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<p>Rheros Iliad: [00:00:02] All Right. Good morning.</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:00:05] Good Morning.</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:00:05] My name is Rheros Iliad Kagoni. That is R H E R O S, Iliad I L I A D, Kagoni, K A G O N I. Today is Saturday, November 26, 2022. We are at Q Lowe's home residence, and before I start asking you questions, please know that you can refuse them at any time.</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:00:33] Okay.</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:00:33] You can change the topic if there's anything that you don't want to talk about.</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:00:37] Gotcha.</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:00:38] And to start, can you please say and spell your name?</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:00:42] Hi. My name is Q Lo. Just, just stick a letter Q and a low, L O</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:00:47] Perfect. Can you tell me what pronouns you use?</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:00:51] I use he and they.</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:00:52] He and they pronouns, perfect. And Q please describe what word to use to describe yourself.</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:01:04] Just one word?</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:01:07] Just one word.</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:01:08] Uh....Curious .</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:01:08] Curious. Okay.</p>	<p>Date and Location</p> <p>Names/Pronouns/Disclaimers</p> <p>Description of Self/Queer Identity/Transgender Man/Trans Man, Queer</p>

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<p>And what words do you use to describe yourself, like, identity? You know, like gay, or queer?</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:01:16] I'm a... I guess I would say a trans man, but I would not say I was straight. I would just say queer because, I mean, who's hundred percent one thing or another? And we're all on the spectrum, you know?</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:01:34] Yeah. So would you say that you're- sorry to cut you off- would you say that your description of that has changed over time?</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:01:41] Definitely. I mean, growing up in, you know, a immigrant Chinese family, you did not have any representation, like anything that was even remotely LGBTQ +, and all the other letters now, was seen as, you know, comic relief or, you know, something to make fun of, something just, you know. Yeah. Not not a good, you know, it's weird because I grew up in New York City and I did not, you know, know anything about anything until much later, like my late teens, early twenties. And it's very, uh, it's interesting because people are like, but you grew up in New York! I'm like, well, it's also very, very like clannish sometimes. Like people don't go outside their neighborhoods a lot of times. And I see that when I go back home, I see people who've never, ever left Chinatown. And I'm just like such a big world. Even in New York is like, you see all sorts of like music, all sorts of things, you know, but they just have that tunnel mentality. I have to stay here and this is where I belong. But it's like there's so much more. You can't just, it makes me sad, actually, when I see those people. I mean, they</p>	<p>Self Identity, Self Description Changing over time, Identity change over time</p> <p>Immigrant family, Chinese family, Lack of representation, New York City</p> <p>Resistance to explore, resistance to learning new things</p>

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<p>might be doing great, you know, if they're in the normal society, whatever, you know, terms of successfulness, they might be doing great. But I'm like, Dude, you never left. You have zero non-Chinese friends. That's not okay. I'm like the white people don't count. You have zero other people of color friends. That is not okay. I'm just like, how can you-! That's such a beautiful world out there.</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:04:05] Yeah, yeah, definitely. So that's a great jumping off point. You mentioned that you were born in New York, so like how long did you live in New York?</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:04:16] To my little mid to late twenties. And then, um, it's funny, I, you know, had to come out as lesbian because we, you know, at that time, trans people were like very... There's nothing we know about trans people. And and then, you know, after I came up here and I'm like, I'm lesbian, this is my wife! These are my kids! Then I'm like something is missing. You know, I met my my wife who had family here at the, you know, very controversial music festival, the Michigan Women's Music Festival. There were, you know, it was problematic because of the whole trans thing. Um, but I was still, you know, very young and I didn't know anything from anything. So I was just kind of like observing. And it's like the first place I've been where it was, there was a woman of color only space. And I'm like, Why do we need those? And it didn't, you know, register until much later. I'm like, Oh, I get it now. I get it now.</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:05:37] So did- was your wife the one who brought you up north or to Maine?</p>	<p>Growing Up in New York</p> <p>Coming out</p> <p>Michigan Women's Music Festival</p>

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<p>Q Lo: [00:05:40] Yes. Yeah, I guess I was ready for, you know, to see different things. I, at the time was in my early twenties, been working dead end jobs, pretty much just trying to find my place in the world. I was very fortunate to meet up with this group of, I call them my group of Amazonian women that, you know, just showed me different things. I learned, you know, they were in a band and I had befriended one of the band members. And, you know, she was going like, hey, let's go do this. Like, Hey, you busy? You want to, you know, drive some of us around? Because we need-- there were like seven, seven members in the band. So that's a lot of equipment and was like, Yeah, I have time, I'm not doing anything. So I got this amazing, you know, tertiary education from these women, like just not even music wise, they played like international dance music's like Afro-Brazilian and lots of Afro-Brazilian...stuff. Have you found during this pandemic that you've lost your your skills for conversation?</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:07:08] Yes and no, yes and no I think.</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:07:09] It's like, you know, you're trying to stay on track and then, boop! Something else comes around.</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:07:15] Yeah. Okay. That, don't even worry about it. It makes the recording more authentic. And don't feel that you have to keep talking. If you pause, then I will ask you a follow up question. So don't feel you have to feel the silence. That's my job. So you mentioned your Amazonian women that you follow. And you also mentioned on</p>	<p>Discovering new “worlds”, meeting new people, having new experiences</p> <p>Chosen family</p> <p>COVID-19 Pandemic</p>

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<p>your background information that you really want to talk about chosen family. So were these women your chosen family?</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:07:53] Um, unbeknownst at the time. I... My dad was number ten of ten, but he was not, he's not close with his family. So as a result, we were never, you know, I should have had a whole boatload of cousins to, you know, interact with, but we just never, never did. And the lead singer of this band became kind of like that, really cool aunt you wish you had. Like, she was the one that was like, here, try this. And she's constantly had NPR on whenever they weren't, you know, rehearsing. So I'm like hearing all these things and watching these beautiful women. And she was like in her fifties when I first met her, so I'm like, I did not know. Someone in their fifties could be this sensual and just sexy and confident and just, you know, I mean, she has her own problematic areas, but, you know, it was just like, you know, (mimics the sound of an explosion). My mom and my my grandmas, cause all they did was work themselves to death, pretty much. They didn't have time to discover things or, you know, just...really put time into a hobby.</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:09:23] So that's actually a really good... (weird sound in the background)</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:09:27] Oh, I have cats, probably the cat.</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:09:31] Would you say that, like, your relationship with your parents was affected by the fact that they were immigrants and you were born in</p>	<p>Chosen Family/ Biological Family</p> <p>Ageism</p> <p>Experiences that are different from what you know</p> <p>Relationship with Parent/Biological family, First Generation Immigrant, Raised in America</p>

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<p>this country or just-?</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:09:39] Very much so. You know, they bought into all that whole American dream, work hard, go to school, go to more school, and then go to more school! And I think, I'll be in school till my thirties. That's crazy. I'm like, I don't think I'm smart enough. Well, you know, I was not, I was definitely the black sheep, Asian. Math? Forget it. They would, you know, you can feel the guilt and shame coming from them, just like why is my kid not good at math? But also they themselves didn't have any higher educations, so it was like all they could say was study hard. I'm like, but that's not really help me, you know. That's it. You know, it was a different world. It wasn't, you know, like it is in the schools now. When the teachers see a child has, you know, trouble with something, they'll bring in someone else to help. And it wasn't like that. It was just like, oh, you're dumb. And I'm like, no I'm not, I can read a book in a day.</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:10:58] Absolutely, absolutely. So for clarification sake, where did your parents immigrate from?</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:11:04] China. My dad was from Hong Kong, and my mom was in like southern and central China and they somehow met and fell in love. Oh, my poor mom.</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:11:20] Why do you say that?</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:11:22] My dad's not a great guy. And she passed like ten years ago. And he's, you know, just it feels like I lost both parents because she was the one</p>	<p>American Dream, Model Minority Myth</p> <p>Not living up to parental expectations, not living up to stereotypes, not being what everyone expects</p> <p>Differences in schools past and present</p> <p>Immigration</p> <p>Parent relationship, Parent passing</p>

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<p>keeping us together. But, you know, it is how it is.</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:11:41] Absolutely. My condolences by the way.</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:11:42] Oh, thank you.</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:11:43] Of course.</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:11:43] It's oh, it...it doesn't get better. It gets different. And you learn to adapt.</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:11:50] That's a very good saying</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:11:52] Yeah.</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:11:53] So, you know, going back to the past, how would you say that your family structure changed when you came out?</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:12:02] Oh, it was bad. The reactions were...I expected my dad not to react well, but my mom, because she loved him so much, she just went along with whatever he said. So they were, you know, trying to isolate me. They took all the phones off the walls. I know kids are like, What do you mean the phones were on the walls? Like, that's where the phone was. Any phone that was in the house they took out except for the one, and I was never allowed to touch it and all that stuff. They didn't want me going out for any reason, so I wound up lying and I hated lying, but I'm like, I have to get out of here because I can't.</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:12:47] How old were you?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Family Structure</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Coming Out, Family Structure, Familial relationships</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Coming out (age)</p>

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<p>Q Lo: [00:12:48] I was...when I came out, I was like 20? So I was a kind of a late bloomer, but I'm like, all the signs were there! I was never, you know, their typical girly girl, always, you know, boys clothes or...clothes have no gender, but, you know, short hair. Always. Yeah. And how? How did you not know?</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:13:24] Did that response ever change?</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:13:28] It's funny, I feel like... My friends tell me I should do a stand up routine about my mom because she would say these crazy things like... I'm going to do her accent. When Quina first come- I just used my deadname, but that's fine. When Quina first tell me this, I did not like. Now I don't care. That's like, Oh, that's the Chinese people for you. I mean, I think we never really spoke about it, but she. Kind of just. Started going out of her way to involve herself, especially after I moved up here and she would just hop on the scary \$15 bus from Chinatown to Chinatown in Boston and then catch the Greyhound up here. I'm like, wow, you're crazy. That's, like, a whole lot of hours. And then she would leave for, like, maybe the next day. I like, why don't you just? Why don't you just stay longer? It's like, oh, no, I have stuff to do. I'm like, You've been forced into retirement. What stuff do you have to do?</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:14:49] Yeah, that's a very good point.</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:14:51] I mean.</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:14:53] So how would you say that your status of, like a first generation immigrant impacted your</p>	<p>Changing response to coming out, Coming out, changing relationships</p> <p>Mother relationships</p> <p>Immigrant status, first generation immigrant, relationship to parents, coming out process</p>

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<p>coming out process? If there was any impact?</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:15:08] Well, definitely. There's so many things I had to, like, unlearn. It's just like, yeah. Oh, what is that? Instead of just being like, Oh, that's a thing, you know? And it's very. It's just so many judgments and things I had to unlearn and discard and be like, This is okay. That's fine. Good for them. You know, if they're happy good. We need more happy people. And also, that's slowly you come to, you know, discover or just think, why is this this way and how can we change it? You know? You know how old people are like, oh, when you get older, you'll get more conservative. I'm like, I'm the complete opposite now. I'm like, burn this. Burn this down. We need a new way of doing things.</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:16:19] Amen.</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:16:20] Yeah. [00:16:20][0.0]</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:16:22] So how do you feel that, you know, race and ethnicity influenced your identity?</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:16:28] Oh, you know, my parents bought into that whole model minorities. Like we would be driving down the street and it's like, look at those people. They're so lazy! And I'm just like. They're just doing their thing, I mean, they could say the same. You can say the same about anyone just standing on the street. Yeah. It was just...I lost. What was the question again?</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:17:00] No problem! I asked how you feel that, like, race and ethnicity influenced your identity.</p>	<p>Changing opinions</p> <p>Race and Ethnicity, Identity</p> <p>Model Minority Myth</p>

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<p>Q Lo: [00:17:09] Um...I had to really... It took me a while to get away from that model minority bullshit and think...Oh. These people actually can't do these things because they're not allowed to. They're...the...things are stacked up against whatever for whatever reason. Well, we know the reason. And you can't, you know, achieve these things, even if you work yourself to death. Like my mom, she...because her English wasn't great. It was, you know, pretty good. But she was never able to get a better position from where she was. She started out in the sweatshops in New York, sewing, and, and then she slowly worked her way into quality control. But she wanted to be, I think she never told me this directly, but I think she wanted to eventually try and design clothes cause she's...she took a bunch of classes, but never formally graduated. Um, and a lot of that has to do with my dad. So I guess... Yeah, there's... And it's gone. Sorry</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:18:51] No, of course not. Don't worry about it. Um, something that I think you have sort of been... I think you mentioned it earlier, and I will articulate it in a slightly different way for the sake of the transcript, but it is navigating queerness without representation. So you mentioned earlier how, you know, you looked around and there was nothing despite-</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:19:22] Nothing</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:19:23] Despite the fact that you grew up in New York.</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:19:24] Right.</p>	<p>Systematic Racism, Model Minority Myth, struggles of people of color</p> <p>Queerness without Representation</p>

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<p>Rheros Iliad: [00:19:25] So do you want to talk a little bit more about navigating queerness without representation?</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:19:30] Oh, Yeah. It just takes you a whole lot longer to, you know... understand yourself or find new things about yourself. I think with the advent of the Internet and, I don't think you... Chat rooms and stuff back in the day? Eventually I was like, Hey, I am located here, or I'm interested in these things. You want to meet up? I'm like, For friendship. I'm like, Oh, sure, yeah, why not? So I got to see different things from these people and I'm like, Oh, wow, maybe this is a thing. And through one of those people, I finally found the Gay Lesbian Center in New York. And it had, I think they had just moved to the new space and did a lot of renovations. But it was like...what is happening, the gay wrestling club? What is it? And, you know, seeing your first transgender person and you're like...Wow...That's...You can do that? Like, this is awesome. I mean, gender neutral bathrooms. This is fucking awesome. I don't ever have to worry about somebody yelling at me or attempting to punch me or something? This is great. But then, you know, after you leave that you go back to your...Your regular life you're like, this could be so much better. It's...</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:21:22] Yeah, I totally get that. So would you say that your journey, discovering your gender identity was different than your sexuality and can you talk about that difference?</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:21:42] Yeah? I mean, I just never felt.... Like my body reflected how I</p>	<p>Navigating queerness without representation</p> <p>Gay Lesbian Center in NYC (New York)</p> <p>Discovering queer spaces</p> <p>Gender Identity, Sexuality, Journey discovering self identity</p>

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<p>felt on the inside and... You know, at that time, all you hear, you didn't really hear much about it. Maybe about the lady boys in Thailand and stuff like that, and you're just like, but is there an opposite? Because you never heard about that. But we all know anyone who probably did make the change at that time was just underground for safety reasons. But um... And as far as sexuality, I always knew I was attracted to women, you know? And before, you know, as a little kid, I'm like... Please, God, just make me a boy, I'll be the best person ever. This, this is, you know, this isn't right. You made a mistake. And, you know, eventually you, you know... we learned those two things were not one in the same. It could be completely different. And it's, it's still funny when I mentioned that to people and they're like, What? What do you mean? Like, get with the program! But it's like, what do you mean? Sex and gender are different? They're different.</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:23:21] Yeah.</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:23:24] It's like, but you don't find that nature! I'm like, actually, you do. What do you mean? Ugh, Go study some biology. I had wanted become a veterinarian when I was very little, and, you know, as a result, I had a bunch of, you know, science classes. But that never came to fruition. But, like, it's true. Go look it up.</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:23:56] Did you go to college and what did you study? [00:23:57][1.2]</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:23:57] I did. I tried going right after high school, and I went for two years to Pace University to study biology and</p>	<p>Discovering gender identity, gender identity, sense of self, lack of queer representation</p> <p>Changing times, changing opinions</p> <p>College, Education, Study</p> <p>Pace University</p>

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<p>pre-veterinary stuff. And then I dropped out. Again, you know, it was just navigating that time, just where should I go to college? You know, all I knew was, all I was hearing was, got to go to college, got to go to college. You know, you got to go to college. I'm like, okay. I don't know where to go, you know. At first I was going to go to college in the city, but I'm like, I kinda want to get away from home for a little bit, just to see how it's like. So I wound up going to the same college, but at a different campus, like up in Westchester, which isn't that much further, but it's a whole different world because it's Westchester. Everyone drives, no one walks, cause, every time you're walking in town, everyone looks at you because you don't have a car or you know, it's anyone else who's walking is black and brown people because they have service jobs. And that was probably not the best place for me. And I didn't find out until way later that at SUNY Purchase, which was the gayest campus ever, I'm like, I could have, could have, you know, but I didn't have those resources or anyone who was a mentor, say, Hey, you should probably go here. You probably have a better experience. So I dropped out and I wound up just working for a few years and I tried going back to college in the city university system. But this time I changed to art, which, you know, was my two loves of science and art. But still, I didn't really have a direction. So I dropped out again and worked a bunch and met my friends in the band and they're like, Oh, we got invited to play at this festival in Michigan, you should... They were they were allowed only one guest and they were like seven, and I'm like, okay. How else can I get there besides paying the 300 bucks?</p>	<p>Dropping out of college</p> <p>Returning to college</p> <p>Classism</p> <p>Lack of resources, lack of mentor</p> <p>Dropping out of college, returning to college</p> <p>Lack of direction</p> <p>Michigan Women's Festival, Volunteering</p>

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<p>They're like, Oh, you could volunteer to work and one of the women had already been there, and was like you probably have a great time, you know, you'll fucking... you're mind will go (mimics explosion). I'm like, okay. So I went in and then I just jumped off the deep end and volunteered for a whole month of this. You get there, it's just like 600 acres of pristine land and everything just gets built from the ground up. All the materials and stuff are in storage, in the local barns and stuff, and it was really, really amazing experience just to see what can be accomplished by, you know, a group of women with one focus, just to put on this festival and then like... Seeing the different body types and all these beautiful women just confident, no matter what they looked like or what ethnicity, whatever, doesn't matter. I'm like, Wow... this is great. This is amazing. And like, for the first time, I'm like, I'm not fat! Because Asian culture is really fatphobic and I'm like, I'm not fat, fuck that bullshit. Like, these women are fat and they don't fucking care! And they're beautiful! And, and I don't remember what you asked me in the beginning.</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:28:16] We were talking about college.</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:28:17] Okay? College.</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:28:20] You can keep talking about that experience, if you want.</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:28:23] It was very, I mean. It really as problematic as the festival was around the trans issue, it was a very nurturing...space for someone to finally be able to say, Oh... I want to try this. See how I like it? Like, everyone walk around</p>	<p>Body standards, Body image, body image issues</p> <p>Fatphobia</p> <p>Michigan's Women's Festival</p>

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<p>without their shirts on... should I do it too? I don't know. I'll try once. Okay. Not for me.</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:28:59] Something that you've mentioned with this festival a lot, is the issue of... What you said the issue of transness. But you've also said that it was very good experience for you.</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:29:13] It... it is a weird thing. Like, when I first... There was a protest camp called Camp Trans that would also assemble around the same time that this festival would go on. And because this festival's policy was, at first, it was woman born women only. And I'm like, okay. And then, you know, the first time I'm hearing about trans people going, we want to be included, too. And then all these older TERFy women were like, but you only had a male experience growing up, I'm like, How? And I, you know, didn't have an opinion cause I didn't know everything, or I still don't know everything, but, you know, I didn't have enough information to be like, oh, but, they were all the boys that were, you know, picked on because they weren't man-boy enough and all those things that or they were super hyper masculine because they were so afraid... You know, that someone would find out that they were different. So there was this whole like, oh, but you know, you have parts. But they're just parts. We all know that a penis doesn't make a man. Same with vagina, you know. But, it was the main, I think, reason why a lot of women didn't want trans women. Like but? But at that time I didn't, you know, have that opinion yet or think, you know, it. I guess in my gut I thought it is... weird that we're excluding this population of women. So what if they were born a</p>	<p>Good experience in problematic spaces</p> <p>Camp Trans</p> <p>Transphobia, Transphobia in women's spaces, transmisogyny</p> <p>TERF</p> <p>Gender vs Sex, Gender debate</p> <p>Growing opinions</p>

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<p>for your art because then you have to deal with more people.</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:34:00] So do you consider yourself to be an artist?</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:34:07] I... That's hard for me because, like... You know, I come from a blue collar family and it's hard to say that? Because then, you know, you have all this other stuff attached to that word. Like, oh, starving artist, tortured artist, just, you know, pining away the days, looking for inspiration. And like, I have no time to pine away looking for inspiration cause I have to work to put a roof over my head. It was very, you know... It was nice to see the creativity and the inspiration from other people, you know, especially when they create something really, really awesome. But at the same time, you're like, you know, if I had that time... If I didn't have to hustle just to eat and all this stuff, I wonder what I could be making. And the same for everyone else. You know, if people didn't have to hustle, every day, they would be doing more creative things. I'm like, can you imagine the innovation? Just happening, because people don't have to worry and it's like, why can't this world be like?</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:35:45] So it sounds like there's definitely a class issue?</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:35:51] Yes, very much so.</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:35:54] That came up?</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:35:55] And also... Very just white, very white everything, like it was hard to see when someone would have a, um, project about race and then they didn't exactly do their due diligence, just</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Art</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Creativity, Inspiration, "Hustle Culture", Poverty</p> <p style="text-align: center;">White Privilege, White Centrism, White Supremacy</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Performative Allyship</p>

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<p>like just surface. This is where the like the, you know, just the, oh, I'm an ally. I'm like, really? Are you? So...what do you think about this? And they're just like, Oh, I didn't know about that. I'm like... What research did you do for this project? It's just... Are you doing this just for clout, like. Oh, I'm an ally, you know. But what do you actually do? You know, what's the actions you do to actually earn that title, Ally? Are you going to, you know, stop in the street when you see some... Brown person being pulled over, and just to make sure they're not going to get, you know, shafted? Do you, you know, do you do any of those things? Do you stand up to your friends when they say something weird or, you know, just something that they don't quite understand? Are you going to say something? Or are you just going to let it go? You know, it's not just with, you know, racism. It's like, you know, sexism, the same thing. You know, you see that dynamic, like whenever you have critiques, it's always the guys, woo woo, woo, woo, woo. I'm like, she's not done yet. She's still talking. And also, you just repeated what she just said. Can you just (makes shushing noise) zip it? Listen! You know, are you listening to respond? Are you listening to understand? It's just like, it's a whole (unintelligible). I found that very, um, is like racism, classism, sexism and it's still prevalent in like... The professors, really, you know, same thing there, because they're all in... The certain class, you know, they have nice homes, blah, blah, blah. And you like do you? I'm, you know, your age. I have kids, but I have to work three, three part time jobs to fucking come here and you don't, you can't quite bridge that gap, because you never had to do this. And it is like no one knew really what to do with me cause,</p>	

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<p>you know, I am about their age, you know, or if not the same age. But I just come from such a different background and they didn't quite understand me. And I'm just like... this is this is part of why I never really wanted to go to art school, because I knew this was going to happen.</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:39:15] So you saw a lot of like performative allyship?</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:39:18] Yes. It's like, yes. You know, the president will come out with a statement any time, like something really bad went down. Like, what are you really doing in the school to make sure, you know, the students understand what is the problem, and how they can help to fix it, you know? You know, we're not expecting you to do every single thing, like, really, you know, but just chip at, and more people that chip away at it, then we can solve it. I think that's a lot of times where people get like, Oh, but I can't, I can't do anything. I'm like every little bit helps, you know? Just even just correcting your friends when they say stupid things like, I don't understand, you were born here. Why can't they, you know, do this stuff like everyone else? I'm like that's the American fallacy. It's, you know, it's it's hard to, especially when you talk to other, um, other minorities that are a lighter in scale and they're like, I don't understand. My parents came here and they built local law. And I'm like, that's because we were allowed to. If you haven't noticed, we reach a certain point and then, (mimics explosion). You know, you're like, Oh, I worked hard. Like you had more opportunities than... This group. It's like... And they can't get over it. Like, it's like it's not just the hard work you did, you were allowed these opportunities.</p>	<p>Performative Allyship at administration level, Performative Actions</p> <p>Racism, Cultural Barriers, Colorism</p>

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<p>And... It's hard to talk to people about that because they get all in their feelings. It's like, but I, I work so hard! I'm like, I'm not dismissing your hard work. I'm just saying you were allowed these opportunities that this other group will never have, and, under the current system, and they're like (mocking noise). And you still got like. You got to detach.</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:41:50] Did you... So this is going to take a slight pivot, but we're going to continue talking about performative, activi- allyship and activism. Did you see these same, or did you have these conversations while in queer centric groups?</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:42:11] Once in a while? It's usually... I mean, not to knock a whole group of people but, you know, it's usually white gay males. They still have you know, they're white and they're male. And they are... They get that privilege, but they don't quite... You know, they don't quite admit it. You know, just like, but, you know, blah, blah, blah, blah. I'm like, still, you're a white male in this society and that makes you on top, even though you're gay.</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:42:59] Absolutely. So.</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:42:59] And also, I hate to say it, but a lot of white lesbians of a certain age, they still have that kind of boomer mentality like, oh yeah, you know, we had to scramble for all this stuff. Like, yes, that's part of our job is to make the future better for whoever comes along. And it's, I guess it's like, this whole, like, student loan thing is like, I paid off my student loan. I'm like, that's great. You were able to, you know, afford to have a job that you</p>	<p>Performative Allyship in Queer Spaces</p>

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<p>something doesn't like their fucking steak. So then you have to make space for that steak in the middle of everything else that's happening. I think that might not be intellectual or whatever, but that is like on the feets thinking, and not a lot of people can hack that and not, you know, get themselves hurt or... And it's just like, what is this elitism?</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:46:48] Yeah. It's a class issue.</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:46:51] Again! Which is weird because, you know, my ex-wife, her family is also like not quite working class but, you know, lower middle class. So they weren't like, you know, in the lap of luxury. So I'm like, where did all this come from? And I'm like (sighs)... we're not a good match.</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:47:21] Time for a divorce.</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:47:25] Uh, yeah, that that was hard. I'm like, you know... I don't think this working out.</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:47:33] Back to the employment.</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:47:37] Yeah</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:47:38] Was there any particular form of employment that you liked or disliked out of those service jobs?</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:47:46] I mean, every job has its pros and cons. I mean, I enjoyed it when I could actually help someone or make their day, you know, but... You know, that, you know, just knowing you helped someone is, has always been like, you</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Preferred Employment</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Importance of Helping People</p>

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<p>know, a thing for me. So this is, I guess, part of why I started working at um, Portland Housing Authority. But that's a whole other story. Not a lot to talk about.</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:48:23] Would you like to talk about it?</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:48:24] Of course.</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:48:26] Go right ahead then.</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:48:29] It's...I find in a lot of...Like... Nonprofit or organizations where you're actually trying to help people, all the wrong people are in leadership... Yeah, he's never going to hear this. My supervisor is a horrible supervisor. It's like, he... His father was a cop. He's from Florida. Two things already against him, and he run...Yeah...Thank God for, I mean, I don't... we're moving away from being a nonprofit and going into a private sector, which is really not... not where it should be. I mean, it was already kind of bad and I can't imagine how much better it's going to get. But he ran it like he was a cop. And he, I could tell he would look down on our tenants and I'm like, it's not their fault they're in public housing. You know, people, people have a right for, to have safe space to live. Housing is a right. And it's, it's this whole, like, for profit. Um, we're getting like, our, our rent just got hiked up 200 bucks a month and I'm like, do you realize people, come up to Lewiston because they can't afford anywhere else? And you're charging like Portland prices, this is crazy. But I could see that he operated, my supervisor in this whole... Kind of like just not cool way. He would tell information only to certain</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Portland Housing Authority</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Inadequate Leadership, Wrong People in Leadership, Mismanagement</p>

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<p>people or he would try, or he tries to play people against each other and just like... And then he also tries to sneak around, catching people, slacking off. I'm like, Don't you actually have things to direct as a director of something instead of just, you know, you're not a cop? And I'm like... You tried to become a cop, but they didn't want you, did they? I can, you know, I, yeah. This whole like... I am the boss mentality and just. Like, I don't care that your wife is Spanish, you're probably racist, too. It's like, I feel so bad for your kids because they're going to have this... Model minority thing going on too, because oh, it is not the thing to be perpetuating. Yeah. Yeah.</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:51:43] So, are you out at work?</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:51:47] To... To my supervisors, I'm out. But for the most part, I think only one or two people out of all the coworkers I'm friendly with know. No, so it's very... It's a very high testosterone place or at least in the maintenance part of it. You know, I'm just like, wow, this is what happens when you live in a fishbowl. And I, you know, my, my Spanish coworkers are like, no one wants to work anymore. And I'm like, no, no, no, no, no one wants to be exploited any more. You know, like this is what, like when he complains about his interactions with a supervisor and yet at the same time he does a lot of things our supervisor does, I'm like, no, you're, you're buying into it. This is, you're, he's not allowed to ask you why you want time off, that is illegal. Illegal? He's like, Oh, I know. But he never says anything because he's so afraid of losing his job. And I'm like, Oh. And he's like, I think I want to go back to school. Like, Yes,</p>	<p>Out at Work, Queerness at work</p> <p>Misinformation</p> <p>Workplace Difficulties</p>

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<p>things to be better for your coworkers. That's the whole point of this union thing. Now, it's just unfortunate because the unions have lost so much power, especially after Reagan. You know, that guy. Messed up so many things.</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:55:44] Absolutely. To sort of get back to your queerness and employment, how do you gauge in the place that you are now, like, how do you gauge who you do come out or who you do not come out to?</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:56:03] Usually, I have to have at least a few conversations, not just like, oh, look at the weather, you know, just. Feeling them out. And, you know, if I hear like certain details, I'll be like, hm, maybe this person will be okay to come out to. But for the most part, I'll just, you know, observe and be like, probably not. It's, I guess it's important to have that, that gut instinct. It's... It's a, it was a much needed skill when I was growing up, but still it's useful and everyone should have a good, you know, gut reaction about things because it's your intuition talking to you. And we're, you know, too often told to ignore that.</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:57:07] Do you think you have a different feeling or opinion on coming out now that you're older, compared to when you were younger? Or has it stayed throughout your...</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:57:26] It's pretty much been the same. It was know, if I felt safe with that person, then I would, you know, you know, discuss certain things. Before I would actually say, hey, I'm trans or, or at that time I'm gay and I, I use gay for... Everything because it's just easier.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Queerness in the workplace</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Deciding to come out, how to decide who to come out too</p>

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<p>Rheros Iliad: [00:58:01] Absolutely. So we are coming up on our time limit.</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:58:04] Okay.</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:58:05] But is there anything that we haven't talked about already that you would like to discuss or expand upon?</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:58:11] Um. We just, you know, uh, need to stay curious and give a crap about someone that doesn't look like us or, or is in the same situation as us. And I care that the landlord across the street is a frickin slumlord because their garbage is out of control all the time. And, it makes me mad,.</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:58:48] Of course.</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:58:49] Mm hmm.</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [00:58:49] And how are you using the word curious in this context?</p> <p>Q Lo: [00:58:53] Curious? Just wanting to know more about something that you don't know anything about or you know, you just see something and be like, Huh? I wonder what that is about and actually research it. You know, we have a wonderful thing called the Internet now. It wasn't like before where you had to go to the library or know someone who knew about that stuff or whatever you're thinking about. And it's very annoying when in this day and age someone goes, Oh, I didn't know that Google is free. Google is free. Or, you know, it was annoying working in restaurants and being like, Oh, there's this and this is this, and these things go along with it. And</p>	<p>Need to stay curious, need to care about neighbors & other people</p> <p>The Importance of staying curious</p>

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<p>they're like, I didn't know that! And then they go, This is my favorite kind of food! And I'm like, and you didn't know that? Google is free.</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [01:00:05] One last question that I would like to ask before we end this interview... What do you have to say about, you know, the, I guess, concern of misinformation? Because sometimes researching can lead to misinformation.</p> <p>Q Lo: [01:00:19] Just making sure your sources are vetted. Like, is it a peer reviewed thing article or whatever? Or is it just an opinion piece, because people are so easily, they don't, you know, realize that an opinion piece is not facts, it's opinions. Opinions. Everyone has one. They're not all fresh. Whatever facts are facts, but like, well, so why does science keep changing? Like, because they found better facts. Because they didn't just stop there. And you have to revisit what you know every so often to make sure it's still valid. And it's just, I think it's just laziness. It's like, Oh, this person says this, I'm good with that. Like, but how? What are that person's credentials? Are they expert in this thing or you know... Or are they just talking about it without any real knowledge? That's that's important. That's a reason why so many people learn, like, oh, spouting misinformation. And it's just, ah, dude, part of our responsibility being on this earth is to be aware of things. Why are, why are we supposed to be mad about this? Because this, this and this. It's like, oh, I thought that was just a rumor. Like, No, you got to got to do the research. I mean, it's... A few minutes or more. Just, just do it. It just. Just do it. Yeah.</p>	<p>The concern of misinformation</p> <p>How to combat misinformation, doing your own research</p>

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<p>Rheros Iliad: [01:02:36] Is there anything else you wanted to..?</p> <p>Q Lo: [01:02:39] Uh, no, thank you for coming out.</p> <p>Rheros Iliad: [01:02:42] Thank you for taking the time to complete this interview.</p>	<p>End</p>