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Speaker2: [00:00:48] Exploring the healing and culture-building practices of Embodied Anti-racism, this is With Love and Justice for All, with Rev Ogun Holder and Rev Kelly Isola.

Kelly: [00:01:01] Hello and welcome to With Love and Justice for All. I'm Rev Kelly Isola and this is the official podcast of Project Sanctus, where we have conversations around embodied anti-racism, dismantling oppression, systems of oppression, fostering liberation. And especially at often the focus is on the special challenges that arise for spiritual seekers as well as spiritual communities or religious communities. I am... As a land acknowledgement, I am coming to you from the land of the Kaskaskia, which includes the Osage and the Missouria and the Choctaw Indigenous nations and is now in the area known as Kansas City, Missouri. And I'm here with my partner in crime and consciousness, Rev Ogun Holder.

Ogun: [00:01:55] Hey, you forgot to mention one important thing. This is episode 100.

Kelly: [00:02:00] Oh, my gosh. I did. Yes. You know, that's so funny because I was thinking about it like all morning. I'm like, oh, episode 100 and Caz gets to be in episode 100, which you know, if you're listening, you don't know what that means yet, but it's a good thing.

Ogun: [00:02:17] Yes, it is Episode 100. I had no doubts we would make it this far at all. But and very glad that our listeners from around the world and all over the US are listening with us and continuing to spread the word about our podcast. As always, you can jump in on the conversation with questions or comments in our social media pages. We got Facebook, Instagram, @getourholyon is our handle. Our phone number is 413-438-4659 or 413-GET-HOLY where you can leave a voicemail. And today, as Kelly mentioned, we have a special guest with us. We started last month highlighting that this was Disability Pride month and we're going to hone in on a specific area around that. And we brought in the expert to talk about that today. She's smiling. But, you know, listen, you know more around this specific area than Kelly and I combined, maybe times ten. So, yes, for all intents and purposes, you are an... You are our resident expert on this. Let me tell you a little bit about our guest and jump into the conversation.

Kelly: [00:03:33] Can I interrupt you for one second?

Ogun: [00:03:34] Sure.

Kelly: [00:03:35] Um, can you come back to your land acknowledgement and what's coming up?

Ogun: [00:03:38] Oh, my, my, my apologies. I was excited. I was trying to get into the discussion.

Kelly: [00:03:43] I know, I know. And I didn't... I hate to put a damper on it and...

Ogun: [00:03:47] She's slowing me down. All right, here we go. Here we go. I am... I am currently on the land of the Tuscarora indigenous peoples. And that is sort of about an hour west of Raleigh, North Carolina is where I am right now. And what else am I doing? Oh, yeah. Coming up, we have our affinity groups first and third Wednesdays is always 7:30 p.m. and we have our book study THIS HERE FLESH by the author Cole Arthur Riley. We have started the book study, but as we said, you can jump in and we're doing that Thursdays at 7:30 p.m. Eastern on Zoom. So you do have to register for the link. And as always, hit us up at projectsanctus.com to see all the things we're doing and make a donation. And if you remember, please, if you haven't ordered your THIS HERE FLESH yet, please order from our Black-owned bookstore partner Bliss Books and Wine Use the code 846BOOK for a 10% discount. All right. That's all the boring stuff. Now, let's get into the conversation. Let me introduce to you Caz Killjoy, a disability and sexuality freelance educator and consultant. They use the pronouns they/them/theirs.

Ogun: [00:05:05] Caz is currently on medical sabbatical. But, and therefore, I am especially grateful that they're taking the time to come talk with us right now. Prior to that sabbatical, they spent their life focusing on the things that make most people uncomfortable, fitting right in with us. Things like accessibility, sex and kink, pain, disability, illness, death and poverty, advocacy, digital harm reduction. Caz is a white gender-queer, queer person who practices non-monogamy as a relationship anarchist. Caz is an abolitionist, an anarchist, an atheist, an anti-Zionist, a lumpen-precariat, a formerly unhoused person, a former sex worker, a proud GED recipient, a writer and storyteller and blogger, and they are multiply disabled. Given all of that, Caz's disabilities are the least interesting thing about them. And I love the name Slavic Caz means the famous destroyer of peace. Caz is also an abbreviation of their first name, hence the name Caz Killjoy, which started out as a joke, and now they're stuck with it. I want to hear this joke. Maybe sometime we'll get around to it. To learn more, to get in touch, you can find Caz online at connectwithcaz.com. Kaz, welcome to our podcast. So thrilled to have you today.

Caz: [00:06:28] Thank you. It's great to be here. Yeah.

Kelly: [00:06:31] So before we go any further, I want to apologize for last week. So if you recall, Ogun, we we talked about Caz as an upcoming guest and misgendered Caz. So Ogun mentioned Caz's pronouns, are they/them/theirs and at the opening of last week's show, when I mentioned what was going to happen this week, I twice I referred to Caz as she. And then in the closing Ogun said she so I wanted to just publicly and here Caz apologize for that in large part because what I've learned you know, my pronouns are she, they there's a danger, there's a real danger in misgendering someone. And for me, I recognize that it can... For some people it's challenging to get used to. You know, we're so habituated and it's so unconscious to say she or he or, you know, the they or them or anything else outside of her and him. And so I just wanted to apologize online and to let people know why it's harmful to misgender. The biggest thing that I find is that basically it's invalidating you. You know, it's invalidating the person that you're misgendering. You know, when someone shares pronouns with you, it's, you know, it's my responsibility to actively listen to what's being said, to try to repeat them in my brain in a way that I will remember. And when I accidentally use the wrong pronoun and when I'm talking about it is to just calmly apologize to correct myself and keep speaking.

Kelly: [00:08:15] I think sometimes when if you participate in a protracted apology, it then goes down a rabbit hole that just gets worse and worse than the misgendering to begin with. So there's a couple things that I just want to to let individuals know about. You know, misgendering is first and foremost, you know, we just commit to doing better. And, you know, on my own time, I can, you know, take a look at how and why I made the mistake and think about how I can prevent doing that again. And I know in this case last week, I really unconsciously I'm focused on podcast and what I got to say to introduce and looking at a script and not even connected to the humanity of who was going to join us this week and then practice using the pronouns that you're less if you happen to be less familiar with them and just be more, you know, and eventually you become more confident. I just think it's important. I don't know that we have really ever talked in great depth about misgendering, but you know, it can... Someone can feel disrespected and invalidated and alienated, you know, and give further validation to, you know, if any kind of previous harm or oppression. So my apologies Caz, And welcome.

Caz: [00:09:37] Apologies. Thank you Kelly.

Ogun: [00:09:38] And as we've shared here many times, we are also in the learning and we're also in the mistake making. None of us are going to be perfect in this journey. And I do appreciate you Caz drawing it to our attention after listening to last week's episode and yeah, making it a great point of learning and awareness for us as well. So let me... Let's move forward, I think, and jump into these to today's discussion. So the first thing I want to bring to this space is, and I think I mentioned this last week around the idea that when people hear disability, the tendency is to think about physical disabilities, as in, you know, ones we can see: visible disabilities. So we know they're also invisible disabilities that we tend not to be conscious of, aware of as able-bodied people. So what would you like our listeners to know about relating to folks with Invisible disability? Should we walk through life just assuming that everyone has one and began to look out for it that way. What would you what would you like us to know?

Caz: [00:10:57] I've got a really long, roundabout answer for you on for this one, but I think it's important that all of it get mentioned because it gives context to the things that we're going to be talking about, as well as provides just more context for your your work, your podcast in general. With project_SANCTUS, it provides more depth of disability, I guess. So...

Ogun: [00:11:24] Take all the time you need.

Caz: [00:11:27] Thank you. In the last episode, the term able-bodied was used a lot, in fact, mostly. So. yes, people with visible or physical disabilities, that's what people tend to think about when they think about disability, which is why they use terms such as able-bodied. But the world isn't just created for the able-bodied, it is created for the non-disabled. And that's why many of us prefer using the term non-disabled instead of able-bodied. The term able-bodied erases the existence of people with many other disabilities, such as some of those who are chronically ill, who have cancer, who have experienced environmental harm, people with psychosocial (these are also known as mental illness or emotional disturbance, depending on which country you're in or what field you're in) disabilities, those who are deaf, blind, and deaf-blind, folks who have intellectual and developmental disabilities, learning disabilities, cognitive disabilities, sensory disabilities such as congenital insensitivity to pain and sensory processing disorder, speech disabilities, and many more. So as you can hear, there are a lot of people left out when we say able-bodied. So we use we use the term non-disabled instead. So when we ask exactly how many people are disabled, which is a statistic that you used last week, we have to interrogate many factors, including what we mean by disability, and who is being asked, and how they identify, who is doing the asking, the methodology of the study, and so much more. So for this, I want to defer to Jennifer Madans, who is a statistics consultant at the Center for Inclusive Policy. Jennifer was featured in last week's edition of Disability Debrief, and the link to that will be in the show notes.

Caz: [00:13:28] According to the Washington... Jennifer said that according to the Washington Group on Disability Statistics, perhaps 8 to 12% of people are truly impaired enough to be considered disabled by their criteria. And according to Madans quote, the criteria regard a person's capabilities through focusing on six domains: walking and climbing stairs, self-care, communicating, hearing, seeing, and cognition. In each area, there will be a range of abilities and difficulties, and the degrees of difficulty people have in those areas can have very different impacts on social participation, which means we might think that we see everyone who's disabled, but we don't. So for the purpose of international comparisons, the standard used to create this statistical group of quote, disabled people is those having at least, quote, a lot of difficulty in at least one of those core functional domains. But far more people actually identify as disabled than meet this criteria. And many people who do meet this criteria, particularly elders experiencing the effects of aging, they don't identify as disabled. It's rather complicated figuring out what percentage of the population is disabled. In your last episode, you mentioned this statistic of 1 in 4 people in the United States having a disability, but as I just talked about, that number leaves a lot of questions unanswered. According to the World Health Organization, more than 1 billion people worldwide, which is around 16% of the population, have some type of disability, which makes us disabled people, the world's largest historically underrepresented group in the world and in the United States.

Caz: [00:15:17] But, those statistics are based on pre-pandemic surveying, so people with disabilities made up a quarter of the US population then, and that number has grown with the amount of people who have post-viral syndrome from Covid, otherwise known as Long Covid. Other estimates from the UN say that 15% to 20% of the world's people are in some way neurodivergent, just one form of disability. So we're talking about vastly different numbers here. So, yes, we should assume that anyone might have a disability and act accordingly. However, many people with various disabilities who are included among disability statistics don't even consider themselves to be disabled, and don't use that as a term to describe themselves. This is particularly true among elders, people of color, and people who live or are from the global South. There are so many reasons for this. I'm just going to go over three. In some places, though these places are rapidly diminishing due to the continued spread of settler colonialism. Disability isn't seen as othered. In fact, disabled people are embraced for their difference. So these people don't identify as disabled. People of color and people of the global South face a great deal of otherness already. And by claiming disability identity, they would only add on to that othering. So why make it worse for yourself than you already have it? And people in the global North, particularly white people of privilege, often live in socio-political environments where it's safer for them to not only accept disability identity, but to proclaim it with pride. There's a minority of disabled white people of privilege who want to feel that they too are very much oppressed.

Caz: [00:17:12] Which is not to say that disabled people do not experience oppression. We very much do. But there's a certain segment of privileged, disabled white people, particularly those who are, quote, very online, who want to shove their experience of oppression and the virtual faces of others, rarely acknowledging that people with multiple historically underrepresented identities, particularly people of color, experience far more oppression as disabled people than white disabled people. But as in most things, it's the privileged white people whose stories get the most attention, who social media accounts get the most followers. The in-your-face approach of privileged, white disabled people can be obnoxious and ill informed, but it's the obnoxiousness that's the point. The squeaky wheel is the one that gets the grease, right? So you mentioned last week that Disability Pride Month is about celebrating the signing of the ADA in 1990. Well, the ADA was largely brought about by the work of white, physically disabled cis men and women whose white privilege gave them the attention needed from white politicians to pass the ADA. But the ADA is lacking in many ways, least of which is its lack of enforcement. The greatest trouble with the ADA is that it was created with the needs of those white, physically disabled activists in mind. There are many, many other experiences of disability that the disability rights movement has continued on the whole to ignore, which is why the disability justice movement was birthed in response to the lack of inclusion and understanding of intersectionality within the disability rights movement. Told you it was a long, long answer.

Ogun: [00:18:57] And a much appreciated answer. And again, thank you for thank you for highlighting things we said last week that I think were... didn't do a good enough, thorough deep dive into into the big question because it's often the thing we say ourselves. Like you know, what is the question we're really asking? Who is doing the asking? And and really what are they trying to seek from the question. So appreciate that. I'm a little curious if you don't mind me asking, and you did address it some in the in your answer about folks who do not consider themselves or label themselves, consider themselves, there's a distinction between those two, as disabled... Do they see themselves as non-disabled people or they simply just don't assume the moniker?

Caz: [00:19:58] So I would say that the vast majority of people who don't consider themselves to be disabled, if you were to ask them, are you non-disabled? They would look at you and be like, What are you talking about? Because using a vocabulary that is newer from... really from the internet, it's being used in disability studies theory now, that unless you are immersed in those worlds, the term non-disabled is not one that generally comes up. Even able-bodied is something that comes from those worlds and is less familiar to most people. So if you go to a... let's see if I went to my prosthetics and orthopedics clinic and if you asked a lot of people there, do you consider yourself disabled, you would get a lot of no's. If you consider... If the question was do you consider yourself non-disabled, you would get a lot of like, what are you talking about? I don't know what you're talking about. So it's very much about who has been reached by this language as to whether or not they're using it.

Kelly: [00:21:21] You know, just like I said at the beginning, around the misgendering. And, you know, we very often are having conversations, you know, how language evolves in, you know, within different communities. And at times it, you know, if I belong to the community, I'm more likely to, you know, to perhaps be a little more along with vocabulary. And if I'm not part of the community or even connected, it just, you know, it doesn't... It's just not on my radar screen. It's like the, you know, it was, you know, a bum, then a wino, then this and then a homeless person. And now it's unsheltered, you know? And so I very much appreciate pointing to to the language, because I remember it wasn't very long ago that that, you know, there were groups of people that say, don't say disabled, say differently abled, you know, and then that was not okay. You know, and to say disabled.

Caz: [00:22:22] And some people still embrace that language for themselves, though, which is the difficult part.

Kelly: [00:22:26] Yeah right, right. Yeah. But so I...

Caz: [00:22:30] Always, always ask someone what vocabulary do you want to be used for you and what... what vocabulary do you use for yourself, and can I use that vocabulary? Because quite frequently it's not okay for someone who doesn't share that identity to use the language that someone might be using to describe themselves. So, yeah... And we're going to get into like vocabulary so much more in a little bit when we get into talking about archiving.

Kelly: [00:23:05] Right? Well, so on that note, you know, one of the things that that you provided for us was this wonderful chapter. I believe it's a chapter from from a book, from archival. And it was titled "Making Sex in the Archive More Accessible: A Call for Preserving Accounts of the Sexual Experience of People with Disabilities by People with Disabilities." And so one of... As I read it, um, you know, just oh my gosh, so, so much to learn. And there's always that, well, I didn't know what I didn't know and now I know. But in there you explain the ten principles of disability justice. And so it's not necessarily wanting a deep dive on all ten, but maybe there's a couple that you have chosen to maybe speak a little bit more about. But I did want to to have our listeners actually learn the ten Principles of Disability Justice.

Caz: [00:24:08] Um, so can I tell, like, a why they exist?

Kelly: [00:24:12] Yes, please.

Caz: [00:24:13] All right, great. So, um, directly in response to the disability rights movement that we were talking about earlier... so those physically disabled white, activists who got the ADA passed, the disability justice movement is a response to that. And in the sense that it does not confine or limit the concept of disability within the white, cishet, male definitions and representations of the past. So the founders of the disability justice movement and we're talking only... I can't do math... Like 15 years ago, I believe, um, were Patty Berne, Mia Mingus, Stacey Milburn, Leroy F. Moore, Jr., and Eli Clare, all of whom are, or were, and were because Stacey Milburn died in 2020, disabled people of color. Most are also queer, trans or women, and through their performing arts and activism groups Sins Invalid, they developed the Ten Principles of Disability Justice and Disability Justice, those of us in the movement call it DJ, believes in an intersectional framework that considers all systems of oppression and considers how ableism is a part of those systems. DJ recognizes the rights are not the same as equity, and that ableism impacts more than just individuals with disabilities. So with all that in mind, the ten principles were developed to outline how the disability justice movement should, shall, and does continue to operate. The ten principles are Intersectionality, Leadership of those most impacted by, and sometimes that's like starred and then added leader of those most impacted by harm, Anti-capitalist Politics, Cross-movement Solidarity, Recognizing Wholeness, Sustainability, Commitment to Cross-Disability Solidarity, Interdependence, Collective Access, and Collective Liberation.

Caz: [00:26:40] Disability justice principles are invaluable for any movement actually, disabled... disability focused or not, which seeks justice and equity through an intersectional approach which recognizes no system of oppression exists within a vacuum. And so if we're going to do a deep dive, I know that in prior communication we had talked about talking about Recognizing Wholeness, because apparently that is a phrase that is a spiritual term that can be used to overlook or bypass disability. I was not aware of this, and I tried to do some research on that. And, with my own biases was not able to find the language needed to pull up information on how that is a spiritual term. So, um, I'd like to explain a little bit more about how DJ approaches Recognizing Wholeness, and then maybe we can compare that to the spiritual approach. So these are two things that have been... that Sins Invalid have published about Recognizing Wholeness. So the first is, "People have inherent worth outside of commodity relations and capitalist notions of productivity. Each person is full of history and life experience." And the second is a little bit, less jargon and easier to understand, but longer. So "Each person is full of history and life experience. Each person has an internal experience composed of our own thoughts, sensations, emotions, sexual fantasies, perceptions and quirks. Disabled people are whole people." So how does that compare or contrast or however you want to put it, with the spiritual way of using Recognizing Wholeness?

Ogun: [00:28:51] So in our spiritual circles, I guess you can call our circle New Thought Christianity, which is, you know, based, I guess, on the teachings of Jesus. But it's not your traditional Christian like atonement and substitution and, you know, heaven, hell, that concept. It's more a metaphysical approach. And when we speak of the word Wholeness, we tend to speak of this idea almost akin to to perfection. So in the... we kind of approach ourselves in as as two beings: spiritual beings and, you know, human beings. And in the in the spiritual realm of things, there is there is no lack of perfection because God is perfection and and therefore wholeness is this idea of no lack, no anything negative in a sense. And then the idea is that as human beings, we sort of pull from that spiritual idea to see ourselves as quote unquote perfect beings in spite of everything else that is going on around us. That our misfortunes or all the things that are happening in our world do not define who we are beyond all that thing. We are these inherently perfect beings of light and love.

Ogun: [00:30:28] The issue with that is that some people take that and and then we have this idea of we see that in each other. So, so regardless of what you look like, what you're going through, who you are, how you show up, I'm going to choose to see you as this expression of divine perfection. And I'm going to relate to you in that way. It's an interesting... It's an interesting co-opting of the term Namaste - The divine in me sees the divine in you. But what often or sometimes happens then is, as a result of that, it gives us almost like a permission to ignore a person's trials, a person's tribulations, you know, the struggles a person may be going through, ignore where folks are being discriminated against, ignore the appeals for equity and justice, ignore the accommodations that people may require, because I'm kind of just not going to take the time and the attention and effort to see who you are. I'm going to see who I want you to be. Want to weigh in on anything Kelly?

Kelly: [00:31:50] Yeah. So it also gets wrapped up, just to add another dimension to it, very often is wrapped up with the word healing. Like you'll hear the term "healing and wholeness" and very often the unconscious, you know, messaging underneath it is that if you're disabled, there's some healing that needs to go on. And there's an assumption without actually talking to the person that one even everything you've already said, you know, about disabled or what do they consider themselves? You know, the vocabulary, the language, how would you you know, there's just this... when you put the healing and wholeness thing together and then there's this idea of, you know, that we're spiritual perfection it gets into this soup that turns into, you know, how we talk about it as spiritual bypassing. So rather than deal with what I don't know and the discomfort and, you know, my biases and how I'm propping up, you know, how I'm participating in privilege, and it's let me let's go over here for healing prayer and meditation and return to our wholeness.

Caz: [00:33:07] So I can neither confirm nor deny, I do not know, I have not asked them if the originators of the Ten Principles of Disability Justice chose this language specifically to say, "Hey, we don't believe in perfection. We believe in our wholeness the way that we are. And we're we're fine the way that we are." Yeah. Um. I don't know. I didn't take the time to ask. To be perfectly honest, I could have, and I might get around to doing it one day, because that would be a great way of reclaiming language that is harmed probably many disabled people as they've grown up in spiritual community who have used that language. And Disability Justice, queer movements, like a lot of Black liberation, a lot of these social movements like to reclaim language. Language that has been horrible for us. Like we were going to say, all right, you know what? Now we're going to use that for ourselves. You can't use that for us. That is terrible. Don't say that. But for us, it describes the harm that we have received on the end of. That language. And therefore, now we're going to use that language with pride. So perhaps that is how recognizing wholeness came about. I don't know.

Ogun: [00:34:44] It would be interesting. And some of that harm that folks may have experienced in spiritual communities is also self-inflicted because there's that internalizing of the message that even if it's not or it may be the case of a chronic illness or even any illness and or disability, that there's something that needs to be corrected. And therefore the correction is a matter of my faith and belief, therefore if it's not happening, there's something wrong with my faith, with my belief. But even just from the beginning, that idea of the word wholeness implying something other than what I already am, and not everybody takes this on and not everybody sends that message. But but Rev Kelly and I can speak to knowing people and experiencing people who who have and there's that what I like to call that metaphysical malpractice approach to to that the self-inflicting harm is the one that I find the most egregious in terms of buying into a messaging that does not acknowledge who you are is whole, as you are. There's there's nothing that needs to be fixed or corrected. So thank you for sharing for that...sharing that. And yes, if you do get the chance to ask them, I would be very curious.

Caz: [00:36:23] I'll see what I can do. And if I do, I'll pass it along.

Ogun: [00:36:26] Much, much appreciate that. One of the rallying cries that you shared with us is the phrase "Nothing about us without us." Please expound on that.

Caz: [00:36:43] Oh, I have a terrible memory. And I literally like I have a neurocognitive memory condition. And Kelly said something earlier where I was like, that that thing there, that's about nothing about us without us. But I wasn't able to be like, put a bookmark in it for this. And I wish that I had because she was saying something about language and how we create language, how we use language about ourselves and "nothing about us without us" is kind of about that. So it's a slogan with its roots in Central European political traditions that means no policy rule or law should be made by anyone without the full and direct participation of the people who would be or are affected by it. And the phrase began to be used by disability rights activists in the mid to late 1990s. To quote James Charlton, who authored a book, "Nothing About Us Without

Us"... there's actually two books called that at this point... The term "Nothing About Us Without Us" quote expresses the conviction of people with disabilities that they know what is best for them. You know, this gets challenged in a lot of arenas. For example, we have legal guardianship of people with disabilities. We have, you know, people who are minors with disabilities. Do they know what is best for them? Who gets to decide? And that's something I'll be talking about a little bit more about is like who gets to make these decisions and who gets to decide what is consent in these in these circumstances.

Kelly: [00:38:31] So I do want to shift to the archives because you had mentioned it earlier and the chapter that you wrote that that I was referring to in in that you cite this all of this about archives that I'm about to say and that you will certainly elaborate on was something that I, I knew nothing about. And I found myself... It was one of those things where, you know, I'm in the middle of a sentence or a paragraph and there's a footnote. And so I have to go Google that before I can keep going on reading. And so this constant back and forth, which I love, I just, you know, the learning just really expands and expands. So in your paper, you cite several archives. One of them is called Act Up Oral History Project. Another one was called the Archives of Lesbian Oral Testimony. I would just love to hear more about, you know, what would you like us to know about the archives and what you mentioned in there? And what is it, I guess?

Caz: [00:39:39] What is archives or what?

Kelly: [00:39:41] I know what generally what archives are. But in this context...

Caz: [00:39:46] Ok so the ones that you mentioned are all related to sexuality in some form, andthere are archives all over the world about oh, pretty much anything I guess, that you could come up with. Like I think it is within human nature to want to categorize and label and put things into their little holes where they belong. Right? And archiving is a little bit about that. But what it's really about is preservation of stories; preservation of history. And archives are mostly consisting of, going back to nothing about us without us, it is those first person testimonies, creations, artifacts. And I cited those particular archives of sexuality because they're a great example of something that was done without us, something that does not include us. And by us I mean disabled people. The archives seem to have not had involvement from archivists who identify as disabled, and if they had the sexual experience of disabled people would be more easily found within their records. The archives currently lack a disability informed categorization system, be it a taxonomy or a folksonomy, which means that while they might have records about the sexuality of disabled people, the records are not currently labeled with terms such as disabled or disability to make all of them easy to find at once all together.

Caz: [00:41:28] Some of these archives might have records that are tagged with terms which would pull up all records tagged as deaf, for example, but lacking an umbrella tag for disability. And this makes it impossible to gather records from these archives that are about multiple disabilities at once. Additionally, these archives may be using outdated language to describe disability such as handicapped, or aren't providing categorization for disabled experience at all. So you could have thousands of records out there on sexuality, the person maybe was talking about their disabilities and how they affect their sexuality that doesn't mean that that got a tag, a categorization, a label, so that we can go and find those records. So as such, it's difficult to impossible to learn more about the sexual experience of disabled people from these archives, which isn't unusual given that most non-disabled people don't consider disabled people to be, quote, worthy of, let alone capable of sexual experiences.

Kelly: [00:42:38] Yeah, that's... I think that's one of the biggest one of the first things that I noticed when someone sort of wakes up and starts to realize and, you know, begin conversations about disability is even recognizing that everybody is a sexual being. And it's one of the it's just one of the things that I first noticed and I remember when I when I was like, oh, I didn't even know I thought that way, you know, when it first occurred to me. And you know, I was thinking about, as you were talking about the archives, I was thinking about. So Unity and New Thought has a massive archive that goes back to our beginnings. And as you were talking about it and and how things are labeled or not, I was thinking because I've spent a lot of time in the archives because I don't live very far from the mothership. And I was... As you were talking, I was... I sort of had noticed it, but I'd never consciously had the thought, "Oh, yeah, no wonder!" Like all of the archives, thinking about how things have been tagged, like there's nothing in there about sex, almost no tags around sex. Most of all of the archiving is done, you know, lots of men, you know, old white men and just things like that and how really starting to expand that image of the whoever's doing the archiving, how much that impacts those who come later on to read and just how much gets missed and lost and disregarded.

Caz: [00:44:16] History is written by the victors, right? So you could say archiving, um, quite frequently, if not always... So we're starting to push the door open on that was done by, you know, the people in charge, the people with the power. And now we're letting people who are, well some archives are not all, are letting people who have been historically underrepresented step in and say "Hey no, like we're in here to this is our history to let us use our language to be a part of it." And it's something that I wanted to mention you said at the beginning that all people are sexual beings and I take a little as a as a former or current, I'm not sure what I am anymore, Sex educator take a little bit of like, whoa, wait a minute on that because a lot of people identify as asexual. A lot of people are not sexual beings and don't want that associated with them. I would say all all people have the capacity to be sexual beings, whether or not they feel that desire.

Kelly: [00:45:38] Yeah, that's much better. Thank you.

Caz: [00:45:41] Yeah, you're welcome.

Ogun: [00:45:43] And why do you suppose that in our general consciousness, we do not see people with disabilities as sexual beings and the ways we ignored them. What do you imagine led to that and perpetuates it?

Caz: [00:46:05] So in last week's episode, I don't know if you realize this, but you both shared anecdotes of your personal lack of awareness and knowledge about the sexual lives of disabled people. So really, this is a question you should both be answering. In what ways is the sexuality of disabled people made visible mainstream, and in what ways is it ignored? I can start you off with some, but I'm hoping you can jump in. So the sexuality of disabled people, is it addressed accurately and adequately in sex education? Is it accurately depicted in 25%, and I use 25% because of the 1 in 4 statistic of mainstream media, or even depicted at all? Is it made a part of the over-sexualization of advertising? Do we see disabled, visibly disabled people acting sexy to sell you deodorant? Are visibly disabled people used as sexy props in music videos in the same ways as thin young non-visibly disabled people are? Do doctors know how to answer the sex related questions of disabled people? Hell, if you're disabled, can you even find a doctor who you can afford to see, who will see you? Because a lot of doctors are saying, "Oh, you're disabled, I don't want to see you, you're too complicated."

Caz: [00:47:32] Whose office is accessible to you and is familiar with your disabilities? Do you personally, either of you who date, who use dating apps, do you swipe left on visibly disabled people or on people whose dating profiles mention they are disabled? Is that an automatic left for you? And how many visibly or out disabled people do you even come across on dating apps or at play parties? Are those disabled people at play parties made to feel welcome? Do people approach them for play or are they left to themselves the whole time? Keep in mind that in any point of this conversation about ignorance and lack of inclusion of the sexuality of disabled people, we could substitute disabled people for elders, fat people, trans and gender expansive people, people of color, anyone who has the appearance of a body outside of the white, young, non visibly disabled, thin, cis, heteronormative concept of what it is to be an ideal subject of desire. So why don't you see sexuality, the sexuality of disabled people? In what ways is it ignored and what ways is it made visible?

Kelly: [00:48:52] Well, everything that you said, the first thing that popped in my head was growing up with TV shows and movies where you did not see romantic relationships with someone that's visibly disabled. You just didn't. There might be a character, but there was not romance.

Caz: [00:49:13] Oh yeah. This character did not get to have relationships, and if they did, they were either the villains or they were the victims of tragedy.

Kelly: [00:49:21] Right. Right. Yeah.

Ogun: [00:49:23] I think that is beginning to change now. Last week I mentioned the TV show Ramy, and this week I'll mention the TV show The Sex Lives of College Girls, created by Mindy Kaling and one of the characters, albeit not a main character, but one of the characters is a black disabled woman who is just horny af and is like just like the non-disabled... Her non-disabled friends she is she is gunning for the guys, she is making out with the guys. It is a very refreshing thing to see. And I noticed... and I paid attention to myself in terms of how the way I see that character change over time. And I remember when I first saw that character appear in the show, my first response is, "Oh, look, there's someone that's disabled and in the show and awesome." And then it was... now it's like she is one freaky woman. Like, I don't even notice, you know, I don't know if this is a good thing or a bad thing, but I don't even notice a wheelchair. I'm like, "Who's she going to be making out with next time we see her?" Because like, it's just who she is. Not the only character like that. But it's fascinating. It's fascinating to see that at no point to my recollection in the narration, in the narrative of the show, do we hear about why she's disabled, what her specific disability is. And it's also refreshing to see all the other characters in the show do not treat her primarily because of her disability and how they relate to her.

Ogun: [00:51:21] It's just like she's she's a person who always knows what's going on on campus. She's a person who can get you somebody's phone number and hook you up with somebody else. And she's also the person who will call dibs on someone she likes before she helps you out. So so it's like the character is written as simply, you know, one of the students, one of the sex-crazed hormone, sexually hormonally driven students who are trying to get their freak on. So I use that as the as an example. To your question around dating apps and play parties, as the person who arguably is on too many dating apps right now, I mean, you know again, arguably, I do not swipe away, was that the swipe left, I do not swipe left based on that characteristic. I mean I swipe left on other things like there's there's a lot of reasons to to to swipe left and and I do pay attention to if it's a profile that I read that that person happens to mention that they are disabled and then I realized I want to swipe left to be very mindful of is that influencing my swiping left of the best of my abilities? Or is there like 15 other things they said that make me go I don't imagine that would be a good match. Right? And then there's the am I going to swipe right to prove the point that I'm not swiping left because there are disabled? Right? So I'm going through all of this in my head.

Caz: [00:53:06] Just, you know, disabled people are not perfect. Like one... one only need look at Congress to find disabled people who are bigots. Right? So we we do not need to swipe right on people just because they are disabled.

Ogun: [00:53:22] Exactly. Exactly. Sometimes I have a tendency to over overcompensate. And yes, I do... I have attended play parties and kink events where they are disabled persons there. And I think because of the fact that... I'm 49 I would say that the first I don't know 45, 46, 47 years of my life has been just, you know, living from unconscious ableism that there's still that first response of, "Oh, look, you know, this person, this person seems out of place." It's like my first reaction, my first unconscious reaction, and then I have to catch myself and go, "No, they don't. They belong here just like I do." And then, you know, as events transpire, as the evening goes on, I'm like, "Oh yeah, they belong here just as just as much as I do." So yeah, yeah, yeah. So my... Yes, it's taken, a few years and by all means my learning still continues. But yes, the perception, the perception has definitely shifted as well.

Caz: [00:54:50] So I wanted to first point out... so you... the question was, are there any recommendations for movies or media that best inform us of our and society's ableism? And I chose a bunch of different formats and also wanted to point out that a study a few years ago showed that about 95% of characters with visible disabilities on television shows are played by actors who have no visible disabilities. So this is called 'cripping up.' The disabled community really looks down upon it and it's to us, it's similar to anyone of another identity playing the role of someone with an identity that they don't share.

Kelly: [00:55:52] So like Tom Hanks playing the gay man in the movie Philadelphia.

Caz: [00:55:57] Yeah, because back then, you know, you could really not be in Hollywood and be out even then. Like we think, What was that, '91? And, you know, we we think like, oh, like the 90s that's when like LGBTQ+ culture started to be more accepted not in some places and not as early as '91. And having a gay actor depict someone as having AIDS in a movie in that era would have been the end to that actor's career.

Ogun: [00:56:35] Yeah.

Caz: [00:56:36] So with that in mind, I chose articles and films and social media and TV shows that are all by disabled people. So there's two articles. Um, the first is "No Roles for BIPOC Disabled Actors in Hollywood: I'm a Black Disabled Actor, and This Is How I'm Making My Place in Hollywood." And the article interviews three disabled women of color who are actors about their struggle to find roles in Hollywood due to ableism and racism. And then a really important resource but that also is sort of like, "Oh, I didn't realize this was ableist" is an article, a blog post called Violence and Language Circling Back to Linguistic Ableism. And it's by Lydia X.Z. Brown. The blog post covers ableism in our language and includes a link to a glossary of ableist phrases. It's very, very, very long. And to be frank, I know a lot of disabled people who are still like that is too long for me to remember. I cannot remember all of those things. Also, I would continue like, Ogun you're using last week that word crazy. You're talking about how "Oh no, that's an ableist word I shouldn't use that." Well, a lot of us who have been treated by the medical industrial complex for mental illness, um, especially in the United Kingdom, consider that mad pride or so we use the word crazy. We're like, "Oh, that's crazy." Like and I can say that because I know what crazy is. Like I've been in the hospital for crazy. So some words you're never going to get out of your language because you just you hear them all the time. And as as much as you might want to change them up and the glossary does offer alternatives. Um, there are disabled people who just don't care, you know, like some words don't bother me, some do. And it's different for everyone.

Kelly: [00:58:46] Yeah. I'm the I'm a, um, spend time in the hospital for crazy like how you said that and I do not enjoy the word.

Caz: [00:58:56] Yeah.

Caz: [00:58:56] So, like, it's totally...it's totally a different experience for everyone.

Ogun: [00:59:04] Like black folk using the N-word. I can say it, but none of y'all can say it.

Caz: [00:59:10] Exactly. And oh, God, I was watching season one of Ramy last night, and it was like when the when Rami gets to Egypt and his cousin is using that word and I'm like, oh, my God, make it stop. Please make it stop.

Ogun: [00:59:25] Yes.

Caz: [00:59:26] Oh, so bad. Oh, all right. So my next resource is a short film streaming for free on YouTube. And it's called Jeremy the Dud. And it takes a totally different perspective, um, on all the other resources that I'm offering. So this is available for free. It has a great cast of several actually disabled actors, including Chloe Hayden, who went on to play Queenie in Heartbreak High. I don't know if any of you all have seen Heartbreak High, but it is adorable. It's like mainly for a young adult queer audience. But, you know, there are those of us who are like older, who are queer, who are like, Oh, yes please break my heart

Speaker5: [01:00:09]

Caz: [01:00:10] So beautiful, beautiful show. Um, the short film is a comedy set in a world where everyone has a disability and those that don't are treated with the same prejudice, stigma and condescending attitudes that people with disabilities face in our own society now. So it totally turns it on its head and it really makes you think like, Oh wow, like I never thought of it that way. I do that too, like all these things. So really great. Um, I wanted to recommend a social media account. I shouldn't say a social media account. I should say a person who runs a social media account. What am I thinking? Um, so Imani Barbarin is a black cis woman who has cerebral palsy and has the Internet's hottest takes on ableism and other disabled disability related issues. You can check out her TikTok, where she is most prolific, though she's on everything else, too. She is @crutches_and_spice so crutches and spice. And TV shows... So there's a subscription required for this unless you, you know, wink wink nudge nudge know how to get your media without paying for it. I wanted to mention this one in particular.

Caz: [01:01:36] It is so dear to my heart. So the reboot that was released last year of Queer as Folk, which is available on Peacock and it stars actor Ryan O'Connell as Julian Beaumont. Ryan himself is a white, gay, cis man who has cerebral palsy. But it also features biracial actor and dancer Eric Graise and a recurring role as Marvin. And Eric is a bilateral amputee who uses a wheelchair in the show. He doesn't actually use a wheelchair outside of the show, or at least not usually. But there's also guest stars, actor, model and activist Nyle DiMarco, who is a white, deaf, cis gay man as Leo. And then the show has amazing portrayals of ableism, including internalized ableism, particularly as they relate to sex and relationships and really, really beautiful depictions of a community that's mostly people of color, that it's mostly queer and trans. You have a couple of straight people who are like, "Oh, hey, I want to get in on this fun." And they're all dealing with collective trauma. I don't want to spoil it, but it's something that brings them together, pushes them apart. And then the undercurrent of, am I allowed to swear on this show?

Ogun: [01:03:04] Yes. Yes, you are.

Speaker5: [01:03:04]

Caz: [01:03:05] Okay, so there's an episode called Fuck Disabled People. And in that episode, the character Marvin is putting on a play party and he's like, This is going to be accessible. If I'm going to do this, I'm going to do it right. Y'all have to have a ramp. You have to have this. You have to have that. The bathroom has to be redone, like all of these things. And granted, it's only accessible for some disabilities. Like if you walk in there with a sensory disability, you'd be like, No, it's too loud, it's too this, it's too that, you know, So contrasting access needs. But it's beautifully, beautifully written, it's beautifully acted. And then there are just a few, like other things that I would recommend people watching to ask yourself how these representations of disability music make you feel. So their music videos. So there's one by the music group Wheelchair Sports Camp. It's called "Yes, I'm a mess." There is the Disability Service Land song, which isn't sung by Ellie Goldstein, but Ellie Goldstein is the actor who lip syncs to the song during the video. And it's very beautifully done. And it's it's very much about disabled life. And then there's Delta Spirit, who don't show up in their own music video. They have actors come in for what's done is done and it's... I don't want to spoil that one because that one might really poke some people the wrong way. And I want people's genuine, not uninformed first reactions to that video. So yeah, these will all be in the show notes.

Kelly: [01:05:05] Awesome.

Kelly: [01:05:06] Thank you.

Ogun: [01:05:07] Yeah. Thank you so much for for all of these and adding them to my list as as well. Thank you so much for taking the time, the effort, the energy to be with us and also deepen and expand our learning. I do hope we can call on you again, not just for the podcast, but for maybe, you know, if we're doing some workshops. I know that, we are creating, we have created and are creating some inter intersectionality content that we hope to share soon. And part of that is bringing in folks to speak to areas that we can't speak from personally. So hopefully we'll we'll get to we'll get to share with you again. So, folks, please visit connectwithcaz that's c-a-z connectwithcaz.com to learn more about Caz Killjoy. And once again, thank you so, so very much for being here and being our guest for episode 100. That's special. There you go. And for all our listeners, thank you always for sharing this podcast. Again, we're on all the platforms. And again, if you have that one friend who doesn't know what a podcast is, you can visit us on withloveandjusticeforall.podbean.com One of the things I do want to share with you is that, slowly but surely, we are going to be creating transcripts for all of our podcasts that we have recorded so far. So as as we post those, we will let you know. I do believe our last episode, Episode 99, if you go back to the show notes, you'll find a link for the transcript there. We realize that this is a long overdue piece that we have been talking about and and have been missing, and our apologies for that. And again, we will continue to learn all the ways that we've been falling short and do our best to step up to the plate for that. So that's our work to do. And we're going to we're going to get to it. Any final thoughts, Kelly, or are we ready to sign off?

Kelly: [01:07:29] No, I think we're ready to sign off. Thank you Caz very much.

Caz: [01:07:33] Thank you so much for inviting me.

Ogun: [01:07:35] Absolutely. So as we always say, until we meet again...

Kelly: [01:07:38] Let's get our Holy on.