

Race and Sexuality

>>> Hello and welcome to InsideOUT. It is 3:00 p.m. on Thursday. You're listen to KCOU Columbia, 88.1ful. I am DJ discovery.

>> I'm DJ Shane.

>> We have two amazing guests today. Hello, guests.

>> Hi, I guess I'm DJ Venus.

>> Hi, DJ Venus.

>> Hi, I'm DJ Jeff Mugler.

>> Hello, DJ Jeff Mugler. Did I get that right?

>> Yes, you did.

>> Excellent. I'm glad to hear it. Hey out there, listeners, welcome back. It is school again.

>> How was everybody's break? I mean I know you can't answer, but break was fun. It is rough to be back. We've got three weeks plug and chug. Everybody can do it.

>> This week is almost over.

>> Plug and chug.

>> One week of classes.

>> Thank God. I'm ready to go.

>> DJ Venus, you are leaving us.

>> Yes.

>> Congratulations.

>> It's so hard to say good-bye to yesterday.

>> It is. It's hard to say good-bye to my sorority sister.

>> Indeed.

>> Preaches devine incorporated.

>> All right.

We're going to jump right in. Today we are talking about intersections between race and sexuality. InsideOUT is an hour long conversation not comprehensive nor could it be but we like to talk about it and cover what we can. If you have throughouts tweet at us @MULGBTQ #insideOUT and then we will respond to you as quickly as possible. Make sure we remember to look at the twitter screen.

>> Exactly.

>> We will do our best. So guests, do you want to maybe give us kind of a brief coming out story and just help us get to know you and where we're at and then we'll keep on talking?

>> Okay. I'll start. I came out to my best friend first in high school. I came out about my -- around probably my junior year of fall in high school. I came out to my best friend first. I sent her a Facebook message, I think, or whatever. I had a big

crush on my coach -- well, he wasn't my coach, but you know the coaches around school. He was really cute. He was Egyptian. He was exotic. Not necessarily in denial but, you know, you don't really know what to call it, you know, when you're younger.

>> Yeah.

>> Yeah, I came out when I was 17. I came out to my mother then. It's just been from there. Yeah, I don't know, I'm pretty open about it. That's my coming out story.

>> I like what you said about you don't quite necessarily understand it. I remember, I just thought -- for me identifying as a woman who liked other woman. I thought everybody looked at women like that. I was straight but sexually attracted to women. But of course I was straight. That's what everybody was. Then I was like oh, other girls don't look at girls the way I do.

>> I remember being young and feeling the exact same way. I remember having a crush on this girl. You don't know what to call it. Do you call it infatuation? You're really drawn to that person and then find out there is a name for it and you identify in the queer community probably.

>> Usually everybody else knows before you do.

>> True statement.

>> You will find out in a good or bad way.

>> Yeah.

>> Won't you, though. My coming out story, let's see. I had a friend in high school who really kind of just, you know, helped me connect my own little personal dots and led me to the conclusion that I was gay. Although it had been there the whole time. You know, I've always been -- I hate to say that it is a bit of a cliché. I've always been different compared to the other kids my age and what not. My mom found out through a slight series of unfortunate events. It wasn't all that unfortunate but, I don't know, I wouldn't have chosen that method to come out to her. She found out when I was, like, 19. And my dad -- I don't think I officially told my dad until, like, earlier this year. I don't even think I told him. Like, my mom told him. I was, like, okay. I think though the reason -- I don't know. Not that I'm looking back on everything hindsight I feel as a queer person, my tip to people is always to -- although it sounds crazy, but -- would be to wait to come out. I kept everything quiet from everybody because I didn't want to risk, you know, losing any kind of, you know, emotional, financial support from my parents. Because, you know, it's kind of hard to come out, you know, when you're not old enough to support yourself because you could very easily be thrown out on the streets and stuff like that. I mean, call it manipulative or whatever but I think we're all out here trying to survive. And also I think, because I had went through so much stuff with dealing with my sexuality that I had already -- I had already, you know,

made it over all of that personal adversity and all the self-doubt and, you know, the insecurities and even the really dark sides of being queer. So by the time I made it out to my parents, I was just like yeah, it is what it is. You can deal with it or you can't and by that time I had become so sure and I had developed such a strong self-love for myself it was like, you know, I'm not going to choose you offer me. At the end of the day, this is my life. It is what it is. I'm fine with everything. If you're upset, that's your issue. You can work out that out in your own time. But I love myself and I'm not changing for anybody, including you. So, whatever. I feel like that's one of the benefits of waiting a little bit longer until you come out. Had I come out when I was 14, it probably wouldn't have went down like that.

>> That's very insightful.

>> I don't think it is manipulative. I think being smart about how you come out and really acknowledging owl the different consequences there can be, positive and negative. What's going to be good if I come out? I'm not hiding and feel more truthful and all that stuff but also there might be severe negative side effects.

>> Exactly.

>> To all the allies out there and people helping, one of the things we like to say being all the way out, it's not like a journey where you've reached a finish point. That's not everyone's goal.

>> No.

>> It's not like you are fully done or fully queer, fully gay because you are out. That's not where it necessarily lies. I thoroughly enjoy being out and I wouldn't go back in. But that doesn't mean -- that's not what the goal always is.

>> I'm out, now it's over.

>> It's not like that.

>> You have to deal with so much other stuff.

>> It is a perpetual fight. You have to keep fighting. Now that you're out, people know to come and people know to harass you.

>> Then you have to deal with people, you know, the questions and, you know, problematic questions and people look at you through the voice of everything that's queer and things like that because everybody's experience with coming out is so different. Everybody doesn't have the same story and, you know, the same journey. It's, I don't know, like you were saying, it is a never-ending thing.

>> Even on a larger scale, you have to fight the system. As soon as I came out -- not as soon as I came out but after I came out it was like okay, great. I've taken care of home. Now what can I do to make sure that things are easier for everybody else? And maybe that's just the kind of person I am. But, you know, it was immediately -- it is interesting because we are talking about race and the intersection of race and sexuality, but my mom was like -- when I came out to my mom, she was like, you know, um, so are you sure this is what you want to do? My

mom is very religious. She was like I think you should talk to Jesus and you should see if this is his plan for your life. And I was like well, mom, check this out. You raised me to be a very proud black man, like, to always be proud of my heritage and who I was and, you know, never let anybody make me feel as if, because I was black that I was inferior or anything like that. So what kind of person would I be to do that for my queer identity?

>> Exactly.

>> As proud as I am to be a black man, I'm equally as proud to be a queer man.

And it just doesn't -- I don't know --

>> They go together.

>> Exactly. It was easy for me to take the lessons that my mom instilled in me as a child and just apply that to the queer identity, even though I had experienced lots of adversity from my mom. Stuff she was doing that she doesn't know she was doing wrong. As a child, whatever, as I grew up it was easier for me to connect the dots. If I'm proud being black and I wouldn't wake up tomorrow morning and change the texture of my hair or color of my eyes or tone of my skin, then I'm not going to wake up tomorrow and try to think, try to act straight or try to betray with the baggy pants and all that stuff. It's just whatever. You see me on campus -- you see me anywhere and I'm as queer as I can be. I'm not hiding anything. I'm not, you know, changing who I am for, you know, indifferent situations and whatever. Sometimes I give masculine, sometimes I'm feeling really Butch queen.

>> Or whatever. It doesn't matter.

>> And you do it all so well.

>> Thank you, darling. Thank you.

>> So I guess talking about that, like what are some of the ways that you do express your gender sexuality and do you think those expressions are impacted by your race or how is that expression impacted by your race?

>> Well, you know, just -- me and DJ Venus, like, we're from Kansas City and -- so, I don't know. But it's just growing up and stuff like that about, like, you know, family is big on gender policing.

>> Oh, yes.

>> You know, I come from a family these predominantly female oriented, so I've always had a little bit of a feminine flare about myself. Although I'm pretty comfortable with it now even years and stuff ago, like, when I came to college it was still such a struggle for me to just -- you know, when you come to college and you see things and you see organizations and you see groups of people, whatever else, like, you know, you still -- it is all very new for you. Where do I really fit in here? How do I, you know, how can I really be who I am and feel comfortable with being who I am? But just like I had to learn to be comfortable with my masculine side and learn to be comfortable with my feminine side and growing up in my family, you

know, some of the women in my family and they still do this today. You know, don't be such a girl. Don't be such a sissy and that kind of stuff stays with you and never leaves you. Even though you grow up and try to move past it that stuff sticks with you. It is very hard and especially, like, when it comes to my race. I don't know if we can say it's gotten better now, but I know back in the day it was really hard, like, you know, even like the male friends I had and stuff like that, they would call me sissy and all that other stuff, too. But, you know, I don't know. It's very difficult.

>> Yeah.

>> In terms of gender expression, I don't know, since I've gotten older, I've gotten really more comfortable with my feminine side. I like to think I'm dead in the middle of the spectrum. But sometimes I'm more masculine leaning, sometimes more feminine leaning. It is who I am naturally. I have been really getting crazy with clothes lately. I had a pair of really short shorts that I cut this summer and they're, like, super short. I don't know. I like to just -- I don't know, I like to in order to feel more comfortable in my skinny like to do crazy, daring things. Quote, unquote daring. I am very much in the black community. I have black friends and go home to a black family and we live in a black part of the city. So wearing short shorts and things like that, that could very well, you know, not be a great thing. But, you know, I'm just getting -- the older I get, I get more comfortable who I am. If that means some days I want to be real, you know, real fem and wear the short shorts, we'll go out to the club and toss it out.

>> We love short shorts.

>> Yes.

>> We do.

>> In terms of actually performing like gender performance, I do it pretty naturally. I don't know. It comes across in my mannerisms and things like that. It's crazy because as a kid these are the things, like, don't do. I had a stepdad who was all about gender policing. Don't wear this, you know, what are you a sissy or fag or whatever? As a child, of course, you know you are afraid so you obey. But I don't know, as I'm getting older I'm kind of breaking away from all that stuff. So, yeah, I'll wear -- I'll wear very feminine things and by the same token, like, even in society like gay men are told that we don't have full access to masculinity either. You can't be a man because you with gay. Sometimes I revel in masculinity. I like to play around and screw with people's heads. I'm going to find a nasty boustie and toss it out.

>> Color coordinated.

>> Yes.

>> Vanity six or something like that.

>> Yes. It's just -- you have to -- I don't know what I can say on this radio show.

Sometimes you just have to say forget society and I'm going to do what I want to do. Honestly, I think it is pretty fun. That's when I have the most fun when I'm saying screw you guys.

>> Absolutely. That's just about as much as you can say on the radio show. Good job. Well done.

>> Perfect. I like to cross the line.

>> Listeners, I think all of you out there deeply intelligent but we want this as accessible as possible. Some of the terms we talked about when we say gender policing what we mean by that is being told because what gender you have, either man or woman in this case, usually transgender isn't policed as stringently because it is defying gender in most ways, is that if you are a man or identify as a man or read as a man you are only allowed to do quote, unquote, man things. That's what gender policing is. Because of how I read your gender, I get to say what you can and cannot do. That's what we mean when we are saying gender policing and we encourage all of you out there, you know, to screw it gender. Try it out. Do different things.

>>Patriarchy limits what men can do. I'm on twitter. Real men don't do this, real men don't do that, real men don't wash their balls.

>> Crazy things.

>> That is not the twitter that I follow.

>> Oh, yeah, you see a lot of crazy things, retweet if you follow the right people. So, I'm not a man if I take a bath now?

>> InsideOUT supports personal hygiene.

>> Yes, always.

>> Just like on the step of twitter, one of my friends actually texted me last night and sent me a picture of a tweet and this isn't vulgar in any way. Pretty sure we are allowed to say all these. It was asking if Butch lesbians shaved their vagina. Who tweets that?

>> People are crazy.

>> Remember your body is your property, you can share it or not share it with whoever you please and get consent before you do anything with anybody else's.

>> Why are you worried about what's in between my legs?

>> Hello.

>> Are you man-scaped? The gall.

>> So we have a lot of discussion questions and I am happy to kind of be more specific, but I've been lucky enough to hear both of our wonderful DJ guests speak about these issues before in multiple avenues and time. I want to ask the broad question, where do you see race and sexuality intersecting? How and where do you see it and how does that work? We can break it down but if you have thoughts where to start or break it down, I would love to hear your thoughts.

>> It's complicated. It is very complicated living as a queer person of color. Extremely complicated. On one hand, you know, you have to remember you are black, unless, you know, whatever, that's not an identity you're really caught up about but one I very much take pride in. Hello. Yes, I am very much black and I self-identify as black and I love my blackness unconditionally. But while I am black, I have to, you know, I'm always calling out racism. I don't play that mess. Even the real covert micro aggressions I'm also calling that out as well. On one hand, however, from your black community you will get a lot of homophobia. I am standing in solidarity with my black brothers and sisters, you know, I'm against racism but I'm against homophobia as well. On the other hand while I'm very much proud of my queer identity and I revel in queerness, I don't take racism from white gays either and I don't take -- I don't take -- I forgot where I was going there. It's hard. It's hard. You have to constantly be on your toes. You have to watch out -- you really have to watch people because they will say some really slick things and do some really slick things. It's like hold on.

>> Like today they were talking how white gay men want to be the sassy black women. They feel that's inside of them. We're not generalizing here, not all of them.

>> There's quite a few white gay men on twitter who tweeted oddly enough, an influx of tweets saying I'm a white gay man with the spirit of a sassy black woman. And I'm like, what?

>> I've met several of them. Especially my freshmen year.

>> Black women are finger pointing angry attitude.

>> You are subscribing to the racial stereotype black women have no sense --

>> Yeah, that's all you think being a black woman is. That's it. It's interesting. It is pretty much the white gays interpreted through a queer eye, like a queer lens. I check that stuff, too. We can party and go toss it out and whip our hair back and forth.

>> That's just not cool.

>> Absolutely. Keeping with the theme of the twitter world, earlier MULGBTQ tweeted this week you can't end oppression with further oppression. You can't work for queer freedom when you are being racist. That's not working for others.

>> Exactly. That's the issue I have with a lot of gay advocates. Dan savage.

>> Sharon needles.

>> Oh, yes, yes. You think it is crazy and at times it can be really sad. You think you have this great community of people, but you really have to watch out because, you know, while you're partying with the gays, you have to watch out for the racism and while you're partying with black people have you to watch out for the homophobia. I will never say black people are more homophobic than white people are. I hate that that's being perpetuated. Black people are so

homophobic.

>> No, no, no. I mean I was at a workshop with Dr. Jamie Washington who I think is brilliant and so smart and says great things all the time. He was talking about how there is that stereotype? Really old white men don't have the stereotype of being racist or homophobic.

>> Not even that.

>> It goes to a deeper fear of racism. It goes to well, I think I can change the minds of my white family but I can never change the minds of that black family over there. We have to treat each other as people and recognize the societal context we're in.

>> Exactly. What's interesting is homophobia comes in all forms. It comes from old gay men and young gay men and straight women. She wrote how her gay friends like grinder and gaga.

>> If you want to blow top on campus, that's how we do. Are you serious?

>> Yeah, I mean, you know, shout out to the girls who do, and I'm not taking anything away from them.

>> I'm just trying to graduate.

>> There's a lot more to LGBTQ than hooking up in the Ellis library bathrooms.

>> Come to the resource center.

>> They're not coming to the resource center. They will come to the drag show.

>> Shout out to those folks getting people educated. They realized how wrong that was. We saw it as learning moments.

>> That's one thing, too. I'm sorry.

>> No, please.

>> That's one thing, too. When it comes to ignorance and things that happen, you know, one thing when I was taking my sociology class my professor broke it down in ignorance. Two types of ignorance. Ignorance because you don't know something, ignorance because you know and refuse to do better. I have to realize, especially we go to school in Columbia in the middle of Missouri, a lot of people simply don't know. A lot of people this may be their first time seeing a black person in person. You have the queer person, too. They don't know how to approach and interact with us from what they see on TV and movies and whatever else, whatever they learn in their home settings. So that's what I think is important to keep in mind, too, about the different types of ignorance.

>> By that same token, I also want to send out a message to all my queer and/or oppressed group of people. It is not your job to teach people either. If you must, go right ahead. But do not always feel like you have to, you know, you have to sit people down and teach them and tell them things. Like it's not your job. If you want to learn how to treat people, you do the research on your own time. I'm not here to teach you and hold your hand and walk you through everything. But if you say something crazy, I will pop off.

>> Don't expect me to not be upset and say hey, what you said to me was kind of messed up.

>> I think we have to be open to trusting people's knowledge and experience. And I think about it for myself. If I say something messed up, I want people to tell me.

>> Exactly.

>> I see that as a sign of respecting me enough to think I can do better. If someone corrects me that's a compliment that you trust me enough to think I can do better. If somebody says something that's wrong and nobody corrects them, there's lots of reasons but sometimes well, I just don't think you are worth any knowledge, you know, or that you can handle it or whatever. So we need to be open always all the time to hear feedback and trust people's experience.

>> Definitely.

>> I really like what you said it's not our job personally to do that and do our own research. We have spots on this campus, we are on a college radio station where you can learn. If you want to hear personal experiences, don't ask someone you happen to meet. Come to an outreach panel. It is people who say this is what I would like to do. I would like to share with you my personal experience in an educational setting. That's very different to have it proposed in that setting than it is to go up to that one classmate or go up to that one person you see in the food court and be hey, so, tell me stuff. It is very different.

>> No, pick up a book. Have that tell you things.

>> Come to a meeting or something like that. I think that's -- I know a lot of things when it comes to different stuff on campus not just the LGBTQ resource center the multicultural center and women's center, stuff like that. People are just -- like, they think they aren't allowed to go into those places because they may say oh, well this is for black students on campus, but it doesn't mean we're not open to having you.

>> To everybody.

>> It is open to everybody. University policy we cannot turn you away anyway, but we're not five-headed monsters going to bite your head off, like, get out of here. What are you doing in here? You're not black or gay or whatever. No. Excuse me, like DJ Venus was saying, well --

>> Hassan.

>> Sorry. Like DJ Venus was saying it isn't our responsibility to teach everybody that's. That's what I struggle with. I feel like I have to be a teacher to combat ignorance but I have to realize that I can't be the person who can change everybody's mind and stuff like that. I have to let go of that idea very quick.

>> Oh, yeah. It's crazy. Once you get into it, like, social justice and things like that your first reaction is now I have all this great knowledge. Let me go out and change the world. And then you get to read people and you're so problematic you don't know what you're saying. Like let me educate you now because you are clearly to

simple-minded you don't know these things and I'm the great social justice and I will teach you.

>> And I will read you.

>> Yes. It's interesting. Like when you are teaching people, if you so choose, like, you have to kind of -- I don't know. I don't want to police anybody's tone. People say things to me all the time that pisses me off and I don't exactly tactful and as graceful as I probably should be.

>> Nobody's perfect.

>> No. And actually I think something else that never gets talked about is that while we as, I guess, talking about me and Jeff, since we as gay black men are -- it's really easy to recognize your place as the oppressed. But, you know, we don't talk much about how we can be oppressors in itself and how gay men can perpetuate sexism and stuff like that. I got on twitter the other day and I was sitting and thinking we as queer people can force those things we fight against on our own.

>> Gender policing and everything.

>> Exactly. You think -- you don't think you're whatever. I got on twitter the other day and I was thinking about all this stuff that gay black men do in general, like, you know, she's so kind and things like that and referring to women as fish, you know, boiling down to essentially the genitals. What else do we -- the way we go in on female artists how we read Rihanna and Gaga. All those behaviors are oppressives but since we're black and gay we're at the bottom so we could never oppress anybody when that's not the case at all.

>> Yeah.

>> I think it's interesting -- I don't know. That's where I'm at now.

>> I think you're right. It is not set up in a stacked column at the bottom or top. It is a mess. It is all over the place.

>> So now I'm actually past the point where you're oppressing me. I'm looking at ways how am I oppressing people?

>> Watch my tone.

>> People tend to think that male privilege goes away when you are gay. It changes.

>> Yeah, it changes.

>> It doesn't completely evaporate into thin air the moment you come out of the closet. There are definitely ways we as gay men oppress or do pro-pestive things to women and think it is fine. When we get called out about it sometimes we're hyper sensitive about it. Oh, my God I didn't mean it like that. No, when somebody says I don't appreciate when you do that or don't you think that's problematic you have to sit and think about it like, you know what, you're right. And change that behavior.

>> Yeah, absolutely. We probably should have done this at the very beginning of

the show. Would you all share with us what you are involved in on campus.

>> Jeff, you run down the list. Jeff is in everything. This girl is all over campus.

>> I like to be involved. I do like to be involved. I'm involved in queer people of color, I'm the secretary. I'm also involved in legion of black allegiance the activities chair, united ambassador, student recruiter for the university, former co-chair and member of national association of black journalists, member of Mizzou's black men initiative and I think that's it.

>> That's it? Come on.

>> I mean.

>> That's great. Sounds like fantastic.

>> Miss Jeff is a busy girl. I can't be bothered, on the other hand. I am graduating next month. But aside from that, I am vice president of queer people of color. We meet every Monday at 7:00 p.m. Come visit us. Come see about us. Let's see. I'm also in MUTV. I do things over there.

>> Cool.

>> That's it currently.

>> All right.

>> I like to go to class and go home. I don't really like to be everywhere.

>> Awesome.

>> All day long.

>> Well, I have a follow-up question about your campus involvement but first we are going to pause InsideOUT 3:00 to 4:00 on Thursday for our sports minute. Stay tuned listeners and hear about sports.

>>> it's around 3:30 at the KCOU sports desk. Coming off a close victory against VCU to obtain third place in the battle for Atlanta's in the Bahamas the Mizzou Tigers men's basketball squad looks to take on the Appalachian State Mountaineers next. On the early December stint the Tigers will face three of four teams that are .500 or under. Their next ranked opponent will be against rival Illinois who is number 22 in the nation currently. Look for senior forward Lawrence Bowers and junior guard Phil Pressie to lead the Mizzou team to the promise land as they have led the teams in points this season. Pressie averages 15 points a game and bowers averages 14 points a game. Catch these guys this Saturday, December 1 at 2:00 p.m. in Mizzou arena taking on applications state.

>>> Mizzou football is officially over this year. The tigers couldn't pull off the upset against Johnny football and Aggies Texas A&M and fall 5-7 on the season missing the mark of eligibility for the bowl season and Missouri will lose 18 seniors. Sticking with S.E.C. football the championship of the southeastern conference will determine who goes to face undefeated number one ranked Notre Dame in Miami for the BCS national championship. The S.E.C. championship is set for 3:00 p.m. this Saturday, December 1 and will feature 11-1 Alabama crimson tide and the 11-1 Georgia

bulldogs. Catch this epic battle on CBS. Mizzou baseball announced the 2013 schedule today. The tigers have 30 home dates with 15 S.E.C. match-ups in the upcoming season. Mizzou will begin the baseball season on the road as they will be going into the heart of the S.E.C. the first two weeks of play. The wildcats of northwestern are the first home game on March 1. The tigers look to qualify for the ninth NCAA regional in 11 seasons along with their switch to the new conference.

>>> on to the NFL the struggling 1-10 Kansas City Chiefs take on Cam Newton and care care panthers.

The Chiefs are in the midst of an eight-game losing streak and looking for their first win since their overtime victory against the Saints back in September. Adam Shepner reported the San Francisco 49ers might have to trade quarterback Alex Smith if the recent success of Collin Capernick is continued. The Chiefs may be interested in Smith. There may be hope for Kansas City. As for the St. Louis Rams, they are coming off a big win against the divisional opponent the Arizona Cardinals and look to face the 49ers this Sunday. Last time the two teams met they tied. This should be an interesting match-up. Look out for a strong 49er defense led by line backer Patrick Willis to go against the hot Rams offense. This game is set for noon this Sunday on December 2 at Fox. For the latest news and sports check out our website KCOU.FM.

>>> All right. We are back with InsideOUT on KCOU Columbia. We are talking about DJ Venus and DJ Jeff Mugler about -- did I say that right? It sounded different that time.

>> You did.

>> About the intersection of race and sexuality. We just talked a little bit about your involvement on campus, and I want to go back to what you said earlier, DJ Jeff Mugler about fitting in and finding the space where you fit in and do you think that overall you fit in on campus? Is there a spot for you at Mizzou? Do you fit in here? And then within all those different organizations and some of our involvement or in the classroom, do you fit in there? Do you think that that's a safe fit-in place for you? Your thoughts?

>> When it comes to fitting in, because I am very involved, I would say that I feel pretty comfortable. You know, I've never really had any problems per se with anybody or anybody saying anything to me or whatever. And I don't really like to use the word fit in. That's just, I don't know.

>> That's fair.

>> More of a comfort.

>> Yeah.

>> Do I feel comfortable. Yes and no sometimes. One of the things I'm involved in is Mizzou's Black Men Initiative. I love the organization. It is a great

organization and it really helps a lot of young men here, young African-American men who come to the university. Most of the boys there if not all are straight, so I'm kind of the only, like, queer male there. So it is kind of like I don't really know and that's just kind of how I feel about men in general. I'm not really too comfortable around straight men and it's not that -- it's just growing up and, you know, understanding my sexuality and understanding my gender and my gender expression, you know. I don't really know how well I feel just yet being around the heteronormative arena that, you know, that is Mizzou.

>> That's fair.

>> Yeah.

>> That's very fair.

>> And, I mean, and I think those guys are great and everything like that and I think, obviously, it was great but I would never, like, try to be part of, like, a fraternity or something here like that. Like that's just not -- no.

>> No.

>> No. They just don't do -- and I just don't feel like -- and I mean QPOC we did an event with PI beta Sigma and those guys are great but at the same time I don't see myself trying to be stroll and stepping somewhere, like, and it is nothing personal. I just don't feel like I would feel very welcome in those kind of places and feel very accepted.

>> You're not willing to sacrifice your queerness.

>> And I'm not.

>> A lot of people do that.

>> People do that. They sacrifice their identity. They sacrifice their whatever.

>> And if that works for you, shout out to the girls.

>> That's fine. If you're happy -- I'm not going to sit up here and police how you should express yourself and how you identify yourself either. I mean I just want people to be happy. If you are comfortable with yourself and happy with yourself, that's great. For me it is not comforting and I think you also asked about class.

Well, you know, going to Mizzou --

>> Hold on. Sorry, I just want to -- before you start in the classroom it goes to what we talked about earlier when and how you come out and those consequences. If your priority is to be a member of the fraternity maybe you see it as a sacrifice, this is what I want or priorities are or how out I am or express things differently.

Thinking where do I want to be in the world and how does that work for me. I think that's great you have that self-awareness and knowledge to know that's not what I want to do. It works wonders for a lot of people and some of their best experiences and lifetime friendships or family or kinship, brotherhood, there's the word that they use. Yeah, it is different and we need to be true to ourselves and we have to check in with ourselves to figure out where do I stand and what are the

consequences going to be positive or negative of the decisions I make surrounding my identity, not just --

>>> Absolutely identities. Sorry to have interrupted. I saw that connection.

>> No, that's fine. Before we go to the classroom, have you got anything?

>> Let's see. All my friends are pretty much black and queer, so, I mean, I feel like, you know, what did we have, like, 9 million people going here?

>> 34,000.

>> Yeah. There is a group of people here for everybody. It's just a matter of finding that group. And, I'm very happy with my group of friends. While I'm with that group of friends I don't feel like there's anything -- I don't feel like I'm the odd one out or whatever.

>> And how did you find your group of friends? Was it through campus involvement? Was it through living in a residence hall?

>> No, no, no, no. I don't know the black community here, I came here as a member of the black community before anything else. And I just -- because it is so small, like, friends, we're all -- like, everybody knows each other and we are all acquaintances, I mean, really. Everybody may not mess with each other in bigger extents -- everybody messes with each other in different capacities. I just found my friends just, you know, I don't know. Hanging out with people and going to parties and things like that. I was never really big on -- my first couple of years I never was big on campus involvement. I didn't start getting into things until maybe, like, my junior year. I wanted to make sure I had the academics down so I wasn't in all the activities my first semester freshman year and that's where my college experience ended. No, I wanted to have everything together and then say I'm in this organization and that organization. I just found my friends being me. I feel like you draw the people who you are much like anyway. But as far as activities, no, I don't feel alienated in QPOC.

>> Good. That's important.

>> I'm in UTV, I don't know, I feel fine. I'm fine with myself. I feel the more you are okay with yourself the more other people -- they can't change how you feel. I feel -- I don't know, if I had my way. If I knew now what I knew back when I was looking at colleges I probably would have went to HBCU but I'm fine where I'm at now. Being here really taught me a lot about the world around me, and how to conduct myself and how to love myself in a predominantly straight white world. So I'm appreciative for Mizzou, I'm appreciate for that. I'm fine. I'm marvelous, darling, simply marvelous.

>> What about in the classroom?

>> Before -- and this is very important. I wanted to make it a point I said this and this radio show. It is important for black people or people of color, queer people, LGBTQ people, women, it is important for everybody to take those classes that are

for you. Like, sociology classes, like, you know, he feel like everybody needs to know these things. Sociology, queer theory, history. Feminism classes. Even if you're not a woman or queer period. Everybody need as feminism class.

>> Everybody needs a feminism class.

>> Because those classes really help you in -- the education that you get from those classes really help you guide your way throughout this world. When I was a freshman and I first got here, I was the token black person in a lot of the classes. I would do that thing people do I'm the only black person. We know that when you are by yourself you with pretty much the spokesperson for that race. I would make sure I was in on time, on class on time.

>> Sitting at the front.

>> Sitting at the front, asking good questions, not just regular questions but good questions. You know, because I felt like -- I felt the burden of the race on me and I had to, you know, show -- I had to show these white folks that black people knew their stuff. But, as I got older -- as I got older and I learned more, I definitely don't feel that pressure to represent everybody, because I'm not a representative of the black race. I'm not a representative of queer people like I'm Hassan -- I'm DJ Venus. And it was sociology classes and readings and all that stuff that taught me that. It was a lot easier for me now. I go to class whenever I want -- I mean I go to classes but I don't feel that pressure anymore. I don't feel like I have to conduct myself in a certain way in front of white folks so they don't think I'm a hoodlum. I don't care. I know who I am and that's all that matters. You need those classes to teach you those things. I don't think if it weren't for those classes that I would be the person that I am today.

>> Definitely agree. I know DJ Venus kind of said a lot of the same things that I probably will say but definitely, I mean, just still feeling -- it still feels a little awkward being the only black kid in class but you take the realization it doesn't matter who I am. I'm intelligent. I'm here. It doesn't matter. I don't have to prove to you that all black people are capable of intelligent speech.

>> When I give my opinion in class, I think in my film studies class we were talking about something racial and I was, like, I don't speak for all black people. Because I'm the only black person in my film studies class and I look at everybody and say I don't speak for all black people but this is my opinion and then I say what I have to say. A lot of people hear it twisted.

>> I think it's important, especially with the knowledge that you have that people are going to take it in this way. This is the context that I exist in. People are going to think this. Let me just tell them right now.

>> Even on this radio show I'm not representing black people and queer people. This is Hassan's experience not the queer black person in America.

>> I think I said earlier, everybody's experience is different. I don't live the same

way --

>> Black people aren't on a list, queer people aren't on a list.

>> I don't live the same way as everybody else. Who is a prominent queer? Keith Boykin or anybody else. Even though you may go through similar experiences like growing up and coming out and stuff like that, you do have to realize that, you know, all of your experiences are not going to be the same, and you don't live the same way. That's why words and stuff like lifestyle and stuff are problematic when it comes to the LGBTQ community and everything because to me a lifestyle is a certain set pattern the way you live but everybody doesn't live that way.

>> I think we have cultural things that tie us together.

>> Exactly.

>> It doesn't mean if we have those cultural things we are necessarily part of that group and it also doesn't mean if we don't have those cultural things we aren't part of that group. We have a comment loosely, I don't know if you can define it but a loose common cultural bond but by the same time, me and Jeff are close friends and I'm pretty sure he's experienced things as a gay, black male that I haven't.

>> Uh-huh.

>> That's the difference between me and DJ Jeff Mugler.

>> And vice versa.

>> Absolutely. Sadly, we are getting towards the end of the show. It just goes so quickly, especially with brilliant guests.

>> Thank you. I was just about to say both are so insightful and teaching me so much.

>> I want to -- I'm going to throw out a couple questions at you and choose which ones you would like to answer. So I would really like to hear, if you have any, like, resources or knowledge out there that speak to some of these issues or speak to, you know, the queer -- well, we just said there is not a queer black experience but somewhere where you felt --

>> Together.

>> Together. Where you felt, like, heard and validated in your experiences.

Sometimes it can be really great to that have. Also, if there is anything else you already said to your younger self you would tell them to take the classes that help them. Do you have any other advice you wish you could have told your younger self or look back to your younger self?

>> Give the quick answer, Jeff.

>> Well, when I think back --

>> Quick.

>> Thank you, DJ Venus.

>> We haven't got much time.

>> Thank you. I would have told myself when I was younger and always tell myself

this to love myself more.

>> Yes.

>> I definitely would have told myself that. It is so important and so vital.

>> The greatest love of all.

>> It doesn't come without difficulty. People think it is so easy but it is not easy at all. Don't feel like you have to be the avenger for all of the oppressed or whatever. Make sure that you are aware and, you know, teach, if you would like, but you don't have to be the hero for social justice for every single person, you know. You don't have to be that teacher like we were saying earlier. Teach yourself and make sure you are comfortable with yourself first so that way others can try to find comfort, too. I'm a firm believer, when you allow yourself to be comfortable and be great within yourself you allow other people to be the same, too. That's what I would tell my younger self.

>> What was the other question?

>> Like resources or people you like to read or websites to visit or events you have been to. Something you have heard.

>> Growing up, going through -- being matriculated in the school from kindergarten up to college the gay black experience is not one you learn about in school. If that's what you're interested in, like I said earlier a lot of gay black people don't want to, but, whatever, but, earlier, I'm beginning now to, you know, read the works of James Baldwin and I just got Marley Riggs. We had a movie night at QPOC and it is great learning about history. I'm a history buff. I think things you tell your younger self, in order to love yourself you have to know who you are. I think knowing your history and knowing things like that is a very critical part of loving yourself. If you go out through -- if you go throughout life and all the images you see before you and all the things you learn are about straight, white people it is like well, where was I? And I'm like that now. Where was I in history. If I was a gay black man in the '70s, what would you be doing now? I wonder about queer slaves? That's how my mind works. And what I'm doing now is I'm immersing myself in that history, I'm immersing myself in that literature I'm reading James Baldwin and blogging and queer poets like Pat Parker and June Jordan. I'm trying to forget who I am through a historical lens. Where have I been and where am I going now? I think that's one of the reasons why, you know, it's so much more easier to accept -- to love myself. After I have accepted that I'm a queer black man in that white straight world, I'm okay with that and now I need to work on edifying that self love and that's what I'm doing now. It's not a journey that ends tomorrow. It ends when they put you in the ground or in a urn if that's what you're into.

>> However it happens.

>> That's what I'm doing right now. Now that I'm actually about to be out of school come December, I plan to be doing a lot more reading. So, yeah, I'm reading

Freedom in the Village right now. A book of essays. Thanks to LBC, QPOC purchased Keith Boykins "For Colored Boys."

>> Yes and we had the Peculiar Kind come. They were great.

>> We have that documentary in the LGBTQ resource center. And it is online. Look it up.

>> They have so many great ideas for things they are trying to put in motion.

>> Yeah. It is definitely important to find, you know, like -- people who are like yourself so you have some kind of inspiration. The women from The Peculiar Kind they inspired me as intellectual people and people who have affected change and that's why it is -- the idea of QPOC to start a literary salon to read these books and learn more about ourselves and make the world a better place.

>> Absolutely. Clearly, we've only touched the tip of the iceberg on this subject but I think we've done a very good job. I've enjoyed it.

>> I've enjoyed it as well. Thank you guys for coming.

>> QPOC meeting every Monday at 7:00.

>> 7:00 p.m.

>> They're on Facebook.

>> Yes, we are.

>> You can find them through LGBTQ's website. And next semester we don't have all of it planned by Pride month is in April and we will have open forums to talk about these things and have movies and sew documentary "Pariah" pay attention, get on our list serve, Facebook and tweet at us @LGBTQinsideOUT. Thank you for coming.

>> Thanks for having us. I think we should do this once a semester.

>> Please. I'm so into it.

>> Intersection of identities.

>> Definitely.

>> I'm down to talk any time.

>> Hey, listen out there listeners, study hard, make a plan, stick to it, drink water, get sleep.

>> Love yourself.

>> Eat real food and love yourself.

>> Be kind. Tell your mom that you love her.

>> Or tell your chosen mom.

>> Hello, hello.

>> Tell the people that you love, that you love them. The people that support you.

>> Give folks their flowers while they can still smell them.

>> See you next week.