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Title: Hiroki Kimiko Keaveney Interview  
Narrator: Hiroki Kimiko Keaveney  
Interviewer: Anna Takada  
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- AT: 00:41:36 And why do you think that? Um, um, like what is it about knowing that handles that, that's healing or, or, or what was the difference exactly between the sadness of not knowing versus the sadness of just everything that happens?
- HK: 00:41:56 I think for me, I was just a very defensive, like QTPOC, whenever I say that I mean like Queer and Trans people of color. And I was like very defensive. I was just like, don't mess with me white America, like, don't mess with me. And I think I had a lot of stuff going on cause I'm half white so I was like God mixed race people, it's like half white people anyway cause not every mix is half white. But anyway, um, I think for me I was coming from a place of defensiveness and like I also, it was like when I was younger it was this sadness that people would say things to me. Like white people in particular that I knew wasn't true. Like, I like, people would say things to me about Japanese culture or just anything I just like knew - I was like that's not true. But I don't know why. And I remember like I was in, I was 13, it was in eighth grade. This one popular boy, white boy, everyone was white basically, not everyone but most, he like - he and I got into this argument we were talking about should the bomb have been dropped, and like he and I like I don't remember cause he was some, one of the most popular boys in the class and I just sort of stood up and started yelling and I was like, no it was wrong. I like, it was like my ancestors were talking through me cause like I had no idea. I was very introverted, I was a closeted gay b trans b whatever you want to call me. Like I definitely wasn't outgoing like in that sense, but like something in me knew that what he was saying was wrong, morally wrong, spiritually wrong and that people, my people died because of imperialism and like, yeah. So I think like that, like the not knowing was the sadness of like people telling me things, but in my heart knowing, mm I think something you're saying is wrong, like, but I don't know what. And it's that - and that's why you internalized racism cause it's like constantly people are

projecting like microaggressions every day or like macroaggressions and then you just, you just, you hate yourself and you think, oh yeah, I'm Japanese. Like, man, like, like I'm nobody. Like, you know, I don't have a history. We're not really American. Like, yeah. Yeah. I think that's the difference. And I think knowing it now, I feel more American now than I did before. And it's complicated because we're not native American. I'm not native American, so I'm not American in that sense. And so, um, so it was partly that. And it was also partly I wanted to learn my story because of Uncle Fred and Auntie Dorothy Cordova who created this group called Filipino American National Historical Society, which has like - I'm like promoting it right now - that has like chapters throughout the country. And really, I think it was in the '80s they created it and it was a way, or the '70s Oh, I need to remember. But it was a way to record Filipino American stories, specifically Filipino American. And they mentored me so graciously and I really - they - Uncle Fred always told me, learn your Asian American history, learn your Asian American history. And they always accepted me as a mixed person, which was really special. And it was because of Uncle and Auntie Dorothy really that it, that I even wanted to learn my Asian American history and learn my family history. Cause I knew just from their legacy in their work that it was - I remember Auntie Dorothy told me, she was like, she learned Filipina American history because it gave her a sense of self worth. She was like, I just, I feel like I have a sense of worth now. Now that I know my story now that I know my history, um, you feel like she was like, I feel like I'm part of America now. And I think that's what's hard about Asian American history because even within academia, even with an ethnic studies, honestly it feels like Asian American history is not taken as seriously. Um, and we're not really seen as people of color who experienced racism and, let alone, if you're half white, then you can forget it you're definitely not a person of color. And so I think it's like, it's like no, it's like no, we are people of color, we do experience racism. We just experience it in a very specific way and, you know, like erasing our histories is part of white supremacy and we actually can learn a lot from each other if we just like took the time, took down our walls of being really defensive, which are our coping mechanisms and really shared our stories, like sharing that my grandparents had to sell their car for \$10. Like that's horrible. Like you know, like little, I think people think of Japanese America as this really rich community, and we are now, I would say we're upper-middle class and I also want to say like that's because of our, the history of pitting people of color against each other and elevating certain people and Japan's history of being an empire. Like, that's why our community's so wealthy. And I think like,

like I think people just kind of ignore the fact that of what happened and how it's psychologically wounded our community and why we are the way we are. And how do you hold that complexity of both having privilege and then also being oppressed. And I think most people have both but are unwilling to talk about it. Um, yeah. I hope I answered your question.

AT: 00:47:01 That was very well said.

HK: 00:47:02 Okay, cool. Cool, good, good.

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