

NEW YORK CITY TRANS ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

KY PLATT

Interviewer: Lorenzo Van Ness

Date of Interview: April 6, 2017

Location of Interview: Commission on Human Rights, New York City

Transcribed by Lindsay Savage

NYC TOHP Interview Transcript #068

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Lorenzo Van Ness: Uh hello, my name is Lorenzo Van Ness and I will be having a conversation with Ky Platt for the New York City trans oral history project in collaboration with the New York Public Library's community oral history project. Um, this is an oral history project centered on the experiences of trans identifying people. It is April 5th, 20-- no April 6th, 2017. [Laughter] um and this is being recorded at the Queens office of the Commission on Human Rights. So, Ky can you tell us your name and your pronouns?

Ky Platt: Hi, I am Ky Platt, pronoun is he.

Van Ness: Cool and can you just tell us a little bit about where you are from?

Platt: Sure, I'm from a small industrial town just north of Cincinnati, called Hamilton, Ohio. Um and I have been living in New York City for seventeen years as of August 4th, coming up.

Van Ness: And --what was it like to grow up in Hamilton Ohio?

Platt: Oh! Ugh. I mean you know, Ohio, ugh. I was, I was raised in um my mom is white, my ~~dad~~ is black and I was raised in with my mom and my white stepfather in an all-white family in an all-white side of town in Ohio. So, I was the only brown kid besides my brother in all my schools until high school. So that was, UGH. Absolutely traumatizing, but in a lot of ways it sort of fortified me um you know in the world and you know made me stronger. So...

Van Ness: So, what was it like to be like the only brown kid? Did people make fun of you? Did...

Platt: I hap...um [unintelligible] you know it was complicated because I was the only brown kid, but I also came out as queer at 10 and I am 44 so this was in '82 [1982] and I at 10 I also shaved my head, so I was boy presenting. Um and [car horn] but I was fortunate because I was smart and also an athlete. And I was like the first one picked on every team, I was the captains of the team. You know, so I was that sort of like popular kind of jock kid. But I still was you know an outsider and also, I just was naturally like mentally an outsider. The thin—I just thought differently than a lot of the people that I grew up around and you know sensitive, I was writing poems, bad ones, and stuff like that as well. Um, uh I was going to say something, I forgot, no I'll find, I'll find it later. Yeah.

Van Ness: Did you have a lot of friends when you were...

Platt: I did! And I still actually have many of the friends, I am friends with a couple of the women who are uh I went to kindergarten with. So, it's weird to be like both an outsider and popular. Um, and now when I go home. Well, actually New York City is my home, I have to start saying that. Um, but you know my childhood home, I um [unintelligible] everybody comes out, they want to hang out, like I don't get any like you know free time or alone time. You know, it's a packed schedule. So, it's uh, it's interesting. Yeah, Yeah.

Van Ness: What were your parents like or your siblings also? What was your family like?

Platt: My mom was and is kind of like a um like a hippie, white woman. You know she went to Jimmy Hendrix funeral, she was on acid, and she is very, very permissive. So, when I dec--, when I learned that you know like that the buttons on boys' shirts were on the opposite side you know. She was fine with me wear only boy shorts, shirts. And she was just very, like you know I could be out all night, I could have boys and girls spend the night. I was um, we lived like in sort of, like um, kind of like the country, and so like I would just wander around by myself and my mom was very permissive of that. Um, my step-father, a white guy from Tennessee was a bit different. But, and I can't say that I like him as an adult because he's, my mom calls him the broke Donald Trump. [Laughter] you know but, I learned a lot you know. Like so, basically, my father, my step-father, and my grandfathers just treated me like a boy. So, I learned how to fix cars, I learned how to fish, um I learned how to like camp by myself. Which is also sort of like, you know, kind of like in the time that I grew up like racially different too. You know, right, like little brown kids aren't out in the woods near their house camping by themselves. So, I was just given a lot of like um freedom. But at the same time my step-father was very politically conservative and racist and yeah. That was hard.

Van Ness: What about your brother?

Platt: Um, my brother Kevin. My brother Kevin is well I have a, I was raised with three siblings. I have a brother Kevin, a sister Erin and a brother George and uh Kevin is the-- I am the oldest. Kevin is the one next to me and he and I share both parents and then my two younger siblings are my half siblings. Kevin was a jock and also very popular. I think that he experienced um, like his life racially a bit different than mine. Whereas I identify as mixed racially he very much identifies as black. But whereas I typically don't date white people he only dates white people [laughter]. So, it's um it's a wei-- he's a weird guy. He's you know, he also, I think he's just way more angry than I am right so. He is a little but hard to be around. My sister Erin is super sweet. Um, blonde, white woman, green eyes, you know, very simple. Has a son, you know that's that. And the one I like the best is actually my brother George who did stand-up comedy once and my joke is that my brother looks like he invented the KKK. He's dated more black women than I have [gasp] [laughter] So, he's, he's this big country boy and redneck looking guy, but he is very sweet, and very cool, and very politically progressive despite being raised in like a very right winged community. Yeah.

Van Ness: Were there lots of like characters where you were from? Like—

Platt: Characters. Li--oh, people?

Van Ness: Yeah, like people that you remember? That—

Platt: Uh sure. I mean I've always been—a bit of a friend collector anyway. [Laughter] You know, so I liked, I like to be around--I just don't like having like the same conversations over and over again so I like to have you know different types of people around me. I tended to be drawn to old people so there was like an older woman down the street. Her name was Mrs. York and she and

I were very close. And then across the street my--was my friend Ricky who was basically like the prototype for like Macklemore. Like he was like that white hip hop guy. His nickname was Dirty White. He is the one who introduced me to hip hop and we formed a break dancing group you know [laughter]. And I was close to his parents also and they were older, and I once saved their dogs from a house fire.

Van Ness: Oh goodness!

Platt: Despite like grown ass men all around standing outside out on the street not saving the dogs and I was the only one [unintelligible]--and I was the only one that ran in. So yeah there were lots of characters. I mean you know when you live in like small weird towns there is like all these super eccentric people because they're not really-- I don't know there's almost like less pressure to conform. Because you can just be weird you know, because everybody is weird. So yeah, yeah yeah, yeah.

Van Ness: And What was your earliest memory, I guess, that you have at home?

Platt: My earliest memory, I think I have a memory that's weird, I don't know that's a tough one. Because it's almost like—I'm not sure it's a memory or a dream—

Van Ness: Yeah.

Platt: You know? But I remember being in the car with my grandmother. And my mom's ancestry is Russian and when I say that my grandmother is like stereotypically like Russian like you know. She is big and big arms and like you know, and she had little like you know, skin tags and she wrinkled and, and she.... But she you know she, she was, she was cool. She died at a young age, I mean when my mom was, I was three. --She died when I was three so that memory must have been around that age when I remember that. three. Yeah.

Van Ness: Ok, what were some other things you remember maybe about like high school or? Or what happened after high school?

Platt: Well, I mean, I don't know I guess I just like I just knew immediately from a very young age that I wanted to just get the fuck out of there. In fact, I am the only one in my family that ~~uh~~ got out right. So, my dad is a you know he's one of thirteen and my mom's one of nine. Um, we have huge family and they all still live there you know. And so, when I graduated high school I went to Ohio State which you know two hours away does not seem very far but it was amazing to just get away and I, I left and I never came home again. And which is weird because a lot of my friends are like 'wait I came back and stayed for the summer' and I was like oh no, oh no no no no I'm never going back right. And then I was there for um until 2000 and then came here. Never looking back, yeah.

Van Ness: And what brought you to New York?

Platt: Well I had always wanted to be here, and I was traveling back and forth and so I had a series of like ex-girlfriends who moved here and then the woman I was dating at the time; who I believe you actually met at a party, um she was like I'm moving to New York City with or without you. And I was like I am too and of course like the second we got here we broke up [laughter]. It was one of those things. Um, but and she actually now doesn't even live in New York City, so she lives in New Jersey, which is not New York City. Yeah, that's you know. I, the first thing I liked about New York was that I for the first time blended in completely because everyone thinks I'm Dominican or Puerto Rican or from Yemen, I'm getting that a lot these days [laughter]. You know, I get Egyptian, Moroccan, or if I have a hat on I get Filipino, a couple times I've gotten Mexican. And I like that you know. It's just like the ability to like you know like, kind of not be seen is almost is really a privilege almost you know. Some people want... I stand out anyway but like it felt different. And uh, yeah it was great.

Van Ness: Awesome, so what did you do when you got here? Where were you living? And what were you doing?

Platt: Um, my first apartment I moved in with [laughter] an ex-girlfriend in Rego Park for I want to say a year. And then I got my own apartment in Inwood for a year. And then I another apartment and I had the luxury because I had a decent job of like living alone you know. And then another apartment in Washington Heights and then I moved in with my longest relationship who is now the mother of my daughter. Um, we're no longer together by the way. I'm single if anybody wants to, like cares to know. Um, and uh but we are a very close queer family. We're raising our, my, our, my, I keep saying my daughter, our daughter [laughter] who is now eight. Yeah, and I did not transition hormonally until after I had my daughter when she was two. So, I have been like transitioned for like six years. Yeah.

Van Ness: So, can you tell us a little bit more about, well did you always want a kid? What, how did you come upon being a parent?

Platt: Oh yeah! I always wanted a kid. Yeah, I um I wanted a family. I didn't want a big family but I just um you know. I, you know it's weird. I don't particularly like children you know but I like mine. And so, it would be very difficult for me to like, I have dated women with children right or who want children. And it was always in the back of my mind, well mine's the best [laughter]. I am super jealous and competitive with other children you know, it's just weird. But, so maybe I should probably go to therapy on that one [laughter]. But, yeah, I wanted a baby and um my partner at the time, my wife at the time actually, wanted children but it was not on the top of her to do list because she worked with children. She owned a dance theater for children that has been in existence for twenty-five years. It's called Look Motion Dance Theater. And so, she got her kid fix right. So I remember we're out having dinner with an ex-girlfriend and her current girlfriend; that's probably the theme that runs through all of this [laughter]. And I announced to the table I was like I want to have a baby and I don't know care how this happens it's going to happen. Everybody was shocked, and Lisa was pissed and like silent and then you know. And then we proceeded to adopt. And I never wanted to give birth. In fact, I didn't want to pass on my genes at all, I was like this is ridiculous. Um but uh, so we began the process of adoption. We wanted to adopt domestically, we wanted to adopt black children, a black child and we wanted

her to be a girl. So, we were very specific about that. I mean we would have absolutely adopted any baby that was presented to us. But that was like my you know my thing.

Van Ness: Your wants.

Platt: Yes, yeah and we linked up with a private adoption agency that specializes in like queer couples. And, we got a couple of like interest's um [inaudible] how it works at this agency is the birth mother chooses you. Right. And you, so, we created it's actually on um, what is I—not I-Book but the little like, where you can make um picture collages on MacBook. So we made like a little pamphlet about our lives, basically just selling ourselves to this birth mother. And you know, we made like twenty copies and ~~the~~ our agency had it and when the birth mother would call they would send that whatever. And, at the time I was working for the Shaumburg center for research and black culture the membership coordinator there and I was at the Congressional Black Caucus in D.C. and our agency. Well, Lisa called, sorry agency called Lisa she was in New York City at the time and she said you know we have a birth mother who's interested, and she's in D.C. Do you want to go meet her? And I was like oh my...like that's not how I thought it would happen you know? So, I was like Oh God yes, you know, yeah fine. Let me get a shot of whiskey right now, because I'm going to die [laughter]—pass out of nervousness. Anyway, I was with a coworker, and who's African American woman and a good friend. She gave me kind of like fucked up advice, but I don't even know if it worked. She was like look, she was African American my friend, she my co-worker she was like no teenage black birth mother is going to adopt their child to a butch black person. You have to put these earrings on right now.

Van Ness: Oh, come on.

Platt: Yeah, it was ridiculous. So, I put the earrings on and this was a queer woman also, which is even more fucked. Um, and so basically yeah, our birth mother was a teenager, she had just had a baby like nine months, ten months before um, she was six months pregnant and she really liked gay people. And she wanted to adopt like to a gay couple.

Van Ness: That's great.

Platt: Um, and we hit it off. And then, I think it was two weeks later, Lisa and I went back to D.C. and we took her to one of her prenatal visits. And we just built a relationship and a friendship, and then it was on January second, I was still hungover from New Year's Eve, right. [Laughter] and I was getting ready to go to a cigar bar with my friend Dewayne. I was in the shower and Lisa bursts in and says the baby is coming. She was two weeks early. And so, we had to like you know rush and get ready. But in the meantime, Lisa's brother lived, still does, just outside of D.C. So, he, Lisa's other brother and his wife went and picked up the birth mother, our birth mother, brought her to the hospital and my sister in law helped deliver. So like—[squeak]

Van Ness: Wow!

Platt: And then we got down there around four in the morning.

Van Ness: Wow!

Platt: Yeah. A whirlwind—

Van Ness: [Laughter] Yeah—

Platt: It really was, and also, she weighed five pounds. And I was like this is ridiculous, like no human should be this tiny. And that's not even that tiny you know [laughter] it was great. It was great, and uh, yeah, she is my favorite person.

Van Ness: Is that how you felt when you first held her?

Platt: Oh yeah! I mean there's pictures of me...I don't cry, I'm kind of just like cold hearted [laughter] but yeah, I am like.... you ever see the memes of Obama crying over his daughter's graduation. I am so weepy [unintelligible] you know she'll write a poem, like she'll have a little picture, you know she'll do something and I just can't believe it, how amazing you are you know. [laughter]

Van Ness: That's great.

Platt: Yeah, yeah. It's ridiculous, I love doing this thing with her where I am like [name] come here, I've got to tell you something and it's extremely important and I have this very serious look on my face and when she gets to me I lean in and [whispers] I love you. [Laughter]. She hates it when I do because she thinks it's like she's in trouble. [Laughter] Anyway.

Van Ness: Um, what are, I guess what are some other experiences in life that have really impacted you I guess?

Platt: Experiences in life that have impacted me, there is so many. This year, a friend of mine from out of town was here. He lives in Newfoundland, he's the poet [unintelligible] and he and I worked together on 9/11 and we worked on Rector Street which is just a few blocks south. So, we survived 9/11 together and I think that it's actually it's funny. You know, earlier I mentioned how cold hearted I am. He is a cisgender, white guy, Irish looks like a leprechaun, if a leprechaun could be a giant, he looks like that. He is so emotional about 9/11 and you know the crying and you know. Yesterday, was actually the first time we visited the memorial together after all these years. You know, it was a big emotional time, I kind of like faked it. I love him, and I am deeply committed to our friendship. We were impacted, like we saw bodies hit the ground. Like, you it was very traumatic. We had that like stereotypical, covered in dust, and then we walked. That's when I was living in Inwood, we walked from downtown to Inwood, that sort of thing. So, but you know, I know he is going to be so emotional and he is going to cry, and I am going to hold him. [Laughter]. [unintelligible]. It was good that I could be there for him. It was a big, crazy experience and it was like you know um I don't know like being in the trenches with somebody.

We just formed a deep bond. Yeah. Um, other things that impacted me. I don't know. That's a hard question I guess.

Van Ness: What about people?

Platt: People who impacted me?

Van Ness: Yeah and influenced you.

Platt: Oh, influenced me. Um, God I want to say Prince.

Van Ness: [Laughter] what about Prince, or when was the first time you ever heard of Prince, met or saw Prince or whatever?

Platt: Um, my mom took me to my first Prince concert at ten years old. And um, it was a dirty. My mom was also very just sex positive and would listen to songs about giving head and stuff like that and so Prince was you know. Also, Prince is my trans icon. I would dress like Prince, I would dance, I would do all these things. In the course of my time, in my ten to teenager years, I saw five Prince concerts, with my mother. Um, and I was a fanatic. I was fanatical about Prince. In fact, I have a story. So, my mom was a big Michael Jackson fan, as everybody typically is. And so, we would travel to Florida every summer and um she heard about a there is Michael Jackson suite at Disney World. And you can rent it and stay and its where he kept all his old award, his Grammy's and American music awards that sort of thing. And my step-dad gave in and reserved one night. It was ridiculously, we were like working class, and you know \$400 a night for a hotel is crazy. So, we drove so he made the reservation, and he said there was ya know there is this one condition. This is about the time that Michael Jackson goes down there, so if Michael Jackson is there you know you can't stay in the suite, but you can stay in his mother's suite which is on the same floor and there are only two suites. And so, we were like ok. So, we get down there, and we brought my cousin, we were actually sort of raised as siblings and she is exactly a year older than me. And she is the closest person to me in my family, like she is the person i am closest to. And um, my brother Kevin who at the time was seven, I was ten years old and my two younger brothers and my mom and my step-dad. We get there, and my step dad goes in to check us in and he comes out and has this look on his face. He's like you are not going to believe this but Michael Jackson is here. [laughter] we started freaking out. Of course, we prepared for it. So, my brother and my cousin had like Michael Jackson paraphernalia but me, being the badass that I was was wearing a jacket with nothing but Prince stuff on it. [Laughter] and it was like a big feud between Prince and Michael Jackson, there was like beef right. So, we get up there and we are standing at the elevator bank and we took a tour of the suite with all of his awards. You know we bring our stuff into his mom's suite, which is the opposite in terms of decor. [Unintelligible] elevators banks and Michael Jackson is coming out of the elevator, he comes out and my mom's like hi Michael and he says hi. And then maybe an hour later, his publicist or somebody or assistant and says Michael Jackson would like to take a picture of the two children wearing Michael Jackson paraphernalia. So, she refused to take a picture of me! [laughter] and I was pissed but I stood my ground I was a Prince fan. Actually, I was like weirdly, Michael Jackson's too

gay [laughter]. Like Prince was like, it made no sense, Prince was wearing women's underwear and having threesomes with all them hot chicks. And I just loved it. But no I was like Michael Jackson is too soft. Anyway, they took a picture, later that night, we were going to Disney World the next morning. So, we were up, me and my cousin, my mom and my stepdad were like in the bed and my two younger siblings were asleep. We were up, my brother, my cousin and I were watching TV. We get a knock on the door and it's the same woman. She's like can you get your mom. So, we went and got my mom and she is like Michael Jackson is requesting that the children join him in the hot tub. And my mom is like NO. Absolutely...

Van Ness: What?

Platt: My mom is a nudist, all of my friends have seen her naked, she is permissive, she would like buy you beer. To this day, she's like I had this instinct that absolutely was inappropriate, and I wasn't going to have it you know. And then, we were like freaking out. I don't even think I had been in a hot tub and it was with Michael Jackson.

Van Ness: Yeah.

Platt: And then my parents came out and like blocked the door with their bodies. Because we were like clawing our way out. So, we went to sleep and got up the next morning to go to Disney World and under the door were autographs by Michael Jackson to all of us. Like pictures of himself. And then ten years later is when controversy of the first boy that he allegedly molested or raped or whatever came out. So, my brother to this day believes he like dodged a bullet like it was entirely set up.

Van Ness: You never know.

Platt: Yeah, you never know.

Van Ness: Wow. Quite a story.

Platt: Thank you, thank you. Well, that's why I am here. [Laughter] and actually I have a friend that wrote about that story in her book. Her name is Nicole Fleetwood and the name of the book is Black Looks. Check it out.

Van Ness: Um, did you, oh did you find out about Prince before or after you came out as, whatever you came out as?

Platt: I, when I was, [unintelligible] sort of after. Like I was saying I was such a weird kid, I would say stuff like around the age of five or six that I was um, like this is the first life I was ever born as a girl. Um, then I would say that to my mom, so I was out as you know as gender nonconforming I guess at a very early age. And then around that age I started wearing only boy's clothes. And then at ten I shaved my head and then that's when I came out. And then at ten I went to my first Prince concert. So, I think it was right around the time that I learned about Prince and it just... he

just blew my mind. Yeah. And it was also like he was light skin, and I was light skin, and I was like even though I am not like on that now, like politically, I think it's ridiculous. But as a young brown kid like it was absolutely like I saw myself. Yeah.

Van Ness: That's great. What was, er, what would you say like has been your journey into the LGBT community or like after you came out at ten? What would happen after that?

Platt: I mean, I didn't like really date at ten [laughter]

Van Ness: I mean, maybe I don't know your life.

Platt: Exactly, I just was queer, and I just began to slowly tell people at a very early age. I told my mom, we were actually on like a road trip. We took a lot of road trips, that was like the hated American tourism where you just hopped in the car and traveled around the country. And I remember sitting in the backseat with my cousin, my brother and my siblings and step=dad driving and my mom in the passenger seat. I was like I will never marry a man, I think they are disgusting [laughter] At a very early, I was like super young. I think I was like nine, eight or nine, and my mom was all well you may change your mind, and I was like nope. [Laughter] Nope, yeah, yeah so, I still I have held to that uh declaration I guess. In terms of dating, I had my first girlfriend at eighteen but that was like making out. Right, but it wasn't until college. I actually remember my first crush, my very first like I am on campus my first day, and I saw this gorgeous woman walking across campus and she, you know I won't say her name, even though we're still friends. Um, and it went, we were friends we never hooked up and I was like that is what I want, right there. And it was just all downhill from there. It was all just one blur of like the sea of exes [laughter].

Van Ness: Were you at that time, when you were eighteen, were you using the word trans? Or like how were you identifying yourself?

Platt: Um, I, I...butch. So, and I know that butch and trans are different, although there are lots of trans guys that are not butch just FYI. I am sure you know that. But, I was very butch so I people would sir me and my energy is very masculine. And so, it's not that I...so like if I had a girlfriend they would give me a boy name you know. Um, but it wasn't it, wasn't until I really moved to New York City that I began saying actually what it was, was I began being told that I am transgender [laughter] by like girlfriends and by typically like um like I call them trans-whisperers. They are like these, in my experience, these cis femme women going look you know what. let me set you aside and tell you. Actually, my co-parent, when we were in a relationship, I told her that I wanted to transition early, early on. She was not supportive at all so I delayed that for about six years. And that's hard, actually that's like huge, that's always been [unintelligible] I was like you did not allow me to tra...it's always a big fight. I mean it's less so now. You know for, I have to say like, I remember, I remember telling somebody that um I think it was like in 2004 I told somebody that I am just naturally attracted to both racial and beauty and gender and beauty. And it was sort of more in my...when I started saying stuff like that it was like it was like alright this is something. And then like so after 9/11 happened I went to therapy. The agency that we were

working at the time kind of got us hooked up with therapists to like talk through PTSD and I started to in therapy say like I would say stuff like my gender issues and stuff like that. I would call myself a tomboy and stuff like that. They were like your saying transgender and they didn't really have the terms for it. Also, I have to say, I remember a friend of mine like we were out at a bar one night. We were out at the Boys Club down in, do you remember the boys club? [yeah] The Boys Club um and it was kind of all like butch on butch and there were trans there and my friend kind of talked negatively about it. She said It was like the borg, like the trans clones right. It was because they were all white guys and they all kind of looked the same. So, I never met somebody that I identified with as an adult. Um and then I was reading I was up one night, and as one does, googling how do you know your transgender [laughter] and I happened upon a like, somebody was giving I think it was OPI magazine like it was somebody giving somebody advice and they said the only people up googling are you transgender are transgender people. I was like, fuck, alright well that answers that right [laughter]. And then I was like ok I am changing my name, and I was kind of like balls to the wall, no pun intended but yeah. But I always dressed like a dude. Or like what in this society duded dress like. Basically, the same black jeans I have always worn like a fucking ratty t-shirt you know it's just like. Like regardless of how I identify I have always been exactly the same. But now, I have had top surgery and I am on hormones so I look a little different, but I don't feel different.

Van Ness: Hows has the, how has your relationship within the trans or LGBT community maybe changed over the years? Or what was the nightlife like in New York City when you first got here?

Platt: Oh god it was amazing, absolutely amazing. Well because I was visiting here in the nineties when there was the Clique Club and stuff like that. And also it was the time of queer nation and act up and there was just a little more like I identified more with that like type of political expression. Which actually made me uh there's been two positive things about the election of Satan. And he...one, is that I'm excited to see more grass roots like let's burn down a goddamn building type of activism you know. And in fact, like that type of activism is exactly why the LGBT rights movement is what it is, so strong today because it came out of you know AIDS activism and queer activism. And so, I am excited to see that happening again. The second thing is, I didn't notice winter at all. Because winter in New York City, like I've been so in my head that I feel like I don't feel the cold. Um, in terms of nightlife, yeah I mean you know I lived on 10th street there was Starlight um there were all these dyke bars around, there was Meow Mix, all within walking distance, I feel that there is less of that, there is definitely less, to me it seems that there is less cis lesbian stuff right. And that makes me sad. Yeah.

Van Ness: What was like a typically night like at Meow Mix or Starlight?

Platt: Lots of drinking. [Laughter] lots of drinking. You know it was, I I want to say almost like a friendlier time. Not that like, I am a social butterfly anyway so like if I walk into a bar I am going to talk to people, I don't feel that. But I feel that, I mean maybe because I have also aged out of the bar scene in that I also have an eight year old daughter so I can't be out in the fucking bar scene all the time but um and New York is a place where like people do happy hour. That's how you link up with your friends so I feel like if you don't drink, even though I do drink, that's probably

difficult too like to find sober spaces and whatever. It was also a lot of dancing too, like making out on the sidewalk. Oh I worked with a guy once and he was like yeah I walked past Meow Mix one night and made with this lesbian on the sidewalk, I was like she wasn't a lesbian dude [laughter] but it was just like that type of real openness and I liked it yeah.

Van Ness: Do you have any like crazy stories from your night life? Your other life?

Platt: Oh God. My other life, I mean there is times of like, one time i went into The Cock back when it was on Evan Way and this was actually before I transitioned and like I was mistaken as a guy and that was a little intense because The Cock was The Cock and that's what people go there for.[Laughter] Um, it was just I would say just way more like a drug fueled scene also. I don't know that anybody does coke anymore [laughter] you know that's probably a good thing, well you know Adderall is probably going to replace that anyway. Um, any crazy, you know honestly, I am drawing a blank but I am somebody that like absolutely like the crazy is drawn to me so I am sure there is like an event but I'm just blanking.

Van Ness: It's fine, and so how is it now? What is your experience now?

Platt: Like the bar scene?

Van Ness: Sure, and yeah, I guess you can talk about...

Platt: Or is this nightlife?

Van Ness: Nightlife is fine, and you can talk about activism too. You don't have to talk about...

Platt: Oh right, we don't have to yeah...

Van Ness: Yeah, whatever is fine.

Platt: Well, activism is more online now. I also, think dating and stuff is more online now. Like people are dating sites and what not. So yeah, I was talking to a friend the other day there is a fetish site called fetlfe and how like the like it's like how you know how you can't process your payment through PayPal, or Mastercard, or Visa because it's a because they are shutting down that ability to do so. Basically because of the Trump administration right. What is it, the NSA? I don't know what agency that regulate or censors that type of thing and he said I guess we are going to have to start cruising again. And you know what that would be fun, I would be fine with that. Get it back to like the roots of both activism and nightlife [unintelligible] this kind of in person stuff would be nice.

Van Ness: Did you um, were you active in any organizations or in any kind of network when you were younger or now?

Platt: Uh, yes. I have actually been I have to say a little bit more active in the Black community than I have in the queer community. Because I have zero tolerance for racism and shit like that and we have tons of it here in the queer community. Um, but I was more active in Ohio with stuff like Queer Nation and Act Up. In New York, you know I guess I became although in my first few years I was definitely more in the streets both in terms of activism and social life. But you know I guess I got a little more domestic which is good you know because God you got to slow down at some point and that's hard and that's a tough experience. Now, you know I have to say other than like donating money I am not really doing much for activism. Although, I write and I did that little commercial for the Commission on Human Rights and stuff like that. I mean I try i am also busy, its hard.

Van Ness: How did you get involved in the commercial?

Platt: Uh, a friend of mine Ez who was an attorney. Or is an attorney, he is an attorney I mean they are an attorney [sigh] I am terrible with pronouns, as far as trans go. I mean any masculine presenting trans person I immediately he them and that's so and I apologize for the record. [Laughter] So Ez, called me and uh said do you want to do this and I was like fuck it sure. It's been interesting because I have had people out of the blue recognize me like a security guard at the ymca on 63rd street, it's so random because they played in the cabs. So I guess the commercial has had more circulation recently because of the Trump administration While it aired in June it's now being played again I guess, so people are like [unintelligible] I work in like a really male dominated industry especially if I am doing metal working and I have had these really butch cis dudes come up and be like lets share a bathroom Ky [laughter] you know what I mean I'm like first of all let's backup slow your roll, like yeah but they have been weirdly supportive [laughter] yeah, yeah. Sharing with a bathroom with those guys anyway is a fucking nightmare but at least their nice about it. [Laughter]

Van Ness: Share a bathroom, that's creepy.

Platt: Oh, yeah.

Van Ness: In terms of self-care stuff.

Platt: Self-care.

Van Ness: Um, how do you, how do you practice self-care?

Platt: Well, I work out when I can, I hang out with my daughter and her kids. I take pictures of birds, so I walk around the woods taking pictures of birds. Um, and then lately i have been forcing myself into echo chambers because I get so annoyed with people saying well did you hear opposing points of view. But Like the opposing point of view, like I have to convince them of my humanity and I have absolutely no time for that, and I don't care. um , you know i am also sort of you know absolutely unforgiving and intolerant of ignorant shit and I will cut you the fuck off and I have cut people out and I am narrowing down um who I want to be around and I am being very

deliberate about that. And like unless I need to work with you um like you don't need to be in my life. So, that's sort of like that's self-care, like I am not out getting massages or anything like that although I need one [laughter] like you know just like limiting the bombardment of anti-black, anti-trans, anti-female garbage is self-care. And I am just raising, I'm sorry we are raising, our daughter to be the most badass radical feminist and the shit she says just gives me life I swear to god it's so dope. And her friend and her group, she already has her little gay boyfriend and he is eight. I don't know if he is really gay yet but he is a flaming. Just like I love how she embraces diversity, and everyone is like how can you raise a kid in New York City? I'm like only want to raise a kid in New York City, are you kidding? Like, I don't ever want her to experience the isolation I felt racially, or in terms of gender. Just like not being able to like pick your friends because you live in such a small town. You just had to interact with whoever was there, I do love people from Ohio. I'm not necessarily dissing all of them but um yeah it's just a miracle, I mean your from here so that's such a privilege.

Van Ness: What are some of the fun things or amazing things your daughter says that like blow your mind?

Platt: I mean well, first of all she's like well she just doesn't...she is like a defender of people. So she um it was a few months ago I get these calls from Lisa and they all start with everything's ok [laughter]. You know I'm like an immediate panic at like level 11 with my reactions to things. Sole was on the playground and she overheard a little boy saying derogatory things about Chinese people and she got up in his face and went off [laughter] and you know this was at the time she was 7 and so they liked pulled up the little kid and he got in trouble. But like what we had to do, what Lisa did, and what the teachers did you know was there are ways of going you can't be like although I'll be like [unintelligible] [laughter] but then she says like amazing stuff you know like going to work the other day and she is getting out of the bathtub and I was like I am leaving can I have a hug? And she says you know I just don't hug people when I'm naked [laughter] I'm like I want you to remember that when you are 16 out in the streets [laughter].

Van Ness: Hold you to it!

Platt: Yes! [laughter] Oh, and this is great I just said that on, you know so this is evidence, so I'll play this for her.

Van Ness: Are there other things that you really want to share, that people need to know to know who Ky is?

Platt: Oh my god, to know who Ky is?

Van Ness: Yeah, I'm sure there is other stuff.

Platt: [sighs] I don't know, I mean I don't know if really want people to know me or to like know...I think that...I don't know how to answer that question. I mean if you have a follow up question?

Van Ness: Yeah, what are, is there anything you want to be known for?

Platt: Want to be known for.

Van Ness: Or how do you want people to remember you? Or whatever, somebody might be saying your name or talking about you in like ten years?

Platt: Um, I think like, I think I would want them to know just like how loyal I am to my friends. In that my friends have been like my chosen family and it's been very important. I am also incredibly funny and I am currently working on a book, I would like to [unintelligible].

Van Ness: Tell me more about it. If you can.

Platt: Well, I call it. I'm not going to give it away because I don't want anyone to steal my idea. But I call it Afro Futuristic Dystopian Kink.

Van Ness: Huh. That's cool.

Platt: And, it's about the death of whiteness.

Van Ness: Do you write in general or have you written?

Platt: I do write, yeah.

Van Ness: What other things have you written? Or do you write?

Platt: Um, I actually had a popular blog back in the day, when people were actually blogging. I am embarrassed to say the name, but I am going to do it. It was called Ask This Black Woman. It was like a little advice, like raunchy advice with political commentary thing. I was interviewed by BBC and [unintelligible] and stuff like that. Yeah you know, I do write. You know what I am, I am somebody who like I decided on big. How do I want to say this? I decide to do something and then I do it, but I am not a multitasker of big things so I am sort of slow it seems at like achieving something. But I am always working on that one thing and then when I am done I pick another kind of thing. And this is currently that one thing. Like even moving to New York City was that one thing. That took me like a year to like get my shit together, because it's not easy. It's a long process.

Van Ness: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Cool. I guess is there anything else that you would really want to add? I mean..

Platt: I think that's it. Yeah.

Van Ness: Cool, well thank you for sharing your story.

Platt: Your welcome!

Van Ness: With me and the various people who will read this or listen to it.

Platt: Hopefully it will be more than like five people.

Van Ness: Yeah, I'm sure. Thank you.

Platt: Thank you.