

PROJECT TITLE: Country Queers Interview

INTERVIEWEE: Twig Delujé

LOCATION: Interviewed in his home (a green trailer on a hill) in Pecos, NM

DATE: July 8, 2014

INTERVIEWER: Rae Garringer

Transcription: Kayden Moore

[0:00:00.0] Rae:: Um, the first question is your name and your age and where you live.

[0:00:05.6] Twig:: My name is Twig: Delujé, I'm thirty-one years old and I live in Pecos, New Mexico.

[0:00:10.5] Rae:: Awesome. So if you're gonna describe where you live to somebody who's never been here -

[0:00:14.2] Twig:: Mm.

[0:00:15.9] Rae:: In whatever way - you know, the town, the landscape, the state - whatever. However you want to describe it.

[0:00:20.5] Twig:: Okay. It's beautiful because I get to live rurally but also have access to - there's city type things available. So it's kind of mountainous, but - it's high desert. Where I particularly live, there's more water than there may be in like, Madrid or Sante Fe, and especially Albuquerque. So it's like, the further south you go, the drier it gets. And so I'm in more of a mountainous region.

[0:00:56.0] Rae:: Okay.

[0:00:56.5] Twig:: So, yeah.

[0:00:57.2] Rae:: Cool. So - I mean this in the broadest sense -

[0:01:02.9] Twig:: [laughs]

[0:01:03.4] Rae:: - and however you want to answer it. But, so how do you identify?

[0:01:06.2] Twig:: I identify as trans masculine. And definitely - I call myself a country queeritan. So, yeah. That's how - queer, rural, trans masculine guy.

[0:01:20.2] Rae:: Okay, great. So, where were you born, where'd you grow up, what was your childhood like - this is a whole lot -

[0:01:27.9] Twig:: A lot [laughs].

[0:01:28.2] Rae:: A lot of questions. Like your parents, your siblings, you know, like -

[0:01:31.5] Twig:: All of it.

[0:01:32.2] Rae:: All that.

[0:01:32.9] Twig:: Just blast it out.

[0:01:33.8] Rae:: Yep [laughs].

[0:01:34.4] Twig:: Right on. Well, I grew up in Hayes, Kansas, which is right in the middle of the state. It's like five hours to Denver from there, and it's also five hours to Kansas City. So I grew up in a - it's about, I don't know, fluctuates from, like, six to 12,000 to all the way up to 40,000 sometimes, if - during the school season, 'cause there's a university there. Um, my mom was a nurse, and my dad's a dentist, and - so it's like, I lived in town, um, and I grew up there, but a lot of my summers and off time vacations were spent at my grandparent's house, in Warsaw, Missouri. So it's in the beginning of the Ozarks. And then I got a lot of family that lives

in Arkansas and Tulsa and Mounds, Oklahoma. Um, and those areas. So a lot of my time is spent in the Ozarks. So, you know. I kind of feel like I grew up in two different places. But - and also, like, my dad, he came from a kind of upper middle class family. Um, 'cause his dad was a doctor, his brother's a doctor, um, and he's a dentist. Um, but then my mom's side was very working class. So my grandfather, he worked on a lot of engines and things like that. Like he worked on engines for NASA for the space shuttles and stuff. And my grandmother, she was a beautician, um, and stuff like that. So, you know, I have one brother. He's younger, we don't speak a whole lot right now. Um, we became kind of distant, and, um, but - and my mom passed away back in 2004, and so my dad and my brother are kind of the only ones in my immediate family that I have. Um, all my grandparents are gone. So - but growing up, like, my dad's mom, she um, she lived fifteen minutes from us in Ellis, Kansas, which is a super, super small town. All the - all the um, roads are still brick. A lot of the main roads, like downtown in my hometown are also still brick, but there's more roads in Hayes than there are in Ellis. And my dad actually grew up in Ellis. So, you know, he's - his whole life kind of revolves around, 'bout a twenty mile radius. Um, and then my mom, she grew up in St. Louis and stuff. So - and then, parts - and Warsaw for a little while. So, you know, it's like my life was kind of split, um, as far as that goes. And as far as - I don't know, is this continuing the answer? Like queerness and stuff? Is that coming up?

[0:04:33.4] Rae:: That's totally -

[0:04:34.1] Twig:: Okay.

[0:04:34.7] Rae:: When did you first know you were queer is my next question [laughs].

[0:04:36.4] Twig:: Okay. Um, when did I first know I was queer? Well, I came out when I was fifteen. Um, in a very small town. And I came out, meaning like I came out to two friends, um, to my closest friends. And - I was actually thinking about this the other day. How, like, I didn't really know what was going on with me because which is strange, because I was actually brought up around a lot of queer-identified people, oddly enough. My mom - one of my mom's best friends was a trans lady and she was the director of the costume department at the university. And, um, and so - then I was around lots of performers, lots of, you know, queer folk. Lots of drag queens. Lots of trans folk. And - but I never really identified that with myself for whatever reason that is. Um, and so I came out to my two friends, but I didn't come out to my parents until I was sixteen. So another year later. Um, and then, by then I was flying the rainbow flag every frickin' which way. And some - you know, had, like a patch on my bag at school. And this was when like Fred Phelps was like really, really starting to attack, especially 'cause - queer youth was really starting to get a lot more attention. So he was going to schools - it was during the time Matthew Shephard had just happened, all of that. So I was the only out person - so I kind of came out as bi at first, which was actually - I was right the first time. Um, and then, you know - but being in a female body, um, I didn't - it still didn't feel quite right, because I wasn't attracted to guys actually. Um, I was actually really terrified of that. But then my friend Lou - I was like, madly, deeply in love with my best friend's sister, of all people - and, so - but I couldn't really call that at the time. And, um, so it was just kind of - it was - I had it a lot easier than a lot of other folk growing up in rural areas, especially in Kansas, in the Bible Belt, and stuff like that. Um, but yeah. It was - so I just kind of - yeah, I guess I came out at fifteen, fully out at sixteen, um, and it just kind of fluctuated and developed over time as that, so...

[0:07:20.1] Rae:: And so did your friends and your family respond? Or like -

[0:07:22.8] Twig:: Yeah.

[0:07:23.0] Rae:: - you had your rainbow patch on your bag at school -

[0:07:25.9] Twig:: [laughs] Right.

[0:07:26.0] Rae:: - like how did that go?

[0:07:27.1] Twig:: Uh, that went - rough. At school it was really rough. Um, I got beat up a number of times, I had my tires slashed a lot, and my - I had a Jeep, and it was my first vehicle, and it was great. And, um, I got - it was keyed a lot. Um, nothing ever happened to my family, thankfully. Um, other than me getting, you know, punched in the face and pulled behind [inaudible] and stuff a couple times. Um, but it's... Like my mom was - it was interesting, because she was really supportive, because - she was uber great with being open and awesome around queer folk, um, obviously. Um, my dad, not so much, but I think he had a really particularly hard time because he was one of the - he's one of the - at the time, there was like two other dentists in town, and so - and he was the most well-received, and I think he was concerned for his practice, for his - and he grew up there. So he knew a lot of people who still lived there. This is a place where, you know, everybody's related to everybody, um, since the beginning of the town, you know, when it was called Rome, of all places. Um, so it's like, he was - yeah. He had a rough time with it. My grandmother, his mom, also had a rough time with it. I didn't actually come out to my mom's side of the family, um, although they all knew. Um, especially my grandparents on that, so I didn't - and I guess that's a large part, because, um, the

- I don't know, I don't know how else to say it. But like, the - it's like there's this weird aspect that just came with their existence, that I, you know, that I was not going to be as well-received. So my mom was great. My cousins were fine. My grandparents were not going to be okay with it. Um, and I mean - my grandpa, he was extremely racist. And, um, you know, my grandma was really great. She was like the sweetest and most awesome lady you would ever meet. Um, but you know. Shit still - it would make her uncomfortable. So just to preserve that, I didn't. As far as my brother, he was so young - we're five years apart - so he just kind of went with whatever. He didn't really give a crap, you know? He's like, oh, okay what does that mean? You know. Like what do you mean you're gay? So, he didn't care. Um, as far as - yeah, my friends, they were weirded out by it. They were - they were comfortable, but weirded out. Like my best friend, she - yeah, I got a lot of flack from her, because, you know, rumors started to spread and what have you, that we were together, that we were having lesbian sex, and like, all this crap, and - so she took it really personally. Um, she's not gay, and so - I think that's a pretty common thing, you know, to [inaudible] when you're getting that. Yeah. I think that's pretty much how it went.

[0:10:47.1] Rae:: Okay. So - so then... Okay.

[0:10:58.3] Twig:: Yeah.

[0:10:58.5] Rae:: We're gonna stick with this for a minute and then I'm going to ask you another question.

[0:11:00.8] Twig:: Sure, go for it.

[0:11:01.8] Rae:: Um, do you think that living in like - like growing up where you did - did you think it was harder to come out there than it would have been if you lived in the big city.

[0:11:10.5] Twig:: Oh yeah. Absolutely. Um - well, I mean, I guess maybe that depends on the city, right? I mean [laughs], you've got - 'cause I didn't have any access to anything queer. My - my queer access was Planned Parenthood [laughs], where my mom worked. And her boss, who was like, awesome, but she also didn't have a lot of ideas around what that safety factor would look like. Like, she was providing me with pamphlets and stuff like this, but you know, it's pamphlets. It's not queer youth groups or anything like that. I actually tried to start a queer youth group at - a gay-straight alliance at my school. Yeah, that went well. Um, and you know, was basically told that I couldn't legally put up any kind of advertisement, um, that it was going to be a legal issue regarding the school as a public school. Um - some bullshit. Um, anyway. And, you know, so I think it's like, I - but I was also really, um, independent, and I had a really tight crew of friends that varied in age. Like some were younger, some were older, some were exactly my age. Um, and they were all theater people. They were all debate and forensics. I was a total drama geek, um, musicals, stuff like that. And so, it was like, I had friends that just didn't give a shit. And then I had - I lost - I don't want to say I lost friends. But I became less close with a number of people. Um, but at the same time, like, my oldest friend growing up, she was the homecoming queen, and the soccer captain, and all that stuff. And, um, like we never separated, like lost touch. And I thought that was really cool. So it was like the - you know, like an after-school special, where you have like, the gay kid, you know, lesbian, that's like besties with the homecoming queen.

[0:13:26.5] Rae:: [laughs]

[0:13:26.7] Twig:: You know, who just didn't care. And like - so it was like, I - I think coming out was difficult because I was scared of Fred Phelps. I was scared of my family's well-being, and myself. Um, but at the same time I had like - for youth, having youth support - I was really fortunate. So, I think it's, um - I don't think I would have liked living in the city as a kid anyway. So I don't - you know? It's kind of a weird thing. I don't know. Yeah.

[0:14:02.9] Rae:: Um, so - then I'm assuming there's like, another piece of your coming out story, right?

[0:14:12.5] Twig:: Right.

[0:14:12.6] Rae:: Coming out as trans and so - like I feel like that's sort of my background childhood stuff -

0:14:16.4] Twig:: Sure.

[0:14:16.6] Rae:: And if you wanted to -

[0:14:18.1] Twig:: Sure.

[0:14:18.5] Rae:: - talk about any of that.

[0:14:19.5] Twig:: Yeah. Um... so [laughs], so going back to my mom's, one of her best friends. She had two really good friends, and one of them again was a trans lady. For whatever reason - I was actually talking to one of my friends about this, um, a couple weeks ago, and how it had never occurred to me [laughs], I don't know why, that you could transition from, uh, masculine

to feminine, whatever, male to female, but not the other way. And so it was like, I came out - like I was always kind of, I want to say butch, you know, but like more boyish, more masculine presenting. Not even tomboy-ish. Like I liked things that guys, quote unquote, liked. So, I don't know. So I was just going along the lines of being a butch woman. And then I went to college [laughs], as it typically happens, and got a lot more exposure in differences in gender and presentation and what that could look like, 'cause - also it was like, a lot - and I don't mean this as any stereotype or anything like that, but like, growing up, you have - there is something to a stereotypical Midwestern soft bull lesbian. And that's what I was running into. And I was like, that is so not me. I hate sports -

[0:15:55.7] Rae:: [laughs]

[0:15:55.8] Twig:: - I have nothing to do with softball, I don't watch games, I - you know, I didn't understand it. And I was like, it's so not me. And so, I was joking for a long time with one of my good friends that I was going to turn into a trucker dyke, and like a diesel dyke. And they - please don't! Please don't do that. And I was like, why, it's not about you, you know. And, um, lo and behold, that's exactly what happened, only I grew a beard.

[0:16:22.5] Rae:: [laughs]

[0:16:22.7] Twig:: So I [laughs], you know, so I went to college, and just got all that exposure, and, um, I ended up finding out, you know, oh, you could trans - FTM, oh, got it. Okay. That's what's been going on. Um, I have no other explanation for why it went that way. It just did. And, um, and yeah. I just - I debated on testosterone for a long time. Um, and I - I couldn't get past the needles, and that's so silly for me to think about, but at the same time I'm like, no, it's actually

totally valid. Um, 'cause, you know, for those that don't know, it's a really big needle that goes in your leg or into your muscle and it's not fun and it's - it doesn't feel good, for me, anyway. And, um, so I just hesitated and said, no no no, can't do it. And then one of my friends ended up telling me about subcutaneous injections, which are much smaller - it's like basically an insulin needle, so I can just stick that in my belly and give myself a shot once a week. And it's totally painless, and has the exact same effect. It's actually less invasive. Um, so once the - once I got past that, I was good. I was totally fine. Um, and just to backtrack a little bit, thinking about - yeah, as far as male or masculine or something, that - growing up, not being able to call it for what it was, but - I remember every time I played make believe as a kid or whatever, and be somebody else, or whatnot, and - every frickin' time, I was always a blonde boy, because I was blonde when I was a kid. Um, like, super super blonde. A blonde boy named Jack, every single time. And I don't know why. You know, I was just tryin' to be somebody I wanted to be, and I just didn't have any names for it. Um, so anyways, so yeah, being able to finally get on T, and then, um [laughs]. So then realizing that I was actually overcompensating for a lot, when I would be - you know, before I could actually - before I actually had a name or knew exactly what was going on for me. So it was like - when pre T or pre trans-identified, I was walking around a lot, was presenting as uber, uber masculine, trying to make my voice lower, trying to take up a lot more space of what I perceived what male was, or masculine was. And then it was like, once my hormones got figured out, once my brain started to kind of like, relax, 'cause I was seeing what I wanted to see, actually, in the mirror, that - I got uber swishy. And like, you know, again, if I talk, like pre-talking, people are like, who the fuck is that, and like, get really nervous. 'Cause I look like butch, and like redneck-y at times. And - but then I talk, and it all goes away. And, um, so yeah. So it's like, I just needed to find that balance, and so now I feel way better, 'cause I feel like

I get to sit in the middle, and that feels really good to me. That was a totally long answer to your question -

[0:19:50.9] Rae:: That's great.

[0:19:51.5] Twig:: Okay.

[0:19:51.7] Rae:: That's great. Totally great. Did you - so did you, like - oh, well, so -

[0:19:55.5] Twig:: Yeah, yeah.

[0:19:55.6] Rae:: - where did you go to college?

[0:19:56.4] Twig:: Oh. I went to the College - well, what was the College of Santa Fe. Sorry.

[0:19:59.7] Rae:: Sorry [laughs].

[0:20:00.4] Twig:: Um, now it's called the Sante Fe University of Art and Design. Um, but I went there for creative writing, and um, minored in religion studies of all things. And um, but yeah. But here in - Sante Fe is about thirty minutes to the south of where I am right now.

[0:20:25.0] Rae:: Okay.

[0:20:25.2] Twig:: So yeah.

[0:20:26.1] Rae:: And so then - like, did you have a coming out as trans to your family time? Was that -

[0:20:31.8] Twig:: Mhmm, yeah. That was -

[0:20:32.5] Rae:: - harder, or easier, or comparable at all?

[0:20:35.5] Twig:: Yeah. It went actually - coming out the first time was a lot easier than coming out as trans. Um, like, I found - my mom's reaction really stunned me a lot. She - like I started talking to her about top surgery and having my breasts removed and she freaked the hell out. Um, couldn't take it, and then talking about name change stuff was really, really hard for my parents. My dad took it as I was trying to distance myself from my family. Um, my mom took it as a total slap in the face - you know, she chose that name for me and - so they were taking it very personally. And I, you know, I finally just stopped explaining to them that it wasn't about them. You're gonna have whatever feeling you're gonna have around it, it's not about you. And um, you know, I actually didn't come out to any of my grandparents around trans stuff, even my grandmother, until, um, I actually started to change physically, like my voice. Every time they would call me, my voice would be deeper or scratchy, and they'd be like, you've got a cold. No, I don't have a cold. Um, my dad, he - it was interesting, 'cause he was very supportive. It's like - it's like it switched, you know? My dad had a hard time with me being a lesbian and my mom was fine with it, but my mom had a hard time with me being trans but my dad was fine with it. So, you know, he, um - he was mostly just concerned for my physical well-being, my health, and making sure I was doing it safely. Um, and, you know - my mom and I kind of distanced ourselves in the last few years. And that was also pre me doing anything as far as medically towards a transition. Um, but even just talking to her about things was just very difficult anymore. Um, but yeah. So like, I don't know. It, um, it was hard. My brother, he definitely had a really hard time with that. Well, he was like - he was fine with it, but - to my face he'd be fine with it, but then hearing about other things that he was saying, um, when I wasn't

around, in his own comfortableness - but he also - my brother has a lot of issues around addiction and things like that, and I have very, very strong addiction on both sides of my family. And, um - of various levels. So I think he - and he runs around with a really, um, not so hot crew. Like not a crew that's very supportive or good. On a lot of levels. So he, um - I think that instilled a lot of maybe beliefs, that if he would have stuck with the beliefs that he brought up - that my family actually brought him up with, of just let it go and let people do what they're doing, that he was around - you know, picking him up from high school when I would come to visit and him yelling faggot out the window at his friends was like, you know, like hey faggot! And smacking the shit out of him. And being like, what the fuck is wrong with you? I'm sitting right here. So it's like, he - and again, he's a straight white male, young guy, in a small Midwestern town. So, you know, he definitely picked up a lot of the stuff that I was trying to fight against as a youth. So anyway, that's - yeah. It kind of went that way.

[0:24:18.5] Rae:: Yeah. So... I don't know if this is like a current or past tense question -

[0:24:30.1] Twig:: Sure.

[0:24:30.2] Rae:: - but the questions about, are there spaces where sometimes you're out and sometimes you're not -

[0:24:34.4] Twig:: Mhmm.

[0:24:34.5] Rae:: - and why, and how do you decide? And so, you know - I feel like - I don't know how you want to answer that.

[0:24:40.5] Twig:: No, that's a really - no, I like that. Um, yeah, it's kind of a loaded one. I - okay, let's see. I try to be - I try to live in places where I feel like I can be out, period. And I think also - um, let's see. I [inaudible] to start with, like right now I'm - I'm out to everybody. Um, again, I live in a place that I'm really comfortable. It's like Pecos itself is actually rather redneck-y. And if I go into town, it could - there's a possibility of danger. But I feel like that goes with anywhere that's rural. Um, you just have to be aware of yourself and your surroundings. And - and, just choices. I'm choosing to live here, but I also rarely leave my house [laughs] and if I do, you know, I'll go to Santa Fe, where - Santa Fe's super great, and open, and diverse as all heck, and um - and Albuquerque too. Albuquerque however does have a lot of problems with the police. Um, so - and I've run into a number of those, so I try to avoid it if I can. Um, but anyway, like I think that - I'm sorry, what was the question?

[0:25:58.1] Rae:: Oh, no no no, it's basically -

[0:25:58.8] Twig:: [laughs]

[0:26:00.2] Rae:: It's okay!

[0:26:00.5] Twig:: Totally went - whoo! Go.

[0:26:00.7] Rae:: [laughs] Spaces where you're out and where you're not -

[0:26:04.2] Twig:: Right.

[0:26:04.4] Rae:: - and how do you decide or, you know -

[0:26:07.8] Twig:: Mhmm. Okay, so that's - that's where I was going. So right now, I'm out, period. Um, I'm out at work. Again, I work in a place that originated as a retirement community for elder queer folk. Um, and um, so yeah. So I have the great opportunity to just be around my elders and be totally open. And a lot of people read me as a gay man, a gay bear, um, which I identify as a bear but not necessarily a gay man. So, um, anyway, so I'm totally out here. But if I go back to Kansas, if I go back to Hayes, um, I feel like I'm more aware of my swishiness, and that has to do with the safety factor. And even though I may run into some people that I grew up with or graduated high school with or what have you, they don't necessarily recognize me unless they see me on facebook or some kind of social thing. Um, there's a rumor - I mean, [laughs] okay. Remind me to tell you about the rumors that happened like, after I moved away to college, 'cause I forgot to mention those. But, um - anyways. So it's like I'm very - I'm out, but I'm more aware of myself, and I also think I'm more aware because my dad still lives there. Um, and he - it's still a concern for him. His wife is also very not - his current wife is not supportive or anything like that either. So I think I'm more aware, not only for my safety but for my dad's well-being. Which is totally, in all honesty, not my responsibility. But, um, it is a concern of mine for him. And then, you know, I spend a lot of time again in Warsaw, Missouri, where it's very much a retirement community, it's very Ozarkian, um, but - you know, so I kind of feel things out with people before I get to know them. So if I were going to the grocery store, I don't talk to anybody. I did come up in one issue with my driver's license before I had changed - my name was legal on it, but my gender was not. And - so my gender still said F on it, still a Kansas license. Um, and I had gone to the grocery store and I was filling out - you know how you get those discount cards that you put on your keychain or whatever the hell. And, um, I was filling out that form, and I put M on my form, and she was checking it against my driver's license. And

because I put M, and it still said F, um, she did a double take at me. And I said what's the problem. And she said, it still says F - or it, you know, it says F on your driver's license. And I said it's a misprint. She goes, well, why haven't you had it changed? I was like, why is it any of your business - like, got into a confrontation with it. And I said, I don't need the fucking discount card if this is going to be a problem. And, um, she's said, oh, it's fine, I'll just ignore it. And then, you know, she was just - nosy, bored, tiny country town. You know, that's what it was. And um, and then I ran into her again. And it was like - at the grocery store, not when she was working but when she was just shopping. And - and it was like, she was trying to be nice to me or start a conversation and I was like - so at that point it was weird because I couldn't really - I still was guarded. I was still nervous. I felt like she put me in a dangerous position. Um, and it was like - but I also wanted to like - maybe she was community, but I don't know that. Um, so anyways. So it's like, if I - it's like if I feel like I have some kind of connection with people, um, that I know or that I have some kind of source that can tell me I'm safe. If I don't know that I'm safe, then I'll be more out [0:30:02.8, think he means the opposite but that's as it is on tape. - KM]. If I'm not, I try to be a little stealth. Um, and that's a - a total luxury and a privilege that I have as a trans masculine presenting person that has a beard, that, um, yeah. That can, you know - present the way that I do, that I wouldn't have if I were a lot of queer-identified folks, so I totally recognize that. Anyway, yeah. That's my answer [laughs].

[0:30:34.4] Rae:: [laughs] That's great. Um, so... How are you doin'.

[0:30:43.5] Twig:: I'm good, I'm just - I have a tendency to roll my shoulder -

[0:30:46.0] Rae:: Yeah, me too.

[0:30:46.7] Twig:: - still, so, I'm trying to like, be aware [laughs].

[0:30:46.8] Rae:: Yeah, totally [laughs]. And if you ever - at any point, if you're like, ahh, I need to get up and go outside or -

[0:30:56.3] Twig:: Yeah, sure.

[0:30:56.8] Rae:: - anything, let me know.

[0:30:58.2] Twig:: Absolutely.

[0:30:58.5] Rae:: Um, do - so - did you feel pressure to move to a city, to a big city?

[0:31:08.4] Twig:: Mhmm. I wouldn't say I was pressured or felt pressured. I was curious about it. Um, I definitely, like so many queers, I focused on - I thought about San Francisco. I thought about trying to apply to Berkeley for college. Um, I was like - I went, actually, when I was fifteen, with my family, to visit San Francisco, because my dad had a conference to go to. And I was just constantly looking for queers of any kind, and, like, maybe them! Maybe them! As you're walking down the street. I'm fifteen years old, what do I know? And, um, but it was like - I think it was also really intimidating for me. Um, there was so much, and I felt like such a country bumpkin, and - so it was, um, this like, I don't know. And I lived in Portland for a while. And Portland's a great city, and it has a lot of accessibility and a lot of queerness, and it's also really accessible to the country. So it's like - I feel like I tried it with Portland, and it's totally not for me. I think also, as a youth I was curious about it, but now it got to that point with myself and just being comfortable and I know how I like to live, and I know how I like to exist. So yeah. I don't feel pressured at all.

[0:32:35.2] Rae:: Um, so - this is a huge question.

[0:32:40.4] Twig:: Yeah, go for it.

[0:32:41.1] Rae:: So what do you think is, or are, the largest sort of issues, struggles faced by queer people in the U.S. today, and -

[0:32:51.0] Twig:: Mhmm [laughs].

[0:32:52.1] Rae:: - do you think it's the same sort of struggles and issues for rural queers, or there's different issues?

[0:32:57.4] Twig:: Wow. Oh, man. Let me think about that for a second. Hmm. I think a lot of them - I think some of them are similar, like health care. Um, but I think a lot of that also can sometimes be linked to class and finance. Um, I mean that's always my main concern. I actually - I'm going to totally out myself but everyone knows - anybody who knows me actually knows I think this. I don't actually like marriage. Um, and so therefore like, I - I'm totally in support of anyone who actually wants it. I mean that. I just don't feel like - it's not something that I want. So I don't feel like it's a necessary thing for the queer community to actually be focusing on. I feel like there are way more important things to be actually focusing on, like health care, um [laughs], you know, making sure everybody has food, making sure everybody has affordable housing and they're not gonna lose their job, or their house, or their kids or their family or whatever the hell. Um, yeah. So I think just - and I think some of that also boils to just being a human being, the issues of being human, and having the system that you're living in actually help you out. Um, as far as like, rural queers, um... I think on some level, maybe it's harder,

because finding community to even chat with, you know, have breakfast with, have discussions about your day or even just the hardships of being queer, can be difficult. And I think a lot of us do live by ourselves and if it's - 'cause it's kind of in a lot of situations, if you don't bring it with you, it's not gonna be there. It's like, if you don't bring your partner, good luck finding a date, you know? Um, and... I don't know. I think - I think it's like, yeah, the community aspect of pulling together on a broader level is definitely an issue, but I think if you want to talk about politics, you know, working in a system that - yeah, food accessibility, housing, health care, all that stuff that's just day to day life and not - is that even making sense?

[0:35:48.6] Rae:: Yeah, totally.

[0:35:50.3] Twig:: Um, yeah.

[0:35:51.7] Rae:: Absolutely.

[0:35:51.9] Twig:: Okay.

[0:35:52.6] Rae:: Yeah.

[0:35:52.8] Twig:: Yeah.

[0:35:53.3] Rae:: Yeah, yeah. Um... I thought of a different question and I forgot it while you were talking. That's okay, it'll either come back or it won't.

[0:36:05.9] Twig:: [laughs]

[0:36:07.0] Rae:: So, um, how do you feel about being both, like, queer and country, and - that.

[0:36:15.5] Twig:: That [laughs]. I - um, it's - I mean that's how I identify as a whole person, you know? I identify as a country queer, and it's very much - I think because it also, it took me a long time to get here, as I'm sure it does for many people, of melding, or finding the balance, or - or marriage [laughs] - between those two things, because they're not always something that we're taught or told or validated, that they can co-exist. And they can. You just, um, you know, that varies from how that works and what that looks like from person to person, but, um, it's - for me, it was finding that comfort again in myself. Like, you know, knowing that I like being in the country, I like throwing hatchets, I like doing things that don't involve a lot of other people, and I get to do it by myself, and be out in the woods. And sometimes it's a little more affordable to do that as well, so sometimes that's a factor. But, um - and sometimes it's totally not more affordable. But you know, it's - I totally grasp so hard onto my identity as a rural existing queer that trying to think of myself as anything else at this point in my life is almost unfathomable. Yeah. So.

[0:37:57.5] Rae:: So who do you feel like your community is here?

[0:38:00.8] Twig:: Hmm.

[0:38:03.1] Rae:: Or is your community out here, or is it in town?

[0:38:06.3] Twig:: Right. Um, well I'm really fortunate that my landlord currently lives on site, and we're really good friends, and so that's somewhat community - but we don't hang out a lot [laughs] at all, so - but that's also by choice, on both of our sides. And, um, so it's like, my community - it's weird. Ever since leaving Portland, I feel like a lot of my community's in Portland, um, which was not something that I was expecting. Um, but also, a lot of my

community's in Madrid, New Mexico. Those are some of my oldest friends, a lot of them being country queers, and a lot of them are in Sante Fe. Yeah, so in Pecos I don't have a lot of people to hang out with, and rarely anybody makes it out this way [laughs], 'cause it is half an hour drive up a maintained mountain road, so it's like, mmph. So it's like, let's see. I guess, yeah. My community would be in Sante Fe and Madrid, Portland, um, as far - yeah. As far as Ozarkian folk, I don't really have a lot of folk that I connected with. I go there because it's where I like to be. It's the place, not so much the people. Um, and uh, yeah I guess it would be whoever I'm connecting with at that particular moment. And I guess people that I can not see for a long time, and still feel that connection with. And I feel like that's what happened with Portland, is that I can still connect with a lot of people that I may not talk to for two years, and it's fine. Um -

[0:39:59.5] Rae:: So that leads me to another one of my questions -

[0:40:00.6] Twig:: Yeah, yeah. Yeah.

[0:40:00.9] Rae:: - which is, do you feel like - do you feel like you have a lot in common with queer people who live in big cities, just sort of because of your kind of queerness, or do you you feel like it's hard to relate because your life feels really different than theirs.

[0:40:14.6] Twig:: Yeah. No, I would totally agree - well, with the second part that you said. Um, yeah, 'cause I don't actually feel like I can connect with a lot of people that do live in cities, 'cause yeah, their existence is totally different, their idea of queerness is also - tends to be very different. Um, like... Okay, I'm going to totally out myself as outspoken - and saying things that maybe a lot of people don't like to hear. But, um -

[0:40:47.8] Rae:: I - I think that's fine -

[0:40:48.8] Twig:: [laughs]

[0:40:49.4] Rae:: - although I know it's weird.

[0:40:50.9] Twig:: I just - I just - [laughs]

[0:40:51.4] Rae:: I'm being quiet over here, so I'm like, it's great! It's great. Go for it! [laughs]

[0:40:55.6] Twig:: I'm like, I don't want to hurt anybody's feelings! Um, no, but I - I feel like people in cities - I'm going to say, in non-rural areas, for a large part get very, very wrapped up in a lot of politics and a lot of concern around politics - well, okay, let me be clear on politics. Politics, not just like governmental, but gender politics, and being very, like, trigger warnings, and - and things like - that's the only thing that comes to mind right now. Um, and I feel like people that - when you're in a rural existence, sometimes you're more concerned about your garden [laughs] or your next meal, or the safety of your pets or your livestock, or just your own safety, that sometimes you - and again, I'm just speaking from my own experience. But sometimes I find that yeah, when I'm living out in a rural area that I'm more concerned about myself than what's - how other people are actually perceiving my queerness. Does that - I'm kind of contradicting what I said earlier a little bit maybe, but I guess - okay, let me say this. I'm less concerned about what other queers think of my queerness than I am in a big city. When I'm in a rural area, I'm less concerned about what other queers think of my queerness or my existence than when I'm in a big city. Um, so it's like I think just I can't always connect with them 'cause I don't have a lot to talk about. Like maybe they're growing a backyard garden, um,

or maybe they, um, you know, at one point grew up in a small town or something like that. But their consistent - their consistent ruralness, if any, doesn't always exist, and sometimes that becomes difficult to make any kind of now connection with, um, yeah. Being queer just isn't enough for me to connect with somebody. You know? Yeah.

[0:43:21.5] Rae:: Yeah.

[0:43:22.1] Twig:: Okay.

[0:43:23.4] Rae:: Um, so you've talked about this a little bit, but how do you feel like your rural, your small town, your rural area sort of treats you or interacts with you as a queer person, as a trans person.

[0:43:38.3] Twig:: Mhmm.

[0:43:38.7] Rae:: As a person.

[0:43:38.8] Twig:: Here in Pecos? Or like, wherever I am.

[0:43:40.9] Rae:: Where - however you want to answer it, yeah.

[0:43:45.9] Twig:: I mean, I'm so out here that if people know me they know I'm trans. Like they know - and a lot of people - again, I used to live here awhile ago for college and what not. So there are people that are here that knew me pre trans - pre visible transition or what have you. So I feel like they - I'm treated fine, you know? Like, I'm not disregarded or um, anything like that. Again, if I go home, meaning go back to Hayes or what have you, that - and it might also be part of my, just, awareness of things there a little bit more. Like I'm hyper-aware of my

situation and what's going on around me than I am here. I feel like I do kind of get into a bit of a queer bubble when I'm in Portland, or here, or elsewhere. Um, so I don't - I'm treated fine.

Nobody fucks with me here or anything like that, so, yeah.

[0:44:47.6] Rae:: Cool. Um, so when do you feel the proudest to be queer or trans or you, and when do you feel the proudest to be, like, country, and is it at the same time? Are there separate

-

[0:45:01.6] Twig:: Hmm. That's a really good question. Um, I wanted to say when I'm throwing hatchets, but [laughs]...

[0:45:13.0] Rae:: [laughs]

[0:45:13.3] Twig:: Um, let me think. I'm not really into pride anymore. Um... God, I don't know if I ever actually, like, go there with a pride thing. You know, proud to be, because I'm so - I really strongly feel like I'm just so comfortable just being me, and that like a day to day existence makes me really happy, you know? Like I found - I feel like just a day to day existence, I feel like I've worked through so much, and I've worked so hard to get here and to be comfortable in just being a rural existing, trans-identified individual that, um... I don't know if that's answering your question.

[0:46:14.0] Rae:: Yeah. Totally.

[0:46:14.2] Twig:: But, yeah, just day to day existence - being able to walk around and just be me and have that be seen and respected is great. So yeah.

[0:46:23.6] Rae:: So when are - when are you the happiest? When do you experience the most joy in your life?

[0:46:28.4] Twig:: Um, when I'm writing, for sure. When I have downtime that I get to like, sit in my comfortable chair and read a book, um, or play my Wii and sit with my dogs, and just - I like quiet time, because I don't feel like I always get a lot of that due to my job. Um, so yeah. And like, especially being able to be outside. Um, if I have the opportunity to ranch hand, that makes me super, super happy. I really love physical, outdoor labor, and I love being around animals and doing stuff like that. Tearing down barns and throwing things and being really [roar sound], you know? Like, crazy. That's always super fun. So yeah, if I'm writing or doing some kind of outdoor physical labor, I'm super good. I'm great. Yeah.

[0:47:27.3] Rae:: Um... So, um [dog barks loudly] Woah. That is -

[0:47:42.5] Twig:: Pardon the dog.

[0:47:43.2] Rae:: - quite a bark. That's awesome.

[0:47:44.4] Twig:: He's loud. He's so big.

[0:47:48.3] Rae:: [laughs] Um, he has some things to say -

[0:47:52.4] Twig:: Yes he does. There are things out there.

[0:47:53.4] Rae:: - about country queerness.

[0:47:54.7] Twig:: There are things out there that I'm tellin' you...

[0:47:56.9] Rae:: [laughs] Um, let's see. So... Do you want to have a family of any kind? What do - what would that look like for you? And, like, if it includes kids, do you think about having kids in a rural place, like - or maybe kids isn't important. I don't know. But just like in terms of do you want to have a queer family, and what would that look like, and do you think it would be hard to have the kind of family you want in like, this place, or in a rural place.

[0:48:31.4] Twig:: Hmm.

[0:48:31.6] Rae:: Or do you think it would be wonderful? Like, I don't just want to focus on the negatives. So like -

[0:48:34.4] Twig:: Right.

[0:48:34.7] - what would be amazing, and what would be hard.

[0:48:36.3] Twig:: Right. Well actually, the kind of family I want, I get a lot - I don't want to say flak, but from everybody, they're like, what - 'cause I don't actually want children [laughs]. I don't want to get married. I can totally see myself with a partner, but I also don't feel like that's required. And, um, you know, I do have a girlfriend right now, and I'm super serious about her, and I love her very much, um, you know. But I'm also - let's see. I get feedback that sometimes makes me feel like I'm - that it's a cold place to come from. Like there's something wrong with me for not wanting to have, like, that whole biological, you know, family thing going on. Um, yeah. My ideal family looks like a slew of dogs and you know, some cats on five acres with a big huge garden, and a beefalo named Tawanda. Like that's - that's what I want [laughs] and you know, I don't - again, I'm like a really, really independent individual and I think that's hard for a

lot of people to wrap their minds around, because they think a lot of people do get a lot from community, and especially in a rural existence because it's so difficult to find that. So, yeah, no, I'm not a fan of kids - again who knows this knows this about me. I'm not a fan of kids. And I nannied for a long time, against my, like, warnings of, I really don't like children, are you sure you want me to look after your kid? Um, and they did! And it was fine, you know, and - but, you know, it's not my ideal situation. Absolutely not. Um, I love baby goats. I love baby animals. People argue with me all the time that children - human children - are baby animals, and I said, nope, not the same at all. Um, so [laughs] you know - yeah. My family looks like animals, and uh, for awhile there it was like, oh, I would love to have, you know - my family would consist of community instead, and just have like five cabins, you know, or whatever. My friends would just come in and out, and stay, and bring whatever. And I actually had the opportunity to do that a couple times, and I realized it was not for me at all. And so - so yeah. So I went there, and [laughs] decided no, and decided that if I was gonna have a family, it would look very different, and, um, mostly by myself with animals and that's it. So, yeah [laughs].

[0:51:37.3] Rae:: Um, so... sometimes I feel like I should rearrange the order, but I forget in between interviews -

[0:51:45.2] Twig:: It's all good.

[0:51:45.4] Rae:: - and I never do. So how - how do you, or how do queer people in the country, find other queers? Whether it's a friend, or someone to date, or someone to sleep with, or whatever you're looking for from other queer people, if you are. You know, how do you do that?

[0:52:04.3] Twig:: Um, God... I mean, I'm - I'm really again, really fortunate here because I've known a lot of people for a long time. So I kinda got brought into a rural queer scene here in New Mexico and Sante Fe and stuff because of college. So I got spoiled in that fact. Um, as far as now, I don't have any new rural queer friends out here. Um, unless I'm introduced to them by somebody I already know. So as far as me specifically going out to find new people to hang out with or to date or whatever, um, it totally - forget it. It's always some kind of referral from somebody else. I mean, I'm dating a country femme in Canada for God's sake, and she's best friends with a friend of mine in Portland, you know, that's like more of an acquaintance, so it's kind of that queer phone tree thing. Um, yeah, again, living in Missouri, I didn't have any queer friends. I had to bring those in. You know, they came to visit me. I think I'm also not as extroverted - dog, sorry.

[0:53:22.6] Rae:: Uh-huh. I thought it was thunder.

[0:53:23.4] Twig:: I know! He's big that way. Um, but yeah. I'm - again, I'm so introverted that - well, I'm actually okay out here by myself. I don't know how, and we were talking about this before, but I don't know how to find other country queers. Sometimes - I did have barn dances at my house when I was in Portland, so it's interesting 'cause you would get different kinds of country queers, who were either rurally existing or just liked the identity or whatever, and they just kind of activated the country queer phone tree, and they all kinda [psh sound], you know, transported themselves to my house somehow. Um, let's see. That's a city thing, so I have no friggin' idea. Not a clue [laughs].

[0:54:09.4] Rae:: [laughs]

[0:54:10.2] Twig:: No idea. Facebook? Craigslist? I don't know.

[0:54:16.0] Rae:: [laughs] Um, we all seem to be in the same boat about that question. We're all like -

[0:54:19.3] Twig:: Nobody knows!

[0:54:19.7] Rae:: - I don't know! I have no idea.

[0:54:20.0] Twig:: I have not a clue.

[0:54:21.5] Rae:: We got nothin' [laughs]. Um, let's see. So... gettin' close to the end -

[0:54:31.2] Twig:: All right.

[0:54:31.4] Rae:: - except for that then I'm gonna want to ask you about, like, the roadshow -

[0:54:34.5] Twig:: Sure, sure.

[0:54:34.7] Rae:: - and stuff like that. Um, well I guess - can I ask a question about, like -

[0:54:40.7] Twig:: Yeah.

[0:54:40.9] Rae:: - about like, I don't know - I think it is a thing, a main thing, about living as a queer person in a rural place, if you want to date someone, right? So you have a girlfriend -

[0:54:50.8] Twig:: Yeah.

[0:54:51.2] Rae:: - in Canada -

0:54:52.0] Twig:: Right.

[0:54:52.2] Rae:: - and, like, you live in New Mexico -

[0:54:53.7] Twig:: [laughs]

[0:54:53.9] Rae:: - and so I'm just interested, like how does that work? I think people make it work in different ways, and -

[0:54:58.2] Twig:: Yeah, definitely.

[0:54:58.8] Rae:: That's an interesting story, it seems.

[0:55:00.2] Twig:: Um, oh god. I - I give all credit to her, quite frankly. Um, I mean, she - you know, she makes so much effort to come out and see me, and a large part of it is that it's a little more user-friendly for her to, to do it financially and also with her job. I just now have - finally, now have a job that has benefits and like, a regular schedule that I'm required to be at, and things like that, when ranch handing and stuff like that, that I didn't. Um, so, I think [laughs] - I don't know how we do it. Again, I totally give her absolute credit. Um, you know, it's a lot of negotiation, I think, and compromise, huge amounts of compromise, because it's like, maybe you want - like, I know there are days where I'm like, oh my God, I'm so tired, and I've been working so hard - and you work double time, so that you can save the money to go and visit. And then you're so exhausted - like I went to see her in Canada about a month ago, and I feel like all I did was sleep and eat. That's all I did. And I mean, we went fishing, and we went for hikes and stuff, but you know - it's definitely hard. So as far as like, yeah, dating other country

queers, I feel like sometimes the pool gets even smaller. Like our dating pools are so small anyway, that then it gets even tinier. And, um...

[0:56:39.0] Rae:: So, like, how did you guys -

[0:56:39.6] Twig:: Yeah.

[0:56:40.0] Rae:: - see each other? Is it like -

[0:56:41.6] Twig:: Gosh.

[0:56:42.4] Rae:: - every six months? Is it like -

[0:56:43.3] Twig:: Right. Sometimes it's every six months. Sometimes, if we're really lucky - like, she came last week. And, you know, that was again purely because she was like, I need to see you. And so it's that, you know - there are days, there are months - three months, or six months. Um, we've never gone longer than six months. Again, totally due to her. And - I give her all credit. And, you know, part of that is because my need to be around people no matter what their faction, in my existence, is much more minimal, I think, than a lot of others. And, yeah. So my need to see people is less sometimes. So I accommodate - yeah, I mean, absolutely, if you wanna come and check, you know, that's totally fine. Um, but yeah. It's - it's not - yeah, I don't see her everyday. Yeah, no, it's a very different kind of relationship I'm sure. So...

[0:57:47.0] Rae:: Um, do you know - so this - you can answer this for anywhere you've lived, because you've lived in lots of rural places.

[0:57:55.4] Twig:: Sure.

[0:57:56.8] Rae:: I guess I'm more curious about rural places than cities, but it's about like queer history, right? So do you know of other queer people, either who were like, people you know now who are older than you, or even like, way back, like little glimpses of stories of queer folks that lived in the rural places you've lived. And if - like, if you do, how do you find out that information, how is it passed down? Is it - is it passed down?

[0:58:18.9] Twig:: Right. Right. Like how they existed, or -

[0:58:21.2] Rae:: Or just how do you even find information about, like, queer people who have lived in rural places. You know?

[0:58:25.7] Twig:: Right.

[0:58:26.2] Rae:: Or how they existed. Any of it.

[0:58:28.6] Twig:: I mean - hmm. So like, I think I'm in a particularly unique situation right now due to my job, so I'm around a lot of, um, queer elders. And I find that really amazing. I mean, I've got people that were really, really famous in their day, and were Stonewall, and like, all the riots and everything. And I mean - so it's like, as far as rural existences, yeah, you have some people that grew up in the Deep South. And you know, just frickin' forget it. Mmm-mm. You didn't come out. No way. No matter [laughs] you know, like what your age or whatever, you had to move away from that. And so it's like - I think... Talking - I mean, it's talking. You know, it's being open to speaking to people, I think, is the main thing, which I am myself not always comfortable with. And I think being willing - the willingness to listen to folks, because I think especially - here's what I've noticed about being around older people [laughs], is that they really

like to talk! They really, really like to talk, and they want to tell you their stories, and they want to tell you all about their life. Like, they really do. And, so, like some days I'll work the front desk and I just can't even handle it, because they want to chat with you all day.

And, so it's like - but sometimes even just my smiling and nodding is enough, and they'll keep going. And so, sometimes even just - yeah, I think it's a willingness, I really do, of wanting to hear the stories, being open to however they come. Um, and the willingness to be able to talk to people. Um, what was I - yeah. I don't know. Is that -

[1:00:31.8] Rae:: That's great.

[1:00:32.2] Twig:: Okay. Yeah.

[1:00:32.6] Rae:: Totally. Yeah.

[1:00:33.7] Twig:: Okay.

[1:00:34.2] Rae:: Yeah. Um, let's see. I had - oh. Um, so... um, sorry.

[1:00:51.0] Twig:: No, you're fine.

[1:00:53.0] Rae:: Just gathering my thoughts a little. How you doin'? You need a break? Do you need -

[1:00:56.1] Twig:: No, I'm good, I'm just -

[1:00:56.6] Rae:: You're okay?

[1:00:57.5] Twig:: Mhmm.

[1:00:57.7] Rae:: Okay [laughs].

[1:00:58.9] Twig:: I mean if you need a break we can take a break.

[1:00:59.9] Rae:: No, I'm good, I'm good.

[1:01:01.2] Twig:: All right.

[1:01:01.5] Rae:: I just - sometimes I like, hold people hostage and ask them questions for like, hours -

[1:01:05.3] Twig:: You're golden.

[1:01:06.0] Rae:: - and I'm like, if this is miserable, please tell me [laughs] if I'm [inaudible] you.

[1:01:07.9] Twig:: [laughs]

[1:01:10.9] Rae:: Um, so... Do you have any funny stories about being queer in the country?

[1:01:21.6] Twig:: Queer in the country [laughs].

[1:01:23.5] Rae:: A country queer?

[1:01:24.9] Twig:: Gosh, yeah, okay. So - so while living in Missouri - or okay, wait wait wait. Let me tell you a New Mexico one. So my very first ranch hand job [laughs] was - I actually wrote a short story about this and I was going to turn it into a novel, but that didn't happen - so anyway. Um, so my very first ranch hand job was during my, like - I was about to go into my

third year of college. And I was working at the massage school supply store, which in itself sounds funny. Um, but I was living - I was, um, living with my girlfriend at the time, I wanted to move out, and so I was looking for jobs, and I found this ranch hand position that was work-trade for, um, living - room and board for a little bit of labor. And I'd never ranch handed before and didn't know what to expect. So I show up and it's a small little farm-ette type thing that was owned by two - one retired veterinarian, a straight couple, and her husband. And he did a lot of wood working, and I can't remember what he did before. But anyway. Um, and then their main ranch hand was this lesbian, and I was going to be offered a room in one of the - in her trailer. So, I go with my girlfriend and I meet this woman. And I myself - so my aunt, one of my aunts on my dad's side is Creek and Potawatomi, so I grew up doing a lot of sweat lodges. So I had just come from another sweat lodge, and I noticed that she had this dome tarped thing out back, that was obviously cleared and the area was well taken care of. So I said - I met her, and she was like, Hi, gave me her name, told her my name, and I was like, oh, are you doing sweat lodges? And she was like, oh yeah, yeah, yeah. And I was like, oh, are you doing another one? And she goes, yeah, actually next week, but you know, it's for women only, and I said, that's fine, I identify - at the time, I was identifying as female. And she said, oh, okay, well come inside. So she showed me everything, and I noticed, like, she had some drums and stuff. Well the drums had vaginas painted on them, and I kinda went, okay. That's different. And I kept my mouth shut, it was fine. And, um, and then we walked outside and she was showing me what I would be doing. And you know, it was like turning on the well - it was solar powered, it was completely off-grid, it was a great site - um, meeting the animals and things like that. So we're walking along, and I was like, so how do you do your sweat lodges or whatever? And she goes, oh, well, you know, if you're wanting to attend, I need you to bring some rice cake stuff. And I was like,

rice cakes. And I was like, I don't understand. It just shows me my lack of lesbian history knowledge. So, um, she was like, yeah, yeah, yeah, you need to bring a mirror and things to make rice cakes, but if you can't afford - well, I understand if you're in a financial situation where you can't afford food stuff right now, but I'll have some extra. I'm like, what are you talking about? And she said, well, I need you to bring a mirror because what we do is your rice cake that you form needs to look as much like your own venus mound as possible, and then, you know we go ahead and we sit around and we feed them to each other.

[1:05:03.7] Rae:: [laughs]

[1:05:05.7] Twig:: And I said - I had no words. And [laughs] I - I turned to my girlfriend at the time and her face was just priceless. I mean it was just - guffawed. And I said, okay, I'll think about it. And so - so she continued on with the tour of all the animals. And I was like, okay, this is a little kooky for me. For me, you know, whatever, to each their own, seriously. And I was like - I needed the place to live, I needed the job, I needed the experience, so I was like, I'll take it. You know, poor college student, whatever. And so I show up, and start moving my stuff in that week, and it happens to be the night that she's having the sweat lodge. I was like, all right. And so you've got all these naked women running around, in and out of the trailer, getting more rice cakes, going back out, water, all this stuff. And I was like, what have I gotten myself into. So I was like, okay, it's fine. I can totally deal with this, you know. So I'm like setting up my room and then the next day I start my work, and [laughs], and I finally get to meet the owners, because I didn't get to meet - they weren't there that day. So anyway, so I meet these two older people. They're like, in their sixties and seventies. They're super nice. And the fellow, he's just like a dirty old

man, and I loved him immediately. I thought he was great. And I just - I don't know, I just find it really funny. So anyway - so - dirty old man.

[1:06:39.6] Rae:: [laughs]

[1:06:40.0] Twig:: Anyway, and so [laughs], so there's this point to where they, um, the owners - after a couple months, they decided they were going to Chile for a nudist convention. And I said, all right. And so I took care of everything for them and stuff, and then - anyway, the story kind of goes on. But, um, it's - it's like, they started showing up more nude more often. So I'm running around with naked women in sweat lodges and like naked old straight nudists, and like, all these random animals, 'cause it was also, like, the ranch itself. Because she was a retired veterinarian, she saved animals. So you had animals that like - you had a horse that - he had actually - and a lot of them were actually really sad stories. But - that was thunder.

[1:07:33.1] Rae:: Yeah.

[1:07:33.4] Twig:: You were totally right. That is crazy.

[1:07:35.5] Rae:: [laughs] It's a gray [inaudible] -

[1:07:36.5] Twig:: Woah, is it gray over there?

[1:07:37.8] Rae:: Yeah, totally.

[1:07:38.7] Twig:: [laughs] I was like, now that was thunder.

[1:07:39.4] Rae:: [laughs]

[1:07:40.2] Twig:: Um, so, you know, you had this horse, that he was terrified of everybody. So you had to get down super low, and like push his bowl, and then get out of the cage real fast. 'Cause he would just come whippin' around, and he would kick the heck out of you, and you'd - oof. But anyway, he was terrified of humans because his owner - the previous owner had driven him drunk down the highway of I-14, and um, he had gotten hit by a car, and so Leslie rescued him, nursed him back to health, things like that. We had a cow that had dwarfism, because she had been completely malnourished. So she was about almost - and then she had a baby. So she was not much bigger than her calf itself, which was terrifying. And so I was like, I'm surprised she even popped that thing out. Um, but she was super protective of her baby, it was really cute. And then we had two lesbian cows, um, and one bull named Casper. And every time he would go after one of the cows, when she was in heat or whatever, um, yeah, the other cow would totally get all uppity and like, start going after Casper. It was ridiculous.

[1:08:55.4] Rae:: [laughs]

[1:08:55.6] Twig:: We had a bunch of dogs that like, loved to eat the cow shit, and like barf everywhere, and a lot - there was a couple of ducks, and one of them had been missing a wing, so he couldn't go anywhere, um, you know, couldn't fly anywhere. We had flocks of chickens running around. We had one cat that the other ranch hand - she loved this cat. And this cat had neurodamage, and the poor thing, um, I can't even - but the middle of your, um, what would you call it, like right here -

[1:09:29.2] Rae:: Your forearm?

[1:09:29.9] Twig:: Your forearm? The middle of that, that's where she was walking, because her paw had been bent and was up. I don't know, and come up to you, and like, love on you, and then out of fuckin' nowhere, she would just attack the shit out of you. She would just be like, give me the - fuck you! And then just like, eat your face. And her and the other ranch hand were just the best of friends. And I was like, that says so much to me -

[1:09:58.0] Rae:: [laughs]

[1:09:58.8] Twig:: I can't even - I mean, wow. And then, one of the other dogs - this other dog, her name was Weedgie, and I frickin' love this dog. She was a Pomeranian. She was about nineteen years old - I'm exaggerating a little bit. She was like crazy old, dude. She was blind, couldn't hear, couldn't - you know, couldn't see, couldn't taste anything anymore. They had laid out all these, like, pads and stuff with different textures, so by the texture - this was the understanding of the vet, anyway - that she could tell where she was in the house. So she would walk along these pads and stuff. Anyway, and so while they were away at their nudist convention, I was to take Weedgie every week to the acupuncturist in Albuquerque, so that she could go get acupuncture. But it was so cute, after she - you know, she'd like, tuck her behind the seat there, and get her all nestled in, and she'd have acupuncture and in about five minutes, she's kinda doing her little robot hop, she's all happy again, 'cause she, like, feels better. It was super cute.

[1:11:05.0] Rae:: Awww.

[1:11:06.0] Twig:: Anyway. But yeah, like, they - at the time, I was totally not drinking, not - you know, I didn't do drugs or anything like - like no pot, or anything like that. But my - the

other ranch hand, she was working at the, um, correctional facility, and - just up the road. And - so she told me when I moved in, do you smoke pot. You know, I don't drink a lot. I was like, no no no, I don't do any of that. And, um, anyway, so she [laughs] - one day she came in. She would write me these long-ass notes, that were like two pages of like, legal notepad. Like back and front. Just long rambles about whatever, and just rant. I'm like, okay, that in itself is passive-aggressive. So anyway, one day she had taped to the note, um, this like, piece of grain. And - this was the end of my time there - and she had taped to this note this piece of grain, this like, leafage, and I was like, what the fuck. And she pointed to it and said pot in big letters. And this ramble - I told you you can't smoke pot here, I work in a correctional facility, you're gonna get me fired, blah blah blah. I'm like, we live with two nudist hippies! Woman!

[1:12:19.2] Rae:: [laughs]

[1:12:20.4] Twig:: So anyway [laughs], she - I took the notes, I tore off a small piece of the legal pad and I said - I wrote her name, and I said, dear so-and-so, I said, I don't smoke pot. I've never smoked pot. This looks like alfalfa. Love Twig.

[1:12:38.7] Rae:: [laughs]

[1:12:40.2] Twig:: And I left it. And she got so pissed, she started throwing shit that night. I had to shut - like throwing stuff, crashing into the walls. I'm like, I'm done. So they were - I was waiting till the owners came back, and I gave them my notice, and they hated to see me go. I was like, I love being here, but I can't live with this person. I can't do it. So I left, and I moved down the road, and I moved into a school bus, which is a whole other story. But anyway, that was like, my very first ranch hand experience. It was pretty amazing [laughs]. Anyway, that's that.

[1:13:16.1] Rae:: [laughs] I have to say - I'm probably not supposed to say things like that, but that is probably the funniest -

[1:13:19.9] Twig:: [laughs]

[1:13:21.3] Rae:: - country queer related story I have heard so far.

[1:13:23.7] Twig:: There ya go. Oh God. Yeah.

[1:13:28.4] Rae:: The whole thing. That's amazing. Um, so, I have basically like one more -

[1:13:35.2] Twig:: Sure.

[1:13:35.8] Rae:: - question. But I'm gonna ask you about - about the Queer Country Roadshow.

[1:13:43.2] Twig:: Ah, the roadshow.

[1:13:44.6] Rae:: Yeah.

[1:13:45.0] Twig:: That was so good. Um, so about last year, so what was that. That was [laughs] -

[1:13:49.5] Rae:: 2013?

[1:13:49.9] Twig:: 2013. When was that?

[1:13:51.1] Rae:: [laughs]

[1:13:53.4] Twig:: Yeah, a year ago this June, I ended up producing the - what was called the Queer Country Roadshow. And the whole premise was a number of years ago, while I was living in Missouri, I really wanted to create a space that allowed rural - rural existing, queer-identified folk that performed, in whatever aspect that looked like, to have a platform that was specifically for them. 'Cause I didn't feel - as far as I knew, that didn't exist. So, anyway, so I mulled over it and mulled over it, then talked to a few of my queer country friends out in, um, Madrid, and they really liked it, and I was like, oh cool, I have some support. That's great. And, um, then it kind of died down a little bit. We were gonna go gung-ho and then, finally - nothing was happening, nothing was happening. I said, you know, if this is gonna happen I'm gonna do it. So I just pushed through and, um, we ended up having it in Madrid at the Engine House Theater. And it was a full house, and, um, we had everything from burlesque to spoken word, music, drag, um, we had some folk that were like, from Albuquerque, some folk from Sante Fe, some from Madrid, um, so it was - it was within the area. And, um, and I had talked to a number of people - a number of friends I knew were performers in whatever aspect. Um, acro - we had like chain, like aerial stuff. And some of them were kind of confused about what - what it was to be a country queer, and what it would take to be that. And I had to explain that, like anything, a person [dog barks] - sorry, dog. Like anything, a personal identity, you know, it's not something that I get to police. And I said, if somebody comes to me and says that they identify as queer, and they identify as rural or country, then they have something that I feel like is a unique performance, you know, then I'm going to let them be in the show. And, um, as long as it's not, you know, culturally or socially offensive, I try to be really aware of that, but as far as their own personal identities, then yeah, I'm gonna say yes. And I think some people had a hard time with that, and I found that really interesting. 'Cause I know as an individual I - as a youth, I had a

hard time with the idea of like, country enough. Like what it is to be country, and that was actually something I wanted to mention, as I was thinking about your questions and stuff, I find it really interesting that when you come up with the idea of what it is, that you take on the identity of being a rural queer or a country-identified person, that sometimes people really come to the table with the expectation that you're going to know all of this stuff. Like how to tie knots, or how to put in a fence, or like, what kind of poultry you should first get. And I'm like - I didn't! [laughs] You know? And I don't think that's always the case. And I think sometimes people identify country 'cause they grew up in a rural small town in Iowa, or wherever, or maybe it was Alaska. I don't know. And - but they don't live there anymore, or maybe they took an internship where they really liked the idea of growing things, and to them that's what country is. And so, you know, I tried really hard to just leave it open. And if somebody came to me and they said, that's how I identify, I'm like, great. Show me what you got. And, um, so we came out with this really great show. And it was - it was the preliminary show that I wanted to fund an actual roadshow tour. And again, at the time I was ranch handing, I was landscaping, I was nannying of all things, and, um, and I had a lot of time, but not the money. So then I raised the money. Then my life changed about a couple months later, and I got a quote unquote steady job, you know, so now I've got this money sitting in this account, and um, not the time to do it. Um, so yeah. So I'm hoping - I would love to do another one. I just don't know when. So, um, but it was a huge success. Everybody was super well-received and supported, and, um, so much help from so many people, and it was just really nice to see community of all kinds, whether they were rural-identified or not, come out and totally support the heck out of that. So I think that helped a lot of performers and rural people see that they had community behind them, which was really cool.

[1:19:02.1] Rae:: Cool.

[1:19:02.6] Twig:: Yeah.

[1:19:03.6] Rae:: Do you think you - when you imagine taking it on the road, what does that look like to you?

[1:19:07.9] Twig:: I - I imagine having like, one, like maybe small main crew of people. Um, 'cause I have some people that are - I know for a fact really amazing performers, and they bring really cool stuff to the table. And so like have them. And - on as regulars, you know, the staple act, and then traveling around and making that connection. So how you connect with these people, I don't frickin' know, but um, connecting with people in other areas of the country, you know? And maybe sectioning it off to where it's like, okay, here's - you're gonna do this part of the states, and you'll do the central part, and this part, and whatever. And, um, so you have - you connect with other rural, country queer performers in other areas that want to be in the show, then kind of showcase them as like, the main act and then we're just kinda - you know, we're like the backup kind of a thing, you know? But to give them some support. So, I think it - if they don't have it. If they have it, awesome. Go for it. But, you know, and like ideally I wanted to turn it - and I think it's still possible, it's just time and money - I want to turn it into a festival, you know? I would love to see it turn into like a general show, and the show kind of raises money, pays the performers, pays for venues and travel costs, but eventually turns into this festival where maybe it's just a big huge show for a weekend, and you have workshops and, um, trade shares, and seed shares, and different kinds of stuff like that. So, you know, it's a huge ethereal

idea that I think would be really cool. I just don't know how to go about it [laughs, inaudible] right yet, making it happen, so, yeah.

[1:21:04.7] Rae:: Well, I understand that [laughs].

[1:21:05.9] Twig:: Yeah, I'm sure you do. I - yeah.

[1:21:08.2] Rae:: But that sounds amazing.

[1:21:09.5] Twig:: Aw, thanks.

[1:21:10.1] Rae:: Yeah. That sounds important. So, as someone who also writes sometimes -

[1:21:16.1] Twig:: Yeah.

[1:21:16.2] Rae:: - I hate - I don't hate. I'm not very good at talking about my writing. But I thought I would ask if you - I don't know, if it is something you like to talk about -

[1:21:23.9] Twig:: Sure.

[1:21:24.3] Rae:: - if there's anything you want to say.

[1:21:25.2] Twig:: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Go for it.

[1:21:25.7] Rae:: Like, I don't know -

[1:21:27.5] Twig:: My writing. Well, I mean, like - my writing is super important to me. It's like the one thing I've known other than my queerness that's like a part of myself, and it's super important to me, and literature in general is really important. Yeah, as far as my writing goes, I

write a lot of fiction, um, I write a lot about class, I write a lot about queer and rural identity. And, um, I think my stories tend to be less about - less about, like, the queerness is just a facet, you know? I try not to make it - that's the whole point of the story. There's always something deeper. And, um, I got really fortunate - I was accepted to the Lamda Literary Fellowship, so I got to go to that last year, and, um - it was amazing, and I met so many amazing writers from all over the country and parts of Canada. And, to kinda see how other people were writing, and to get that feedback, and um, so anyway, that was just really cool. And, um, yeah. I mean, I do have a BA in creative writing and a masters in writing with an emphasis in book publishing, but I'm not doing anything with them [laughs]. You know, other than for my own enjoyment. So, you know, I'm still trying to - I have a really hard time with editing, um, while I write. And I work on that constantly. And it's just a really big challenge. So getting - and getting to that point where I feel like a story is done, I need to get to a point where it's going to be done enough to where I feel comfortable to send it out. Um -

[1:23:17.2] Rae:: So do you, when you say you have hard time with editing while you're writing -

[1:23:19.2] Twig:: Yeah.

[1:23:19.6] Rae:: - you mean you are editing yourself as you're writing [inaudible].

[1:23:21.0] Twig:: I'm editing while I'm writing, which is -

[1:23:23.2] Rae:: Yeah.

[1:23:23.8] Twig:: - that's my brain. I mean - I don't know if you can hear it in this, but my brain's going twenty miles an hour. You know, all the time. And I just - that doesn't sound very fast, actually.

[1:23:35.8] Rae:: [laughs] It's a country pace.

[1:23:36.2] Twig:: Um [laughs] - what did I - twenty miles an hour is fast, okay?

[1:23:41.1] Rae:: If you're on a horse.

[1:23:42.1] Twig:: Yeah, exactly! [laughs] That's totally - but like, it's going to like, all these different areas all the time. I'm constantly having to filter, 'cause I'm really - I think about my words and stuff a lot, and um, anyways. So yeah. Editing while I'm writing is a very big challenge. Um, to not do. And yeah.

[1:24:06.2] Rae:: Yeah.

[1:24:06.7] Twig:: So, um, but yeah. It's huge for me. It's like the only thing that I know, other than growing stuff, that I'm like, good at. I'm really, really good at, that I know I can get better, so anyway.

[1:24:20.9] Rae:: So this maybe is connected to one of my last questions -

[1:24:24.2] Twig:: Yeah.

[1:24:24.7] Rae:: - which is, um, who are some of your heroes?

[1:24:28.2] Twig:: My heroes?

[1:24:28.8] Rae:: Or your sheroes.

[1:24:30.3] Twig:: Dorothy Allison, you have my heart forever and ever. Um, Alice Walker - God. They just blow my mind. I love them so much, and they speak so much to my heart and to my existence. Guh - I have no words other than I love you! Um, yeah, and - yeah. I had a great privilege to meet Dorothy Allison finally, a number of years ago, and it was just - everything it ever could have been. Yeah, it came at a really important moment. I had - one of my friends - not to get a downer, but like, one of my friends was murdered back in 2008 and, um, I had just come back from her funeral, and I had already made a reservation to go see Dorothy speak at a lecture for Tinhouse in Portland. And I wasn't gonna go, I wasn't gonna go, I was like, no, Jana would want you to go, so I went, and, um, yeah. I just listened to her and it was like medicine. You know, it was like I needed that so hard, and I had been wanting to see her for years, but I'm like, if I would have seen her at any other time, other than that moment, it - it would have been profound but not the way that it was there. And it was like, she just - she kept - this is totally going to sound egotistical but I don't mean it this way - I felt like she kept meeting my eyes, and I was with a friend at the time, and I was like, I felt like she kept - and they were like, no, she kept looking at you. Like, she saw you. And anyway, I got to meet her and everything. And that's exactly what she said. She was like, I'm so happy to see you. And I was like, what the fuck? Like, so I don't know if she thought I was somebody else, but anyway, it was really great. So that was amazing. And Karen Russell, I think she's - she's still up and coming, she's not queer, but she's amazing. Least, I don't know - I don't think she's queer. I actually don't know that for a fact. So, um, she's an amazing story-teller, an amazing fiction short story writer. She wrote, um, Dorothy's House for Girls, or no, Saint Lucy's House for Girls Raised by Wolves. And um,

Vampires in the Lemon Grove, Swamplandia... Um, she's amazing. If you haven't read her please do. Um, who else. Gabrielle from Xena is also very big for me. Renee O'Connor, just saying [laughs]. I may or may not have a tattoo.

[1:27:06.7] Rae:: [laughs]

[1:27:06.9] Twig:: Um, no, she - yeah. I just, um, I don't tend to gravitate towards, like - oddly - I don't know what this means or if it means anything, but like - towards male-identified people. A lot of people that I really admire and really like to be around are female-identified or female-presenting. Um, whatever that is. But yeah. So, yeah. Mostly authors and stuff, yeah.

[1:27:37.0] Rae:: Cool. Um, so the last - well, my very last question is always what else should I have asked you. But I'm not there yet.

[1:27:46.6] Twig:: [laughs]

[1:27:46.8] Rae:: So my last one before that one is, like, I don't know. Anything you want to say to other rural queer folks?

[1:27:53.2] Twig:: God. That's a good one. Um, try not to be scared. 'Cause I find that that can be a really easy place to go to sometimes. Um, and sometimes hard also, to go to. But like, if you're existing in a rural existence, in a rural area, like, try not to project a sense of fear. Try to remain strong in the fact that this is part of who you are and this is how you're choosing to exist. And maybe you're not choosing. So like, maybe that's the thing, is like, if you're choosing to be there, stay strong in that choice. And if you're not - if you don't have that option, if it's someplace that you have to be for whatever reason, you know, try to remain strong in that

you're there and you can be there, but you can also get out if you don't want to be there, 'cause that's okay too. Um, yeah.

[1:28:53.8] Rae:: That's great. And so then - at the end, like, what were the things you wanted to talk about I didn't ask you about, um, is there - do you have

[1:29:06.2] Twig:: [dog barking] Sorry! Squat! [laughs]

[1:29:07.4] Rae:: No, it's totally fine! I love the background noises. They're different in every place and I think they add a lot -

[1:29:12.1] Twig:: He's so loud.

[1:29:13.1] Rae:: They add a lot of, uh, I don't know.

[1:29:15.7] Twig:: Like depth or something?

[1:29:16.8] Rae:: Something. Yes.

[1:29:17.3] Twig:: Okay. So they add something.

[1:29:18.5] Rae:: Texture or something.

[1:29:19.1] Twig:: Got it. There you go [laughs].

[1:29:19.4] Rae:: I don't know. Um, so - and also, like, are there questions that you are curious about in terms of future interviews I do, like you should really ask this.

[1:29:31.0] Twig:: Oh man.

[1:29:32.9] Rae:: And if you don't have anything to ask, that's totally fine.

[1:29:35.9] Twig:: I mean, I'm always curious about what people - I mean, okay. Let me think, how can I say this.

[1:29:43.2] Rae:: Is that twenty miles an hour happening' right now?

[1:29:44.5] Twig:: Yes it is.

[1:29:45.3] Rae:: [laughs]

[1:29:46.0] Twig:: Twenty miles an hour, I tell ya, it's the speed of light right there! Yeah. Um, I think - okay. So one of the struggles that I have as a country queer is that I find myself still antiquating, if that's the right word, connecting maybe, um, antiquated - I don't know if that's right, I can't think. Anyway, um, connecting the idea of class and intelligence with rural existence. And I find that sometimes I myself go there. Like, I guess maybe that goes around with my comment around there's this assumption that you're gonna, like, know all this stuff about living rurally, because apparently that's supposed to look the same all the way around, right? Or there's an assumption of what that looks like. And so, sometimes I find - okay. From like other queers [laughs], other rural queers, if I don't know those things of whatever it is that they're expecting me to know, then I'm not country enough or I look stupid. But from people that don't live that rural existence, sometimes they're automatically assuming that I'm ignorant or poor, because I'm living a rural existence. And I think maybe those are just assumptions I'm making on my own. But I find that that happens frequently for me. Um, so finding a way - making thoughts - that's a big thought of what I do in my writing, and try to do in my writing,

and also what I was trying to do with the roadshow, is show that it's such a broader perspective than what we assume or what other people assume of us. Yeah. And even of ourselves, sometimes. 'Cause sometimes we can surprise ourselves of what we're actually capable of. Um, just as human beings, not just rural or non-rural or whatever. Um, but yeah. That connectivity, that breaking down those stereotypes or assumptions of what all of that looks like. Does that - yeah. So, I don't know if there's even a way to, like, formulate that into a question. But I would be curious as to what other people's experiences are around that, if any, and like, what that looks like elsewhere in other parts of the country, you know. 'Cause I'm sure - 'cause sometimes it's true, right, with anything of those things, but you know, it - there's lots of times where it's not, and it doesn't always collate sometimes, y'know.

[1:32:31.5] Rae:: Okay. Cool.

[1:32:31.6] Twig:: Yeah. That's all.

[1:32:32.5] Rae:: That's awesome.

[1:32:33.5] Twig:: Okay.

[1:32:33.8] Rae:: Anything else you want to add before I -

[1:32:35.7] Twig:: No, thank you so much -

[1:32:36.9] Rae:: Thank you so much!

[1:32:37.2] Twig:: - for like coming and hanging out.

[1:32:38.2] Rae:: And thanks for breakfast! That was delicious.

[1:32:39.2] Twig:: Totally! You're welcome. You're very welcome. My pleasure. Absolutely.

[1:32:42.2] Rae:: And if it's okay with you, we'll do some pictures?

[1:32:44.0] Twig:: Yeah.

[1:32:44.5] Rae:: Oh great. Cool.

[END]

[1:27:06.7] Rae:: [laughs]

[1:27:06.9] Twig:: Um, no, she - yeah. I just, um, I don't tend to gravitate towards, like - oddly - I don't know what this means or if it means anything, but like - towards male-identified people. A lot of people that I really admire and really like to be around are female-identified or female-presenting. Um, whatever that is. But yeah. So, yeah. Mostly authors and stuff, yeah.

[1:27:37.0] Rae:: Cool. Um, so the last - well, my very last question is always what else should I have asked you. But I'm not there yet.

[1:27:46.6] Twig:: [laughs]

[1:27:46.8] Rae:: So my last one before that one is, like, I don't know. Anything you want to say to other rural queer folks?

[1:27:53.2] Twig:: God. That's a good one. Um, try not to be scared. 'Cause I find that that can be a really easy place to go to sometimes. Um, and sometimes hard also, to go to. But like, if you're existing in a rural existence, in a rural area, like, try not to project a sense of fear. Try to remain strong in the fact that this is part of who you are and this is how you're choosing to exist. And maybe you're not choosing. So like, maybe that's the thing, is like, if you're choosing to be there, stay strong in that choice. And if you're not - if you don't have that option, if it's someplace that you have to be for whatever reason, you know, try to remain strong in that you're there and you can be there, but you can also get out if you don't want to be there, 'cause that's okay too. Um, yeah.

[1:28:53.8] Rae:: That's great. And so then - at the end, like, what were the things you wanted to talk about I didn't ask you about, um, is there - do you have

[1:29:06.2] Twig:: [dog barking] Sorry! Squat! [laughs]

[1:29:07.4] Rae:: No, it's totally fine! I love the background noises. They're different in every place and I think they add a lot -

[1:29:12.1] Twig:: He's so loud.

[1:29:13.1] Rae:: They add a lot of, uh, I don't know.

[1:29:15.7] Twig:: Like depth or something?

[1:29:16.8] Rae:: Something. Yes.

[1:29:17.3] Twig:: Okay. So they add something.

[1:29:18.5] Rae:: Texture or something.

[1:29:19.1] Twig:: Got it. There you go [laughs].

[1:29:19.4] Rae:: I don't know. Um, so - and also, like, are there questions that you are curious about in terms of future interviews I do, like you should really ask this.

[1:29:31.0] Twig:: Oh man.

[1:29:32.9] Rae:: And if you don't have anything to ask, that's totally fine.

[1:29:35.9] Twig:: I mean, I'm always curious about what people - I mean, okay. Let me think, how can I say this.

[1:29:43.2] Rae:: Is that twenty miles an hour happening' right now?

[1:29:44.5] Twig:: Yes it is.

[1:29:45.3] Rae:: [laughs]

[1:29:46.0] Twig:: Twenty miles an hour, I tell ya, it's the speed of light right there! Yeah. Um, I think - okay. So one of the struggles that I have as a country queer is that I find myself still antiquating, if that's the right word, connecting maybe, um, antiquated - I don't know if that's right, I can't think. Anyway, um, connecting the idea of class and intelligence with rural

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