

George Hoagland
Narrator

Andrea Jenkins
Interviewer

The Transgender Oral History Project
Tretter Collection in GLBT Studies
University of Minnesota

August 24, 2017



The Transgender Oral History Project of the Upper Midwest will empower individuals to tell their story, while providing students, historians, and the public with a more rich foundation of primary source material about the transgender community. The project is part of the Tretter Collection at the University of Minnesota. The archive provides a record of GLBT thought, knowledge and culture for current and future generations and is available to students, researchers and members of the public.

The Transgender Oral History Project will collect up to 400 hours of oral histories involving 200 to 300 individuals over the next three years. Major efforts will be the recruitment of individuals of all ages and experiences, and documenting the work of The Program in Human Sexuality. This project will be led by

Andrea Jenkins, poet, writer, and trans-activist. Andrea brings years of experience working in government, non-profits and LGBT organizations. If you are interested in being involved in this exciting project, please contact Andrea.

Andrea Jenkins

jenki120@umn.edu

(612) 625-4379

1 Andrea Jenkins -AJ
2 George Hoagland -GH
3
4 AJ: Hello.
5
6 GH: Hi Andrea.
7
8 AJ: My name is Andrea Jenkins, and I am the oral historian for The Transgender Oral History Project
9 at the Tretter Collection at the University of Minnesota Libraries. Uhm, today is August 24th
10 and... 2017. And, uhm, I am on the campus of the University of Minnesota. Uhm, today we're
11 with George Hoagland. How you doing today George?
12
13 GH: I am great.
14
15 AJ: Yeah?
16
17 GH: It is so nice to talk to you.
18
19 AJ: Oh wow. Thank you very much. It's really my deep honor and pleasure to be speaking with you
20 today too. So, uhm, I'm going to ask you to state your name, spell your name so we just make
21 sure we have the correct spelling, uhm, tell me your, uh, gender identity as you affirm it today,
22 uh, your gender assigned at birth, and your pronouns.
23
24 GH: Uh, okay! So my name is George Hoagland. Uh, first name is G.E.O.R.G.E.
25
26 AJ: Like Washington?
27
28 GH: Like Washington.
29
30 AJ: [Laughs].
31
32 GH: Like Jefferson. Uhm, last name is Hoagland. And that's spelled H.O.A.G.L.A.N.D. Uhm, my gender
33 identity is androgynous and I put that under the umbrella of genderqueer.
34
35 AJ: Mhm.
36
37 GH: Uhm, and pronouns I use all of them. Uhm, he, she, and they are the most popular.
38
39 AJ: Okay.
40
41 GH: And I think, uhm, based on feedback primarily from my students, they seems to be the one that
42 is used on me most. For myself, I, I use the first person which is I.
43
44 AJ: I, yes.
45
46 GH: So people like they so I'm gonna go with they. It's a good one.
47

1 AJ: Alright, alright. Well, that's interesting. So you, you cited your students...
2
3 GH: Mhm.
4
5 AJ: ... as being really comfortable with them. What kind of students are you engaged with?
6
7 GH: Uh, most recently I worked with students at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design. So these
8 are students who are artists or artist types. Uhm, but before that, uhm, even as recently as last
9 year, I worked at, uh, the University of Minnesota Duluth in the, uhm, Women, Gender, and
10 Sexuality Studies Department.
11
12 AJ: Oh wow.
13
14 GH: And that is where I think the, the they really caught on so those students were very they-
15 forward.
16
17 AJ: Right. [Laughs].
18
19 GH: They really wanted to like include me in their group.
20
21 AJ: They were they-forward.
22
23 GH: [Laughs]. They were they-forward. Exactly. Yeah, so I'm embracing that. It feels good.
24
25 AJ: So you're a professor?
26
27 GH: I am a professor.
28
29 AJ: Cool. Uhm, what subject matters do you... instruct?
30
31 GH: Gosh. Uhm, most of the time whenever I'm asked to. But when I get to choose my own, uhm,
32 fields, I would say I am foremost a media studies person. That means I work in a variety of media
33 fields. So... not on the production side but on the theoretical side. So more on the, the study of
34 cinema...
35
36 AJ: Sure.
37
38 GH: ... or the study of video games which is a new thing. Uhm, I also do QTIPOCI studies, so Queer,
39 Trans, Intersex, People of Color, and Indigenous people studies.
40
41 AJ: Wow.
42
43 GH: Particularly in regard to media and media representations. I also do science and technology
44 studies so it would be like the social effects of, a particular kind of technology on a group of
45 people. Uhm, I also do performance studies. I used to do literary studies [laughs] in my spare
46 time.
47

1 AJ: Oh wow. In your spare time.
2
3 GH: Yeah, yeah, yeah. So a bunch of stuff. I had interdisciplinary training and I call upon that pretty
4 much every day to tackle whatever thing I'm looking at.
5
6 AJ: So, just, this is just a little technical piece but can you repeat Q...
7
8 GH: So it's QTIPOCI.
9
10 AJ: PO CI.
11
12 GH: So you could say "cutie-poci" is one way of saying it or "cutie-poc" if you wanna leave off the I.
13
14 AJ: Right.
15
16 GH: Uhm, but it's sort of an outgrowth of like what we called in the past QPOC.
17
18 AJ: So the first I is...
19
20 GH: Intersex.
21
22 AJ: Intersex. The second I is indigenous.
23
24 GH: Yes.
25
26 AJ: Sorry about that world. Uh, I usually remember to turn off my phone but...
27
28 GH: See this is, this is a media studies moment.
29
30 AJ: [Laughs]. Right.
31
32 GH: Like we're always connected.
33
34 AJ: Exactly.
35
36 GH: [Laughs].
37
38 AJ: [Laughs]. You can go on and discuss that a bit more. I'm sure you have already turned off your,
39 uh, human communication device.
40
41 GH: No, no. I haven't, but it... I don't expect anything to go off.
42
43 AJ: Okay. Very good. Uhm, George, tell me what is your earliest memory in life?
44
45 GH: Oh goodness, my earliest memory in life. Well, I don't know if it's earliest but I can remember
46 early moments or early sort of sensations I guess you would say, right? So, I remember primary
47 colors. That's probably like the most aesthetic-ly shaping thing in, in my life.

1
2 AJ: The movie?
3
4 GH: No, gosh, no I was in college when that movie came out. No, I mean the colors, like red and blue
5 and yellow and green. Like those colors have always been, uh, sort of imprinted on me so my
6 memories of seeing those colors are pretty vivid, and there isn't any like event associated with
7 them. I just always, yeah, always like them. So like the colors, uhm, in my neighborhood. I
8 always notice the colors in the neighborhood.
9
10 AJ: Wow.
11
12 GH: Yeah, I know. I'm weird, but I'm okay with it, you know? [Laughs].
13
14 AJ: No, it's cool. It's your, it's your memory. There's no judgement there. Uh, where did you grow
15 up?
16
17 GH: Uh, I grew up in San Diego for the most part. Well, yeah, I spent all of my, my, uhm, childhood
18 there. Uhm, but my family moved around because we were military. So I was born in, on a naval
19 base in Japan in Yokosuka, which is the name of, of the city.
20
21 AJ: Yokosuka.
22
23 GH: Yokosuka.
24
25 AJ: Do you know how to spell it?
26
27 GH: So it's Y.O.K.O.S.U.K.A.
28
29 AJ: Mhm.
30
31 GH: So I think, uh, people who's primary language is English would probably say Yokosuka.
32
33 AJ: Uhuh.
34
35 GH: Right. But it's, uh, in Japanese you'd probably say like Yokosuka or something like that. Uhm, so
36 it is a beautiful place. Probably also had a lot of, uhm, impact on how I imagine like, uh, sensory
37 experiences. It's a very lush place. Uhm, and then we stayed there until I was just about three.
38 Something like that. Then we went to, uhm, Washington State, uhm, to another Navy base there
39 in Bremerton. And then my little sister was born, and then we moved to San Diego, and then I
40 grew up there. So we moved to San Diego when I was like four. So, yeah, and I lived there from
41 four to maybe twenty-six. Something like that.
42
43 AJ: Wow.
44
45 GH: So... and a bunch of different places around San Diego so it's not like a... San Diego has—is like a
46 town made up of millions of other towns.
47

1 AJ: Right. I have been there a couple of times, and it was kind of odd...
2
3 GH: [Laughs].
4
5 AJ: ... that is was like, there are these little towns but they're all sort of connected.
6
7 GH: Yeah.
8
9 AJ: I mean, I guess, most places would call them neighborhoods.
10
11 GH: Right, right, yeah. So they, yeah, they don't call them neighborhoods there. They're actually like
12 just parts of the city...
13
14 AJ: Yeah.
15
16 GH: ... so I would say, so, you know, it's—
17
18 AJ: They all have their own distinct identity...
19
20 GH: They do.
21
22 AJ: ... and culture.
23
24 GH: They do. Yeah. So if you're from San Diego you would probably not say I'm from San Diego. You
25 would say I'm from the part of town that you're actually from. So the parts of town that I am
26 from are Chula Vista, which is a separate city.
27
28 AJ: Mhm.
29
30 GH: And then, uhm, Pacific Beach, which is, uh, beach town. And then Coronado which is in Isthmus.
31 So on the other side of the bay. And then... so many places.. Mira Mesa...
32
33 AJ: [Laughs].
34
35 GH: ... uh, Torrey Pines, I don't know, a bunch of places.
36
37 AJ: Bunch of places.
38
39 GH: Yeah, I know.
40
41 AJ: Wow, that's beautiful.
42
43 GH: It is beautiful.
44
45 AJ: One of the most temperate places in the country...
46
47 GH: [Laughs].

1
2 AJ: ... that's for sure.
3
4 GH: It is beautiful and temperate.
5
6 AJ: Essentially the world.
7
8 GH: Yeah.
9
10 AJ: [Laughs]. Uhm, eighty degrees and sunny almost year round.
11
12 GH: Pretty much year round except when it's like smogy, and then it's just eighty degrees and dark.
13
14 AJ: Really?
15
16 GH: Yeah, yeah.
17
18 AJ: Uhm, southern California. Uhm, so what was it like in elementary school?
19
20 GH: Elementary school... was mostly pretty fun. I mean, I sort of, uhm, uh, got to be my most fun
21 self, at least the self that I like the most at school, which is not surprising that I then went on to
22 spend my entire life in schools in various capacities so elementary school was great. Uhm, I was
23 a really early reader so I don't remember learning to read. I just sort of feel like I always could.
24
25 AJ: Mhm.
26
27 GH: I know that that's not true. [Laughs]. I don't remember when I learned to read.
28
29 AJ: There's lots of children who are by the age three they're reading...
30
31 GH: Yeah.
32
33 AJ: ... full sentences and comprehending.
34
35 GH: Mhm. Yeah, I spent time with a kid this summer who is two and a half.
36
37 AJ: Uhuh.
38
39 GH: And she'll be reading by next year for sure, yeah. So, I think it's probably common.
40
41 AJ: I don't know if it's common. I'm not trying to take away your brilliant genius...
42
43 GH: [Laughs].
44
45 AJ: ... but it does happen.
46

1 GH: That's right. That's great. That's like, yeah. It's like, uhm, what was I going to say? Uhm, have my
2 genius archived.
3
4 AJ: [Laughs].
5
6 GH: [Laughs]. Oh my goodness. Uhm, no elementary school was, was really, I thought it was pretty
7 fun so, uhm...
8
9 AJ: Mhm, cool.
10
11 GH: ... I got in trouble a lot.
12
13 AJ: Yeah.
14
15 GH: I didn't pay attention. Also unsurprising.
16
17 AJ: Hm.
18
19 GH: Yeah, but it was generally pretty good. I got in trouble for talking in class and probably for being
20 black. That's my guess.
21
22 AJ: Hm. Yeah.
23
24 GH: Uhm, but, uh...
25
26 AJ: Cause San Diego is not the most diverse community.
27
28 GH: It is diverse but it is segregated.
29
30 AJ: Okay.
31
32 GH: So, uh, depending on where we lived at any given time would determine like what the racial
33 makeup of any school was.
34
35 AJ: Mhm.
36
37 GH: So I think I went to like maybe four or five different elementary schools so they were all pretty,
38 uh, different. Uhm, but in terms of people of color like San Diego was pretty heavenly— pretty
39 heavenly— it is heavenly for people who, maybe, for people who identify as, uhm, Asian or
40 Pacific Islander...
41
42 AJ: Uhuh.
43
44 GH: Asian American, API.
45
46 AJ: Yeah.
47

1 GH: Uhm, so there's big populations.
2
3 AJ: There's a lot.
4
5 GH: And South Asians too.
6
7 AJ: Mhm.
8
9 GH: So I went to school. The coolest kids that I went to school with were Filipino.
10
11 AJ: Ah.
12
13 GH: I still think they're the coolest kids.
14
15 AJ: Yeah.
16
17 GH: Yeah. Hands down.
18
19 AJ: Hands down. Yeah, they tend to have sort of, uh, a soul food diet.
20
21 GH: Yep.
22
23 AJ: [Laughs].
24
25 GH: Mhm.
26
27 AJ: Uh, and some pretty close proximity to, uh, African American culture.
28
29 GH: Yeah. Yeah, yeah. I mean, you know. They, they...
30
31 AJ: The Filipino folks that I have experienced...
32
33 GH: Me, me too, right, so they're like, yeah, wherever you would find black kids you'd also find
34 Filipino kids in, in my, in schools I went to. So that was cool.
35
36 AJ: Uhm, what was home life like?
37
38 GH: Oh, gosh, home was a mix of things.
39
40 AJ: You're a Navy family right?
41
42 GH: Yeah, so we started off as a, as a Navy family, and that was another, uhm, it's not idiosyncratic
43 for other people in the military but particularly for the military in the '70s when things were
44 pretty, I don't know, uhm, the military was pretty generous for, for families and you could have
45 all of your needs met...
46
47 AJ: Right.

1
2 GH: ... uhm, by the military. So we lived in military housing in some really nice neighborhoods.
3
4 AJ: Mhm.
5
6 GH: Those are no longer military neighborhoods in, in San Diego, uhm, unsurprisingly. Uhm, and we
7 firmly believe, I think my parents firmly believe, that we were solid middle class cause we looked
8 like everybody else on the block.
9
10 AJ: Sure.
11
12 GH: We had the same houses, went to the same church...
13
14 AJ: Mhm.
15
16 GH: ... you know, shopped at the same places on the base, uhm, parents had the same jobs. It was
17 very, uhm...
18
19 AJ: Was your mom or dad in the military?
20
21 GH: So my dad started off as, uh, enlisted, uhm, in the... I'm not sure what year he entered but it was
22 right after high school. So, it was, in some ways kind of like a golden opportunity for him.
23
24 AJ: Mhm.
25
26 GH: So he rose up through the ranks and then by the time all of us kids were born he was a petty
27 officer and then he retired as a chief petty officer...
28
29 AJ: Oh wow.
30
31 GH: ... which is pretty much as far as you could go as an enlisted, uh, person. So, yeah, we were, we
32 just look the same as all the other kids so I grew up with white friends and Hispanic friends and,
33 you know, there was always a mix of kids...
34
35 AJ: Mhm.
36
37 GH: ... around. Uhm, home life in that sense was great as long as we were military identified so that's
38 a kind of— I think of it as a really socialist way of living, you know?
39
40 AJ: Mhm.
41
42 GH: Uhm, which was really cool but then than my parents separated when I was about eight. And
43 then my sisters and I moved in, we lived with our mom exclusively and that's when we moved
44 into the projects after that.
45
46 AJ: Okay.
47

1 GH: So, which is also like it's very common that that happens.
2
3 AJ: Yeah.
4
5 GH: So, uhm, we moved to the projects things became a lot less inclusive I guess, right? And the
6 white kids in the projects were like the minorities and like the special people.
7
8 AJ: Oh wow.
9
10 GH: Yeah. Yeah.
11
12 AJ: The others.
13
14 GH: The others right? Yeah. Yeah. The white kids in the projects.
15
16 AJ: It's interesting.
17
18 GH: So that was from— or age eight until, I lived at home until eighteen. I moved out at eighteen. So,
19 uhm, home life generally... it was, I don't know, I guess, uhm... there were lots of tough things
20 but then there were also lots of awesome sweet things.
21
22 AJ: Mhm.
23
24 GH: So a pretty good mix of stuff.
25
26 AJ: Right.
27
28 GH: Uhm, home is where I, I learned that being weird is cool.
29
30 AJ: [Laughs]. Okay, yeah.
31
32 GH: So, so that was, yeah, my, my parents were, were very, were very kind in that regard cause they
33 had no idea what to do with me so I got to like do stuff that my siblings just didn't get to do. So
34 that was cool.
35
36 AJ: Are you the oldest?
37
38 GH: No, I'm the middle kid. I have an older sister and a younger sister.
39
40 AJ: Okay.
41
42 GH: Yeah. Who both still live in San Diego.
43
44 AJ: Is that right?
45
46 GH: Mhm. They moved away, and they moved back.
47

1 AJ: Yeah, it's kind of hard to leave San Diego...
2
3 GH: It is.
4
5 AJ: ... I would imagine.
6
7 GH: Yeah, yeah.
8
9 AJ: [Laughs].
10
11 GH: Unless someone like tells you get out... [Laughs].
12
13 AJ: [Laughs]. Right.
14
15 GH: ... you wind up staying, and I kind of feel like I wore out my welcome in that town.
16
17 AJ: Oh boy.
18
19 GH: Yeah.
20
21 AJ: Well, let me ask you this. When did you begin to realize or determine that... I know you talked
22 about sort of your parents accepting your weirdness...
23
24 GH: Mhm.
25
26 AJ: ... quote. [Laughs]. Uhm, that your gender wasn't exactly like all the kids around you.
27
28 GH: Yeah. Oh gosh, I'm pretty certain preschool. I mean, cause that was the time when I started
29 hanging out with other kids from, you know, all around and not just the kids on my block. Uhm,
30 yeah, I, I think I, it's the feeling that, you know, as a social person I always knew that I was
31 different.
32
33 AJ: Mhm.
34
35 GH: To myself it never seemed even notable.
36
37 AJ: Right.
38
39 GH: So for, you know, uhm, you know, if, looking back I could say for a person who was going to
40 grow up to be an intellectual that seems like a reasonable path of development.
41
42 AJ: Mhm.
43
44 GH: Uhm, but at the time as a kid it, it was surprising to know how different that I was.
45
46 AJ: Hm.
47

1 GH: Right? It was, you know, you've... I would find, I would find reminders of being different in
2 places that I didn't expect, you know. So, okay, let me...
3
4 AJ: Like an example.
5
6 GH: Yeah. [Laughs]. Like an example. So, okay, so next door we lived in a yellow house because my
7 mom wanted the house painted yellow.
8
9 AJ: Mhm.
10
11 GH: And next door to us was this family, and I, I feel like they just had ten kids but I'm sure they
12 didn't.
13
14 AJ: [Laughs]. Okay.
15
16 GH: The kids were just like so free and wild, uhm, and one of the kids was my best friend. We were
17 the same age. And this kid's name was Chucky.
18
19 AJ: Uhuh. [Laughs]. Chucky.
20
21 GH: [Laughs]. Chucky from next door. So, uhm, this is a white family. Uhm, and they were very, you
22 know, '70s surfer...
23
24 AJ: Uhuh.
25
26 GH: ... you know, hippie military family, which there are a lot of those in, in San Diego. So these kids
27 were always outside just running around doing whatever.
28
29 AJ: Mhm.
30
31 GH: You know, they had skateboards and trampolines, and we didn't have that stuff in our house.
32
33 AJ: Right.
34
35 GH: So, uhm, I'd be playing with Chucky all of the time as much as I could. And it would be fine when
36 it was just the two of us.
37
38 AJ: Mhm.
39
40 GH: But then if another boy would come around then it would be like, "Oh no. George," and my
41 name wasn't George then, uhm, it would be like, "George, now you have to be the girl." And I'd
42 be like, "But I don't, why should we do anything different than what we're doing now?"
43
44 AJ: Right.
45

1 GH: Uhm, and then [laughs] it was so funny. [Laughs]. And then, and then the other boy would be
2 like, "Well, okay, uh, Chucky if you're going to play with George then like, like, uh, George has to
3 be your girlfriend then." And I'd be like, "That doesn't make any sense."
4
5 AJ: Yeah. Right. [Laughs].
6
7 GH: You know? And then Chucky would be like, "Okay."
8
9 AJ: Uhuh. [Laughs].
10
11 GH: So those kind of things would surprise me as a kid.
12
13 AJ: Yeah.
14
15 GH: All the time I'd be like, "What? That doesn't make sense."
16
17 AJ: Mhm.
18
19 GH: Uhm, yeah, I'm trying to think of examples like growing up. I think my parents definitely had
20 what we would today call gender panic.
21
22 AJ: Yeah.
23
24 GH: Uhm, it was just poorly managed. [Laughs].
25
26 AJ: Yeah.
27
28 GH: It just, they, they were very careful I think in, in, uhm, how they described me to other people
29 but then at home, uh, was just always me.
30
31 AJ: You were just George.
32
33 GH: Yeah, yeah.
34
35 AJ: Define gender panic.
36
37 GH: Gender panic.
38
39 AJ: Cause, I mean, I have some ideas about it but it's a little more morbid than I'm thinking that
40 you're...
41
42 GH: Right, right. Well, it gets worse over time, right? So when you're a little kid your parents might
43 say sometime like, in my case, "Oh, George is a tomboy." Right?
44
45 AJ: Yeah.
46

- 1 GH: And that's an acceptable label especially for like afab people like I identify so, assigned female at
2 birth people.
3
- 4 AJ: Right.
5
- 6 GH: So to be a tomboy is, is acceptable, right? Uhm, as you get older, uhm, especially like through
7 puberty and into high school, uhm, there are like milestones that I think parents may want their
8 kids to meet, right? So in my case my parents thought of milestones as like "Oh, you know,
9 you're going to, uh, uh, be a good Christian girl." Right? That was very important to my parents.
10 Uhm, and then, you'll, you know, meet a man, get married, have kids, right? So that was sort of
11 the path that they wanted, uh, all of us to be on. So myself and my two sisters. And my, uh, my
12 mom in particular tried to manage that path in some, uh, I think, in some ways that were anxiety
13 ridden for her, right? My dad was less involved. Uhm, but my mom, particularly after my parents
14 split, my mom would do things, for example, like, uh, for every— we go school shopping, uhm,
15 for every pair of pants I got I had to buy a dress, right?
16
- 17 AJ: Hm.
18
- 19 GH: And by the time I got to high school it was, "You need to wear a dress to school three days a
20 week." [Laughs]. Right?
21
- 22 AJ: Wow.
23
- 24 GH: Stuff like that, right? And it never stuck, right? She would make the, the rule or whatever.
25
- 26 AJ: She would make the proclamation but...
27
- 28 GH: Exactly. Yeah. But I would still...
29
- 30 AJ: You would take off the dress.
31
- 32 GH: Yeah, yeah, or not even that. I would just, you know, I would do it for like the day she said.
33
- 34 AJ: Uhuh.
35
- 36 GH: And then I would do something else.
37
- 38 AJ: Revert back to your regular dress.
39
- 40 GH: I mean, even so, like, I, I think I look great in a dress...
41
- 42 AJ: Mhm.
43
- 44 GH: ... and the dress clearly didn't, you know, change my identity in any way. [Laughs].
45
- 46 AJ: Right. Exactly. Yeah.
47

1 GH: Uhm, I actually really liked wearing dresses for, for certain things.
2
3 AJ: Cool.
4
5 GH: I mean, I still would if it was practical.
6
7 AJ: Yeah.
8
9 GH: Uhm, but yeah, so I think that's the kind of like anxiety, particularly that, that my mom felt like,
10 "Oh, there's something, if George doesn't stay on this path then these things aren't going to
11 happen." But at the same time, uhm, uh, I think both my parents were very proud of me.
12
13 AJ: Mhm.
14
15 GH: My mom in particular. Uhm, and I think that that pride stayed intention about what goals I was
16 going to achieve right so.
17
18 AJ: Did you, uhm, stay in relationship with your father?
19
20 GH: I did until actually fairly recently. So, uhm, my dad was always around when we were growing,
21 uhm, which, I mean, even then we weren't as, as kids we weren't even really sure how, how,
22 uhm, unusual that was.
23
24 AJ: Mhm.
25
26 GH: So my parents had a custody agreement that was every other weekend. And, uhm, my dad
27 showed up every other weekend and stayed, never lived too far away...
28
29 AJ: Mhm.
30
31 GH: ... was always around. Uhm, maybe not like the most involved parent in our day to day but he
32 would always come around.
33
34 AJ: But he was there.
35
36 GH: Yeah. He was always there so, uhm, right now I forgot the question. [Laughs].
37
38 AJ: Yeah, no. The question was were you, were you, did you have relationship, that was the
39 question.
40
41 GH: Oh, yeah, yeah.
42
43 AJ: But then you said up until recently.
44
45 GH: Up until recently, right. So, uhm, uh, growing up things were reasonably okay. Uhm, I went to
46 college. He was around still, you know, somewhat. We talked kind of regularly but I started to,
47 uhm, express beliefs that were... he had a hard time reconciling them with his own faith.

1
2 AJ: Mhm.
3
4 GH: And that only continued to get... our beliefs, well, our beliefs, I think, stayed the same. But his
5 idea about what my beliefs were continued to change...
6
7 AJ: Hm.
8
9 GH: ... over time right, uhm, to the point...
10
11 AJ: Not in a positive way.
12
13 GH: No, not in a positive way so, yeah, my, both of my parents, uhm, are, well my mom has since
14 passed...
15
16 AJ: Awe.
17
18 GH: ... but, uhm, my parents raised us in an evangelical, uh, Christian household so today I think it
19 would be evangelical Christianity doesn't look the same way as it did in the '70s. This is also in
20 southern California so we hung out with a lot of white hippie Christians.
21
22 AJ: Right.
23
24 GH: And that was kind of like how, how we grew up.
25
26 AJ: Uhuh.
27
28 GH: Uhm, you know, the, the white guys with beards who played guitars. Like that was, yeah, that
29 was, that was our family.
30
31 AJ: Okay. They wore Birkenstocks and...
32
33 GH: Yeah, yeah so everybody like we were the family that dressed up for church...
34
35 AJ: Uhuh.
36
37 GH: ... but nobody else did. [Laughs]. So, uhm, uh, my dad and I had stayed in touch and were pretty
38 regular communicators and very, you know, nice and gentle with each other until I was in grad
39 school. So until I moved to Minnesota pretty much. Uhm, and through grad school like I tried to
40 explain to him what I was doing, and he was really not quite sure what I was doing in Minnesota
41 or why I moved so far away.
42
43 AJ: Mhm.
44
45 GH: Uhm, he knew that I was, uh, not straight. Uhm, he didn't, still doesn't really know what queer
46 means but I had, you know, dated a bunch of women. Uhm, it's not a bunch.
47

1 AJ: [Laughs].
2
3 GH: Some women. [Laughs].
4
5 AJ: It's okay if you dated a bunch of women.
6
7 GH: I didn't date a bunch of women.
8
9 AJ: Okay.
10
11 GH: [Laughs]. There was like, I don't know what the qualifier is but I'm sure it wasn't a bunch. But I
12 dated women, uhm, and he knew about it and he met many of them. And, you know, things
13 were kind of cool. When I moved to Minnesota I think the gulf between our ideologies just really
14 widened up cause we weren't in close contact.
15
16 AJ: Hm.
17
18 GH: So he would ask me things like, you know, "Okay, you've been in grad school for like four years
19 now. Like when are you going to do your residency?" And I'd be like, "Dad," I was like, "You
20 know, I'm not, it's not, it's a doctorate. It's not an MD."
21
22 AJ: Right.
23
24 GH: And he was like, "I don't know what that means."
25
26 AJ: Okay. [Laughs].
27
28 GH: So he was like, "You've been in school all your life. Like when are you gonna get a job? What are
29 you gonna do?"
30
31 AJ: Uhuh.
32
33 GH: And so along with those conversations, uh, came with, uhm, uh, his questioning my Christian
34 beliefs, which I still hold very firmly.
35
36 AJ: Okay.
37
38 GH: So he would say like, "You know, well where are you going to church?" And I'd be like, "Well, I
39 don't go to church." And he'd be like, "Okay, so what kind of, you know, uh, what are you
40 doing?" And then from there our conversation devolved into like, you know, well, you know,
41 "You know you need to repent for your sins, right?" And I'd be like, "What sins are we talking
42 about dad?"
43
44 AJ: Right.
45
46 GH: And then he'd be like, "Well, now that you mention it," right, he's like, "you know your
47 lifestyle." And then I went like, "Oh. This right?" So it went downhill from there and I was just

1 like, "You know, you didn't have a problem with my lifestyle before." And he was like, "Well,
2 you're grown up now." And I was like, "Oh." So, unfortunately, I decided to stop talking to him
3 cause he had gotten kind of mean about it, actually...
4
5 AJ: Okay.
6
7 GH: ... right before I graduated with my PhD.
8
9 AJ: Hm.
10
11 GH: So I was like, "You know, I love ya but you're mean so we're not gonna...
12
13 AJ: Right.
14
15 GH: ... talk so much anymore. So that's how things have stand, stood for some time. And I, I love him
16 deeply. I just haven't talked to him in a while, and now it's mostly because of like inertia, not
17 because I don't want to talk to him.
18
19 AJ: Right. Yeah. [Laughs]. Life is like that.
20
21 GH: Exactly. Yeah, yeah. So he's old, and he has remarried.
22
23 AJ: Mhm.
24
25 GH: And his, uh, uhm, wife seems really nice.
26
27 AJ: Mhm.
28
29 GH: So I'm assuming he's happy.
30
31 AJ: So he's doing the same?
32
33 GH: Yeah, he's doing the same.
34
35 AJ: How about, uhm, how about your relationships with your sisters?
36
37 GH: Pretty good. I mean when we were growing up, uhm, I think we weren't, we didn't have much in
38 common. We were pretty different people. So my sisters, uhm, my older sister I have always
39 admired. Like she is just like the pretty girl.
40
41 AJ: Okay.
42
43 GH: Just always was, right?
44
45 AJ: [Laughs]. Uhuh.
46

- 1 GH: And my little sister is just always the baby, right? She's just like annoying. Just, and they just sort
2 of stayed that way. Uhm, up until, uh, my mom passed, and my mom had been suffering from, I
3 think, an undiagnosed mental illness that we now probably would have identified as like a
4 bipolar disorder.
5
- 6 AJ: Mhm.
7
- 8 GH: So she, uhm, uh, was in and out of, uh, healthcare and, uhm, she'd been institutionalized a
9 couple of times.
10
- 11 AJ: Oh.
12
- 13 GH: And then, yeah, she struggled with depression her whole life, and I think she just didn't get the
14 treatment that she wanted. So sadly she was, uhm, uh, she had a manic episode one day, and
15 she was driving her car and she crashed her car. And then she was in the hospital for a couple of
16 weeks, and then she died after that. So that was, I mean, it's morbid and awful. Uhm, and it was
17 very traumatizing for me. I was twenty-four but it's something that brought my sisters and I
18 much closer together.
19
- 20 AJ: Hm.
21
- 22 GH: And so we had to sort of say like, "Hey, the roles that we have played all our lives were like I'm
23 the weird one and I get to do whatever they want and there's this one and this one." We just
24 can't do that anymore.
25
- 26 AJ: Right.
27
- 28 GH: So we are, we have been... so my mom died well in '95 so that's almost, almost thirty years ago
29 now.
30
- 31 AJ: Yeah.
32
- 33 GH: Yeah, so like the past three years we have been pretty close I would say.
34
- 35 AJ: Uhuh.
36
- 37 GH: Yeah.
38
- 39 AJ: Wow, yeah.
40
- 41 GH: And they always, they always knew about me. They were just like, "Oh yeah."
42
- 43 AJ: Mhm.
44
- 45 GH: "You're like that."
46
- 47 AJ: [Laughs]. Yeah so, so there, there was never, uhm, a specific coming out moment for you?

1
2 GH: Not for me. Uhm, I remember my older sister in particular. She wrote me a letter, and it was
3 really, really sweet. So I, I don't even think that I had talked to her about anything, uhm, but she
4 wrote me the nicest letter. And she said, oh, gosh, I want to quote her correctly because she
5 said it so great. She said something like, "Even if you had like one eyelash and half a kneecap
6 [laughs] you would still, you would still be you and you're perfect and I love you." And I was like,
7 "Oh, that's so sweet."
8
9 AJ: Oh that's cool.
10
11 GH: So.
12
13 AJ: What kinds of, uhm, well, let me ask you this. What terms have you used to describe yourself
14 over time?
15
16 GH: Sure. Oh that's a good, that's a good question. I think of myself as really effeminate.
17
18 AJ: Mhm.
19
20 GH: Uhm, and so the complexities involved in saying that I think are, are worth talking about.
21
22 AJ: Yeah. Absolutely.
23
24 GH: So.
25
26 AJ: Cause that means there's this sense of male identity...
27
28 GH: Exactly. Exactly. Right.
29
30 AJ: ... with a feminine veneer on top.
31
32 GH: Exactly.
33
34 AJ: But you talk about it.
35
36 GH: Yeah, yeah. So I'm so happy to talk to you about this.
37
38 AJ: [Laughs].
39
40 GH: Okay, so, so in, in my family, uhm, so I, I spent my teenage years in a household of women.
41
42 AJ: Uhuh.
43
44 GH: So here are the, there's my grandmother who moved in with us...
45
46 AJ: Mhm.
47

1 GH: ... uhm, my mom, my two sisters, and we lived in a two-bedroom apartment.
2
3 AJ: Oh wow.
4
5 GH: Right so it's the five of us and one bathroom right. Two-bedroom.
6
7 AJ: Lots of estrogen.
8
9 GH: Right? So there's a lot of lady stuff happening.
10
11 AJ: Uhuh.
12
13 GH: And each of the people in the house, each of the women in the house were very different
14 people right with, with just, uhm, I think of everyone just having like amazing qualities. And I
15 always admired, like admire is too soft of a word but I always like maybe envy is actually the
16 word I'm looking for.
17
18 AJ: Uhuh.
19
20 GH: For the kind of feminine strength that they each expressed in their own ways. My little sister is
21 somewhat. She's the baby.
22
23 AJ: Uhuh.
24
25 GH: But the other ones like everybody had their own strengths. Like my grandma was just tough as
26 hell right. She smoked Marlboro Reds every day.
27
28 AJ: Wow.
29
30 GH: [Laughs]. Right. And her favorite album, like, when she moved, her favorite album of all time
31 was Purple Rain.
32
33 AJ: Really?
34
35 GH: I was like, yeah. She would be smoking Marlboro Reds and she was like maybe, you know, four
36 foot eight. Right?
37
38 AJ: Uhuh.
39
40 GH: This tiny little person and she had her headphones on, and she'd be singing Purple Rain. It was
41 like my favorite thing. She was just like, like did not give a F. Like she just...
42
43 AJ: Would she like air guitar the, the guitar solo?
44
45 GH: No, no, no. She was just, she was just tiny and, you know, she wasn't like super expressive, you
46 know? She's just a tiny person and she was just, yeah, just delightful, just delightful, right?
47

1 AJ: That's a good album.
2
3 GH: Right? It's not the best but it's good, right...
4
5 AJ: Yeah.
6
7 GH: ... as far as Prince albums go. Uhm, so that's my grandma. And my mom, uhm, uh, when I was
8 little I just thought she was an angel, right? She was , you know, very elegant. At least, you
9 know, her outward appearance was always on point right? Uhm, I think she learned a lot from
10 growing up in the fifties about how to be a respectable black woman, and she modeled that for
11 all, everybody in the neighborhood right. Uhm, and, you know, she was just so, just so put
12 together. Very into fashion, very into interior decorating. And I was just like, "Oh, I want to do
13 that too." So she was that, in addition to being, you know, depressed her whole life, uhm, and
14 we saw that but we didn't know what it was.
15
16 AJ: Mhm.
17
18 GH: Uhm, and, uh, she always was working on the next thing, but she never finished things so she
19 was like, "I'm going to business school. I'm going to divinity school. I'm a psychology major. I'm
20 like the leader of the choir at church. Like I'm the one that people come to with their problems.
21 She was always doing that. So very, she had great leadership qualities and was like always put
22 together like very, I don't know, Hilary Clinton-esque.
23
24 AJ: [Laughs]. Okay.
25
26 GH: You know, something like that, right? And then my big sister was a bad girl. Like real bad. Like
27 she would climb out the window.
28
29 AJ: Oh wow.
30
31 GH: She would like, she ran away a couple of times. Like she got into fights with people. She wore
32 the earrings. Like she had it all.
33
34 AJ: [Laughs]. Okay.
35
36 GH: She had long hair.
37
38 AJ: Yeah.
39
40 GH: She had everything. And long nails. And they're painted. And she had the cute outfits. So, yeah,
41 she was just cool.
42
43 AJ: Yeah.
44
45 GH: Uhm, so they all had these, these great qualities that I associated with feminine strength, right?
46 And not identifying in the same way that they did, right, like not being a girl or a woman like
47 how they were.

1
2 AJ: Right.
3
4 GH: I just admired but I didn't feel like I embodied any of it.
5
6 AJ: Sure.
7
8 GH: But I learned from it right?
9
10 AJ: Uhuh.
11
12 GH: So I think, uhm, the parts of me that I identify as masculine are the parts that are the effeminate
13 parts right?
14
15 AJ: Huh.
16
17 GH: So when I think of femininity I think of like that's the tough part. That's the, right? So I was
18 always the kid that was like I had a doll [laughs]...
19
20 AJ: [Laughs].
21
22 GH: I had a doll named Jason which was a little Raggedy Anne Doll.
23
24 AJ: Okay.
25
26 GH: And the doll's name was Jason which I had my entire life that I carried around with me until way
27 too late. And everybody like my family, they were so nice to me. There was like Jason had a spot
28 at the dinner table.
29
30 AJ: Oh wow.
31
32 GH: Jason got to do, Jason got to do [laughs] stuff that I didn't get to do. So, uhm, it, it, the parts of
33 me that I did not identify as feminine were the parts that like were very sensitive right and, and
34 vulnerable. So that's where I think my masculinity lies because I had such strong feminine role
35 models.
36
37 AJ: Mhm.
38
39 GH: So when people ask me like, you know, "Oh, you don't identify as feminine. Or at least you don't
40 outwardly, like that's not part of your everyday appearance."
41
42 AJ: Sure.
43
44 GH: I say like, "Well, let me tell you what feminine means to me..."
45
46 AJ: Okay.
47

- 1 GH: "... because it's like, that would be like hashtag goals, right?"
2
3 AJ: Right. [Laughs].
4
5 GH: I don't have any illusions that I'm ever going to be like, embody the feminine strength of people
6 in my family, but being effeminate is okay. I don't mind.
7
8 AJ: Yeah, absolutely.
9
10 GH: I'm sensitive.
11
12 AJ: Are you a feminist?
13
14 GH: Absolutely. Yeah. Before I even knew what it was, I mean...
15
16 AJ: Uhuh.
17
18 GH: Yeah.
19
20 AJ: What's your ideas or thoughts around the term and how it manifests itself in black culture?
21
22 GH: In black culture in particular I kind of feel like the term is unnecessary, uhm, because people are
23 out there like living every day, and pop culture, however, is very necessary so when I think
24 about, uhm, young people in particular, particularly like, not just young black woman, but young
25 women of color, uhm, who come through my classes and, you know, I tell them it doesn't, you
26 know, doesn't matter to me whether or not you identify as feminist but let's talk about the
27 people in your house in your neighborhood where you're from and the things that they do that
28 you look at and go, "Oh, damn. I could learn something from that," right? And that's, uh, where
29 people's beliefs or how those experiences and knowing those people informs their beliefs I think
30 is inherently feminist.
31
32 AJ: Mhm.
33
34 GH: But, uhm, I don't, I mean, it's, it's currently I think useful for black people to attach to the word
35 because it's like common to pop culture parlance so it's like a handy shorthand.
36
37 AJ: Sure.
38
39 GH: But I also feel like black women in particular have always been feminists.
40
41 AJ: Yeah.
42
43 GH: Do we have a choice?
44
45 AJ: There was no...
46
47 GH: And I include myself in that because I want to be tough that way.

1
2 AJ: Right. Yeah. I mean we worked since we landed on these shores outside of the household...
3
4 GH: Absolutely.
5
6 AJ: ... as well as inside the household. And, uh, yeah.
7
8 GH: Mhm.
9
10 AJ: Provided and raised families and...
11
12 GH: Absolutely.
13
14 AJ: ... stood up for the neighborhood.
15
16 GH: Absolutely. Right. It's called running shit...
17
18 AJ: Right.
19
20 GH: ... which is like yeah, it's always been the case.
21
22 AJ: Exactly.
23
24 GH: Yeah, yeah.
25
26 AJ: No, no doubt. Thank you for sharing about that. Uhm, so effeminate, that's the main term that
27 you... Did you identify as a lesbian or do you identify as a lesbian?
28
29 GH: I never liked it. I mean if it meant that I could go to a club or meet a person, generally a girl, if it
30 worked then I'd be like, "Yeah, sure." [Laughs]. You know. Whatever.
31
32 AJ: [Laughs]. Okay.
33
34 GH: Uhm, but even then like when I had conversation, conversations with my friends we always
35 talked about like [breathes out] lesbians. It's so hard right cause like in the nineties, uhm, this
36 would be like in the early nineties when I was like old enough to go to clubs and stuff, you only
37 got two flavors of lesbians. They were butch or femme. That was it right?
38
39 AJ: Uhuh.
40
41 GH: And it was like one wore lipstick and the other one had a fannypack.
42
43 AJ: [Laughs].
44
45 GH: And I was just like those options aren't working for me right?
46
47 AJ: [Laughs]. Exactly.

1
2 GH: Yeah. And then there were like the cool people who were like Lesbian Avengers, and I wanted to
3 roll with them but not like, not in a identificatory way but because they were revolutionaries
4 right?
5
6 AJ: Right. Right, yeah.
7
8 GH: And I'm just like I wanna be where the revolutionaries are.
9
10 AJ: Sure.
11
12 GH: Although I'm limp wristed. [Laughs]. If I had a chance to take on a sexual identity like limp
13 wristed pretty much sums it up.
14
15 AJ: Okay. Limp wristed. That's a new identity that I, uh, I mean, I know it has been hoisted upon
16 many, many people but...
17
18 GH: Mhm. Yeah, I feel like it only works when the package that you expect it to be in is different.
19
20 AJ: Right.
21
22 GH: Right, so if I were, for example, like a white guy. I would not describe myself as a white guy.
23
24 AJ: Right. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Got it. Uhm, to the extent that you feel comfortable, George, uhm, and
25 if there hasn't been any that's certainly your choice, uhm, but have you undergone any medical
26 interventions as a part of, uh, expressing your androgyny?
27
28 GH: Mhm. Yeah, so I'll, I'll be weird about it cause I, that's where I come from. So I have, but not
29 necessarily. Well, okay, one was, was cosmetics. So I had a breast reduction.
30
31 AJ: Okay.
32
33 GH: Uhm, and here at the U.
34
35 AJ: Mhm.
36
37 GH: Thanks U for paying for most of that.
38
39 AJ: [Laughs].
40
41 GH: Uhm, in 2007. Uhm, but I also at the same time, I also when I moved to Minnesota I either
42 realized or, uhm, started to have this, uhm, hormonal condition that I was being treated for for
43 like the entire time I was in grad school. So from like 2002 to like 2011. So I had, uhm, an adrenal
44 condition called... oh, it's, it's a, ah, it's a good one. Gosh. So anyway it's when, uhm, it's when
45 your adrenal glands produce too much... what is it called... ah, I can't believe it. I can't forget it.
46 Anyway, so as a result of a begin...
47

1 AJ: Epinephrine. Testosterone.
2
3 GH: It's, it's a, so it's an endocrine issue right...
4
5 AJ: Uhuh.
6
7 GH: ... which is wrapped up in like other kinds of treatments. So it's an endocrine issue, uhm, and it's
8 not cortisol. It is the hormone that regulates your potassium.
9
10 AJ: Hm.
11
12 GH: And your potassium is what you need for your heart to beat right.
13
14 AJ: Right.
15
16 GH: So I had a, uhm, oh my gosh, I can see the word in my mind and I'm blanking on it but I had a,
17 uhm, not a cancerous tumor but an adrenal tumor that was causing me to produce too much of
18 this hormone...
19
20 AJ: Mhm.
21
22 GH: ... uhm, that, uh, affected my levels of potassium.
23
24 AJ: Adrenaline?
25
26 GH: Uhm, well your adrenal glands, there, there's a relationship right...
27
28 AJ: Yes.
29
30 GH: ... between, they, they produce a lot of hormones and adrenaline is one of them.
31
32 AJ: Yes. Is one of them. Yeah.
33
34 GH: So, uh, uh, also so I had a breast reduction but I also, uhm, was treated for this condition which
35 doesn't have anything outright to do with the sex hormones that we think about as regulating,
36 uhm, our biological situations whatever they are.
37
38 AJ: Mhm.
39
40 GH: Uhm, but this one is, uhm, this particular condition, uhm, affects hormone balances that can, I
41 think, indirectly affect how you express or how your biology works sort of in a male or female
42 sense right? And I do not pretend to have any sort of intersex condition or anything like that
43 right?
44
45 AJ: Sure.
46

1 GH: Uhm, but I was treated for this condition and it, uhm, required me to visit an endocrinologist for
2 like most of the time I was in grad school.
3
4 AJ: Mhm.
5
6 GH: Uhm, an endocrinologist when they see someone like me whose name is George...
7
8 AJ: Right.
9
10 GH: ... they start to, well some of them do and some of them did at the U, would be suspicious about
11 what I was doing to myself...
12
13 AJ: Got it.
14
15 GH: ... to like make this thing so would be in a doctor's office and one time I actually had a doctor
16 outright accuse me of, uhm, illegally taking testosterone or acquiring it and taking unregulated
17 amounts of testosterone.
18
19 AJ: Wow.
20
21 GH: And I was just like, "Okay, tell me more about like what, how that's working and I filed a
22 complaint."
23
24 AJ: Uhuh.
25
26 GH: Uhm, so that's wasn't, uh, a surgery but that was like a, a condition that had other effects that
27 were...
28
29 AJ: Mhm.
30
31 GH: ... medical, medicalized, right?
32
33 AJ: And so you're taking male hormones or?
34
35 GH: No, I wasn't taking any hormones. It's just my bodily situation, just how it came. So, uhm, I had
36 the most, I think, no, I had one adrenal gland removed...
37
38 AJ: Mhm.
39
40 GH: ... in 2011 which solved my problems which was mainly, uhm, high blood pressure and low
41 potassium. Uhm, so, uh, there are no problems with that now but what that whole experience
42 taught me was that, uhm, medical treatment is such a big factor in understanding how other
43 people's perceptions of your biology work.
44
45 AJ: Hm.
46

1 GH: Right? Uhm, and one of the big things that it did was it really like made me understand like my
2 body is fine. Right? There isn't, while I may want a more idealized gender identity and some
3 days I do...
4
5 AJ: Sure.
6
7 GH: ... uhm, uh, I have no desire to interact with the medical establishment...
8
9 AJ: Wow.
10
11 GH: ... to, to get there, right? Uhm, because who the heck knows what's going on in there right?
12 Everything is working. I'm healthy now.
13
14 AJ: Yeah. [Laughs].
15
16 GH: I'm good.
17
18 AJ: I'm good.
19
20 GH: Right?
21
22 AJ: Right.
23
24 GH: So that was a really long way of saying it.
25
26 AJ: No, actually...
27
28 GH: But I think about these things really deeply.
29
30 AJ: Uhuh.
31
32 GH: Right? About like what it means to...
33
34 AJ: So no future medical stuff?
35
36 GH: I mean I'm really happy to be healthy and not to have to go anywhere...
37
38 AJ: Right.
39
40 GH: ... or take any medicine.
41
42 AJ: Yeah.
43
44 GH: Uhm, but, you know, maybe when I retire I will just get a whole overhaul. Get things lifted up.
45 [Laughs].
46
47 AJ: Wow.

1
2 GH: I don't know.
3
4 AJ: How did you come to the name George?
5
6 GH: I did not. Uhm, so my parents named be something else, my dead name.
7
8 AJ: Uhuh, yeah, your dead name.
9
10 GH: My dead name, right. And my, uh, the name never fit, never for anybody.
11
12 AJ: Yeah.
13
14 GH: Right? Uhm, I think, you know, my parents were a little suspicious but...
15
16 AJ: Really? Okay.
17
18 GH: Yeah, yeah. So, uh, I was in college and I worked at a wonderful, uhm, independent bookstore.
19 And I just visited it this summer.
20
21 AJ: Mhm.
22
23 GH: And I was talking with my, my co-workers, uhm, at the bookstore about how I, you know, always
24 hated my name. I told the story of how I got my name. So my dad named me after an ex
25 girlfriend.
26
27 AJ: Uhuh.
28
29 GH: Bad idea.
30
31 AJ: Really?
32
33 GH: Yeah! I know, right? And I don't know if my mom ever knew that or not.
34
35 AJ: Okay. [Laughs].
36
37 GH: It's a bad idea. So, uhm, so the people at the bookstore we started like brainstorming what
38 names would be good, and I said, "Well, like, I always liked George," uhm, cause I like George
39 Elliot.
40
41 AJ: Uhuh.
42
43 GH: And also George Sand, and they are like two like... they both had these like sort of incognito
44 existences as like literary figures that I thought was really cool.
45
46 AJ: Mhm.
47

1 GH: So they just sort of made a list of the names and then people just voted and George won. So.
2
3 AJ: [Laughs]. Really?
4
5 GH: So I was like there it is. I am henceforth, I am George. And it just, it, it seems, it wasn't even that
6 big of a deal.
7
8 AJ: Yeah.
9
10 GH: They were like, "Oh, yeah. Of course that's your name."
11
12 AJ: Wow.
13
14 GH: So, yeah. Yeah.
15
16 AJ: How long ago was this? [Laughs].
17
18 GH: Gosh, when did that happen? Uhm, ninety... ninety-eight maybe?
19
20 AJ: Mhm.
21
22 GH: Ninety-seven, ninety-eight.
23
24 AJ: Did you take legal steps...?
25
26 GH: I didn't take legal steps until it really mattered.
27
28 AJ: Okay.
29
30 GH: And it didn't really matter until I went to graduate school.
31
32 AJ: Until graduate school.
33
34 GH: So I changed my name legally here in Minnesota for the outrageous fee of like \$300 dollars.
35
36 AJ: Mhm.
37
38 GH: Uhm, and because it was so expensive cause I was a graduate student, who has \$300 dollars,
39 right?
40
41 AJ: Yeah.
42
43 GH: Uhm, so, uh, because it was so expensive I decided I needed a middle name, right, so I changed
44 my middle name too which also was given to me...
45
46 AJ: [Laughs].
47

1 GH: ... by my best friend and a friend of hers who's a professor in Toronto. And I said, "You know, I
2 need a middle name but I just want like an everyday name. And my nickname before then had
3 been George every day."
4
5 AJ: Uhuh.
6
7 GH: Cause I'm just George. I'm George every day.
8
9 AJ: Uhuh.
10
11 GH: And so the friend, uhm, whose name is Steve Flusty who is a geographer in Toronto. He said like,
12 "Oh..."
13
14 AJ: Steve...
15
16 GH: Flusty.
17
18 AJ: Flusty. F.L.U...
19
20 GH: F.L.U.S.T.Y.
21
22 AJ: Flusty.
23
24 GH: He is a geographer at the University of Toronto I believe. And he said like, "Oh, so you need
25 quotidian name. Also don't you wanna be like GQ?" And I was like, "Yeah, I wanna be GQ,"
26 right?
27
28 AJ: Uhuh.
29
30 GH: So my middle name is Quotidian which means every day. So...
31
32 AJ: Wow.
33
34 GH: So for \$300 dollars I got the longest name I could get. [Laughs].
35
36 AJ: That is a great story.
37
38 GH: Isn't it? I was like yeah, it is good.
39
40 AJ: Fascinating. Wow. GQ.
41
42 GH: GQ. Yeah.
43
44 AJ: I'm gonna start calling you as such.
45
46 GH: Some, some people do, and I'm not mad about it.
47

1 AJ: Okay. Alright. Very good. Has, has your sort of outward gender expression, because, you know,
2 people sort of treat us, and when I say us I mean everyone on the planet based on their
3 perception of they think we are versus how we identify ourselves most of the time.
4
5 GH: Mhm.
6
7 AJ: I mean we have to kind of have our people on the head. Some of us who don't, uh, identify as I
8 mean you aren't necessarily perceived, uhm...
9
10 GH: Right, right.
11
12 AJ: ... uhm, but, you know, I would suspect many people, particularly based on your name perceive
13 you as male.
14
15 GH: I think I couldn't say.
16
17 AJ: How it is that they think their right?
18
19 GH: Yeah, that's a good question. Uhm, I think, it's one of those instances where school has been
20 such, like the only place that I can be. I can't imagine what my life would be like say in corporate
21 America where there would be certain expectations of like comportment that I would have to
22 live up to right?
23
24 AJ: Yeah, golfing.
25
26 GH: Exactly, right.
27
28 AJ: [Laughs].
29
30 GH: You know, do you show up to the meeting in a tie or, you know, a pants suit or what do you do...
31
32 AJ: Right.
33
34 GH: ... so luckily I don't have to deal with any of that. And I have the great benefit, uhm, as an adult
35 and as a professional to introduce myself to people in the way that makes sense.
36
37 AJ: You wanna be.
38
39 GH: Right.
40
41 AJ: For sure.
42
43 GH: And then, you know, if things get really weird and people aren't sure what to say, I may be like,
44 "Oh, what's my prefix? It's doctor." You can just call me doctor.
45
46 AJ: Okay.
47

1 GH: Right.
2
3 AJ: Mhm. Yeah. Exactly.
4
5 GH: Uhm, so I think that's probably the number one influence that, you know, it gives me a lot of
6 confidence actually to walk around day to day. It doesn't matter to me what you see.
7
8 AJ: Mhm.
9
10 GH: That said, uhm, uh, I have I think throughout my life been pretty accepting of like whatever
11 people's perception of me is.
12
13 AJ: Mhm.
14
15 GH: So I get ladied all the time, right?
16
17 AJ: Okay.
18
19 GH: I also get sir'ed depending on where I go.
20
21 AJ: Mhm.
22
23 GH: So, for example, I was in Australia and everybody sir'ed me. And I was like what is that, right?
24 Like because I am really short so like it doesn't, you know, you could put a lot of things together
25 and I was like I got a big butt, you know.
26
27 AJ: [Laughs].
28
29 GH: You're like, "Oh that's not a sir," right? But they were just like across the board everybody, and I
30 was just like, "Huh, what is that?" And I came to this, uhm, unsupported, uh, conclusion that,
31 uhm, Australians aren't used to seeing black women traveling alone which I was so I must be a
32 man, right?
33
34 AJ: Got it.
35
36 GH: So I thought that, I don't know, it, I don't know if that's true or not.
37
38 AJ: There's probably some reality to that.
39
40 GH: Somewhat right?
41
42 AJ: It may not be the whole thing.
43
44 GH: Yeah, yeah. Uhm, so, yeah, it, it's, you know, I, I—
45
46 AJ: I mean your haircut is sort of Afro punk masculine-ish.
47

- 1 GH: Right, right. Yeah. So I shaved my head for the first time in '92.
2
- 3 AJ: Oh, you did a baldie or just a straight fade?
4
- 5 GH: Oh, yeah. All the way. Just, just, no, bald. Yeah, so that was like every week. Just cut it all off.
6 Yeah. And that was after years of having the creep. So I had like a little patch of hair right here.
7 [Laughs].
8
- 9 AJ: [Laughs].
10
- 11 GH: So, yeah, my sister would just shave my head for me.
12
- 13 AJ: Uhuh.
14
- 15 GH: Like every week and that was...
16
- 17 AJ: Wow.
18
- 19 GH: ... yeah. So I was just a little punk kid in the mosh pit.
20
- 21 AJ: Mhm.
22
- 23 GH: And all that. Uhm, so I think those kind of experiences had, I don't know... part of me feels very
24 fortunate that I don't consider it such a big deal but another part of me is like it gives me the
25 ability to advocate for any particular group that I could...
26
- 27 AJ: Sure.
28
- 29 GH: ... represent at any given time, right? So, for example, when people from the women's march
30 send me an email saying like women like me and you.
31
- 32 AJ: Right.
33
- 34 GH: I have no problem responding to that saying like, "Yes!" Because ideologically we are in the
35 same place, right? Uhm, if someone refuses to address me by my, you know, honorific or
36 something like that because they insist on saying Mrs. or something like that or Miss. It doesn't
37 happen very often but when it does that's when I have to be like, "No." Right?
38
- 39 AJ: Mhm.
40
- 41 GH: Uhm, yeah, but otherwise socially like the things that we get to walk around or at least the
42 things that I get to walk around with in Minneapolis like people see a lot of other stuff I think.
43 [Laughs].
44
- 45 AJ: Yeah.
46
- 47 GH: They worry about like what's your gender? So.

- 1
2 AJ: No negative police interactions or white women that are not in the academy kinda get weird
3 when you're approaching them in the elevator or walking down the street. Like I know a lot of
4 black men... okay, actually having lived thirty years of my life as a black male I have experienced
5 these things too.
6
7 GH: Mhm.
8
9 AJ: Uh, but have you, uhm, had any experiences like that?
10
11 GH: Yeah. With police, with NPB in particular, uhm, been stopped twice for... it started off for being, I
12 think, black while walking.
13
14 AJ: Mhm.
15
16 GH: Uhm, and I think, well the first time... No I wasn't walking. The first time I got stopped, and this
17 was like not too long after I moved here. So I was riding my bike down Nicolet Mall back when
18 you weren't supposed to ride your bike but it was farmer's market day, and so you can, there's
19 no choice so you're sort of like weaving in and out...
20
21 AJ: Right.
22
23 GH: ... between buses. And I got stuck, and it's not laugh worthy particularly in our current climate. It
24 was infuriating. So I got stopped by, uh, uh, an officer in a squad car who sees me from behind,
25 and I had dreadlocks then.
26
27 AJ: Hm.
28
29 GH: So little bit longer hair then. Uhm, and the officer yells, "Hey!" Right? And then yells, "Hey!"
30 louder, and then like pulls off on me with the lights, right?
31
32 AJ: Mhm.
33
34 GH: And is on the bullhorn. And I'm just like, "What the!?" Right? So I turn around, and this is before
35 my breast reduction even though still I got the chest-eses. So I turn around, and he sees me
36 from the front and he was just like, "Oh, never mind, baby." Right? And I just go, [gasps]. That's
37 the grossest thing that has ever happened.
38
39 AJ: Oh my god.
40
41 GH: Yeah. So then I'm stopped by the police again, uhm, years later. And, uhm, I don't remember
42 what I looked like at the time but the police, the officer in that case, and I swear to god, it could
43 have been the same officer. They looked identical.
44
45 AJ: Yeah.
46
47 GH: Shaved head. You know? The MPD.

1
2 AJ: Yes.
3
4 GH: The ones that, the ones that when you see them across the street you're like, "Oh god. I just
5 want to, I just want, can they just go away?"
6
7 AJ: Mhm.
8
9 GH: So, uhm, uh, stopped by an officer again, uhm, and this guy was just so angry. Like, I'm just like,
10 "Yeah, this could go really really bad." Like I don't know if it's a gender thing or the cop just
11 looked crazy to me.
12
13 AJ: Right.
14
15 GH: Just looked insane, right? So those are two instances of being stopped in Minneapolis. Never
16 been stopped by police any place else.
17
18 AJ: Huh.
19
20 GH: I don't know what that means.
21
22 AJ: Right.
23
24 GH: Actually I think I do. Uhm, and then the other example... you said police and...
25
26 AJ: And professional life, uhm...
27
28 GH: Professional life.
29
30 AJ: Medical. You've already talked about the medical...
31
32 GH: Right, right, right.
33
34 AJ: ... world but, uhm, I guess here's the, uh, five hundred thousand dollar question. [Laughs].
35
36 GH: [Laughs].
37
38 AJ: Which restroom do you use?
39
40 GH: I use all of them, which again is like it doesn't, you know, it's not a big deal. I used to be, actually
41 I, I...
42
43 AJ: The one with the shortest line. [Laughs].
44
45 GH: And usually, you know, it's Minnesota. There aren't lines for the bathrooms here for the most
46 part. Uhm, but I also should contextualize that I'm usually on a campus when I'm using, uh,
47 public restroom or in a restaurant in which case like restaurants really care.

1
2 AJ: Right.
3
4 GH: They don't care. Uhm, but I used to be very, uhm, uh, I think overly concerned about, uhm, what
5 white male students would think about seeing me in the men's room. And this was before the
6 gender neutral bathroom...
7
8 AJ: Mhm.
9
10 GH: ... uhm, uh, sort of wave took over in Minnesota, right?
11
12 AJ: Sure.
13
14 GH: So I would, you know, for example, like during a break in class like if we were taking a bathroom
15 break like I would make an effort to go to the women's room to like not alienate students. And
16 this was like my own head trip because I have no idea what they would have thought.
17
18 AJ: Right.
19
20 GH: Probably not much, right? Uhm, I'm a big fan of, uh, movements to put a label of what facilities
21 are available on the door. To say urinals and stalls or, you know, toilets, or whatever.
22
23 AJ: Mhm. Right.
24
25 GH: I think it's, it's handy to me but, uh, I'll use, I'd prefer it to be clean.
26
27 AJ: Yeah. [Laughs].
28
29 GH: But I'm not against using a urinal but, you know, it's usually not my first choice.
30
31 AJ: Right. Yeah. Huh, wow. Talk to me a little bit about, uhm, love and relationships. How is it dating
32 or relating as an androgynous queer black person?
33
34 GH: [Laughs]. Uh, good mostly. [Laughs].
35
36 AJ: [Laughs].
37
38 GH: I have been, I have been very fortunate.
39
40 AJ: Yeah, balloons and flowers being thrown up in the air. [Laughs].
41
42 GH: I have been, I mean, I have to tell you, Andrea, I feel very blessed. All the struggles that I have,
43 the dark times, the hard times, like I have never, never sensed, uh, being unwanted or being, uh,
44 you know, just out there on my own. Well, I have often felt lonely for all kinds of reasons. Uhm,
45 but in terms of dating, I was really luck. I think I started dating at like... maybe twelve.
46
47 AJ: Wow.

1
2 GH: Something like that. Yeah. Uh, all the cute people. Uhm, when I was little, like under eighteen it
3 was all boy identified people.
4
5 AJ: Mhm.
6
7 GH: And then, I don't know, college time then I started dating girl identified people. Uhm, but then
8 when I was an adult I realized that one of, at least one of the people who I dated, uh, when I was
9 younger like that person's gender identity, you know, was, was in flux as, as...
10
11 AJ: Okay.
12
13 GH: ... or at least they're expression of their identity was in flux.
14
15 AJ: Mhm. Mhm.
16
17 GH: Uhm, as mine would later become. Or at least the expression of it more openly would become.
18 Uhm, we're talking about it more openly I guess. And, yeah, I've had lovely relationships. I'm
19 married.
20
21 AJ: You're married? Congratulations.
22
23 GH: Uhm, I am married. Thank you.
24
25 AJ: How long have you been married?
26
27 GH: Oh gosh. She's gonna watch this. [Laughs].
28
29 AJ: [Laughs].
30
31 GH: You better get ready. Uhm, we are coming up on our three year wedding anniversary.
32
33 AJ: Wow.
34
35 GH: And we have been together for six years.
36
37 AJ: Got it.
38
39 GH: Yeah, so I'm married to a person who identifies as, uh, cisgender.
40
41 AJ: Mhm.
42
43 GH: Uhm, as a cisgender woman. Uhm, although I call her, she's pretty butch.
44
45 AJ: Mhm. [Laughs].
46
47 GH: I mean, I think she is.

1
2 AJ: Okay.
3
4 GH: And...
5
6 AJ: I'm just gonna say every time I've seen her she's in a dress but I just...
7
8 GH: Which is, which is great right because she is so...
9
10 AJ: Which means nothing right? It means nothing.
11
12 GH: Exactly.
13
14 AJ: It's like the perception thing that I talked about earlier.
15
16 GH: Mhm. Yeah, it's a like it's interesting. And we in a lot of ways, I think, because our, our culture
17 here in Minneapolis is, you know, it's labeled progressive or at least it's... it looks progressive,
18 right, from a lot of different angles. Uhm, but white people here and my partner is white, can
19 play with a bunch of different things in terms of gender expression.
20
21 AJ: Sure.
22
23 GH: And we see those kids walking around town all the time, right?
24
25 AJ: Mhm.
26
27 GH: So, uh, my partner, uh, she is a tough woman from South Dakota, and when she puts a dress on
28 she's fabulously gorgeous and she's still super butch. [Laughs].
29
30 AJ: [Laughs]. Okay. How, how, how do you meet people? How do you navigate that conversation
31 when you're, you know, I know you're married now.
32
33 GH: Mhm.
34
35 AJ: You've been in a relationship for six years but prior to that, I mean, or even this relationship...
36
37 GH: Yeah. I would say learning all of the time right?
38
39 AJ: Mhm.
40
41 GH: I mean, I'm learning from talking to you about these things...
42
43 AJ: Sure.
44
45 GH: ... right now.
46
47 AJ: Uhuh.

1
2 GH: Uhm, I don't think. I think I have been sort of insulated from my own, from talking about my
3 own development because it has felt so natural for a lot of my life. So it wasn't really until, you
4 know, I was in my career, you know, as an academic that people started to, uh, ask me out right
5 questions about like, you know, so what, what is important to you in this regard, or what
6 pronouns do you use or whatever? And that's when I really had to start to think about things to
7 say. Oh, so now I have to make a choice about these things whereas before like all was good,
8 right?
9
10 AJ: You're just George Quotidian.
11
12 GH: Exactly.
13
14 AJ: [Laughs].
15
16 GH: Right? So now I have to make a choice and for me that choice is always, like I said, it's political.
17 Right?
18
19 AJ: Mhm.
20
21 GH: So when I publish, because occasionally I have to do that in my job, right, I have to chose like
22 submit, when you submit your bio cause you always have to submit your bio right? It's like
23 which pronouns am I gonna use, and I decided that I would use, uh, for publications that were
24 strictly like, you know, uhm, he or she, then I would use she because it was the one that was
25 most different from my name.
26
27 AJ: Mhm.
28
29 GH: So to show that there was some kind of contrast. Uhm, and these things are, they're always a
30 choice, right. I mean for me. They're, they're always a choice.
31
32 AJ: Sure.
33
34 GH: And it's always a political one, uhm, for the, the people who I surround myself with I live very
35 much in a bubble except when I'm being stopped by MPD or whatever.
36
37 AJ: [Laughs].
38
39 GH: Right?
40
41 AJ: Uh, queer bubble I would imagine.
42
43 GH: A very, it's a very queer bubble, right? Uhm, even like going to TSA, right?
44
45 AJ: Uhuh.
46

1 GH: Like I academically talked about what it means to go through TSA as a gender non-conforming
2 person.
3
4 AJ: Mhm.
5
6 GH: The tips and tricks to get through, you know, as quickly as possible. One is to get, uh, a precheck.
7
8 AJ: Yes.
9
10 GH: So. Mhm.
11
12 AJ: We love precheck.
13
14 GH: Exactly. It doesn't always work but it still cuts down on the amount of time you have to spend
15 like say like, "Did you push the right button? I know you only two."
16
17 AJ: Uhuh.
18
19 GH: If you do that, can you get out of my crotch?
20
21 AJ: Right. Exactly.
22
23 GH: Yeah, so, uhm...
24
25 AJ: You have an anomaly in your thighs.
26
27 GH: Exactly. Yeah.
28
29 AJ: [Laughs].
30
31 GH: [Laughs]. I've been told so many things so that the academics who, who work on that in gender
32 studies, they call it hot crotch.
33
34 AJ: Hot crotch. I've never heard of that term.
35
36 GH: Yeah, so when your crotch lights up...
37
38 AJ: Oh, wow. Okay. [Laughs].
39
40 GH: Yeah. Yeah, it's a thing.
41
42 AJ: That's a thing. [Laughs].
43
44 GH: [Laughs].
45
46 AJ: Oh, uhm... who's the first gender non-conforming or transgender person you've ever met?
47

1 GH: Ever met? Okay, I was gonna say.
2
3 AJ: And how did that impact you?
4
5 GH: Another gender non-conforming person... See, I went back immediately to something more
6 recent because, you know, in the '70s we didn't use those words, right?
7
8 AJ: Right. Exactly.
9
10 GH: So I can think about people that I saw and was just like, "Oh, noted." I have to keep that person
11 in mind.
12
13 AJ: Mhm.
14
15 GH: So I, obviously, I never met Sylvester but like that's like the person that first comes to mind.
16 Seeing Sylvester on TV and going like, "Something is happening there." I like it.
17
18 AJ: Yes.
19
20 GH: Right?
21
22 AJ: I've actually seen Sylvester three times.
23
24 GH: Oh! Lucky!
25
26 AJ: [Laughs].
27
28 GH: So, uhm, but I think in college, uhm, there were people who, at that time, we used to, you know,
29 use the, the terms, uhm, MTF or FTM, right?
30
31 AJ: Mhm.
32
33 GH: Uhm, and that was pretty much the only terms I had ever heard. And I met someone who at that
34 time identified as FTM, and that person seemed so unhappy and so, I mean, the discrimination
35 that he must have gone through...
36
37 AJ: Mhm.
38
39 GH: ... just must have been so immense that he was even uncomfortable what were then, uhm,
40 lesbian and gay spaces.
41
42 AJ: Mhm.
43
44 GH: Right? Cause, I mean, bisexual spaces didn't really exist then either.
45
46 AJ: Sure.
47

1 GH: Right? Uhm, and I remember thinking how when I met this person, who's name I've since
2 forgotten, uhm, thinking like, "White people," you know, like, "Wow, I'm really glad that you've
3 done this...
4
5 AJ: Mhm.
6
7 GH: ... but why, why are you here? This place is so awful for you.
8
9 AJ: Right.
10
11 GH: It's so awful. You know? Uhm, then later on when I, when the language around, particularly, uh,
12 transgender people started to evolve right...
13
14 AJ: Mhm.
15
16 GH: ... I started thinking like, "Oh, okay." And then the internet came around and then there were
17 communities where, I mean, I didn't participate in the communities but I saw people
18 participating in communities and then technology and devices came around, uhm, and then
19 here at the U people were talking about medical procedures and then the history of the
20 university and the... I met a doctor who had been retired and who had started doing what we
21 then called, uhm, sex reassignment surgeries, like in the '80s, and I was just like, "What was
22 that?" And he was like, "Oh yeah, people came here, and they stayed." And when I asked other
23 people about it they would say like, "Yeah, that's why Minneapolis is queer more so than gay
24 cause all the other cities were more gay."
25
26 AJ: Mhm.
27
28 GH: In 2017 I don't think it's the same but yeah, so the most... the people who have the most, the
29 greatest affect on me were celebrities I would say. So Silvester and then of course Prince would
30 be like my big numbers.
31
32 AJ: So you put Prince in a gender non-conforming...
33
34 GH: Oh, absolutely. Everybody in my neighborhood wanted to be Prince.
35
36 AJ: Uhuh.
37
38 GH: Didn't matter what their gender identity was.
39
40 AJ: Really?
41
42 GH: And we all felt like yeah, I am Prince.
43
44 AJ: And I am Prince.
45
46 GH: So I was just like, "Yeah, I'm Prince. Of course I am." Right?
47

1 AJ: [Singing Prince lyrics] "I'm not a woman, I'm not a man."
2
3 GH: [Laughs].
4
5 AJ: "I am something that you'll never understand." [Laughs].
6
7 GH: Exactly. Exactly. And so that went all the way back to, you know, for you, right, to '78.
8
9 AJ: Right.
10
11 GH: So, you know, I always thought that. Yeah. Then there was Boy George who everybody said they
12 would date. Everybody. They were just like, "Boy George is so pretty. I would totally date him."
13
14 AJ: Yeah. Wow.
15
16 GH: I think that's probably still true.
17
18 AJ: You're taking me down, uhm, musical lane here, George.
19
20 GH: Yeah.
21
22 AJ: [Laughs]. Uhm, what do you think the relationship is between the L, the G, the B, and the broad
23 umbrella T? And I wanna really... because you think about this a lot T is out where, uhm,
24 genderqueer, gender non-conforming identities fit within that context.
25
26 GH: Sure.
27
28 AJ: If you can.
29
30 GH: Yeah, yeah. Uhm, I'll try.
31
32 AJ: Mhm.
33
34 GH: So I think there is a relationship between all the letters is fraught, right?
35
36 AJ: Mhm.
37
38 GH: Uhm, I think the idea of solidarity is pretty much what continues to bind people together even if,
39 uhm, identities and ways of being and ways of living don't really match up, right? So, uhm, I
40 think like just in the context of, well, let's just say the Twin Cities cause that's where we are,
41 right?
42
43 AJ: Mhm.
44
45 GH: To be gay in the Twin Cities is very different than being queer, to being, uh, bi is something
46 totally else. We're talking about different populations of people altogether, right...
47

1 AJ: Sure.
2
3 GH: ... who may not like come together for any reason at any time and if you throw in thing like, you
4 know, class and race and gender and ability and all of these other, uh, uh, ways of being in, in
5 identity states, we can see that the tensions, uhm, between, let's say the L and the T, right, or
6 maybe not the L and the T. Maybe the G and the T, right...
7
8 AJ: Mhm.
9
10 GH: ... are, uhm, uh, deeply rooted, right? Uhm, what that means for gender non-conforming people,
11 I think, is something that, that I, I experience, uhm, professionally but not as much socially.
12 Yeah, I don't think so. Uhm, there's that, there's a, uhm, a kind of hypervisibility mixed with an
13 invisibility right?
14
15 AJ: Mh.
16
17 GH: Now progressive circles, genderqueer people kind of rule the day, right, because I, I think of
18 genderqueer people as being kind of like shapeshifters, like political shapeshifters.
19
20 AJ: Sure.
21
22 GH: Right? Uhm, but in terms of like, you know, when you're talking to a community about like why
23 you should be supportive of this particular group of people, the genderqueer person might be
24 the first person to alienate that group to be like, that group might say, whoever the group is,
25 that church group or whatever might say like, "You don't quite fit into that category, you person
26 who could pass as male or female whenever you want to."
27
28 AJ: Right.
29
30 GH: Right?
31
32 AJ: Mhm.
33
34 GH: Uhm, and so for me when I think about being both hyper visible and invisible and then I add
35 class and ability and race to these things, right...
36
37 AJ: Mhm.
38
39 GH: ... uhm, I feel like there's both a represent like hot spot for the need to represent. At the same
40 time like a huge aversion to wanting to like be in that light. Do you know what I mean? Cause it's
41 like I'm not clear at all actually I don't think.
42
43 AJ: Sure.
44
45 GH: But there's... it's fraught, right? So there's, there are these tensions between, uhm, being
46 genderqueer and being in, in solidarity with LGBTQAI and there's two Q's right for the
47 questioning and the queer...

1
2 AJ: Mhm.
3
4 GH: ... depending on your age group, and that...
5
6 AJ: Yep.
7
8 GH: Uhm, and I think in our current moment we have just used queer as a kind of like overarching
9 label. So if you say like you're queer you can pretty much have any gender identity you want,
10 right? I think that's great. Uhm, at the same time, it's not particularly developmental, right?
11 Because queer is not going anywhere, right? There's not like queer plus. [Laughs].
12
13 AJ: Right. [Laughs].
14
15 GH: Right. Yeah.
16
17 AJ: Can, can, can straight identified people be queer?
18
19 GH: Uhm, I think... let me put it this way. I think one's sexuality and one's way of being are not
20 necessarily linked in overt like well they're just not necessarily in overt direct ways.
21
22 AJ: Mhm.
23
24 GH: Right? So someone could be straight, let's say and have, you know, sexual practices that many
25 people would not recognize as heterosexual right? That person to me seems pretty queer right?
26 Uhm, there could be a person who identifies as queer who has sexual practices that many
27 people would identify as heterosexual right depending on where their gender falls and where
28 their partner's gender falls. Uhm, so the sort answer is yes. The long answer is yes and...
29 [Laughs].
30
31 AJ: And I, I'm not, I have no preconceived, I'm just asking a question based on sort of your
32 comments.
33
34 GH: Yeah.
35
36 AJ: Uhm, you made me think about it and I know for a fact that a number of quote "straight"
37 identified people do.
38
39 GH: Mhm. I think about the issues in...
40
41 AJ: Wear the queer label. Yeah.
42
43 GH: Mhm. I think about the issues, I mean, I work with college students so I'm thinking about, you
44 know, people, you know, from eighteen to twenty-five or whatever who, uhm, maybe
45 experiencing sexual behavior in an adult way for like the first time right? And I think about the
46 experiences of students who either, while they're in college, or shortly before they come to
47 college, uhm, identity as trans. And many students get to college with their, you know, their

1 government name and then that government name becomes a dead name while they're in
2 college, right, and then they may or may not have physical changes that go along with that.
3 Uhm, and I, when I talk to these students I get the sense that many of them are looking for like
4 validation in their current identity, right? And they worry about like are they trans enough right?
5
6 AJ: Right.
7
8 GH: Are they queer enough? Are they whatever, right? And some of them really feel comforted by
9 the notion that, you know, I say to them, like, you might not know that you're trans until after
10 you have sex with someone.
11
12 AJ: Right.
13
14 GH: It's possible. Right? And many it's likely. I don't know. Don't know that many people's
15 experiences. But it's possible so I, you know, when I say like, your gender identity and your
16 sexuality might be combined in these indirect, idiosyncratic personal ways...
17
18 AJ: Mhm.
19
20 GH: ... that mean, you know, you, it doesn't, it doesn't have an effect on how trans you are right? Or
21 how queer you are or how straight you are necessarily right? So then when you add all the
22 political connotations and then there's like safety issues and then there's like, you know,
23 community issues and certainly there's race issues because to be like trans and black and queer
24 in Minneapolis is different from being trans and black and queer in New York.
25
26 AJ: Right.
27
28 GH: Or any other place. Right?
29
30 AJ: Yeah.
31
32 GH: You know? So, yeah. I think these questions are like some of them, the most pressing questions
33 like in terms of like humanity that we have right now in the United States especially.
34
35 AJ: Mhm.
36
37 GH: Right, like...
38
39 AJ: Around gender identity?
40
41 GH: Around gender iden—
42
43 AJ: Expression.
44
45 GH: Around identity and expression and sexuality and understanding how sex works at all right? At
46 least having a personal understanding of what it means to be a sexual person. These are huge

1 questions for us, right? Cause those things are so bound up in our notions of what's human and
2 what's not, right?
3
4 AJ: Last two questions. Where do you see the trans community fifty years from now? And when I
5 say trans I'm including gender non-conforming and genderqueer, gender fuckers, nihilists,
6 [laughs].
7
8 GH: Right.
9
10 AJ: Uh, cause that's the only language we have right now.
11
12 GH: Mhm.
13
14 AJ: Uhm, when, so where might the community progress to when you just talked about this as
15 some of the biggest issues of our time, uhm, fifty years from now? And are there any questions
16 that I didn't ask you that you want to be sure...?
17
18 GH: Uhm, the second question I just want to ask you questions and talk to you.
19
20 AJ: [Laughs]. Oh, oh.
21
22 GH: We don't need to record that.
23
24 AJ: Okay.
25
26 GH: Uhm, at least not in this setting. Uhm, fifty years from now, I mean, part of me thinks well we
27 could look back to the past fifty years and recall that like well, you know, first of all the
28 community will be everywhere as it was fifty years ago and as it is today, right?
29
30 AJ: Mhm. Sure.
31
32 GH: It might be more numerous or more visible and the language I'm imagining will change, right?
33
34 AJ: Mhm.
35
36 GH: Uhm, I would like to see the term transgender in particular used in the same way that the term
37 gender is used.
38
39 AJ: Mm.
40
41 GH: So when someone asks you what's your gender identity, you would say what, a variety of
42 transgender, right?
43
44 AJ: Right.
45
46 GH: So if someone said, you know, someone asked me like, "What's your gender George?" I don't
47 say, "Oh, I'm gender." Right?

1
2 AJ: Yeah. [Laughs].
3
4 GH: [Laughs]. You would say like, and, uh, trends are you know trans will come as a descriptor, you
5 know, hopefully in the future gender will come as a descriptor and not like a box that you check.
6 Uhm, fifty years from now I have hopes but I don't know that I have like visions, right? I want,
7 uhm, the number one thing, I would say, I want us, and I include myself in the community as you
8 did, I want us out of jail.
9
10 AJ: Right, yes.
11
12 GH: That's the first thing I want, right? Fifty years, no trans people in jail.
13
14 AJ: Mhm.
15
16 GH: Uhm, and I want thriving, being everywhere, being whatever it is that people do, right, running
17 the military...
18
19 AJ: Colleges.
20
21 GH: Yeah, yeah.
22
23 AJ: Military.
24
25 GH: Yeah. I mean running it as trans people are doing right now.
26
27 AJ: City council. [Laughs].
28
29 GH: Exactly, exactly. So, I mean, it won't even be city council. It would just be like who in the
30 government is not trans right? Because you would need, you would need people with the
31 broadest ranges of experience and perspective and understanding or the complexities of human
32 nature to run shit.
33
34 AJ: Yes.
35
36 GH: Right? So, and that, I mean, is a, it's a, it's a big responsibility for the trans community but I feel
37 like people are already caring.
38
39 AJ: Yeah, yeah. So I think that's true, and I think the experiences of navigating, uhm, multiple
40 identities through time and space do. Uhm, provide you a unique perspective...
41
42 GH: Absolutely.
43
44 AJ: ... on, uhm, many, many ideas that govern our culture and society.
45
46 GH: Absolutely. Yeah.
47

1 AJ: Yeah.
2
3 GH: It is, right now we have a moment where for better or worse like we look to the trans
4 community for, uh, the kind of authenticity we want to see in the world, right? People, I mean,
5 we characterize as like living your truth or whatever right?
6
7 AJ: Sure.
8
9 GH: So but that kind of, I mean, people are desperate for that kind of authenticity.
10
11 AJ: Right. And that's, yeah, that's what I see the biggest contribution of all of this gender
12 exploration, this gender explosion, if you will, is that it potentially will open and free other
13 people up to...
14
15 GH: Yeah.
16
17 AJ: ... live in their truth, whatever that may be, and, you know, I'm absolutely positive that, you
18 know, we're gonna have eight billion or nine billion transgender people on the planet but...
19
20 GH: Mhm, mhm.
21
22 AJ: ... we can have people to just accept themselves as who they are.
23
24 GH: Yeah.
25
26 AJ: And live that truth and reality. I think that's a positive example that trans, uh, identified folks
27 bring to the table.
28
29 GH: Mhm. Absolutely. I feel, like the trans community is teaching us how to work on yourself.
30
31 AJ: Mhm.
32
33 GH: Yeah, you know, in a variety of ways work on your health, work on your appearance, work on
34 your career, work on your, you know, everything, right?
35
36 AJ: Sure.
37
38 GH: The self-work it's like, ah, it's everything for me. I think that's...
39
40 AJ: This conversation, this hour and a half conversation...
41
42 GH: I know, I'm just like oh dang!
43
44 AJ: ... has been so fascinating, George. I really appreciate your willingness to, uhm, to be open, to be
45 authentic as you just named, uh, and really share a lot of yourself, I mean, it's certainly not all of
46 yourself...
47

- 1 GH: [Laughs]. Right.
2
3 AJ: ... cause it's only an hour and a half, and you're life is much more, uh...
4
5 GH: Maybe not actually. [Laughs]. That's pretty much it. I love snacks. That would be the only thing I
6 would... [Laughs].
7
8 AJ: Okay, snacks are good.
9
10 GH: [Laughs]. Snacks are good.
11
12 AJ: Well, thank you so much, uhm, I, I am deeply honored and, uhm, until we meet again my friend.
13
14 GH: Oh, thank you so much, Andrea. Thank you for all your work. This is such an amazing important
15 project. So thank you.
16
17 AJ: Wonderful. Peace!
18
19 GH: Peace. That was awesome.