

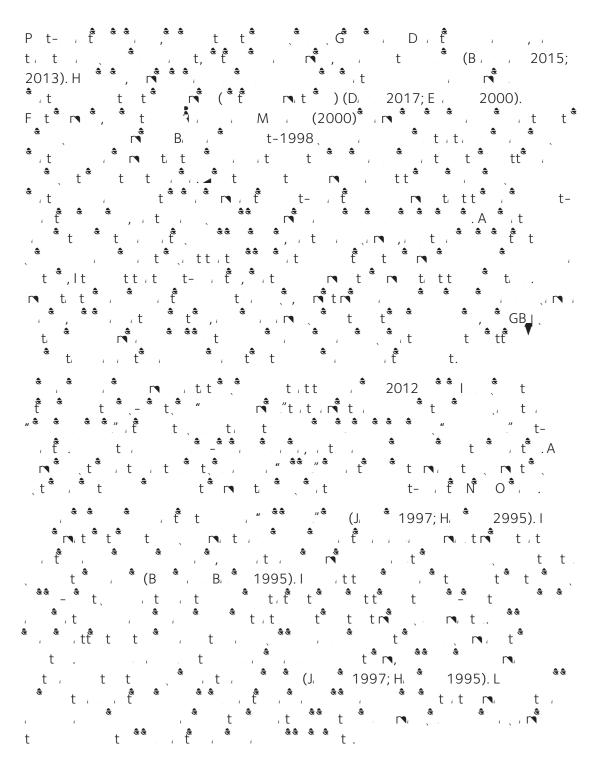
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LGBT+ Liberation: LGBT+ lives and issues in the context of normativities

Monference, November 2021

Summary

Gender, sexualities and disaster



Why relationships matter post-disaster

'If you're not around the gay community you would be in a boat without a paddle."
(Betty)

'I've been going to The Pub since I was 16, 17? The troupe really opened my eyes and try different things and see the reactions I get and I feel like now is the time that I'm getting to finally find my style...I've definitely grown a lot in the past 7 years and I'm really glad I joined the troupe cos I can be myself, I don't have to keep secrets, I can be like this is me...At home, it's very different from New Orleans I mean I live in the sticks, its country. So having to hide with my family and not being able to have my own style you know...me and my mum don't really get along, we're both stubborn arses, you can argue with us til you're blue in the face but we will still fight you. And also she is a very judgemental person which is taught me like my mind is really open to whoever, I don't really judge people til I have a reason to, I have no right to..."

4've learned a lot from different people in the troupe. It's how I came to the term pan sexual. It was Jessica who explained it to me, I was like am I? You know what you're right.....it took a few years to settle into and anyone who really knows me they say I'm an old soul, cos I always act way older than my age...J like everybody. I tried to tell my sister and her friends that I thought I was bi."

"I'd much rather my life in New Orleans cos I'm more open and free but at home I'm still like in that box and I'm still like living under my parents roof so, like if my mum found out I did drag, she would, "Why do you want to go around dressed up as a boy, what is wrong with you? Dehdehdeeeh! You'll never find a man if you keep hanging out in gay bars." (puts on a whispery southern accent).

'My parents do not know. They might have some suspicions about me being bi. But they were like whatever you are we will love you and support you so thats ok...but with the poly/bi stuff I don't know I think it's too much for them to get their heads round."

"Katrina was a big eye opener, it made me realise how much I loved New Orleans, how much I love my life and my friends and they are still my friends to this day, the new friends, being involved in this community helps me cope. If Katrina hadn't happened I don't know where I would have been. I don't know if I'd have been able to come out. I'd probably be married right now with some random guy that I'd have met in college. It's the "what if?" factor. What if it had never happened? Would I still have met Harrie? I'm grateful that my life has taken the path that it has now. I've found myself and I've found a wonderful family, my friends as well, a wonderful community that I'm a part of."

'I didn't realise how I identified as a combination of male and female til I went away out of state and I really tried to figure it out."

"Escaping familiarity, family and friends included was seen as a good way to find their own identities. For Beaux, it was about negotiating her identity in her own way. "[Going away to college because of Katrina] i was also about to discover my gender identity. I became more comfortable with myself because I was discovering myself at my own pace."

'I went down to the pub one night because we had nothing to do. We had nothing to do but drink [laughs] and the pub owner said they had people show up on Tuesdays, on weekends, asking when we would be back on so we were like alright, let's put this thing back together. Our first show back was on November 15th I believe and there were 5 drag kings and we did a full show so there were 12 acts and you can imagine it was total chaos with only 5 of us and there were a couple of group acts you know."

"I'm guessing that everybody had that moment in that silence. The silence right after the hurricane had hit and it stopped raining and the birds weren't chirping, nothing was moving, everything was still I feel like everybody was like standing outside just taking it all in. It was awesome and it completely changed my town to become more accepting and more closer and everything like that. It was easier."

Conclusion: Sexualities shape our relationships

Bibliography

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