing of hearts and minds than a policy put in place that doesn't seem to actually translate over to a community level. But the main important ones that there could be, would be specifically with education practices just like discrimination kind of laws which, you know, even in government systems that I distrust are still of vital importance to the fact that they are tangible and do matter, hence-why like I said there's such a push-back about whether or not we can teach children about queer people. It's the one big thing I would like as a policy. I think that there should be in educational establishments from a young age and that we start teaching and we start teaching about these issues from this age and like classes on the history of the gay movement, or the trans movement and there should be teaching about how trans people and queer people have existed throughout all of human history because so much of the perception is it's some modern new fad that kids have made up despite the fact that as a historian myself, I have thousands of years of evidence of our existence.</p> <p>So yes, I suppose the main thing would be that there should be an educational policy that as a part of history or modern studies, talks about our lives and where we came from."</p>	9.53-13.06
13.09	<i>What would be your first example on the curriculum?</i>	
	<p>"It all depends on definition, but I mean there's references through all sorts of ancient worlds whether that's Assyria, Kanesh. There's a lot of references in India as well. If you look to indigenous cultures there's been numerous references there. I suppose that the kind of one that would tie-into a Western understanding of modern history would be old speak easys and stuff like that where there's photographs and stories written by people who were trans and</p>	13.12-15.10

	<p>you can see all of that and then there's the obvious and now fairly well known, at least by our community, is Nazis burning of the Hirschfeld Institute libraries and stuff like that, which is why people think we're a modern phenomenon; that our history has been erased.</p> <p>So yes, I guess you could start with these kind of more modern examples of the kind of underground culture that the gay communities were also kind of found, you can work back from there to numerous references from ancient Greeks and historical kind of loose references. Different terms and phrases for everyone but yes, the easiest would be looking to 1900s Western history that we have an association with personally."</p>	
15.11	<i>Have you faced any barriers in the workplace/career due to being queer?</i>	
	<p>"Yes, so many, oh god, for many years, some subtle, some overt. And a huge amount of it has just meant especially when I was younger and I wouldn't really be 'Out' out at the workplace. I'd say that for the most part that's not even out of fear. I don't give a damn if people know I'm trans. I'll fight God to do whatever I want. I don't care about people's prejudices. But it's more about how having to come 'out' every single day, is one of the most exhausting things you can do as a person. And I would get sick of just having to be like my pronouns are he/him and correct people and answer every single person's questions about what it's like being trans. And am I doing this, and am I doing that. And of the first questions you ever get from people are about your genitals, which is always astounding to me. Whenever people ask me that question I would just be like 'and anyway tell me about your junk, come on let's go there, do you hear how insane you are'. So a lot of it was like the exhaustion. Like how I would be treated like some strange novelty and especially because in some workplaces if I did 'come out' I would immediately notice that I'd get treated differently. More harshly from bosses. They would become much more critical of me. Co-workers would be more inclined to either deliberately mis-gender me or just be very cruel or kind of blame me for things. Nothing I would ever do would be good enough. And as somebody who is also disabled it was just often a lot to cope with that I would be dealing with ableism and transphobia side by side. And I've definitely been fired for being trans. But you know they'll use any excuse and make whatever up so you can't point at them and say oh you did this because I was trans or I was disabled. But I've been bullied out of jobs and fired for something that I absolutely didn't do and that's what got me so deeply into trade union work. You know as a working class person who saw a lot of my co-workers also vulnerable in some way or another also getting mistreated and realising that if we were standing together we would have been able to do a lot more to fight for ourselves. But yes, I've lost a lot of jobs. I've been made very ill from bullying, been underpaid or not paid at all, sexually harassed, assaulted. It's all been there."</p>	15.16-18.49
18.50	<i>Did you ever get any help from H.R. or anything like that?</i>	
	<p>"H.R. are the devil because H.R. are not for workers. They are created to cover the company's back and they exist solely to pretend that they are helping you as a worker but they're actually just making sure that they can fuck you over best in</p>	18.51-20.26

	<p>a way that benefits the company. I hate H.R. and H.R. in particular has been the people that fucked me over the most. I used to work for a very famous Scottish video game company that I can't name due to a non-disclosure agreement that I signed after suing them for discrimination and the H.R. department when I was very ill in dealing with the issues in the workplace, were the people that lied and manipulated me, treated me the worst and tried to ensure the most that I was the one that was fucked over and the company didn't do anything to make amends for the experiences that I was having in the workplace. They're the devil."</p>	
20.27	<p><i>Going forward what changes would you like to see in the workplace?</i></p>	
	<p>"As I kind of explained policy change without cultural change is meaningless because we already have anti-discrimination laws. We already have these things in place but they don't necessarily cross over into reality and so much of that comes down to enforcement on whether or not people believe that just because it's illegal to do something doesn't mean that anybody believes you when you say I got fired because I was discriminated against. If the system itself is corrupt then what does the law within that system do to prevent the system from hurting you? They just say well we don't believe you at every level. In that regard it's another one what needs to change the most is our cultural understanding and so much of that comes down to solidarity and community. And so I do think there needs to be a bigger push for companies to be openly, vocally, pro queer and trans rights. Which a lot of places won't do unless it's flying a flag at Pride to make money off of gay people while actually still discriminating against them. Which I have experienced myself working for a company that has a Pride float every year that has discriminated against me. I think policies need to be in place within the companies themselves and have systems in place that aren't just H.R. in the way that they currently work, where people have places to turn but so much of that is I think that more people should join a trade union. I think that people who are workers especially vulnerable workers of all kinds need to understand that your boss will never care about you but your comrades and your fellow workers will and so I would love to see people who are more vulnerable in various ways and workers of all kinds joining trade unions. I'd love to see a surge in the understanding that trade unions are there to protect you, not to take anything from you. I would like to start culturally holding places to account for what they owe us as workers and I would like to see bigger push-back if people are discriminated against in the workplace from people culturally because unfortunately under capitalism stuff doesn't change unless there's a financial incentive. If people stopped buying things from companies that are prejudiced it should have a tangible effect. It's a difficult answer but I suppose I would want anti-discrimination laws and policies to be much more firmly understood and implemented and I would like more management in general in all of these places to have more training about what discrimination looks like and the communities that experience it, whether it's understanding the issues that your disabled workers may face and how to accommodate them, how to also be aware of your queer workers and how they might be mistreated from people around them and how to deal with that in the same way that we have in recent years kind of pushed way more for there to be</p>	20.30-25.20

	consequences for sexual harassment in the workplace which unfortunately in the same way still goes on and is still a massive problem. “	
25.21	<i>What was your experience of growing up as a queer person?</i>	
	<p>“Closeted but not deliberately and so much of that is just growing up in the ‘90s where it was all very hush hush. It wasn’t talked about in school (laughs obviously and the media that we had was that gay people were the weird little flamboyant odd ones and I was like well that can’t be me. And you wouldn’t see many lesbians or trans people either. There were just a few shows with the flamboyant gay man like Will and Grace or whatever that existed at the time... I didn’t even watch any of that stuff. But the point is that we had so little media and the very little media that we did have was very stereotyped in it’s own way. So there wasn’t anything about just a horrible little goblin man. I don’t know I just assumed I was straight. I just assumed I was a girl. And more than that I just assumed I was not autistic and ADHD riddled and all of the other things that I also happen to be. I just kind of figured I was strange and not very good at being a girl, as much as I like some aspects of it and still do. Hence why I’m more non-binary than a trans man. I got described as being a tomboy a lot let’s say. And as a bi-sexual person I just gravitated towards men but that was just the social kind of conditioning. Nobody asked me about my crushes on boys, nobody asked me why I had such an intense interest in Rachel Weiss in The Mummy. I just think she’s a great actress, okay? [laughs]. So it was accidentally closeted. And a lot of that is I just didn’t understand being gay or trans. I really didn’t know about trans people at all. Didn’t know it was an option, just knew that I was a bit uncomfortable with the way that people saw me. With the way people thought of me as a woman. Not because I necessarily have problems with being thought of as a woman. But my perception of what that was, was just so different from the rest of the world and I figured out what that was later in life when I met more trans people.</p> <p>The other thing is, it’s funny now but I don’t speak to most of the people that I went to school with and was friendly with but it turns out that all of my friends were gay or trans. So we must’ve known but didn’t know and that’s a funny thing.</p> <p>I did have a few friends that were out and they were very badly bullied and yeah, I do think that that must’ve sub-consciously put me in the closet a little bit more. But I guess my experiences of youth were of feeling like there was something off with me. not necessarily that I felt badly about myself in that regard but more that I felt I just couldn’t understand why people didn’t understand me and I was quite lonely because of that I think. I just felt there was a lot of myself that I wasn’t allowed to be.”</p>	25.28-29.16
29.14	<i>Do you feel that your experiences are similar to those of other queer people?</i>	
	“I’d say from the people that I know or speak with, yes, for those who like myself didn’t come out till later in life. I’d say no in that so many of them who came out earlier in life experienced a lot more I don’t know, concentrated difficulty in youth in the way I didn’t. I had it in other areas and that a lot of people I know	29.22-31.16

	<p>do seem to... haven't always known they were, at least, queer with their sexuality in a way that I just didn't know. I'm just like, oh maybe. It literally took somebody being like, 'You look at women in a way that I look at women, are you sure you don't like women?' And there was me going oh yeah maybe. It wasn't even that I had any internalised prejudice against it in particular, it just didn't even occur to me, which a lot of people are surprised by especially because I'm like, you know, I love girls, they're great. But I'd say in terms of the wariness and the sense of being out of place, the knowledge and understanding that there is a threat to you if you are queer and it definitely seems universal, there's a kind of feral edge to everyone I know that comes from having to survive on the outlines."</p>	
31.19-31.32	<p><i>Do you believe there's such a thing as a LGBT+ community which implies a coherent group identity based solely on shared sexual orientation or gender identity?</i></p>	
	<p>"No, at least as we currently have... The only thing that I know about gay people is that I hate most of them. I say that with love as well, not actually hate them but you know they're people, we're people and just like with every person I meet, there are certainly many of them that I don't get on with, who I wouldn't spend time with. Not because they're bad people but because we don't have anything in common and I think that it's important to remember that and not some amalgamation, some blob, because we end up stereotyping ourselves in a way to try and fit in and be less lonely. I always felt that I wasn't trans enough or I wasn't queer enough, that I was being gay wrong, or I was being trans wrong because at the same time we fight for liberation and we fight for acceptance for people to be themselves. We also as a way to gate-keep within our own communities as a way of self-defence. Try and say this is you know, this is how you show yourself to the world and I think that's a very understandable response, especially when we're all fighting for our lives out there, we want community we want to fit in together and we want to feel held by each other but that does mean that we end up hurting ourselves at the same time.</p> <p>I think that in terms of there needing to be a community as a political and social entity, yes we are, because regardless of how very different so many people who are LGBT+ are from me, I will always have them as a friend and a comrade when the time counts which is that we all understand what it's like to just exist and be hated for that and to be at risk and there is a universality in that experience that does translate to a community of a kind that those who experience prejudice have to be a community, even if you're not a community. I don't know if that makes sense."</p>	31.34-34.26
34.29	<p><i>Do you think that all queer people have similar perspectives towards the various definitions of gender identity?</i></p>	
	<p>"Oh god I wish. Most certainly not, not even other trans people. Some of the worst transphobia I have experienced from other queer people, you know. Once again just because you are a member of the LGBT umbrella, that does not mean that you get on with other people under that umbrella which is a part of the problem with it being an umbrella. Plenty of people who are trans are not gay</p>	34.37-37.50

	<p>or bisexuals or queer in that part and plenty of queer people are not in that part of the umbrella are not queer in a trans sense. So there's massive amounts of gay people of all kinds who are transphobic and there's plenty of trans people who probably think them gays are pretty bad being gay, you know, shouldn't do that. Which is very funny to come across whenever I do, rare but you know, everyone loves to be an outlier I suppose. Even within the gay communities for god sake you get... they call themselves gold star lesbians because, right well, if you've ever slept with a man once then you're not really a proper lesbian or whatever and then there's definitions of lesbianism that they fire in. And then within the gay male community there's definitions of about what makes you gay enough or what kind of gay you are that everybody fights over and then in the trans community we're all fighting about whether you're trans enough. If you experience dysphoria or don't or non-binary people exist and if your trans if you don't medically transition. All of these fights that we have all the time is so indicative of the larger problem in society and within ourselves where we feel a desperate burning need to understand humanity through a narrow lens and a sense that we have the right to dictate what's right and what's wrong. Whereas god knows more people just maybe need to think like, are they happy? are they harming anyone? If not, let them be, but yeah, there's definitely huge amount of prejudice that exists within the LGBT community towards itself and towards each other because prejudices outside, you know we're not immune to it, it trickles down, and whether it's internalised against yourself or externalised against others, it's very keenly felt and there's so many disagreements all the time for sure."</p>	
37.52	<p><i>Would you be happy to give examples of transphobia you've experienced from other queer people?</i></p>	
	<p>"I mean for sure I've experienced when I first kind of came out as non-binary, it was before I was using he/him pronouns I was using they/them, until I was like I don't like those but I was dating a woman who considered herself like she is a lesbian and she liked me but she just didn't want to admit that I was a trans person because she was like, no you're a woman because I only date women. And I was like well you're dating me and I'm not a woman. And just kind of experienced like that kind of, you know, she would mis-gender me and kind of try and convince me to stop calling myself trans you know, so it didn't last very long, because I don't put up with shit. I'm just like alright fine, I'm out, nobody gets to tell me what to be but it was just very disappointing to be with somebody who in so many ways like seems very accepting but just could not accept that despite the fact, especially because I'm not a particularly masculine person, that that could mean that I was trans. She was just 'Well you don't look like a man, or you look like a woman.' I'm like thank you.</p> <p>So I've experienced that as an example. Especially as a non-binary person like from other trans people. I've been told that non-binary doesn't really make sense and that I can't really be trans because I don't take hormones, which I did for a while but especially with all my various health things and just who I am, it's not something I kind of continued with. And I don't wear a binder because with the autism I can't get over that in a sensory level. I've even experienced that</p>	37.56-40.53

	from other trans people- why don't you wear a binder? Why don't you look trans enough? Why don't you present as trans? And you can't be trans because you don't look what I define trans as has been a big one for me."	
40.54	<i>What are your thoughts about the current debate about gender identity?</i>	
	"I think that it's not a debate. That's the thing, part of the problem is we're allowing it to be a debate. Human rights are not up for debate. I think it's an unconscionable hell that makes me miserable to see that our very rights to existence are seen as an object to be argued over and more than that, that we are somehow corrupt and inherently predatory and that kind of thing is just so miserable. And the fact that there is so much false concern about how our rights to exist would somehow impinge on other rights, which is such an echo of the same debates that were had in early kind of gay rights movements. The same debates, the same well if we talk about how gay people exist and you know, you'll corrupt the children. The connection between being gay or trans with sexual deviants and predators and paedophiles. All of that stuff is still tied into the dialogue around it and it's so destructive and it is an echo and obviously the gay rights movement still experience those prejudices as well but just seeing them re-ignited in a fresh new way has been very depressing and sometimes very scary. It's scary to watch people hate you and genuinely wish you dead. I'm not somebody that's prone to being intimidated by society or individual perception of me, but to just know or to see people who really wish you dead. To see that sometimes they will harm people is hard on the heart, but yeah, my main thing is that it shouldn't even be a debate. I don't think that my right to exist is the question, it just is."	40.58-43.49
43.57	<i>How did/have you socialised as a queer person in your youth?</i>	
	"Crime. Some of it was just good old fashioned crime, I'm not going to lie. I was a young punk. As with so many young queer people I was very cold to counter-culture. I didn't get on very well with so many people that I went to university with and stuff and then after leaving university I got deeply into music more than anything which is such a great way to meet community and got very into the punk scene which got me into activism. And then when I was travelling I got into throwing squat parties and stuff like that you know, running from cops in the middle of the night when they finally figure out that we've within an hour or two brought tons of stuff to abandoned buildings you know. So I was very much in the punk scene as it were here and in the States and was very cold to music as the great equaliser as they say. Just alternative scenes in general like goth, punks, these big club nights, massive house parties, all of that stuff. So weirdly I didn't really hang out with the gays. I hung out with punks and I hung out with like Anarchists and Communists. So my social life was based around music and politics that just so happened had a lot of queer and trans people in it for those reasons, so I didn't really go to gay bars or gay clubs. Sometimes I would go to club nights and stuff with other friends but a lot of it was to do that I didn't like the music much and like I said only the punk bars were full of sad gay people anyway, so it was basically a gay bar in its own right. Although there were a few like the old famous kind of gay bars and stuff like that are kind of more cosy and	44.12-47.20

	<p>comfortable with themselves. Bars that were for gay people. There was one in Leith, I can't remember the name, it was really famous I know that much, I used to go there a lot.</p> <p>So yeah, under-age drinking, taking drugs, breaking into old abandoned warehouses. Yeah, all the good stuff."</p>	
47.21	<i>Did you find the punk scene accepting or not?</i>	
	<p>"That's a whole other debate. I mean the problem with punks is that there's actually so many people who aren't particularly punk as I would think of it you know, it's a lot of horrible old hateful men, misogynists, homophobes, people who were predatory and disgusting. So there was a huge amount of problem in that regard but I always chose my friends carefully and my community so there is very accepting corners of it and then massively prejudice corners of it and massively messed up corners of it. So there was always a bit of a pitched battlefield to kind of keep those people at bay and out of spaces that we were committed to having as accepting ones. And obviously there's the good old Dead Kennedy song Nazi Punks Fuck Off because there's a huge amount of right wing contingents and we would not mess about when it came to them because they were there, so it was both accepting and literally Nazis. So yeah, both sides of the spectrum for sure."</p>	47.22-48.47
48.48	<i>Has your social life changed over time?</i>	
	<p>"Well yeah, otherwise my liver would've just walked out in protest for sure. I mean definitely as a young mentally ill person I lived like I wanted to die when I was younger and had very little self-preservation in the way that I lived and partied and went about things which is I guess, a universal experience, for many a young punk I suppose. But as an adult the way I socialise has definitely changed massively in that. I have an understanding that like the most revolutionary thing that you can do is take care of yourself and your community like create heart and home. That to be counter-cultural, it's a silly phrase, but I can't think of how else to define it, isn't just like getting fucked up with your friends and annoying society by being bad, it's about the real community that you build in these moments that count. I love a good party, I always will but what are the living situations of your comrades, has everybody got enough to eat, is your friend feeling bad emotionally. I'm like let's not go to the pub today let's sit down and talk about it. I'll make you a good dinner and like you need to go to bed a little early you've been hitting it a bit hard I'm worried about you. There's much more care, not just for myself but for my friends. A lot less denial and some of that came about through the ignorance of youth. We didn't know how to deal with our problems so we just didn't. So I party a lot less as well because I have disabilities that make me quite exhausted but I do occasionally go to gigs but unlike when I was younger, I'm usually back in bed by 11pm like God intended. And I prefer to go for dinner instead of going out on the lash to clubs or whatever. And I like going to the cinema with my friends and I like having friends over for my little dinner parties and movie nights. I like going out for lunches. I've become a lot more sedate. But do not get me wrong if there is a good gig in town I can be found doing cocaine in the bathroom with the best of</p>	48.53-52.10

	them.”	
52.13	<i>Have you faced any healthcare issues due to being queer?</i>	
	<p>Oh so many for sure. I have a lot of nice little disabilities that all get squashed together and a big one for me is chronic fatigue syndrome and I developed that later in life. A lot of that was due to the kind of stress and because I have complex post-traumatic stress disorder as well. And I do think that so much of how I became as disabled as I am is growing up and living as a person that had so many experiences that were violent and traumatic. And some of those experiences that were violent and traumatic were nothing to do with me being queer. But some of those experiences that were violent and traumatic were very much to do with being queer and as with any vulnerable demographic experiences consisted of discrimination and that does manifest in your health. That you as a queer person are less likely to be treated well by a medical professional because they themselves happen to harbour some personal prejudice against you. Or whether it's also that our medical systems obviously being rooted in white supremacy, is incredibly prejudiced in its own right. whether it understands that within itself or not. I've experienced thousands of prejudices over the years that have had a quantifiable effect on my health. And a massive one is most certainly a denial of care. I've been denied healthcare specifically and explicitly because of my queerness.</p>	52.19-54.28
54.37	<i>Do you think there are enough health care services available for Queer people?</i>	
	<p>Not even close. Very, very few in fact unfortunately, especially at the moment, the waiting lists are longer than ever before for people to get seen by gender clinics. Then within the gender clinics you're experiencing very violent transphobia a lot of the time which is ironic. And extremely vulnerable people are experiencing prejudices and violence within these contexts that have a notable impact on their mental health which leads to higher rates of suicide, attempted suicide, mental health crises. And then there's very little health care and then within the mental health care system there is very little understanding of how prejudice has an impact on your mental health. So there's very little support in those regards and then there's even the kind of issues around sexual health, where you as a queer person can be treated with prejudices and judgement when you go for screening. I've had some excellent experiences with wonderful professionals who had zero judgement or expectations no matter what I'm coming to them for. But then I've had other people such as my last sexual health screening who treated me like I was a disgusting deviant for having had sexual partners who were, you know, queer and for having queer sex and it made me, as somebody who's pretty unflappable, made me feel bad about myself. Not because I felt about the fact I'm gay and have gay sex, but because it made me feel belittled and small to be talked to like a child by some fanny of a woman who treated me like I was shit on her shoe. And those experiences mean that people are afraid to go and then when we do go to ask for care, we're told that it's not there, there's so little support for us and what little there is there's campaigners against our right to exist are trying to dial back whether it's cuts in funding through the NHS and closing of gender clinics or whether it's the recent</p>	54.40-5178.





	<p>study that I can't remember the name of that came out, is actually as somebody who is a researcher myself understands these things, is not as scientific or medically viable true frigging piece of research. It doesn't meet any of the metrics of how you're supposed to research. It's misinformation produced with massive biases and that is giving more ammo to continue to deny care or even to deny the right to explore what the proper care should be. Because I don't think that our system is doing things right but I do think that we need to be exploring how to do it right instead of saying well we need to give people nothing which is currently in the way the dialogue is going."</p>	
58.23	<p><i>What are your thoughts on the future of healthcare for queer people?</i></p>	
	<p>So within the Western medicine system are the very creation of the NHS and Western medicine as we understand it has been through, I'm not being hyperbolic through white supremacy and colonialism and imperialism. It's a bunch of aristocratic white men who first developed 'modern medicine' and those means of understanding the human body were through the lens and the prejudices of a system that saw people in a certain way. And those prejudices, though much of it has been unlearned or revised, are still very present because so much of our modern medicine like the research that we've done has been through violent means. The history of gynaecology for example is based on experimentation on black women. That violence is tied into the history and in the modern practice. The way we are treated within medicine is often violently. There is very little empathy because the system was never an empathetic system, was almost seen as experimental, you go for health care and you've come out and you feel like cattle is such a common thing, you feel like you're de-humanised or a body. And it's not a body with feelings and because that history is baked into medicine and is still taught that way, the main thing that we need to do, not just for queer people, but for all people, is that we need to radicalise the way that we educate our healthcare providers. The system as it works right now is incredibly violent towards them as well, they're forced to work ungodly hours and told if they can't hack it they shouldn't be a doctor which is denying a huge amount of people the right to practice medicine including other disabled people who would be probably the best suited to treat people with disabilities. And then if you are a doctor in that position your health ends up suffering to be a health care provider, your empathy goes out the window. I think that we need to overhaul the system so that there are more doctors and nurses, less hours and more empathetic treatment on how they're educated. More humanity put into that system and for the system in general to put much more funding into the health care of trans people and queer people. And so much of that it does need to be funnelled into. At the moment of where we are with the health services and a mental health service that doesn't just blame your depression on you're depressed but understands that there are tangible things that cause that depression within your environment. That you're not just medicalising a social issue instead of an empathetic approach to our experiences and a lack of suspicion towards your body and mind that currently leads to not getting healthcare. We are somehow incapable of making decisions for ourselves. The future of health care, not just for queer people but for all people needs to be about the dismantling of the system itself and the re-creation of it into</p>	58.27 - 1.03.35

	<p>something much less violent because those prejudices are experienced by the majority of people that go through the modern health care system. In particular, people of colour as well. Our health is directly tied to the prejudices that are baked in and you need to, from the ground up, re-build the way that we think of medicine and re-build the way that we practice it and that comes with a much more empathetic and holistic approach as well as ensuring the baseline understanding of how the human body works. Yeah, it's another big complicated one."</p>	
1.03.36	<i>Elder care, do you ever think about your future as you age?</i>	
	<p>Yeah a lot, in particular I was a carer for my own grandmother and saw the state of elder care as it currently is, which is very bad. The disdain for people who are 'not productive members of society' and the capitalism is very prevalent within our system. If you're old or sick then you were a burden on the system. I mean that's literally the phrase used so often 'a burden on the system', human life is a burden and the way that elderly care is seen is like 'why don't you just die already'. It feels so much like that and social services is collapsing and the current understanding of what's going to happen with the system is one that is not good. Even if we pumped funding into it, it would still collapse because the system has been stretched thin for so long that the framework has completely crumbled and everybody is hanging on by their fingertips that works within elder care. So there is just very little support for elderly people in terms of having like care workers or help with every-day tasks unless you're lucky enough to have a family member or family members hopefully. Because care work is the hardest job in the world. God help me I never want to do it again. I cannot respect carers more, I really can't. It's so hard and that's half the problem that there's so few people and they're all worked to the bone. It's harrowing and I feel that a lot of people are isolated from family. We end up getting pushed out or losing family and in a system that if you don't have anyone, you are left alone, that's a scary prospect for me, I worry about it a lot you know, I'm not getting any younger, I'm not going to have kids. I'm not going to have anyone to take care of me and there's no support for isolated elderly people. So yeah I think about it a lot and I think about it a lot in the modern sense as well in that how many people are out there and alone who don't have any help."</p>	1.03.43 - 1.06.49
1.06.50	<i>Do you think there are any particular barriers to elderly care for Queer people?</i>	
	<p>"Well yeah as I kind of mentioned briefly so much of it comes down to support networks in a massive way. The current care system as its set up is still with an understanding that the elderly will have family or community to fill in the gaps because most people can only get carers in for a few minutes every day at a certain time unless you go into full time care. And so there's a lack of support networks that mean that you're more likely to be in vulnerable or dangerous situations. And there's also the fact that say you do end up in full time care of any kind especially if you relocate to an elderly care home of various kinds, I imagine that there is the usual barriers there of prejudices of all kinds whether it's from staff or from other people. Whether it's through the health care that you were given. Whether it's through social isolation due to just maybe if you're</p>	1.06.59 - 1.08.39

	put in a situation where you are among people who were either prejudice or just not gay themselves or trans themselves. And you're like well it's just me. I imagine that that causes a lot of barriers in its own right, you know."	
1.08.40	<i>Do you have any thoughts what elderly care might be like by the time you might require it?</i>	
	"Non-existent and that's not even me being too glib. I mean the outlook is non-existent. The system is collapsing and as I said, even with massive amounts of like funding boosts it's going to be grim, at least as I currently understand. By then I'm hoping that we would've had a full-fledged revolution and the whole world will be different full of rainbows and kittens and nobody will ever struggle again, yay, but the reality is probably non-existent. Especially post-Covid there is a huge uptake in people experiencing long term disability and then that combined with an ageing population is as traditionally understood, there is going to be a huge number of people ageing at the same age. That I am ageing and a system in place that is really not there to support things as they are, let alone in the future and so I imagine that I'm just going to be dead by 60 hopefully in a cool way but if not then god knows. No, I am being glib, I hope to live beyond 60 but it is just that I imagine it non-existent and hopefully by then more people will come together to perhaps build like community support and systems where we'll take care of each other as it should be, but in terms of the structured system, oh god I don't have any optimism in that regard."	1.08.47 - 1.10.49
1.10.50	<i>What are your views on elder care provision in other parts of the world, if any?</i>	
	"I wish I could say that I have anything particularly set in that regard. I always refuse to answer a question that I don't really understand enough. And I really don't understand enough about other systems other than I suppose I know a little about the States which is also grim and much for profit. And there's a huge amount of taking advantage and financial elderly abuse and all sorts of stuff due to the 'for profit systems' in place but that also happens here. So I guess in that regard it's not great and from what I know in the States system is bad but I don't have a great understanding of elderly care in other countries to be honest."	1.10.54 - 1.11.57
1.11.58	<i>Can you think of any legislation that has brought more rights for queer people?</i>	
	"Well I think that legislation has never brought any rights for queer people. Queer people have demanded rights and legislation has reflected those movements. I think that one of the common misconceptions of people is that any of these legislations are themselves powerful but I think half the time that's because the systems in place want you to believe that they are the arbiters of human rights to give and take away. But every single bit of progress that has been achieved by humanity has been on the backs of people themselves. I'd say that there's never been a piece of legislation that's given anyone rights, they've merely reflected the movements that have demanded them to the point that they can no longer deny that we're not going to stop."	1.12.04 - 1.13.22
1.13.25	<i>Has any legislation diminished or rolled back the rights of Queer people?</i>	

	<p>“Well, yeah, all the time, which is why they’re in place is that their attempt to deny us...to keep us from asking or demanding I should say, for our rights as people and the best way to do that is via isolation of all kinds. If people don’t know that there’s power in numbers and that you’re not alone. There has been obviously for so many years like kind of eradication of rights. I mean not least of which obviously the kind of laws were in place making it illegal to discuss being gay in schools. And there’s so many laws in place the world over that basically makes it illegal to be gay or discuss being gay or trans, then there’s laws in place regarding whether or not someone can have the rights of their gender if they’re trans. Yeah rights are rolled back so regularly. Every time those who were in power or more prejudiced to push to continue to erase us from history and so much of that is constant and continuous and still on going.”</p>	1.13.28 - 1.15.20
1.15.22	<p><i>Do you feel that the general public are supportive of equal rights for Queer people?</i></p>	
	<p>“I think that’s such another complicated answer in its own right. In like I don’t really know if there’s such a thing as the ‘general public’ as we know it because it so much depends on all of these divisions that we have whether it’s class, education, politics, upbringing. I think obviously the mass social movements or social understandings of whichever culture or society is kind of putting out there. And I’d say that there is a huge overwhelming percentage of people who are quietly living their lives who are also just supportive of queer people being able to live their lives. But the thing about the general public I find is that they tend to be the ones that are less loud than the vocal minority that hates us and the problem is you only hear the vocal minority that hates our guts is that they begin to feel like the general public. So yeah, I feel that for the most part people are supportive but I think that’s still within an often kind of place of ignorance as well, where there’s so many people that don’t really ask themselves that question because they just don’t care because they think... they’ve never you know, spent much time with queer people or whatever and they don’t even realise that we’re just vibing. So yes I guess I think they do, I hope they do and if they don’t, I don’t care.”</p>	1.15.36 - 1.18.02
1.18.04	<p><i>What are your hopes for the future of Queer rights legislation in Scotland?</i></p>	
	<p>“It sure would be nice if we stopped trying to debate whether or not trans women are women. That would be super sweet. I’d really like for the apparently controversial questions around whether or not you can identify as your own gender or be treated like a human being stops becoming like a horror show. Every time there’s been a push for gender recognition there’s been such terrifying vitriol and so I guess my hope for any of these legislations, which like I said I see more as a reflection than anything else, is that anything that passes would be able to pass without it being notable. Without it having huge backlash. Without it potentially getting revoked again or all of the other horrible things that happen that even comes up as a discussion. My biggest hope for anything regarding the codification or our rights in any way is that it would be unremarkable.”</p>	1.18.10 - 1.19.42

1.19.46	<i>Can you give examples of positive portrayals of queer people in the arts?</i>	
	<p>I'd say books have always been so great for me in terms of finding my people in there. Especially obviously just down the road in wonderful Govanhill we've got a queer bookstore where I get to go and pick stories that are about me and people like me and people other than me but who are also queer. So many of my favourite books have been in that list. Even my favourite comic books that I've been reading since I was a little lad is Hellblazer. Joe Constantine in Hellblazer is a bi-sexual disaster and I feel very seen in that. He's a punk bi-sexual disaster who drank too much, smoked too much and everybody thinks he's a dick. I read that and I was like, I'd like to be that, well not really but I guess like for me he was always really influential and that kind of like the first queer character that I really knew of as a child and reading the Hellblazer comics because those are old damn comics, it's been rattling around since the 80s. So that's wonderful positive representation for me. Not really because it's been remarked on as he's bi-sexual so much. He just happens to sleep with men and he also like every bi-sexual that I've ever known is just kind of bewildered all of the time and not very good at life and yeah, I feel very represented.</p> <p>Yeah, there's so much great queer media out now and for me another great favourite like local Scottish author, thankfully a friend of mine, L. R Lam is a non-binary person who writes these great fantasy novels who has just released a book called Dragonfall which I loved which is so full of great representations of gender and sexuality and was beautiful and you go right back to Marge Piercy and Ursula K Le Guin, these beautiful representations through novels have been my bread and butter. And there has been, especially in recent years, so much more queer media in television. We're no longer just quietly relegated to the bookshelves where we can be ignored.</p> <p>There's so many more films and T.V. shows with explicitly queer characters. There's almost too many to count. A great example for me at the moment I suppose is one of my favourite films is by Jordan Peel called Nope and that has an explicitly lesbian character called Emerald who is a jewel, very funny, and once again she happens to be queer but it's not the point of the story. And for me that's what makes great queer art. Not to say that we shouldn't have stories that are about being queer and that experience or the prejudices or the journeys that you have relating to that because these are important stories. But to also be able to have stories about a person who is queer. But the story is not about their queerness has been the most wonderful part of reaching a more saturated point of our media and video games that's beginning to become the case as well in so many more stories, like Hades which has bi-sexual disaster as one of the main characters, again my favourite flavour and then Horizon Zero Dawn, Horizon Forbidden West has Aloy, she's an incredible character with great nuance and strength who happens to be queer. You've got so many things and it's finally being written by and created by queer people instead of observations from straight people in the writing room. It's by us, for us and it's comforting and looking forward to an era where these pieces of media and film and games come out without the backlash from horrible little imbeciles."</p>	1.20.14 - 1.25.38

1.25.41	<i>Could you give any examples of negative portrayals of queer people in the arts?</i>	
	<p>Loads probably. There's always misunderstandings or misrepresentations of queer people in the arts. For generations and I guess relevantly to the current day is Dune and not in the films thankfully and Villeneuve whose wonderful interpretation of the June books decided to not portray the harkening as gay but Frank Herbert himself is pretty homophobic and wrote Villeneuve's harkenings as like paedophilic homosexuals.</p> <p>One that always stands out to me in particular as the child that grew up in the nineties. And I'm sure that people growing up in the '90s will remember this. It was a horrible time period when everybody thought Jim Carey was the best thing in the world. And Ace Ventura Pet Detective was one of those films that I swear to god I watched so much as a child and I loved so much but the villain in that film was this trans-gender woman and of course when they discovered that, everybody was throwing up everywhere. At the time I didn't really get that joke, what it was, or what it meant and it is one of those thoughts, one of those images that pops up in my mind every now and again when I'm like that is the worst thing in the world that's just so bad, and I'm grateful that as a child I didn't understand the joke. I mean I don't get this, she's not a man, she's not a woman so maybe they're just pretending and she's clearly a woman. And like good on young me for not understanding transphobia.</p> <p>I literally think how affective that could be especially if you were a young trans woman yourself, seeing that and seeing how people would see you as a laughing stock with such great vitriol and as a villain. And that's heart breaking to me.</p>	1.26.02 - 1.28.59
1.30.04	<i>Thank you so much for sharing your memories and making me feel so welcome.</i>	
	You're welcome.	1.30.11
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