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Title: Hiroki Kimiko Keaveney Interview
Narrator: Hiroki Kimiko Keaveney
Interviewer: Anna Takada
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<Begin Segment 9>

- AT: 00:47:38 Yeah. So, um, cause you mentioned that you were pretty isolated in Ohio. So if you could just like, yeah, you know give the lay of the land.
- HK: 00:47:49 So, um, yeah, it was funny when I was in Ohio, I just, I wanted to learn anything about Japanese culture, but like I didn't cause I internalized racism. And I remember being Japanese in high school was like, like - don't worry, this connects to your question. But um, I remember once someone came up to me - they were a person of color, thank God, but it was still really awkward - they asked me what kind of Asian I was and I knew she really liked like manga - and at the time I didn't even know what manga was I thought it was called anime. That's how disconnected I was from anything. And all I knew is I didn't, wasn't gonna read manga or like watch anime because that's weird people do that. And I remember this one white girl came up to me and was like, she like confessed to me what she was like, like I like, I watch anime. And I was just like, I don't care. I don't even know what that is. Like my internalized racist ass. I was like, I don't care white girl. She's like, I'm really ashamed. I was like, I don't, okay me too, like lot, plenty of shame to go around. But I remember I didn't say me too, cause obviously I didn't know. I was like, Oh okay, I don't care. Um, cause that's how deeply rooted was it was like even the white people who did it, they knew that only weird people watch that stuff. Only weirdos. Right. And so I think I always associated being Japanese with being really weird. And um, and so this person, she came up to me and she was like, what kind of Asian are you? And I was like, don't say Japanese. I was like, oh my gosh, shouldn't say Japanese she's going to love me if I say Japanese. But I grew up Irish Catholic. So I was like Japanese because like I couldn't lie, like it was a sin. And so in my - you know - I was taught that it was sinful to lie. So I was like Japanese, she's like, oh my God, Japanese. I was like, yeah, like it was just so much. So that was my exposure to I guess a Japanese community. Like,

and I was like, me and my sister, Kelsey and her brother were like the only four Japanese Americans I knew growing up in Ohio. Um, I remember there was one person named Natsuko Abe, who they called Natsuko, Abe, but like looking back I was like, that's how you pronounce her name. But anyway, that was when I was in, I think like, elementary school, second grade, fifth grade, I don't know. But I remember I was so excited to meet like someone from Japan, but she was only there for half a semester cause she was - or for one semester - cause she was an exchange student. So that was really cool meeting her. But as you can tell it's very isolated. So, um, so by the time I, you know, was a senior - or no, I was a junior - they offered Chinese at my school, and I thought this is it. This is like the closest I'm going to get to Japanese so I'm going to take Chinese. Same language, right? Not at all.

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